

Authorship in Mozambique: The Case of António Quadros (1933-1994)



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Table of Contents

Short Abstract, p. 3.

Long Abstract, p. 4.

Acknowledgements, p. 9.

Introduction: António Quadros and the Problematics of Authorship and Readership in Mozambique, p. 10.

1. A Portuguese Tarzan: The Ambiguous Identity of João Pedro Grabato Dias, p. 35.

2. The Canon and Authority: Duplicitous Writers and Totalitarian Readers in *As Quaybyrycas* (1972), p. 72.

3. I/We, the People: Onymous, Anonymous and Collective Subjects in *A Arca*, *Eu, o Povo* and *O Povo é Nós*, p. 127.

4. ‘Aos Amigos, Inimigos, e Queridos Indiferentes’: Quadros and His Readers, p. 185.

Conclusion: ‘No fundo sou um grande ordinário [...] / E ignorante do meu lugar histórico, também’: António Quadros and the Future, p. 242.

Bibliography, p. 249.

Authorship in Mozambique: The Case of António Quadros (1933-1994)

In this thesis, I examine the question of authorship in late-colonial and post-independence Mozambique through the case of the eccentric figure of Portuguese artist and writer António Quadros (1933-1984), who wrote and published most of his works in Mozambique. The study draws on archival research, interviews with associates and colleagues of Quadros, close textual analysis and postcolonial and critical theory. It is the first substantial study on the problematic of authorship in Mozambique and on the understudied writer António Quadros.

In the thesis, I consider how Quadros's work can nuance discussions of authorship in Mozambique and more generally. I explore the question of authorship through the themes of identity, canonicity, representation and readership. I consider the relationship between politics and literature in the contexts of colonial and post-independence Mozambique, with attention paid to the continuities and disjunctions between the role of the author in these distinct historical moments. I focus on the political function of authors in such politicized contexts and I frame the author as a paradoxical figure who is inherently political — given the absence of a free press and, in the colonial period, the context of censorship — but whose works can have only a limited political impact in a context of high illiteracy and a lack of publishing infrastructure. The works of Quadros stands as a counterpoint and complement to the works of his contemporaries.

Authorship in Mozambique: The Case of António Quadros (1933-1994)

In this thesis, I examine the question of authorship in late-colonial and post-independence Mozambique through the case of the eccentric figure of António Quadros (1933-1984), a Portuguese-born writer and artist who lived in Mozambique between 1964 and 1984, where he wrote and published most of his literary works, under three pennames: João Pedro Grabato Dias, Frey Ioannes Garabatus and Mutimati Barnabé João. This thesis is the first substantial study on Quadros's works and on the question of authorship in Mozambique.

The study draws on archival research carried out in Portugal and Mozambique, interviews with associates and colleagues of Quadros, close textual analysis and engagement with postcolonial and critical theory. I address the question of what it means to be an author in Mozambique and how authorship changes after the end of Portuguese colonial rule.

The idiosyncratic works of Quadros provide a productive case study through which to approach the problematic of authorship. Given the peculiarities of his works, this study of Quadros's unusual case stands as a counterpoint and a complement to extant scholarship on Mozambican literature, which has generally focused on a limited selection of writers. The thesis thus contributes a first extensive study of Quadros's hitherto neglected works and a problematizing analysis of authorship in Mozambique.

In the thesis, I interrogate the authorship theories of Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault, the publication of whose seminal essays 'La mort de l'auteur' (1968) and 'Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?' (1969) was contemporaneous with Grabato Dias's début, in 1968. Through my readings of Quadros's texts, I interrogate the political implications of Barthes's

and Foucault's erasure of authorial identity and their respective challenges to authorial authority. I make the case for an approach to the question of authorship that takes into account the anonymous agents and institutions — such as editors, political parties and the State — that are involved in the conferring of authority onto certain authors and readers. In contrast to Foucault, who considers the author a discursive function, I make the case for an approach that considers authors (and their readers) as institutionally located individuals with relative positions of social and political privilege and access to power. I argue that the politics of authorship — access or lack thereof to written culture, the informal system of patronage identified by Russell Hamilton (1984) in place in colonial Mozambique, the racism experienced by black and *mestiço* writers — need to be decoupled from and understood in the light of the colonial, anti-colonial and nationalist politics of Mozambique. In politicized contexts such as colonial and post-independence Mozambique and in the absence of a free press, authors necessarily perform dual roles as artists and political figures

I explore the problematic of authorship in Mozambique in relation to questions relating to readership. The issue of how to read texts produced in colonial and post-colonial contexts has been a concern of postcolonial studies. I discuss the debate in the field over the politics of postcolonial reading practices in the light of Quadros's works, which suggest a way of reconciling the opposing positions of theorists who have made the case for deconstructionist and historicist approaches.

The thesis is divided into four chapters, which address the themes of identity, canonicity, representation and readership.

In the first chapter, I examine the ambiguities of the Luso-Mozambican identity of Quadros's most prolific penname, Grabato Dias, in relation to the debate amongst critics and authors around Mozambican identity (*moçambicanidade*). Discussions of what it means to be a Mozambican writer have been orientated around the question of Mozambican identity. I argue that these discussions, in turn, have been conditioned by the question of the (non-)place of writers such as Quadros (identified variously by critics as European, Euro-Mozambican, Portuguese and white writers). I contest the literary historiographic framing that such writers were in fact barred from the Mozambican canon. I contend, rather, that a discourse of exclusion, to which Quadros's poetry contributes, has paradoxically functioned to incorporate certain of these writers in the Mozambican canon. I contrast the configuration of Grabato Dias's identity in the colonial period with its framing after the end of Portuguese colonial rule. The shift in Grabato Dias's identity map onto the sudden change in political paradigm that the end of Portugal's dictatorship, the Estado Novo, entailed. Grabato Dias's identity trajectory reveals the disjunction between the utopian universalism of *moçambicanidade* as a loose cultural identity accepting of settler writers like Quadros and the relatively rigid nationalist definition underlying the conception of Mozambican civic identity held by Mozambique's ruling party, Frelimo. In the colonial period, Grabato Dias's Luso-Mozambican identity functions as a form of resistance to Portuguese colonial rule; in the post-independence period, he fears that his identity will function to exclude him from the new nation of Mozambique.

In chapter two, I analyse Quadros's engagement with *Os Lusíadas* (1572), a major work of the Portuguese canon by Luís de Camões that was appropriated by the Estado Novo as a foundational imperial text. In *As Quibyrycas*, a mock sequel to Camões's epic, Quadros provides a subversive rereading of Camões's epic, which is accompanied by a preface

authored by dissident Camões critic Jorge de Sena that parodies the scholarship of conservative Camonian critics, many of whom had links to the Estado Novo. Quadros's and Sena's reframings of Camões draw out the tensions and ambiguities in *Os Lusíadas* as a counter to the authoritative interpretations of conservative literary critics. The poem and its preface raise questions over the relationship between authors, their texts and ideology. Quadros and Sena critique the ideologizing of Camões by the conservative Portuguese academy and suggest that Camões, curiously, is complicit in his appropriation as a pro-colonial author. Quadros's attribution of partial responsibility onto Camões for the anachronistic appropriation of his texts betrays a concern that his own works would be appropriated for nefarious political ends. For Quadros, ambiguity, ambivalence and duplicity — identified by some postcolonial critics as efficacious anti-colonial strategies — leave texts, in authoritarian contexts, vulnerable to political appropriation.

Chapter three examines the phenomenon of collective poetry in Mozambique through the specific cases of the poetry of Grabato Dias and Mutimati Barnabé João. I analyse Quadros's attempt in *Eu, o Povo* to reconcile the anti-colonial and post-colonial functions of poetry in Mozambique, which I identify as opposition to colonial rule and support of Frelimo's nationalist project. I argue that the appropriation of collective discourses by Frelimo during the post-independence period blunted the oppositional politics of the anti-colonial poetry that the party mobilised as propaganda to legitimize it as the governing party of Mozambique. Quadros's idiosyncratic foray into the genre of *poesia de combate* (combat poetry), *Eu, o Povo* (I, the People, 1975), is an enactment of the discreet anti-authoritarian politics outlined in Grabato Dias's *A Arca* (*The Ark*, 1971), written during the colonial period. The short-lived canonization of *Eu, o Povo* suggests that, in the post-independence period, there was little room for writers to question and critique Frelimo.

In chapter four, I examine questions relating to readership in the poetry of Grabato Dias. I discuss three texts (*O Povo é Nós*, *Sete Contos para um Carnaval*, *Sagapress*) written during the eleven-year period after independence during which Quadros literary activities became greatly diminished. The three collections were published on Quadros's return to Portugal, in the 1990s. In the texts analysed, there is a double concern with the relationship between context and text. What is the relationship that Grabato Dias's poems have with the contexts in which they were written? And what is their relationship to the contexts in which they will be read? Grabato Dias's poetry provides a productive case study through which to discuss the related debate in postcolonial studies concerning the modes of reading most appropriate for approaching texts written in colonial contexts.

A figure who straddled the colonial and post-independence periods in Mozambique, Quadros is a case the study of which reveals the continuities and disjunctions between what it meant to be an author in Estado Novo-Portugal and Frelimo-ruled Mozambique. Although Quadros's disconnect from the political and social realities faced by most Mozambicans becomes apparent in certain instances, his works often display a remarkable perspicacity regarding the complexities of colonial and post-colonial Mozambican politics and the problematic of authorship in Mozambique.

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Lastly, but not leastly, to my friends and family, who can claim an indirect, if not insubstantial, contribution. What follows is dedicated to my dad.

António Quadros and the Problematics of Authorship and Readership in Mozambique

Um marrequinha das direitas
comia lulas com um ambidextro
da oposição. Ó pus (cisão
de expectorado rasto no clima
do ódio) como saber-te útil
sem provar-te fecundo? e saboroso?

Comiam lulas, pois, e nos enganar
com que se temperavam no manjar
diziam um ao outro mil enganar
troçavam galhardetes e rosmanos
com esses ares ibério-hindustânicos
que os portugueses têm a cear.

Comiam lulas rubras de tão fulas
por se saberem nuas e comíveis
e eu sentia-me lulas nos terríveis
maxilares daquelas fomes cíveis.
Não sou um exigente ou exegeta
picuinheiro de tontas pequenezes,
mas ao vê-los à mesa e às lulas, (fezes
de Jeová!) fez o poetazinho
que também sei que sou vergomitar
talvez apenas só de incompreensão...
Reveses duma sensibilidade
que já se vê que tenho e me atormenta
muito, ou só cerveja a mais? (Areja
pelo vômito a voz da lula e azula
já nojentíssimo o céu. Vou-me deitar).
(*Laurentinas*, p. 35)¹

A right-wing hunchback
was eating squid with an ambidextrous
fellow from the opposition. Oh puss (scission
produced by spitting, sign of a climate
of hatred), how can I know that you're useful
unless you prove that you're fertile? And delicious?

Eating squid, their seasoning chicaneries,
sprinkled on themselves and their fare,
they exchanged a thousand trickeries,
they traded pennants and chicories
with that Ibero-Hindustani air
with which the Portuguese are wont to dine.

They were eating crimsoned squid,
piqued because naked and moreish,
and I felt like the squid being chewed
in the terrifying jaws of that civil hunger.
I'm not fussy, nor am I a nit-picking

¹ When referencing quotations taken from works by Grabato Dias, Mutimati Barnabé João, Frey Ioannes Garabatus or António Quadros, I use abbreviated titles, followed by a page number, where one is available (unlike most of the texts written by Quadros, *Laurentinas* is paginated) and I provide an English translation of the quoted text. In my translations, I have endeavoured to render the Portuguese intelligible, whilst preserving the ambiguities of the original text.

exegete of silly nothings,
but seeing them at the table (Jehovah's
faeces!) made me, minor poet
that I am, retch rhymes,
perhaps out of incomprehension...
Woes of my heightened
and harrowing sensitivity
or one too many beers? (Through
the vomit, the squid gasps for air and
the revolting sky turns blue. I need a lie down).

In 'A lula compartilhada' (The Shared Squid), from the 1971 collection *Uma Meditação, Vinte e Um Laurentinas e Dois Fabulírios Falhados* (A Meditation, Twenty-One Laurentinas and Two Failed Fables in Verse), the poet describes his horror as he watches a colonial official and an opponent of the colonial regime eat squid together. The political orientation of the right-winger's unlikely companion is ambiguous: he is both left- and right-handed. Seasoned with 'enganos' (trickeries), the meal is an exchange of 'galhardetes', of political allegiances, as the 'Ó pus (cisão...)' is revealed to be pally with the colonial regime that it only notionally opposes. The sight of the squid being shared by political enemies is enough to make the poet spew words ('vergomitar'). The result of the poet's heaving is the text that his readers have before them. He wonders with some irony whether his nausea is the result of his having drunk too many of the beers that give *Laurentinas* its title (Laurentina is a Mozambican beer brand) or his heightened sensibilities as a minor poet ('poetazinho'). Either way, the final lines reveal that the speaker too has been partaking of squid: his vomit smells of the seafood that he has eaten. The speaker, who is repulsed by this vision of political corruption, is also complicit in the unseemly meeting. He does not act on his revulsion. His role is limited to observing, writing (vomitous) poetry and retiring to bed to nurse a hangover.

The poem is deprecating of the role that authors can play in speaking truth to power. As a voyeur, the poet is complicit in the act that he denounces. The poet's going off to lie

down is a rhetorical manoeuvre typical of the poetry of João Pedro Grabato Dias, whose texts often end with a note of resignation.

The poem raises several questions relating to the politics of authorship in colonial Mozambique. What is the function of authors in colonial contexts? What strategies were available to writers to critique the colonial regime in Mozambique? To what extent is poetry an efficacious medium to speak truth to power? Can authors be politically independent thinkers? What right do poets complicit in colonialism's evils have to denounce the iniquities that they witness? These are some of the questions that will orientate my discussion of the works of Grabato Dias and the other pennames of Portuguese artist and writer António Augusto de Melo Lucena e Quadros (1933-1994).

Grabato Dias is one of three pennames under which Quadros published literary texts. Quadros hailed from Santiago de Besteiros, near Viseu, in the North of Portugal. He studied at the Escola das Belas Artes do Porto (now called the Faculdade de Belas Artes da Universidade do Porto), where he also lectured. According to a CV that Quadros compiled in 1991 for his application for a doctoral programme in architecture at that same institution, he studied at the Escola das Belas Artes de Lisboa and in Paris in the 1950s, at the *École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts*, with a grant from the Gulbenkian Foundation.

In 1964, Quadros left Portugal for Mozambique's capital, Lourenço Marques (now Maputo). There, he taught at the Liceu Salazar and gave voluntary classes at the Núcleo de Arte on painting, sculpture, ceramics and engraving. In Lourenço Marques, he was part of a privileged social elite. With the poet Rui Knopfli, he co-edited a literary magazine called *Caliban* (1971-1972) for four issues, published in three instalments, until production was

halted by the colonial police. The issues featured work from Knopfli, José Craveirinha, Glória de Sant'Anna, Herberto Helder, Eugénio Lisboa, Jorge de Sena and others. In Mozambique and Portugal, Quadros's artistic activities were varied: he was a painter, sculptor, engraver, illustrator, potter and beekeeper.²

Quadros stayed in Mozambique until 1984. In the post-independence period, he taught at the Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, before moving to the Direcção Nacional da Habitação, where he worked with the architect José Forjaz. He initiated and ran the experimental TBARN (Técnicos Básicos para o/no Aproveitamento Racional da Natureza) project. Along with Forjaz, he co-produced the Monumentos aos Heróis Nacionais, located near Maputo Airport.

In terms of his literary activities, Quadros's time in Mozambique was the most productive of his career. According to the dates of composition of his published poems, the vast majority were written in Mozambique and many of them in Lourenço Marques/Maputo. In a letter to Maria Lourdes Cortez dated 17 September 1971, Quadros quips that she is ignorant of his early patriotic poetry: 'Vê como não conhece a obra toda? Bem feito! Se conhecesse a minha fase patriótica sebastianista e a não sebastianista dava urros! Eu já os dei!' (See, there are poems of mine that you're not familiar with. And it's just as well! If you were aware of my patriotic Sebastianist and non-Sebastianist phases, you'd roar! Believe me, I've done enough of that already!).³

² A selection of Quadros's illustrations are reprinted in António Quadros, *O Sinaleiro das Pombas* (Porto: Árvore, Cooperativa de Actividades Artísticas, 2001), the most comprehensive extant anthology of Quadros's artistic work, which is scattered across galleries and private collections in Portugal and elsewhere.

³ Maria Lourdes Cortez, 'Carta 1 — 17-9-71', *A Ideia: Revista de Cultura Libertária*, 19: 77-79 (2016) p. 108.

Grabato Dias's début was in 1968. That year, the judging panel of a poetry competition held by the Câmara Municipal de Lourenço Marques awarded their prize to a poem, accompanied by illustrations, submitted by an incognito poet called Grabato de Tete. The mysterious author did not attend the award ceremony to collect the monetary prize. Two of the members of the panel — both friends of Quadros — Eugénio Lisboa and Rui Knopfli, recount that they only found out that Quadros was behind Grabato de Tete after the competition.⁴ Quadros approached Lisboa in 1970 with the poems that would later be published in his first collection, *40 e Tal Sonetos de Amor e Circunstância e uma Canção Desesperada* (40-odd Circumstantial Love Sonnets and a Song of Despair) and asked him to write a text to introduce the collection. In the meeting with Lisboa, Quadros mentioned that he was prompted to publish his poetry by his then wife, Clara.⁵

Besides Grabato Dias, Quadros had two other pennames: Frey Ioannes Garabatus, a fictional friar and drinking mate of Luís de Camões, to whom a mock sequel of Camões's foundational epic *Os Lusíadas* (The Lusiads), titled *As Quybyrycas*, is ludically attributed; and, Mutimati Barnabé João, a guerrilla soldier whose collection *Eu, o Povo* (I, the People) was published by Mozambique's ruling party, FRELIMO, in 1975 as part of Mozambique's independence celebrations.⁶

During the late colonial period, Quadros published five collections: *40 e Tal Sonetos*; the twin odes, *O Morto* (The Deceased) and *A Arca* (The Ark); *As Laurentinas*; and, *As*

⁴ Eugénio Lisboa, *Acta est Fabula: Memórias*, 6 vols (Guimarães: Opera Omnia, 2012-2017), III, p. 333-335. Rui Knopfli, 'Homem do Renascimento', *Jornal de Letras: Artes e Ideias*, Ano XIV, 632 (1995), p. 14.

⁵ Lisboa, *Acta est Fabula*, III, p. 337.

⁶ When I discuss Frelimo/FRELIMO, the party's name appears capitalized when I refer to the party before the Third Congress of 1977, when the party's name was changed to Frelimo. Where I refer to the party generally and without reference to a specific historic period, I opt for Frelimo. Arcénio Francisco Cuco, 'FRELIMO: De um Movimento Revolucionário a Partido Político', *Revista Núcleo de Estudos Paranaenses*, 2:2 (2016), 138.

Quybyrycas, 'edited' by Grabato Dias. In 1974, two months after the Carnation Revolution, he published a third ode attributed to Grabato Dias, called *Pressaga Pré-saga Saga/press: Ode Didáctica da Primeira Singular à Segunda Plural sobre as Terceiras, Segundas e Primeiras Pessoas* (Presage Pre-Saga Saga/press: Didactic Ode Conjugated in the First-Person Singular and Addressed to the Second-Person Plural, Regarding the Third, Second and First Persons). A year later, *Eu, o Povo* was published by FRELIMO as part of Mozambique's independence celebrations. Besides a series of anonymous articles that appeared in *Domingo* from late 1980 until early 1981 and a poem published in 1977 in Portuguese journal *Colóquio/Letras*, Quadros did not publish again until 1986 (*Facto/Fado: piqueno tratado de morfologia: parte vii*, Fact/Fate: a modest treatise on morphology: part vii) after he had returned to Portugal from Mozambique.

In the early 1990s, Quadros revisited texts that he had written in Mozambique in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1991, a second version of *As Quybyrycas* was published by Afrontamento. In 1991 and 1992, Edições Pouco, a publishing house of Quadros's invention, published a slew of Grabato Dias's works that were written in Mozambique in the post-colonial period: *Sete Contos para um Carnaval* (Seven Short Stories for Carnival), *Sagapress: Poesia com Datas* (Sagapress: Poems with Dates) and the spiritual sequel to *Eu, o Povo*, *O Povo é Nós* (We Are the People).

Quadros's time in Mozambique coincided with a period of momentous change in the country. He arrived in 1964, the year that the armed conflict led by FRELIMO against the Portuguese colonial forces began. He was in Lourenço Marques on the day of the Carnation Revolution, when the Estado Novo, Portugal's dictatorship, was brought down by a coup. He was present at the country's celebrations of independence from Portugal in 1975, to

which he contributed a collection of poems attributed to a dead guerrilla soldier, fallen in the armed conflict against the Portuguese which continued until September 1974, five months after the fall of the Estado Novo. Quadros remained in Mozambique until the mid-1980s, before leaving having grown disillusioned with the ever-worsening political situation in the country.

The Carnation Revolution marked a watershed moment in Mozambique's history. As Patrick Chabal remarks, the date 'not only marks the Portuguese revolution "of the carnations" but also, in effect, the beginning of the transfer of power in the Portuguese African colonies'.⁷ The revolution set in motion the decolonisation process that would lead to the nation's independence from Portugal on 25 June 1975. Lisboa, who was with Quadros when he first heard news of the coup, recalls Quadros's reaction: 'A caminho da Matola, Quadros barafustava: "Agora que tudo estava a correr tão bem..."' (On our way to Matola, Quadros remonstrated: "And everything was going so well..."). Lisboa opines that Quadros was referring to his personal projects.⁸ Quadros's reaction, as reported by Lisboa, points to an ambivalence towards Mozambique's independence, which Grabato Dias expresses in *Pressaga*, published two months after the revolution, in June 1974. In *Pressaga* and in *Eu, o Povo*, published the following year, in 1975, Grabato Dias and Mutimati express their concerns about Mozambique's future and, in particular, the place of Portuguese settlers in the new nation.

The contrasts and similarities between the colonial and post-independence periods in Mozambique are a recurring theme of the chapters that follow, in which I trace the

⁷ Patrick Chabal, 'The End of Empire', in *A History of Postcolonial Lusophone Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), p. 17.

⁸ Lisboa, *Acta est Fabula*, III, p. 426.

changes in what it meant to be an author in Mozambique during the twenty-year period that Quadros lived in the country.

What does it mean to be an author in late colonial and post-colonial Mozambique?

In the contexts of colonial and post-colonial Mozambique, the author was an inherently political role. In the absence of opposition parties and a free press under the Estado Novo and Frelimo-ruled Mozambique, poetry was a privileged medium through which authors could voice political discontent. Given the high levels of illiteracy in Portuguese, most Mozambicans did not have access to print culture or to national political discourse. In the colonial and post-colonial contexts, literature was potentially a vehicle for voicing the concerns of those who were excluded from colonial, anti-colonial and nationalist politics.

In the Mozambican context, several authors were prominent political figures in the anti-colonial struggle who, after independence, became important members of Frelimo's leadership. Marcelino dos Santos (who published poetry under the pseudonyms Kalungano and Lilinho Macaia) was a founding member of Frelimo. He served as vice-president of the party from 1969-1977 and as a Minister of Economic Development. Jorge Rebelo was the head of Frelimo's Central Committee. Luís Bernardo Honwana was an advisor to Mozambique's first president, Samora Machel.

During the colonial period, for Mozambican-born writers of colour, the very act of writing, in Portuguese, was a form of opposition to racist colonial logic. For these authors, writing during the colonial period was a perilous activity. The circulation of the poems of Noémia de Sousa, collected in *Sangue Negro* (Black Blood), led to her being exiled to

Lisbon in 1951, until 1964, and thereafter to Paris.⁹ José Craveirinha was imprisoned by the Portuguese colonial police (known as the PIDE until 1969, and thereafter as the DGS) in 1965 and remained in incarceration until the Carnation Revolution of 1974. Luís Bernardo Honwana was jailed in 1964, the same year his only work, *Nós Matámos o Cão Tinhoso* (subsequently translated as *We Killed Mangy Dog and Other Stories* by Dorothy Guedes), was published the year in which the struggle for independence officially started in Mozambique. Honwana was released in 1967.¹⁰

Quadros's experiences of political persecution were mild compared to those of Sousa, Craveirinha and Honwana. Quadros experienced very little inconvenience from the colonial authorities, who do not appear to have considered him a threat. Although *Caliban* (1971-1972), the literary magazine that Quadros ran under the name Grabato Dias with Rui Knopfli, was closed by the DGS in 1972, Quadros was not imprisoned. According to records held in the Torre de Tombo, he was interviewed by PIDE agents on one occasion before he moved to Mozambique. He was misidentified as the co-author of a manifesto co-signed by António Quadros Ferro, the son of António Ferro, a former head of the Estado Novo's propaganda service. In a letter dated 4 September 1968, from a PIDE sub-director in Lourenço Marques to the Director-Geral of the secret police in Lisbon, Quadros is identified as a member of a group of leftist intellectuals.¹¹ In Mozambique, Quadros benefited from the favour of the governor of Lourenço Marques, Baltasar Rebelo de Sousa, who was an

⁹ Noémia de Sousa, *Sangue Negro* (Maputo: Associação dos Escritores Moçambicanos, 2001).

¹⁰ Luís Bernardo Honwana, *Nós Matámos o Cão Tinhoso* (Lourenço Marques: Sociedade de Imprensa de Moçambique, 1964); Honwana, *We Killed Mangy Dog and Other Stories*, trans. Dorothy Guedes (London: Heinemann Educational, 1969).

¹¹ Lisbon, Torre de Tombo, PIDE/DGS, SC, CI(2) 10941 NT 7608; PIDE/DGS, SC, SR-3015/56 NT 2783.

admirer of his art. In the post-Carnation Revolution period, Quadros had informal connections to the intellectuals and writers who were part of the Frelimo party machinery.¹²

In the cases of Sousa, Craveirinha and Santos, pseudonymy functioned to protect their identities from the colonial authorities. In Quadros's case, there was no need to hide his identity from the authorities given his privileged position within colonial society in Mozambique. Quadros's pennames were never intended to conceal his identity totally. Indeed, in contrast to the coyness displayed during the Câmara Municipal de Lourenço Marques poetry competition, Quadros sold copies of Grabato Dias's first collection, *40 e Tal Sonetos*, door to door.¹³ Grabato Dias's, Mutimati's and Garabatus's texts are littered with references to their status as fictional authors and signs pointing to Quadros's hand in the production of the texts. When Maria Lourdes Cortez, in her prefatory essay to *Laurentinas*, writes that Grabato Dias's embedding himself in a dense textuality allows him to appear 'devidamente escudado' (duly shielded) before his readers, she is not referring to the kind of protection that Craveirinha's, Sousa's and Santos's pseudonyms offered.¹⁴ The notion that the construct Grabato Dias — as a fictional identity — acts as a shield to protect the author from his readers refers to a Barthesian-inflected coyness whereby authors anonymise themselves through the creation of a textual persona. Indeed, much like Roland Barthes, Lourdes Cortez does not totally discount the importance of contextual details — including, presumably, biography — in the analysis of Grabato Dias's works.¹⁵

¹² The information about Quadros's connection to Baltazar Rebelo de Sousa was provided by Eugénio Lisboa in an interview held in Lisbon, August 2019.

¹³ Interview with Lisboa, Lisbon, August 2019.

¹⁴ Lourdes Cortez, 'Introdução', in *Uma Meditação, 21 Laurentinas e Dois Fabulários Falhados* (Lourenço Marques: João Pedro Grabato Dias, 1971), p. 9.

¹⁵ Barthes published an autobiography, written in the third person, in 1975. Roland Barthes, *Roland Barthes* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1975).

Grabato Dias, Ioannes Garabatus and Mutimati combine features of heteronyms, pseudonyms andonyms. For this reason, I deliberately do not refer to them as pseudonyms or heteronyms. Instead, I describe Grabato Dias, Ioannes Garabatus and Mutimati as pennames or fictional authors. As noted above, his pennames perform a function very different from that of the pseudonyms used by several of his contemporaries in Mozambique. His usage of fictional authors is distinct from the heteronymic functions of Fernando Pessoa's Alberto Caeiro, Álvaro de Campos and Ricardo Reis. In contrast to Pessoa, who, as Richard Zenith and Fernão Cabral Martins point out, rarely hesitated in the attribution of texts to his various heteronyms,¹⁶ Quadros deliberately plays on the indeterminacy of his speaking subjects' identities. Furthermore, Quadros, to my knowledge, never attempted to schematize his fictional authors into a heteronymic universe. Pessoa, in contrast, fleshed out his heteronyms with texts, many of them attributed to heteronyms, documenting the biographies, belief systems, physical appearances and temperaments of Caeiro, Campos and Reis.

Quadros makes reference to different kinds of authorship in his work: to anonymity, collective writing, to the conception of the poet as dependent on a patron (*A Arca* and *As Quaybryrcas*) and commercial authorship (*As Quaybryrcas*, *Pressaga*). His works ironically play on conflicting authorial tropes: of aristocratic alienation from society and the ethical imperative to stage an intervention in perceived problems in that very society from which the author is disconnected; of the intellectual autonomy that comes from being an outsider and the intellectual and artistic compromise that derives from relying on patronage; of

¹⁶ In the publication plan sent to João Gaspar Simões in 1932, Pessoa stipulated that 'toda a obra heterónima é para ser publicada sob o seu próprio nome, Fernando Pessoa, sem nenhuma espécie de hesitação ou ambiguidade'. Fernão Cabral Martins and Richard Zenith, 'Prefácio', in Fernando Pessoa, *Teoria da Heteronímia* (Lisbon: Assírio & Alvim, 2012), p. 18. Pessoa, 'Carta a João Gaspar Simões — 28-7-1932', in *Teoria da Heteronímia*, pp. 255-257.

writing to a contemporary readership whilst also writing for posterity; of the author as a tragic figure whose plight makes him interesting and the poet as a sheltered, privileged subject; of the author who has privileged access to knowledge and as a figure who is unable to express that knowledge in a way that is accessible to their readers. Quadros's mixing of these opposing tropes makes him a productive case study to discuss questions of authorship in Mozambique and how authorship changed from the late colonial period to the early 1980s.

‘Puxa! Que fala difícil!’: António Quadros, ‘poeta intratável’?

Quadros's works have never had a sizeable readership, owing to the marginal literary context in which he published them and the difficulties that his poetry presents to readers. Most of his works had small, single print runs and many are very difficult to access. Few of his poems have been translated into other languages.¹⁷ António Cabrita has described Grabato Dias as a ‘poeta intratável’ (inaccessible poet) for critics.¹⁸ There is a paucity of critical studies on Quadros, limited to the works of Maria Lourdes Cortez, Eugénio Lisboa, Amélia Muge, Frederick G. Williams, Maria-Benedita Basto, António Cabrita and Murilo da Costa Ferreira.¹⁹ More recent studies of Quadros's work have focused on Mutimati Barnabé João and Frey Ioannes Garabatus, despite the fact that only one collection is attributed to each of those fictional authors, whereas nine collections are attributed to

¹⁷ All of the poems from *Eu, o Povo* were translated by Chris Searle into English, in *Sunflower of Hope: Poems from the Mozambican Revolution* (London: Alison and Busby, 1982), pp. 84-109. Frederick Williams translated select stanzas from *As Quibryrcas* and five poems from *Eu, o Povo* (‘Relatório’, ‘Camarada Inimigo’, ‘Eu, o Povo’, ‘Venceremos’ and ‘Pés da Mesa’) into English. The translations appear in his bilingual anthology, *Poets of Mozambique/Poetas de Moçambique: A Bilingual Selection* (New York, New York: Luso-Brazilian Books; Provo: Brigham Young University Studies; Maputo: Universidade Eduardo Mondlane; Lisbon: Instituto Camões, 2006), pp. 276-287.

¹⁸ António Cabrita, ‘Tudo é Escrita e até Certas Coisas Escritas’, in Quadros, *O Sinalheiro das Pombas*, p. 213.

¹⁹ The works of these authors can be consulted in the bibliography.

Grabato Dias. This thesis is, to my knowledge, the first attempt at a lengthy study of the works of Quadros's three pennames.

The difficulties of reading the poetry of Grabato Dias, Mutimati and Ioannes Garabatus are many and varied. Quadros self-published most of his poems, which appear not to have passed through a rigorous editing process. The texts contain typographical errors and uneven use of punctuation. At times, it is unclear who is the subject in a given verbal construction. Quadros's idiosyncratic use of vocabulary means that his use of imagery is, on occasion, ambiguous.²⁰ It is not always clear whether the ambiguities in the poetry are the result of a conscious or unconscious artistic expression or the by-product of a misprint.

Quadros's use of pennames also presents a challenge to his readers. Quadros's deployment of his pennames is ludic, corresponding to the impishness that Carmela Ciuraru identifies in some usages of pseudonyms:

A nom de plume can [...] provide a divine sense of control. No writer can determine the fate of a book — how the poems or novels are interpreted, whether they are loved or grossly misunderstood. By assuming a pen name, though, an author can claim territory, seize possession of a work before the reader or critic inevitably distorts it. In this way, the author gets the last laugh: *despise my book as much as you like; you don't even know who wrote it*. However petty, such trickery yields infinite pleasure. Obfuscation is fun!²¹

The games of hide and seek that Quadros's pennames play with his readers establish a perverse relationship of resistance and dependence with them that is subtly distinct from that envisaged by Ciuraru for the author hiding behind a pseudonym. Quadros counts on some of his readership being in the know as to the identity of the author and others being in the dark.

²⁰ A notable instance is the lengthy section in *A Arca* dedicated to 'a ola', discussed by Cabrita in his essay on Quadros's poetry published in *O Sinaleiro das Pombas*: Cabrita, 'Tudo é Escrita e até Certas Coisas Escritas', in Quadros, *O Sinaleiro das Pombas*, p. 204.

²¹ Carmela Ciuraru, *Nom de Plume: A (Secret) History of Pseudonyms* (New York: HarperCollins, 2012), p. xxv.

The poem that serves as an epigraph to this chapter evinces many of the typical features of Grabato Dias's poetry: humour, usually in the form of irony; nonsensical lines that are the result of a dedication to rhyme (a dedication which is, in general, uneven); unconventional syntax; and, strange imagery. 'A lula compartilhada' was published in a context of censorship. Like many other anti-colonial writers in Mozambique and in Portugal, Quadros coded his anti-authoritarian and anti-colonial politics in what historian Oliveira Marques describes as a 'highly original crypto-writing' and Russell Hamilton as a 'hermetismo ambíguo' (ambiguous hermetism) that allowed authors to bypass the censors.²² Quadros continued to write in a cryptic style in the post-independence period.

'A lula compartilhada' combines the two tendencies that Grabato Dias, in a poem from *Sagapress* dated 24 August 1978, self-deprecatingly identifies as his two principal poetic tendencies: 'Como sempre, faço versos que oscilam / entre a fábula e as receitas de cozinha' (As usual, I'm writing poetry that oscillates / between the genres of the fable and the cooking recipe). The fable and the allegory are two literary modes that Grabato Dias often mentions in his poetry or attributes to his texts. The cryptic allegorizing tendency in his poetry entails a conscious withholding of information from his readers. As Grabato Dias notes in *Facto/Fado*, his texts conceal as much as they reveal: 'Sei que finjo, que fujo ao que me devo. / Estou sempre ocultando algo no abrir da escrita' (I know that I feign, that I shirk my obligations. / Even when my writing appears to open up, I am always hiding something, p. 28). This quotation points to the fact that Grabato Dias is conscious of the difficulties that his poetry presents to his readers and that he deliberately closes parts of his texts off from them.

²² A.H. de Oliveira Marques, *History of Portugal*, 2 vols (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972-76), II, p. 187; Russell Hamilton, *Literatura Africana, Literatura Necessária*, 2 vols (Lisbon: Edições 70, 1981-84), II, p. 65.

A further difficulty in reading Quadros's works — in particular, those of Grabato Dias — is highlighted in *Facto/Fado*: 'Digo-me, redigo-me, contradigo-me' (I talk to myself, I repeat myself, I contradict myself, p. 13). Grabato Dias is consistently inconsistent in what he says. At times, he flags that he is conscious of the inconsistencies in his poetry but, as with the ambiguities that arise from alienating syntax, vocabulary and typography noted above, readers can never be sure that a given disjunction in Grabato Dias's texts is calculated or accidental.

One area where Quadros's fictional authors are constant is in their anti-authoritarian politics. Although there is no discernible ideological programme in Quadros's poetry, there is a distinctive anti-authoritarian strand that runs throughout his work. This anti-authoritarianism continued into the post-independence period: Mutimati, in *Eu, o Povo*, and Grabato Dias, in *O Povo é Nós*, detect and critique the latent authoritarian tendencies of Frelimo.

According to the individuals that I have interviewed, Quadros had no formal political affiliations. Although sympathetic with FRELIMO's project before the party's Third Conference, he was not a member of the party, nor was he a member of the Associação dos Escritores de Moçambique (Association of Mozambican Writers).

Even if Quadros was not interested in current affairs or party politics, his poetry deploys various political discourses: the language of medieval hierarchies, colonialism and, in the post-independence period, the Marxist-Leninist buzzwords favoured by Frelimo. At times, Quadros's use of language relating to colonialism is infelicitous. In *A Arca*, the poet

makes the aggrandized and ironic claim that he, alone, is slave ('escravo') to the powers-that-be. Grabato Dias's likening of his position as a poet benefitting from the patronage of his authoritarian masters to slavery in 1971, only a decade after forced labour in Mozambique was officially abolished, reveals a disconnect from the harsh realities faced by many Mozambicans under Portuguese colonial rule. Quadros's unfortunate use of terms such as 'escravo', in particular, is the result of a mapping of the language of colonial rule onto the literary politics of being an anti-colonial Portuguese writer with a privileged social position in colonial Mozambique.

Authorship and Readership: Two Interlinked Questions

In this thesis, I consider Quadros's work in the light of authorship and post-colonial theory. Theoretical debates around authorship have been dominated by the works of Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes, in particular two foundational texts published in the late 1960s: Barthes's 'La mort de l'auteur' (The Death of the Author, 1968) and Foucault's 'Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?' (What is an Author?, 1969). The texts written by Quadros during the colonial period coincided with the publication of Barthes's provocative essay and Foucault's response. Indeed, in an article published in 1973, Lourdes Cortez repeatedly cites Barthes's *S/Z* — the comprehensive analysis of the same short story, Balzac's 'Sarrasine' (1830), discussed in 'La mort de l'auteur'. In the article of 1973 and her introduction to *As Laurentinas*, Lourdes Cortez directly engages with the relationship between biography and text that Barthes defiantly dismisses in his essay.²³

²³ Lourdes Cortez, 'Grabato Dias e as Transgressões de Linguagem', in Jorge de Sena, *Craveirinha, Grabato Dias, Rui Knopfli: Leituras* (Lourenço Marques: Minerva Central, 1973), pp. 19-34; Lourdes Cortez, 'Introdução', in *Uma Meditação, 21 Laurentinas e Dois Fabulários Falhados* (Lourenço Marques: João Pedro Grabato Dias, 1971), pp. 5-13.

Barthes's and Foucault's texts have been heavily criticised: the former for its lack of precision and academic rigour; the latter for the obscurity of meaning in certain sections and the — self-consciously — preliminary nature of the project. Notwithstanding the legitimate concerns raised by extant criticism with regard to Barthes's and Foucault's discussions of authorship, the questions that these thinkers raise are pertinent to the case of Quadros, whose texts harness authorial disappearance as a political strategy in the contexts of colonial and post-independence Mozambique.

In 'La mort de l'auteur', Barthes's famous declaration of the death of the flesh-and-blood author, consigned to irrelevance in textual analysis, was written against the backdrop of a French tradition of literary criticism that looked to biography to explicate an author's body of work. In the essay, Barthes is concerned with rewriting the terms of authorship and readership: he replaces the notion of the author with 'écriture' — which, as Adrian Wilson notes, he would later substitute with 'Texte'²⁴ — and the 'Critic' with a depersonalised Reader. Barthes dramatically notes at his essay's conclusion that the 'birth' of this reader comes at the cost of the author's death.²⁵ Barthes's essay is a rejection of authorial intention; of the idea that a given text contains a single, 'theological' meaning — the 'message' of the Author-God. The act of the production of meaning is displaced from authors to readers.

As Andrew Bennett has noted, the declarative tone of Barthes's announcement of the author's death belies an anxiety that the author — in many critical practices — is *not* dead. Barthes's text, more manifesto than critical study, makes the case that the author as a biographical entity *ought* to be excised from literary analysis. Indeed, paradoxically, the

²⁴ Adrian Wilson, 'Foucault on the Question of the Author: A Critical Exegesis', *The Modern Language Review*, 99:2 (2004), 343-344.

²⁵ Barthes, 'La mort de l'auteur', *Le Bruissement de la langue* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1984), p. 67.

anonymous intertext established with Nietzsche's proposition that God is dead 'links authorism with theism'.²⁶

[...] Barthes's radical subversion of authority, his project of textual liberation, is exposed at the end of 'The Death of the Author' to the stringency of a certain circumscription, a certain subjectivity, as one model of unity and essentialism centred around the figure of the author is replaced by another, centred around the figure of the reader. More importantly, perhaps, Barthes's call-to-arms for a revolution in both literature and criticism embeds within itself its own contradiction or its own circularity.²⁷

Similarly, Adrian Wilson notes the paradoxes of Barthes's and Foucault's texts, in which there is a 'seeming ambiguity as to whether [they] were signing a death warrant, carrying out an assassination, or preaching at a funeral'.²⁸

Foucault's 1968 paper, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?' is, in part, a response to Barthes's essay. Bennett describes Barthes as Foucault's 'unstated premise, his silent progenitor and antagonist, his "intertext"'.²⁹ Foucault says that it is insufficient to declare that the author is dead; a statement so obvious is tautologous.³⁰ Foucault positions his paper as a preliminary post-mortem and an analysis of the space opened up by the author's demise.

Foucault calls the author a function of discourse. To put a name to a text, to attribute authorship, is a complex process whose outcomes are revealing about the importance assigned to different kinds of texts and the ways in which they are read. Like Barthes's essay, Foucault's paper is a critique of a certain author-inflected mode of reading. According to Foucault, texts are read in relation to the author to whom they are attributed and the *oeuvre* of which they are a constituent part. For this reason, the names of authors act differently to other names. An author is synonymous with their work.³¹

²⁶ Andrew Bennett, *The Author*, (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 14.

²⁷ Bennett, *The Author*, p. 18.

²⁸ Wilson, 'Foucault on the Question of the Author: A Critical Exegesis', 342.

²⁹ Bennett, *The Author*, p. 19

³⁰ Michel Foucault, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?', in *Dits et écrits: 1954-1988*, 2 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), I, p. 824.

³¹ Foucault, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?', in *Dits et écrits*, I, p. 820.

For Foucault, the author-function conditions readings of literary texts. If a writer's work is littered with inconsistencies, problems, tensions or contradictions between works, this is a sign of maturation or evolution —these things can be explained away by biography. If there are tensions, inconsistencies or contradictions within a given text, this can be explained by the fact that it was authored by a human being, prone to perversities, quirks, lapses in logic and irrationality. The author confers on a work or body of work a unity which accounts for its contradictions.³²

The question with which Foucault begins and ends his paper is a question posed by Samuel Beckett in *Nouvelles et Textes pour Rien*: 'Qu'importe qui parle, quelqu'un a dit qu'importe qui parle?'.³³ As Bennett remarks in a comparison of Foucault's and Barthes's essays, Foucault emphasises that in post-Romantic modes of reading who speaks — or who readers think speaks in a given text — matters, at the same time that he 'yearn[s] towards a future in which our only response to such a question would be a shrug or, as Foucault puts it, at the close of the essay, a "stirring of an indifference". Foucault wants it to matter not at all who is speaking'.³⁴ Elizabeth Fox Genovese argues that Foucault's project and those of similar authors, such as Barthes, threaten to suppress the voices of authors who have not had the historic privileged access to print culture that Foucault and others have enjoyed:

The death of the subject and of the author may accurately reflect the perceived crisis of Western culture and the bottomless anxieties of its most privileged subjects — the white male authors who had presumed to define it. Those subjects and those authors may, as it were, be dying, but it remains to be demonstrated that their deaths constitute the collective or generic death of subject and author. There remain plenty of subjects who, never having had much opportunity to write in their own names or the names of their kind, much less in the name of the culture as a whole, are eager to seize the abandoned podium; it has merely been insisted that the podium cannot be claimed in the name of any particular person experience.³⁵

³² Foucault, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?', in *Dits et écrits*, I, p. 830.

³³ Foucault, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?', in *Dits et écrits*, I, p. 820.

³⁴ Bennett, *The Author*, p. 19.

³⁵ Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, 'My Statue, My Self: Autobiographical Writings of Afro-American Women', in *The Private Self: Theory and Practice of Women's Autobiographical Writings*, ed. by Shari Benstock (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), p. 67.

Seán Burke's contention that one of the great paradoxes of Foucault's text — that the author is most alive when he is considered dead, most present when he is presumed absent — has rather served the inverse of Foucault's longing for a literary culture in which the author's identity were a matter of indifference: the names Foucault and Barthes have become synonymous with their positions on authorship.³⁶

Foucault's author-function describes a specific socio-historical conception of authorship (Western, post-Romantic) — the author as an individualized subject. Foucault's critique of author-centred modes of readings rests on the tension between the primacy of the author and the author's continual and endless disappearance in writing. As Bennett notes, Foucault's framing of writing as a process under which the author continually disappears and is replaced through the creation of writing subject(s) contrasts with Barthes's concern with writing as an absolutely negative space: 'Barthes is concerned only with a certain absence, a 'negative' space of writing. Foucault is concerned with the social and historical construction of a "writing subject" and posits writing as a space in which this disappearing is endlessly enacted'.³⁷ Foucault's model focuses on the disappearance of the author, but it also consciously accounts for their persistence.

In contrast to Barthes and Foucault, who consider the flesh-and-blood author an irrelevance, I make the case for an approach that considers authors (and their readers) as individuals with relative positions of social and political privilege and access to power. I

³⁶ Seán Burke, *The Death and Return of the Author: Criticism and Subjectivity in Barthes, Foucault and Derrida* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1992; reprint. 1998), pp. 6-7.

³⁷ Bennett, *The Author*, p. 20.

argue that the politics of authorship need to be decoupled from and understood in the light of the colonial, anti-colonial and nationalist politics of Mozambique.

For Quadros, as for Barthes and Foucault, the question of what it means to be an author is intimately linked to questions of readership. Implicitly (Barthes) and explicitly (Foucault), ‘La mort de l’auteur’ and ‘Qu’est-ce qu’un auteur?’ describe the encounter with texts as a power struggle between the tyrannical figure of the Author and their disempowered readers. In the texts of Grabato Dias, in particular, the author agonizes over how his texts will be received by posterity. Issues relating to the reception of texts written in colonial and post-colonial contexts have been at the heart of debates in postcolonial studies regarding the field’s theoretical allegiances. The works of Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, who draw upon the works of French deconstructionists, contrast with the materialist approaches of theorists such as Terry Eagleton, Benita Parry and Neil Smith.³⁸ Underlying the debate is the question of radicalism. What makes Leftist literary criticism radical? Is it ‘applied deconstruction’ (Spivak)? Materialist critique? What should be the politics of reading of ‘radical’ postcolonial studies? Can postcolonial studies be politically radical or is its politics doomed to be little more than academic posturing?

The obsessive and shifting interrogation of the relationship between text, author and context in Quadros’s works maps onto these debates regarding the question of how to approach texts written in colonial contexts from the anachronistic position of a post-colonial moment. For Quadros, to be an author is to be caught in a temporal slippage between the present and the future. Authors are products of the contexts in which they write but, at the

³⁸ See Terry Eagleton, ‘In the Gaudy Supermarket’, *London Review of Books*, 21:10 (1999); Benita Parry, *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique* (London; New York: Routledge, 2004); Neil Smith, ‘What Happened to Class?’, *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 32:6 (2000), 1011-1032.

same time, they are fashioned — as constructs and images — by posterity, by whose standards they and their works will be held to account. In the case of minor authors, writing in marginal literary contexts, this situation is particularly acute: lacking a sizeable contemporary readership, Quadros's fictional authors insistently look to posterity. In this way, Quadros's case is a counterpoint and a complement to other authors of the period.

The central claim of this thesis is that, for Quadros, to be an author is a fraught negotiation of distinct and conflicting functions and features of authorship: speaking truth to power and supporting a political project; intellectual independence versus intellectual compromise; authenticity versus falsity; the poet as figure of authority versus the writer as an oppositional, anti-authoritarian figure. The crucial paradox of being a settler author in the contexts of colonial Mozambique and post-independence is that these authors were politicized figures the political impact of whose works was minimal. Although Quadros was distanced from the anti-colonial and nationalist politics of Mozambique, his conceptions of the author as an inherently paradoxical figure nevertheless reflect the tensions of anti-colonial and post-independence politics in Mozambique.

In contrast to past discussions of what it means to be an author in Mozambique, which have tended to focus exclusively on the question of identity, I consider authorship in the light of identity and three other topics, which correspond to the four main chapters of this thesis: identity, canonicity, representation and readership. These topics overlap with the fundamental factors of power and authority with which Quadros repeatedly grapples.

In the first chapter, I discuss the ambiguities of Grabato Dias's Luso-Mozambican identity. I contrast the configuration of Grabato Dias's identity in the colonial period with

its framing in the post-Carnation Revolution context. The shift in Grabato Dias's identity map onto the sudden change in political paradigm. The trajectory of Grabato Dias's identity reveals the disjunction between the utopian universalism of *moçambicanidade* as a loose cultural identity accepting of settler writers like Quadros and the relatively rigid nationalist definition underlying Frelimo's conception of Mozambican civic identity. In the colonial period, Grabato Dias's Luso-Mozambican identity functions as a form of resistance to Portuguese colonial rule; in the post-independence period, he fears that his identity will function to exclude him from the new nation of Mozambique.

In chapter two, I analyse Quadros's engagement with *Os Lusíadas*, a major work of the Portuguese canon by Luís de Camões that was appropriated by the Estado Novo as a foundational imperial text. *As Quibyrycas* and its preface, authored by dissident critic Jorge de Sena, provides a subversive rereading of Camões's epic. Their reframings of Camões draw out the tensions and ambiguities in *Os Lusíadas* as a counter to the authoritative interpretations of conservative literary critics. The poem and its preface raise questions over the relationship between ideology and text. Do poems intrinsically have ideologies or are those ideologies conferred on texts? To what extent can writers resist political appropriation of the sort to which *Os Lusíadas* was subject under the Estado Novo?

Chapter three examines the phenomenon of collective poetry in Mozambique through the specific case of the poetry of Grabato Dias and Mutimati Barnabé João. I analyse Quadros's attempt in *Eu, o Povo* to reconcile the anti-colonial and post-colonial functions of poetry in Mozambique: resistance to power and the expression of the nationalist project. *Eu, o Povo* is an enactment of the discreet, idiosyncratic anti-authoritarian politics outlined in *A Arca*, written during the colonial period. The short-lived canonization of *Eu, o Povo*

suggests that, in the post-independence period, there was little room for poetry to question and critique Frelimo's nationalist programme.

In chapter four, I examine questions relating to readership in Grabato Dias's texts. I discuss three collections (*O Povo é Nós*, *Sete Contos para um Carnaval* and *Sagapress*) composed during the eleven-year period after independence during which Quadros's literary activities became greatly diminished. The three texts were published on Quadros's return to Portugal, in the 1990s. In these works, there is a double concern with the relationship between context and text. What is the relationship that Grabato Dias's works have with the contexts in which they were written? And what is their relationship to the contexts in which they will be read? Grabato Dias's texts provide a productive case study through which to discuss the related debate in postcolonial studies concerning the modes of reading (historicist and deconstructionist) most appropriate for approaching texts written in colonial contexts.³⁹

A figure who straddled the colonial and post-independence periods in Mozambique, Quadros is a case the study of which reveals the continuities and disjunctions between what it meant to be an author in colonial and Frelimo-ruled Mozambique. Although Quadros's disconnect from the political and social realities faced by most Mozambicans becomes apparent in certain instances, his works often display a remarkable perspicacity regarding the complexities of colonial and post-colonial Mozambican politics and the problematic of authorship in Mozambique.

³⁹ Where I use the terms 'postcolonial' and 'post-colonial', I deploy them according to the distinction made by Jane Hiddleston: 'Post-colonialism is [...] narrow in scope and names a specific, identifiable moment. Postcolonialism, with no hyphen, is larger and more problematic. [...] Overall, it can be agreed that postcolonialism names a set of political, philosophical or conceptual questions engendered by the colonial project and its aftermath'. Jane Hiddleston, *Understanding Postcolonialism* (Stocksfield: Acumen, 2009), pp. 3-4.

A Portuguese Tarzan: The Ambiguous Identity of João Pedro Grabato Dias

sei, desde sempre, que não nasci na pátria física conveniente [...]
eu, definitiva, definidamente sem lugar [...].
(*Pressaga*, p. 10)

I have always known that I was not born in the appropriate physical fatherland [...]
I am definitively and by definition without a home.

In an opening episode from the 1974 didactic ode *Pressaga*, the poet describes his arrival at the customs post of the soon-to-be independent nation of Mozambique. The collection is attributed to João Pedro Grabato Dias, the most prolific of António Quadros's fictional authors, and was written shortly after the Carnation Revolution of 25 April 1974. In a curious confusion of the biographies of penname and master-author, Grabato Dias — whose birthplace, according to his autobiography, was Inhaminga, Mozambique — declares in *Pressaga* that he was born in the wrong fatherland.⁴⁰ The rejected 'pátria' in question is presumably not Mozambique; as he looks at the photograph in his new (Mozambican) passport, Grabato Dias declares that, for the first time, he recognizes himself in the visage staring back at him ('Abri o passaporte absolutamente novo / E vi-me fotografado e reconheci-me', *Pressaga*, p. 11). At the moment when Grabato Dias rejects the fatherland in which he was 'born', the mask slips and the Portuguese-born master-author, Quadros, emerges to express his alienation from the country of his birth.

This authorial slippage betrays the shifting identity of the construct Grabato Dias in relation to the groups between which Quadros, his creator, oscillated. Quadros was at once part of the settler community in Lourenço Marques/Maputo — as a Portuguese who arrived in Mozambique in 1964 on a teaching contract — and alienated from it. The settler community in Lourenço Marquês was constituted of Portuguese and Mozambican-born individuals of differing — and in some cases, uncertain — national identifications.

⁴⁰ Lourdes Cortez, 'Introdução', in *Laurentinas*, p. 9.

Following the Carnation Revolution, Quadros, as one of the relatively few Portuguese settlers who opted to stay in Mozambique until the mid 1980s, was at once a player in the national reconstruction project, and not welcome in the new nation. Although Grabato Dias identifies himself with the inchoate nation of Mozambique, he states that he is ‘definitiva, definidamente sem lugar’ (definitively and by definition without a home). *Pressaga* dramatizes the poet’s fears of non-belonging in post-colonial Mozambique.

In this chapter, I examine Grabato Dias’s identity in two distinct contexts: late colonialism and the period immediately following the Carnation Revolution. As a figure situated between Portugal and Mozambique, Grabato Dias is a flexible construction who is positioned as both colonized and colonizer. In the collections published during the late colonial period, Quadros took advantage of his fictional author’s ambiguous cultural identity to position him as a pre-colonized subject visited by Portuguese sailors in the sonnet ‘Alémgoria’, and as a colonized subject in the 1971 ode *A Arca*. *Pressaga* exposes the limits of Grabato Dias’s uncertain identity at the end of empire. The itinerant fictional author of the self-professed exile Quadros arrives at the borders of the new nation, ‘do nada’ (from nothing, p. 10), and his place in post-independence Mozambique is not guaranteed.

João Pedro Grabato Dias: *Portugalidade* and *Moçambicanidade*

Grabato Dias is the most prolific of António Quadros’s fictional authors. To him are attributed eight books of poetry, one collection of short stories and several poems published in journals, as well as a significant body of unpublished texts.⁴¹

⁴¹ See the bibliography for a list of Grabato Dias’s works.

Maria Lourdes Cortez's preface to *Laurentinas* carries an autobiographical text written by Grabato Dias, the details of which overlap with Quadros's biography. Like his creator, Grabato Dias was born in 1933. He spent his early life in Portugal, before moving back to the country of his birth, Mozambique, in the 1960s. Lourdes Cortez notes that the furnishing of an autobiography points to the fact that Grabato Dias is a textual being whose identity is constructed through language: 'Grabato Dias situa-se na própria densidade formal que amorosa e pacientemente "fábrica"' (Grabato Dias situates himself in the very formal density that he lovingly and patiently 'fabricates').⁴² Grabato Dias's discourse highlights his non-existence; his textuality. In an autobiographical series of poems from *40 e Tal Sonetos*, the poet points to his status as a fiction: he is the impossible bastard son of a 'beberrão nado morto' (a stillborn drunk) and a 'viúva virgem' (a virgin widow, p. 53).

In his autobiography, Grabato Dias emphasises his mixed cultural heritage:

Nascido em Inhaminga em 1933. Mestiço de hindustano, celta, judeu e com prováveis avós nos Concheiros de Muge. Parte da infância e adolescência em Santiago de Galapitões, por onde leu muito Hugo, Camilo, Poison do Terrail [sic.] e S. Cipriano. Herbanário e colector de pedrinhas. Gago mas muito dotado para o fado e para a ociosidade. Funcionou em várias profissões, tais como a pública e a privada, e é actualmente conselheiro para a África Leste do Comptoir d'Hygiène et Beauté, no sector de Shampoos e desfrisodorizantes. Volta nos anos sessenta à África, muito documentado em Edgar Burro — (ughs!). Acha que a realidade é aqui a sopeira da fissão. Sem vícios, com hábitos simples mas não mesquinhos. Também já esteve em Paris. (*Laurentinas*, p. 5)

Born in Inhaminga in 1933. Hindustani, Celt and Jewish mix, with likely grandparents buried in the Concheiros de Muge. Part of his childhood and adolescence was spent in Santiago de Galapitões, where he read much Hugo, Camilo, Ponson du Terrail and Saint Cyprian. Herbalist and collector of pebbles. A stutterer but has a real talent for *fado* and for idleness. Has had various professions — public and the private — and is currently Hygiene and Beauty consultant for Portuguese East Africa, in the Shampoos and Coif-odorant department. He returned to Africa in the 60s, which is documented in Edgar Burro — (ughs!). He believes that reality, here, is a poor woman's fiction. Vice-less, with habits that are simple but not miserly. Also: he's been to Paris.

The conspicuous omission in Grabato Dias's genealogy is Catholicism, the religion of the Estado Novo. There is a similar omission in 'Laurentina Cesariniana 2': 'Mestiços somos nós todos / judeus e mouros / e ainda bem' (We are all mixed race / jews and moors / and the better for it, *Laurentinas*, p. 43). Grabato Dias's adolescent readings are of the Romantics

⁴² Lourdes Cortez, 'Introdução', in *Laurentinas*, p. 9.

Victor Hugo and Camilo Castelo Branco, the adventures of the wily prankster Rocambole and the grimoires of Saint Cyprian. Like many Portuguese settlers, work and financial gain attracted Grabato Dias to Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique). An account of his return to Mozambique in the 1960s, he remarks, can be found in the works of ‘Edgar Burro (ughs!)’ — a reference to Edgar Rice Burroughs, the creator of Tarzan. In this way, Grabato Dias configures himself as a Portuguese who has ‘gone native’: he is the eponymous hero of a Portuguese version of the Tarzan novels. Unlike Tarzan, who rejected civilization on his return to it, Grabato Dias’s latest occupation is that of cosmetics consultant for Portuguese East Africa, a position where he is a specialist in ‘desfrisodorizantes’ — a portmanteau of ‘desfrisar’ (straighten (hair)) and ‘desodorizante’ (deodorant).⁴³ The autobiography establishes Grabato Dias as a marginal figure, born outside the centres of colonial power in Mozambique and raised in provincial Portugal. That Grabato Dias has spent time in Paris is perfunctorily added as a footnote.

Grabato Dias’s Luso-Mozambican identity reflects the ‘inter-identity’ that was said to characterize the Portuguese male in imperial and colonial settings. In *Casa-grande e Senzala*, Gilberto Freyre described Portuguese ethnic and cultural identity as that of a ‘povo indefinido entre a Europa e a África’ (a people of indefinite European or African identity).⁴⁴ Freyre insisted on the flexibility (plasticity, in his terms) of Portuguese men, in colonial

⁴³ That Grabato Dias is identified as a cosmetics consultant is an in-joke. Quadros was known for his impressive hirsuteness. The picture of Quadros provided in the anthology of Quadros’s artistic and literary works, *O Sinaileiro das Pombas*, depicts him sporting a fulsome and unkempt beard. Quadros, *O Sinaileiro das Pombas*, p. 5.

⁴⁴ Gilberto Freyre, *Casa-grande e Senzala: Formação da Família Brasileira sob o Regime de Economia Patriarcal* (Lisbon: Livros do Brasil, n.d.), p. 18. In *O Luso e o Trópico*, Freyre describes the Portuguese as a bridge between Europe and other continents: ‘situados entre a Europa e a África, a Europa e o Oriente, a Europa e os Trópicos’ (situated between Europe and Africa, Europe and the Orient, Europe and the Tropics). Freyre, *O Luso e o Trópico: Sugestões em Torno dos Métodos Portugueses de Integração de povo autóctones e de Culturas Diferentes da Europeia num Complexo Novo de Civilização: o Luso-Tropical* (Lisbon: Comissão Executiva das Comemorações do V Centenário da Morte do Infante D. Henrique, 1961), p. 55.

settings, to assimilate into foreign cultures and to adapt to tropical climates. In a more recent framing of Portugal's inter-identity, Boaventura de Sousa Santos describes Portugal as a 'correia de transmissão entre o centro europeu e a periferia africana de expressão oficial portuguesa' (transmission belt between the European centre and the African periphery).⁴⁵ For Freyre and Santos, the lack of definition of Portuguese identity resides in the mixing of African and European cultures.

In a similar if subtly distinct way to lusotropical Portuguese identity, Mozambican national identity has been framed as complex and ambiguous, owing to the (often violent) mixing of cultures that imperialism and colonialism entailed. The problems inherent to the construction of a national identity for a culturally diverse nation are underlined by Carlos Serra, who has recourse to negative metaphors of impotence and disease to describe the project of creating a unified national identity, which he contrasts with the image of fermentation to evoke the search for *moçambicanidade*: 'Somos um país de ambiguidade, de interrogação, de construção identitária. Somos um país que fermenta na busca de um nós simbólico comum *virusisdado*, porém, por um nós real-social imponentemente assimetrizado' (We are a country of ambiguity, of interrogation, of identitarian construction. We are a country that ferments in its search for a common and symbolic 'we', which is contaminated, however, by a real-social 'we' that is impotently asymmetrical).⁴⁶ Similarly, Gilberto Matusse underlines the 'indefinição' (lack of definition) of Mozambican literature as 'marca da sua própria identidade' (mark of its very identity) and 'reflexo das condições especiais do seu desenvolvimento' (reflection of the special conditions of its

⁴⁵ Boaventura de Sousa Santos, 'Onze Teses por Ocasão de Mais Uma Descoberta de Portugal', *Luso-Brazilian Review*, 29:1 (1992), 106. The term 'inter-identidade' (inter-identity) is Santos's.

⁴⁶ Carlos Serra, 'Prefácio', in *Identidade, Moçambicanidade, Moçambicanização*, ed. by Carlos Serra (Maputo: Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, 1998), p. 11.

development).⁴⁷ Whereas a lusotropical Portugueseness has traditionally and frequently served to deny the distinctiveness and legitimacy of the cultures of former Portuguese colonies, framings of Mozambican national identity have sought to account for indigenous cultural diversity and to incorporate white settlers of Portuguese ancestry.⁴⁸

Discussions of *moçambicanidade* have frequently centred around the question of what it is to be a Mozambican writer. As noted in the introduction, debates over what it means to be an author in Mozambique have tended to focus exclusively on the question of identity. Indeed, for Nelson Saúte, the case of Mozambican literature is one particularization of the general rule that there is an inextricable relationship between literature and identity.⁴⁹ Debates have often grappled with the (non)place of ‘European’, ‘Euro-Mozambican’, ‘Portuguese’, ‘white’ and/or ‘colonial’ writers in the emerging canon of Mozambican literature. Russell Hamilton notes that this debate, in the 1960s, was oriented by a dichotomy between positions that emphasised the national versus the universal character of Mozambican poetry.⁵⁰

The formation of the Mozambican canon has been closely linked to the question of *moçambicanidade*. The criteria underlying which writers count as Mozambican are various and, at times, unstated and ambiguous. These criteria included racial identification, place of birth, allegiance to Frelimo and its nationalist project, as well as whether the writer in question resided in Mozambique for most of their career. Saúte detects the inconsistent

⁴⁷ Gilberto Matusse, *A Construção da Imagem de Moçambicanidade em José Craveirinha, Mia Couto e Ungulani Ba Ka Khosa* (Maputo: Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, 1998), p. 17.

⁴⁸ Frelimo’s slogan ‘do Rovuma ao Maputo’ (from Rovuma [River] to Maputo [River]) is an example of a framing of Mozambican identity in political discourses that sought to include — and, as some have argued, erase the distinct features of — different regions in the national paradigm.

⁴⁹ Nelson Saúte, ‘Identidades em Literatura: Espaço Público, Literatura e Identidade’, in *Identidade, Moçambicanidade, Moçambicanização*, p. 82.

⁵⁰ Hamilton, *Literatura Africana, Literatura Necessária*, II, pp. 16-22.

application by Portuguese critics Manuel Ferreira and Alfredo Margarido of this last criterion — the ‘abandonment’ of Mozambique — as a factor that would exclude an author from the Mozambican canon. He notes the ‘valores movediços’ (shifting criteria) at play in Ferreira’s discussion and questions why an author such as Noémia de Sousa, who left Mozambique in 1951, is not excluded by Ferreira.⁵¹ In the case of Ferreira’s inconsistent application of his own criteria and more generally, Saúte identifies race as an unstated criterion determining the formation of the Mozambican canon. He points out, however, that race as a factor for exclusion has been deployed unevenly. He cites the case of Mutimati, Quadros’s black or *mestiço* fictional author, as an example where Quadros’s whiteness did not preclude him from being accepted as Mozambican.⁵² In chapter three, I discuss the nuances of the case of Mutimati and argue that the erasure of Quadros’s whiteness — the anomalisation of his identity — was the *sine qua non* of Mutimati’s text being published by FRELIMO in 1975.

The link between Mozambican canon formation and *moçambicanidade* is made by Matusse in *A Construção da Moçambicanidade em José Craveirinha, Mia Couto e Ungulani Ba Ka Khosa* (1988). For him, the selection criteria used for anthologies of Mozambican poetry fit into two broad categories: criteria that focus on writers (and, implicitly, their identity) and those that focus on the content or form of works.⁵³ Although Matusse critiques the various selection criteria that have been deployed by anthologists and emphasises the need for a ‘model’ that takes into account the cultural complexities of Mozambique, he does not propose his own set of criteria. Instead, he proposes a thesis that differs significantly

⁵¹ Saúte, ‘Identidades em Literatura: Espaço Público, Literatura e Identidade’, in *Identidade, Moçambicanidade, Moçambicanização*, p. 88.

⁵² Saúte, ‘Identidades em Literatura: Espaço Público, Literatura e Identidade’, in *Identidade, Moçambicanidade, Moçambicanização*, p. 89.

⁵³ Matusse, *A Construção da Imagem de Moçambicanidade em José Craveirinha, Mia Couto e Ungulani Ba Ka Khosa*, p. 17.

from Saúte's assertions that *moçambicanidade* has its origins in the poetry of José Craveirinha.⁵⁴ For Matusse, the 'imagem da *moçambicanidade*' (image of *moçambicanidade*) is the result of an interplay of authors who distance themselves from inherited literary models — the Portuguese literary tradition being a significant cultural frame — and readers who recognise that distancing.⁵⁵ The framing of Matusse's thesis — he remarks that the distancing effect is noted by the (predominantly non-Mozambican) critics who have studied Mozambican literature — implies that *moçambicanidade* is an artifice (an 'image') fashioned by the Portuguese critics whose positions on the question of Mozambican literature he outlines in the introduction to his book. The assertion of Mozambican literature as a distinct category relies on the affirmation of its difference from Portuguese letters.

The two examples of the construction of *moçambicanidade* by non-Mozambicans — the critics and anthologists Frederick G. Williams and Alferdo Margarido — that I now discuss are illustrative of the ways in which white writers of uncertain national identification are treated: they are included in the canon and the justification for their inclusion is the complexity and ambiguity of *moçambicanidade*. The publication of anthologies of poetry has been one of the principal vehicles in the shaping of the Mozambican canon.

In the introduction to his bilingual anthology of Mozambican poets, Williams discusses the debate surrounding the formation of the Mozambican canon. *Poetas de Moçambique/Poets of Mozambique* includes texts by Portuguese- and Mozambican-born

⁵⁴ 'A ideia de moçambicanidade vem d[a] poesia [de Craveirinha]' (The idea of *moçambicanidade* originates in Craveirinha's poetry). Saúte, 'Identidades em Literatura: Espaço Público, Literatura e Identidade', in *Identidade, Moçambicanidade, Moçambicanização*, p. 91.

⁵⁵ Matusse, *A Construção da Imagem de Moçambicanidade em José Craveirinha, Mia Couto e Ungulani Ba Ka Khosa*, p. 191.

writers.⁵⁶ Implicitly, for Williams, to have lived in the geographical space now called Mozambique, or to have taken that political, geographical or cultural space as poetic inspiration, is sufficient to be considered a poet of Mozambique.

Williams's sole stated selection criterion for his anthology is the 'inherent literary value' of the poems — a highly subjective criterion dressed up, by Williams, as an objective standard. The subjectivity of William's choices is projected onto the contemporary historical, political and cultural context from which he is writing: 'Regardless of the criteria used, readers and critics alike will inevitably disagree with the choices. In addition, what one generation establishes, a subsequent one may well disavow. Ultimately, tastes and preferences, tradition and especially time will determine the Mozambican literary canon'.⁵⁷

Williams configures the Mozambican canon and Mozambican literary identity as multifaceted and complex questions, rather than closed categories. He outlines some of the specific issues involved in the shaping of the Mozambican literary canon. These problems are articulated in a series of unanswered rhetorical questions, the responses to which can be discovered in the anthology's contents page. Most of these questions focus on the place of a specific writer or group of writers within the Mozambican literary canon.⁵⁸ All of the authors cited are included in Williams' anthology, except for one group, which is conspicuously absent: 'fascist' (pro-Estado Novo and pro-colonial) writers. Williams does not specifically acknowledge this criterion; the political allegiance of writers active during the colonial period is a crucial unstated factor.

⁵⁶ Williams, 'Introduction', in *Poets of Mozambique/Poetas de Moçambique*, pp. 16-36.

⁵⁷ Williams, 'Introduction', in *Poets of Mozambique/Poetas de Moçambique*, p. 35.

⁵⁸ Williams, 'Introduction', in *Poets of Mozambique/Poetas de Moçambique*, pp. 32-33.

Williams's insistence on the complexity of Mozambique's ethnic and racial make-up is not so much to do with the variety of indigenous cultures and ethnicities that have existed and continue to exist in Mozambique, but rather a justification for the inclusion of writers who are white, Portuguese-born or of Portuguese heritage. Williams's anthology is a particularly extreme case, which includes selected stanzas from Luís de Camões's *Os Lusíadas*.⁵⁹

In the introduction to his anthology and in an article on Mozambican canon formation, Williams puts Quadros forward as simultaneously an extreme and exemplary case of the problems inherent with establishing a canon of Mozambican letters.⁶⁰ Paradoxically, Quadros exemplifies the question of *moçambicanidade* precisely because he is not Mozambican.

In the article, Williams claims that Quadros's pretending to be Mozambican through the construct Mutimati Barnabé João was a fraught and dangerous manoeuvre: 'Being white, António Quadros could not run the risk of detection by either the Portuguese, who would have condemned him as a traitor, or the black Africans, who would not have easily accepted a Portuguese white man as their spokesperson'.⁶¹ Although some writers have framed Mozambican canon politics as a high-stakes debate in which white and/or Portuguese heritage writers risked exclusion is exaggerated. Indeed, in the post-independence period, two of Mozambique's best-known writers are white and of Portuguese ancestry: Mia Couto and João Paulo Borges Coelho.

⁵⁹ Williams, *Poets of Mozambique/Poetas de Moçambique*, pp. 56-59.

⁶⁰ Williams, 'Introduction', in *Poets of Mozambique/Poetas de Moçambique*, p. 33; Williams, 'Who and What Constitutes Mozambican Poetry?', *Mediterranean Studies*, 12 (2003), 189.

⁶¹ Williams, 'Who and What Constitutes Mozambican Poetry?', 192.

In the case of Alfredo Margarido's 1962 anthology of Mozambican poetry, *Poetas de Moçambique*, the works of white Mozambican poets are subject to harsh moral criticism but are nevertheless included in the book. In his prescriptive preface to the anthology, Margarido is adamant that the works of white Mozambican writers do not meet his stated, if vague, criteria: 'Quais os poemas que consideramos nesta antologia? Pois aqueles que exprimem a soma de exigências próprias dos homens, aqueles que reivindicam a sua qualidade humana' (Which poems did we include in this anthology? Those that express the sum total of man's wants, those that claim his human quality).⁶² Margarido's criterion is authenticity, based on a distinction between a humane (Marxist) poetics focused on the 'praxis do homem alienado' (praxis of the alienated man), which 'articula a situação presente em relação com a sua negação radical e previsível no futuro' (articulates the present situation with a view to its radical and expected denial in the future), and an idealistic poetics 'que assente [...] na realidade própria do poeta' (drawn from the poet's own reality) and which, thus, merely 'considera [...] uma metafísica da acção' (concerns itself with a metaphysics of action).⁶³ This second group of poets, who are unable to adopt as their own 'a praxis do homem da cor' (the praxis of the person of colour), can only offer 'soluções idealistas' (idealist solutions).⁶⁴

For Margarido, the majority of white Mozambicans — unlike, he claims, white Angolans, save Fernão Ganhão, the exception in the Mozambican context— belong to this second group. His critique is, thus, of the politics of white Mozambican writers, whom he variously accuses of political queitism, a lack of appetite for challenging the colonial regime and a disconnect from the 'problemas imediatos' (immediate problems) of colonial

⁶² Alfredo Margarido, 'Prefácio', in *Poetas Moçambicanos* (Lisbon: Casa dos Estudantes do Império, 1962), p. 3.

⁶³ Margarido, 'Prefácio', in *Poetas Moçambicanos*, p. 4.

⁶⁴ Margarido, 'Prefácio', in *Poetas Moçambicanos*, p. 4.

Mozambique.⁶⁵ Margarido's critiques notwithstanding, all of the white poets that he censures are represented in the anthology. Hamilton notes that Margarido's emphasis on the 'práxis do homem alienado' (praxis of the alienated man) provoked a negative response from Knopfli, who took issue with Margarido's politicizing approach and, in consonance with Eugénio Lisboa, emphasised the 'aesthetic' and 'universal' dimensions of poetry as opposed to its relationship to the political and social context of colonial Mozambique. For Hamilton, this manoeuvre was a way for 'Euro-Mozambican' writers (to use his term) to 'reivindica[r] o seu lugar legítimo no contexto cultural universal' (claim their legitimate place in a universal cultural context).⁶⁶ In this way, a universalist discourse was mobilised by Lisboa and Knopfli to stake the claim of white, settler and European writers in the emerging canon of Mozambican poetry.

Margarido's anthology also elicited a response from the pro-Estado Novo critic Rodrigues Júnior, who, in *Alguns Poetas de Moçambique* (1972), sought to correct the perceived omissions of Margarido's anthology. In the essay, Júnior claims that the 'Literatura de Moçambique' — a term used by Amândio César, whom he cites, and which Júnior qualifies as a sub-literature within the colonial framework of the 'espaço do Mundo Português' (the space of the Portuguese World) — expresses 'bem viva, a alma lusíada' (in a truly lively way, the Portuguese soul).⁶⁷ Júnior identifies the colonial literature produced in Mozambique as somehow 'possivelmente [sic], mais rica na sua expressão verbal, *mais portuguesa na sua essência*' (perhaps richer in its verbal expression, *more Portuguese in its*

⁶⁵ The last charge is levelled against the poetry of Glória de Sant'Anna and Reinaldo do Ferreira, whose works are highlighted as representing 'o problema mais grave' (the most serious problem). For Margarido, their 'poesia lírica, de raiz essencialista [...] se divorcia dos problemas imediatos' (essentialist lyric poetry is divorced from the immediate problems [of Mozambican society]) and 'reveste-se de um carácter acentuadamente não-humano' (has an acutely inhuman character). Margarido, 'Prefácio', in *Poetas Moçambicanos*, p. 4.

⁶⁶ Hamilton, *Literatura Africana, Literatura Necessária*, II, p. 19.

⁶⁷ Rodrigues Júnior, *Alguns Poetas de Moçambique* (Braga: Paz, 1972), p. 14.

essence, my emphasis) than ‘[a] literatura da Metrópole’ (the literature of the Metropole). In this way, Júnior lusotropically locates the ‘essence’ of *portugalidade* in the ‘mistura de sangues que deu o tipo de homem novo, o qual trouxe para a literatura um mundo colorido de outra expressão’ (the mixing of bloods which resulted in a kind of new man, who has contributed to literature a world coloured by a different sort of expression).⁶⁸ Matusse critiques Júnior’s argument in *Literatura Ultramarina* that, given that both Mozambique and the Alentejo are provinces of Portugal, the supra-nation, Mozambican literature is no more a distinct category than the literature of the Alentejo — a framing consistent with the Estado Novo’s conceptions of the Portuguese overseas ‘provinces’.⁶⁹ Whereas Júnior subsumes Mozambican literature into a Luso-centric literary system in an attempt to quash the distinctiveness of Mozambican literary identity, Margarido — grudgingly — accepts ‘European’ writings into his canon of Mozambican writings through an insistence on the complexities of Mozambican literature as a phenomenon.

Margarido’s anthology epitomises the treatment of white, Portuguese or settler writers who did not have ties to the Estado Novo: even when their poetry was said not to conform to the hazy criteria determining what constituted Mozambican literature, they were never totally excluded from the canon, unlike the pro-Estado Novo writers whose absence in Margarido’s anthology Júnior laments. Indeed, a discourse of perceived anti-white, anti-Portuguese or anti-European exclusion has ensured that the works of writers such as Knopfli were never ignored.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Júnior, *Alguns Poetas de Moçambique*, p. 16.

⁶⁹ Júnior cited in Matusse, *A Construção da Imagem de Moçambicanidade em José Craveirinha, Mia Couto e Ungulani Ba Ka Khosa*, p. 12

⁷⁰ Knopfli’s claimed absence from the Mozambican canon has not prevented his works from featuring in most anthologies of Mozambican poetry and discussions of Mozambican literature as a phenomenon.

The framing of the Mozambican canon and the retroactively constructed literary national identity that undergirds it as complex and, crucially, accepting of ‘European’ writers, entails a tacit acceptance of the theorization of Portuguese identity as plasticized and a transference of that plasticity (recoded in terms of universalism, complexity or ambiguity) onto the (predominantly male) white authors that have been included in the Mozambican literary canon. As an identity that, according to Severino Elias Ngoenha, was ‘na sua essência, anticolonial’ (in essence, anticolonial),⁷¹ *moçambicanidade* was a home — in Quadros’s case, a second home— for anti-colonial settler writers. Furthermore, the unstated criterion determining who is and who is not included in Margarido’s and Williams’s respective anthologies is ideological (in Margarido’s case, explicitly so): white writers are included, as long as they were known sympathisers of the anti-colonial struggle.

There is a disjunction, however, between *moçambicanidade* and Mozambican civic identity. Whereas Mozambican literary identity has been mostly accepting of writers such as Knopfli, FRELIMO’s position towards the social group that he represented was less welcoming after the Carnation Revolution. According to Newitt, FRELIMO’s prolongation of the colonial war after 25 April 1974 resulted in ‘numerous attacks on white settlers and on Portuguese property’, before FRELIMO ‘belatedly called a halt to its military campaign’ in August. FRELIMO’s lack of guarantees for the safety of white settlers led to many believing that a FRELIMO-led Mozambique would ‘have no place for them’.⁷² Although FRELIMO professed that its Mozambique would be ‘para todos’ (for everyone), in practice

⁷¹ Severino Elias Ngoenha, ‘Identidade moçambicana: já e ainda não’, in *Identidade, Moçambicanidade, Moçambicanização*, p. 25

⁷² Malyn Newitt, *A History of Mozambique* (London: C. Hurst, 1995), p. 539. It should be noted, however, that the prolongation of the colonial wars in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea Bissau was ‘entirely due to the refusal of the Portuguese regime to contemplate negotiation towards decolonisation’, given that armed conflict was only opted for by the African nationalist parties as a ‘last resort in the face of Portuguese intransigence’. Chabal, ‘The End of Empire’, in *A History of Postcolonial Lusophone Africa*, p. 4.

the party did little to protect white settlers or white Mozambicans with dual nationality in Mozambique. Newitt notes: ‘The Frelimo leaders who took over the Mozambique government in 1975 made little or no effort to persuade the white population to stay’, resulting in large-scale migrations to Portugal and to South Africa.⁷³ This, in part, was owing to a law passed in 1975 that forced Mozambicans to renounce all other citizenships and passports that they held in order to gain Mozambican citizenship.⁷⁴ If configurations of Mozambican literary identity — even as framed by its most prescriptive theorists — accounted for the mixed national and cultural backgrounds of Mozambique’s predominantly white and *mestiço* writers, Mozambican civic identity was inflexible. As a Portuguese-born settler, Quadros was not faced with the dilemma of choosing between the new nation of Mozambique and the country of his ancestors. After independence, Quadros was able to stay in Mozambique as a Portuguese settler – which he did, until 1984.

‘João Pedro Grabato Dias lá / assinado abaixíssimo de tudo’: 40 e *Tal Sonetos de Amor e Circunstância e uma Canção Desesperada* (1970)

40 e Tal Sonetos de Amor e Circunstância e uma Canção Desesperada is the first collection of poetry that Quadros published, in 1970. A second edition, revised and expanded, appeared in 1975.⁷⁵

⁷³ Newitt, ‘Portuguese Emigration to Africa’, in *Emigration and the Sea: An Alternative History of Portugal and the Portuguese* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 231.

⁷⁴ Lei da Nacionalidade (Mozambique), Imprensa Nacional de Moçambique, 25 June 1975.

⁷⁵ The differences between the first and second editions are minimal. Besides some minor differences between the poems, an additional sonnet (‘elemental, caro watson’), ‘fragments’ of the poem submitted to the Lourenço Marques town hall poetry competition and a fragment of a first draft of *Pressaga* feature in the second edition. I quote from the first edition, which is paginated.

In Quadros's collections published before the fall of the Estado Novo, subversive anti-imperial, anti-colonial and anti-authoritarian sentiments are coded in cryptic imagery, hidden in difficult syntax and masked by intertextual references.⁷⁶ In his study of literary censorship during the Estado Novo, Cândido de Azevedo asserts that poetry, more than any other written medium, was subject to strict scrutiny from the censors under António de Oliveira Salazar's and Marcello Caetano's regimes. The criteria determining which works were censored were ill-defined. Immorality, subversion, pornography, realism, communism, un-patriotism and anti-Christianism were typical motives for banning a given work or excising specific passages.⁷⁷ The historian A.H. de Oliveira Marques argues that Portuguese authors, in the context of strict Estado Novo censorship, developed 'a highly original crypto-writing', which was accompanied by a 'sharp understanding on the part of readers and listeners'.⁷⁸ Quadros had recourse to several strategies to code the subversive (anti-colonial and anti-authoritarian) elements of his poetry, including abstruse vocabulary, erudition and acrostics.⁷⁹

The title of *40 e Tal Sonetos de Amor e Circunstância e uma Canção Desesperada* gestures towards Pablo Neruda's *20 Poemas de Amor e una Canción Desesperada* (1924),⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Grabato Dias's poetry is characterized by its cryptic style. Amélia Muge notes that Quadros's poems contain many 'enigmas' and that his works constitute a 'sucadâneo de pistas mais ou menos disfarçadas' (a succession of potential avenues, some of which are more obvious than others). Muge reveals that one of the stanzas from *Facto/Fado* spells the name of an ANC militant (Ruth F.), who was murdered by a letter bomb in 1986 (*Facto/Fado*, pp. 38-39). Amélia Muge, 'Existe um Universo e Nós com Ele', in Quadros, *O Sinaleiro das Pombas*, p. 60. Other examples of these enigmas include the acrostic and pseudo-acrostic poems in *40 e Tal Sonetos*, and the section dedicated to descriptions of the signs of the zodiac in *A Arca* (stanzas LVIII-LXXXI), which are, in fact, descriptions of Quadros (Cancer); his son, João (Gemini) and unidentified friends and family members. The information pertaining to *A Arca* is provided in a letter written by Quadros to Lourdes Cortez, published in magazine *A Ideia*. Lourdes Cortez, 'Carta 1 — 17-9-71', *A Ideia: Revista de Cultura Libertária*, 19:77-79 (2016), 107.

⁷⁷ Cândido de Azevedo, *Mutiladas e Proibidas: Para a História da Censura Literária em Portugal nos Tempos do Estado Novo* (Caminho: Lisbon, 1997), pp. 91-200.

⁷⁸ Oliveira Marques, *History of Portugal*, II, p. 187.

⁷⁹ The following sonnets from *40 e Tal Sonetos* are acrostic or pseudo-acrostic poems: 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 31, 39 and 49.

⁸⁰ Pablo Neruda, *20 Poemas de Amor e una Canción Desesperada* (Buenos Aires: Losada, 1961).

a cycle of erotic poems whose subject matter ‘was once judged offensive’ to the conservative sensibilities of some readers when they were first published.⁸¹ The allusion to Neruda’s book in the collection’s title is subversive in its pointing toward a text authored by a communist revolutionary, whose sensational (for 1924) discussions of sexuality would have struggled to avoid the infamous ‘lápiz azul’ (blue pencil) of the Portuguese censors. In his review of the first edition of *40 e Tal Sonetos*, João Rui de Sousa notes the absence of love as a theme and highlights the ‘corrosive’ nature of Grabato Dias’s poetic project in the sonnets:

[...] esta poesia é, mais do que de *amor*, de *circunstância*, mais do que de adesão, de intenção corrosiva. Corrosão feita de um sarcasmo impiedoso que orienta-se para diversos alvos: desde as fraquezas mundanas até às técnicas de dominação pelo medo [...], desde o obscurantismo organizado até à convencionalidade de certo ritual pseudo-artista. Esse humor cáustico coloca abertamente o A., embora por caminhos de comunicabilidade que nem sempre são do mais fácil acesso, naquela ala, a satírica, que desde as *cantigas de escárnio e maldizer* até à época actual [...] nunca abandonou a nossa poesia.⁸²

These sonnets aren’t so much *love* poetry, as they are *circumstantial* poetry; their author’s intention is corrosive rather than adhesive. Their corrosiveness stems from an impious sarcasm and is aimed at various targets: from worldly failings to techniques of domination through fear; from organized obscurantism to the conventionality of the pseudo-artist’s ritual. This caustic humour openly situates the author in a tradition of satire — albeit through lines of communication that are not always easily accessible—which, since the *cantigas de escárnio e maldizer* has always been present in Portuguese poetry.

Published in 1971, Rui de Sousa’s review was written in the same context of censorship as Grabato Dias’s sonnets. The reviewer situates Grabato Dias’s ‘corrosive’ humour in a tradition of Portuguese satirical writing. Sousa, however, does not explicitly name the objects of Grabato Dias’s satire. At the same time, Sousa encourages Grabato Dias’s public to read his sonnets as products of a specific context. He notes that they are, above all, circumstantial poems.

The change from Neruda’s ‘poemas de amor’ to Grabato Dias’s ‘sonetos de amor e circunstância’ signifies a reframing of the relationship between poetry and the context in which it is produced. In the preface to *O Povo é Nós* (dated 1979), analysed in chapter four,

⁸¹ René de Costa, ‘Love Poetry’, in *The Poetry of Pablo Neruda* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1979), p. 17.

⁸² João Rui de Sousa, ‘João Pedro Grabato Dias, Sonetos de Amor e Circunstância, Lourenço Marques, Edição do Autor, 1970’, in *Colóquio/Letras*, 3, 1971, 81-82.

Grabato Dias establishes a direct link between poetry and circumstance. For Grabato Dias, ‘Toda a circunstância se auto-interroga investindo no saber específico da poesia’ (All circumstances undergo a self-examination through poetry’s specific way of knowing.). He claims that ‘A poesia é a substância da circunstância’ (Poetry is the substance of circumstance) and that ‘Só há poesia de circunstância’ (There is only poetry of circumstance, *O Povo é Nós*, p. 6).⁸³

The presence of ‘circumstance’ in *40 e Tal Sonetos*’s title urges the reader to look beyond the poems: to consider the contexts that are absent from the texts, and which the poet does not explicitly discuss. Grabato Dias’s sonnets are experiments with poetic language’s ability to communicate with readers in coded messages.

The collection is split into two sections: ‘A Quadratura do Circo’ (The Squaring of the Circus) and ‘Do Reino Arração’ (On the Arakan Kingdom). The anonymous epigraph that frames the first section points to the difficulty of the poet’s task in reconciling the reality that he experiences with the poetry that he writes:

A quadra, turra do circo
que, pacatos, habitamos
tem quatro servos e rima
rímel com calomelanos.
(*40 e Tal Sonetos*, p. 6)⁸⁴

‘Quadratura do circo’ is an allusion to the ancient geometric problem of squaring the circle. ‘Quadratura do círculo’ refers, by extension, to an ‘impossibilidade absoluta’ (absolute impossibility) or a ‘utopia’.⁸⁵ In the first line of the epigraph, ‘quadratura’ has been split into

⁸³ In the case of *O Povo é Nós*, the need to highlight the context in which the poems were written is urgent because Grabato Dias delayed publication of the texts by thirteen years: the poems are dated 1979, but the collection was only published in 1992, once Quadros had returned to Portugal.

⁸⁴ I have decided not to translate this quatrain, which verges on the untranslatable.

⁸⁵ *quadratura* in *Dicionário Infopédia da Língua Portuguesa* [online]. Porto: Porto Editora, 2003-2020. [consulted 1 April 2020].

‘quadra’ (quatrain/epoch) and ‘turra’, the latter a derogatory name given to combatants in the various independence movements by Portuguese soldiers in the colonial army. According to the anonymous author, the ‘quadra’ — the quatrain and the period in which the author lives — is at odds with the ‘circus’ that the speaker and an invoked ‘nós’ (we) inhabit in tranquility. The tension between the times in which the poet and his fellows (including his readers, who are incorporated in the ‘nós’) live and their placidity points to the theme of complicity that pervades the collection and the other texts that Grabato Dias published during the colonial period. At the same time, poetry is cryptically identified as a militant political gesture that upsets the ‘circus’ of colonial life. Poetic form is confining: the quatrain’s four lines (versos) are ‘servos’ and the expectations of assonance, rhyme and metre lead poets to make incongruous and ill-fitting associations, such as the unrhyming ‘rímel’ and ‘calomelanos’. The nonsensical epigraph encodes one of the collection’s striking features: the potential for subversion through cryptography, where seeming nonsense can serve as cover for anti-colonial politics.

The collection’s opening sonnet, ‘lobishome em clima de atenção’ (werewolf with his ears pricked), serves as a warning to the poet’s readers. The poem depicts a transformed and famished werewolf surveying his surroundings. The attentive lycanthrope’s ‘fome // espantosa’ (startling hunger) is underlined by the description of the full moon as ‘a lua / redonda da quaresma’ (a full / Lenten moon, p. 7). The topos of the hungry poet is a recurring theme in the collection.⁸⁶ The werewolf’s Lenten hunger contrasts with the speaking subject’s assertion in sonnet 20: ‘insisto em existir em tempo entrudo’ (I insist on existing in a mardi-gras time, p. 26). ‘lobishome em clima de atenção’ takes place at the moment

⁸⁶ Sonnet 11’s title recalls the werewolf’s hunger from ‘lobishome em clima de atenção’: ‘fome ruça...ui! de lóvo’ (my faded hunger...oi! like that of a wolf, p. 17). See also sonnets 15 (‘motorizada 50 cm³’, p. 21) and 23 (p. 32).

immediately after transformation and prior to the termination of the werewolf's fasting. The collection's second sonnet suggests that the famished poet/starving werewolf will sate his hunger through the deployment of humour, described as 'unhas da minha fome mais madura' (the nails of my most mature hunger, p. 8).

The werewolf is wary of a nearby shepherd's 'insone // fogaréu' (insomniac // fire) and the 'vento desatento' (careless wind).⁸⁷ 'lobishome em clima de atenção' operates on an unresolved tension between the monster's urgent desire to sate his hunger and his keen awareness of the danger that surrounds him. The hungry monster/starving satirist must be careful how and when he displays his claws. Likewise, the reader, duly warned, will have to be attentive to the mechanics of Grabato Dias's humour — specifically: *what* are its targets.⁸⁸ As well as urging readers to be attentive to what is absent or unsaid in the sonnets, the poem provides an alibi for the poet's decision not to be more explicitly critical: he is surrounded by danger. I highlighted in the introduction to this thesis that Quadros, in writing subversive poetry under the name Grabato Dias, did not in fact put himself in a compromising position with the colonial authorities.

In 'lobishome em clima de atenção', Grabato Dias identifies with a circumspect werewolf; a monstrous outsider.⁸⁹ Grabato Dias embodies two facets of discursive monstrosity. He stands as an incarnation of a lusotropical inconsistency under which

⁸⁷ The 'vento desatento' may be a reference to Harold Macmillan's 'Winds of Change' speech of 3 February 1960 to the South African parliament, in which he signalled that the British government would not seek to oppose African nationalist independence claims. For an analysis of the subtle allusions to and reworking of the 'winds of change' image in Luís Bernardo Honwana's *Nós Matámos o Cão Tinhoso* (1962), see Cláudia Pazos Alonso, 'The Wind of Change in *Nós Matámos o Cão-Tinhoso*', *Elipsis*, 5 (2007), 67-85.

⁸⁸ In the second edition of the sonnets, published after the Carnation Revolution, in 1975, Grabato Dias further highlighted the need for the reader to be on the look-out through the addition of a forty-ninth sonnet, whose title 'elemental, caro watson', places the reader in the role of Sherlock Holmes's detective sidekick.

⁸⁹ Monsters appear in many of Quadros's paintings and recur in his poetry. Quadros produced an engraving called 'Lobishomem' in 1960, which is reproduced in Quadros, *O Sinaleiro das Pombas*, p. 144.

configurations of the pre-colonized and of the hybrid subject — the child of miscegenation — were coded as ‘monstrous’.

Grabato Dias highlights an instance of colonial coding of the pre-colonized/hybrid subject as monstrous in the epigraph to the second section of *40 e Tal Sonetos*, ‘Do reino arracão’ (On the Arakan kingdom). The section takes as its epigraph a redacted stanza from Canto X of *Os Lusíadas*, in which Camões refers to the mythical, monstrous procreation allegedly practiced in the Arakan Kingdom through the device of Tethys:

Olha o reino Arracão
.....
Monstros, filhos do feio ajuntamento
de ãa mulher e um cão que sós se acharam
Aqui, soante arame, no instrumento
da geração, costumam
.....
.....
(p. 30)

See the Arakan Kingdom [...]
Children of the horrible coupling
Of a solitary woman and a dog:
Today, men wear on their genitals
Tiny tinkling bells [...] ⁹⁰

The function of the epigraph is explained in *Pressaga*, when Grabato Dias suggests that an aesthetics of ‘monstrosity’ was often deployed by European colonizers to frame non-European peoples as inferior beings, and thereby justify the putative civilizing mission of colonization:

[...] os herdeiros especiais da história [...]
inventaram as descobertas para ocultar a ronha
que é missionar entre os mestres e chamar-lhes gentio
e burlar a consciência ninando-a quentinha
ao colo robusto duma mãe ásia ou duma África mãe
a que se exigem duas tétas [sic.] suplementares
para justificar que se lhes chame monstros.
(*Pressaga*, p. 3)

the special heirs of history
invented the discoveries to disguise the dishonesty

⁹⁰ The original Camões text is stanza CXXII from Canto X of *Os Lusíadas*, ed. by Frank Pierce (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1973), p. 251. The English translation is Landeg White’s, from *The Lusíadas* (Oxford: University Press, 2008), p. 221.

of evangelising amongst leaders and calling them heathens
and defrauding our conscience by lulling it to sleep
in the robust lap of an Asian or African mother
to whom are attributed two additional teats
to justify our calling them monsters.

The ‘monstrosity’ with which Camões and Europeans more generally described the non-European peoples that Portuguese sailors encountered on their voyages in Africa, Asia and the Americas served as a justification for the Portuguese imperial project, whereby the ‘monstrous’ pre-colonized are placed in opposition to the putatively civilizing agents of European imperialism: Portuguese sailors.

In ‘Alémgória’ (Beyond Allegory, *40 e Tal Sonetos*, p. 31), the first poem of the collection’s second section, Grabato Dias is positioned as a subject visited by European navigators. ‘Alémgória’ obliquely critiques the ‘técnicas de dominação pelo medo’ (techniques of domination through fear) identified by Rui de Sousa, through coded interrogations of the Portuguese colonial project in Africa.

The sonnet describes the arrival of a ship. The poem’s proximity to the redacted stanza from *Os Lusíadas* invites the reader to interpret the ship as a Portuguese vessel. The preposition ‘do’ in the section title ‘Do Reino Arracão’ situates the speaking subject on the side of the peoples visited by Portuguese explorers in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The title of ‘Alémgória’ suggests that the text is an allegory written from the *além mar* (overseas): from the position of a pre-colonized subject at the moment of the Portuguese arrival. Much like *As Quibyrycas* — which Quadros published two years later, in 1972 — ‘Alémgória’ is a retort to luso-centric imperial narratives of Portuguese expansion.

‘Alémgória’ begins with Grabato Dias’s parodying the stereotype of the ‘lazy black’, as the speaking subject’s state of inertia, expressed through the imperfect tense and a

colloquial contraction of ‘estava’, is rudely disrupted with the preterit arrival of the ship: ‘tava eu descansadíssimo, veio a nave’ (there I was, not a care in the world, when the ship appeared). At first, the ship provokes wonder in the speaker: ‘torneira mágica debitando azuis / verdíssimos e flutuações insuis / peitadas, com um esforço casto. A nave // tinha um ar de quimera’ (a magical tap pouring out greenish / blues and wondrous fluctu / ations, with a chaste force. The ship // had a chimeric air). The ship soon transforms from chimeric apparition into a vessel that provokes the ambiguous reaction of ‘espantos’ (meaning ‘fright’, ‘fear’ and ‘amazement’) in those who see it. The ship’s ‘magical’ and ‘chaste’ dispensing of ‘flutuações insuis / peitadas’ contrasts with its ‘grave heresia’ (grave heresy) of a ‘bispo perfumado / de gasóis ternurentos’ (bishop, perfumed / with gentle flatulence) and the ‘arsenais / de carochas carbúnculas’ (arsenals of carbuncled cockroaches) teeming on board.

Initially a figure of wonderment, the ship soon connotes hypocrisy, heresy, violence and pestilence. The closing lines of the poem recall the opening, as the poet remarks ironically: ‘Ó povo honrado / e não é que eu fiquei descansadíssimo?!’ (My dear people / did the ship’s arrival not leave me without a care in the world?!). The speaking subject’s ironic question implies that the ship will only bring upheaval and turmoil to the anonymous group of people that the poet addresses and that he will not remain passive in the face of the intruders.

The notion that Grabato Dias is a pre- or colonized subject is undercut elsewhere in the collection. In the continuous autobiographical poem called ‘pública forma de 3 demissionetos em papel selado’ (certified copy of 3 resignation-sonnets on stamped paper, pp. 53-55), that runs through sonnets 44, 45 and 46, Grabato Dias describes his mixed

cultural ancestry of rebels, traitors and slaves in a passage that runs over the forty-fourth and the forty-fifth sonnet:

milaneto enfartado
de judas, de asterix, e de um

45

merdólico hindú e ainda mais
com sangue escravo mas disfarçadíssimo

stuffed great (x1000) grandson
of judas, asterix and some

45

shitfilled hindu and, what's more,
has the blood of slaves pumping through his veins, but you wouldn't know it (pp. 53-54)

Grabato Dias's use of superlatives to describe his subaltern identity suggests an ironizing of his claiming of a colonized status: 'João Pedro Grabato Dias, lá / assinado abaixíssimo de tudo' (João Pedro Grabato Dias, / undersigned below the lowliest of the low, p. 44). Indeed, the poem reveals that Grabato Dias has privileged familial connections. The forty-sixth sonnet registers a series of annotations made by readers of the 'demissionetos', including interventions written with the infamous blue pencil of PIDE agents:

(Nota a vermelha sangue vaca :) Posto
o impróprio tom, mais língua na pimenta
ou véce virsa, e baixe-se de posto.
(assim nado:) governa a dor Pimenta.

(Nota baça a lápis respeitoso :)
Ouso notar a vóscelência a dura
punição, e lembrar-lhe que este moço

é primo, por tabela, da Doutora
Joaninha A. Boa. (Em azul-tremoço :)
Promova-se. (lápis :) Ligue à doutora!
(p. 55)

(Note in cow's-blood-red ink): Given
the indecorous tone, we recommend
soap for his mouth, or versa vice, and his demotion.
(signed) guv' 'Pain' Pepper.

(Respectful pencil note:)
I note your excellency's harsh
punishment, and remind you that this fellow

is cousin, something something removed,
of Dona Joaninha the Good. (In blue:)

Promotion! (pencil:) Call the Good Lady!

Grabato Dias's resignation is a performative gesture that puts his superior, Governador Pimenta, in an awkward situation. Pimenta is reprimanded by an anonymous agent for accepting Grabato Dias's resignation, who reminds the governor of the poet's connection to a Joanhina A. Boa. Grabato Dias's resignation is revealed to be a prank against his superior, written in an 'impróprio tom' (inappropriate tone) and with language that warrants his mouth being washed with soapy water.⁹¹ The poem's title establishes the 'demissionetos' as a prank against authority performed for the poet's readers: Grabato Dias has made public Pimenta's gullibility through the publication of his sonnet. Knowing that he cannot be dismissed, Grabato Dias benefits from his high-placed relative to receive a promotion. The poem is revealing about Grabato Dias's position within colonial society. Rather than a colonized subject, he is an anti-colonial member of a colonial elite.

In the ninth sonnet, titled 'já pode. (jogo infantil de esconde-esconde)' (yes, you may. (a child's game of hide-and-seek), p. 15), the poet remarks that he has spent the 'trinte e sete anos-dor' (thirty-seven painful years) of his life so far under the yoke of 'maus amos' (bad masters). The poem is a rewriting of the Camões sonnet that begins 'Sete anos de pastor Jacob servia...', which, inspired by the story from Genesis, describes Jacob's faithful love for Rachel, whose father, Laban, tricks Jacob into labouring for him for seven years. At the end of the seven years, Laban offers the hand of Rachel's sister, Leah, in marriage instead of Jacob's beloved. Camões's poem ends with the duped Jacob beginning a second seven-year stint of labour for Laban.⁹² In contrast to the dedicated and hardworking Jacob, Grabato

⁹¹ According to Eduardo Medeiros, the prize awarded to Grabato Dias by the Lourenço Marques town hall in 1968 was never collected because the regional Education Secretary found the submitted piece 'indecorosa' (indecorous). Eduardo Medeiros, 'Memorial: António Quadros', *Ideia: Revista Libertária*, 77-80 (2016), 287.

⁹² Luís de Camões, 'Sete anos de pastor Jacob servia...', in *Selected Sonnets*, ed. by William Baer (Chicago: London: University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 146.

Dias, consistent with his self-description as lazy in the autobiographical text that frames *Laurentinas* and in ‘Alémgoria’, dramatizes his idleness as a form of opposition to the powers-that-be. His rebellious inertia, however, does not liberate him from his subjugation:

Vendo, em triste amargor, que com os anos
assim se me negava à porvindoura
fama, como se não fora merecida,

cá estou para servir outros maus amos.
Entenda-se: vos servira se não fora
pra tão ruim labor, tão bela a vida!
(p. 15)

Realising, with sad bitterness, that over time
I was thus denied future
fame (as if I didn’t deserve it!)

here I am to serve other bad masters.
Let me be clear: I would serve you were
the labour not so bad and life not so good!

Idle or active, the poet serves bad masters. Furthermore, his laziness has resulted in his not achieving the fame that he claims — with a heavy dose of irony — to deserve. The sonnet’s conclusion implies that the poet’s refusal to serve the powers-that-be is not a moral question: he would happily obey were the work more appealing and distractions from it less so. Grabato Dias’s subalternity is elective; his resistance to authority ironic and performative. The sonnet, furthermore, points to a slippage that recurs in Grabato Dias’s writings between marginalia and subjugation. Grabato Dias’s ironic aggrandizing of his plight as a marginal poet is frequently accompanied by a discourse of self-victimisation in which the poet describes himself as under the yoke of the powers-that-be.

In the aftermath of the Carnation Revolution, Grabato Dias’s ironic claims of subaltern identity become problematic. *Pressaga* dramatizes the conflict between Grabato Dias’s mixed textualized identity and the civic identity of his creator: a white Portuguese settler in a new post-colonial reality.

The End of an Era: *Pressaga* (1974)

Whereas the subversive politics of the pre-revolutionary ode *A Arca* are couched in cryptography, the post-revolutionary ode *Pressaga* is unabashedly anti-Estado Novo. In *Pressaga*'s internal economy, the moment of rupture, 25 April 1974, is the condition without which the poem could not exist. Underlying the anaphoric announcement of the end of the Portuguese dictatorship is the reality that the Estado Novo could not be openly denounced, in a context of censorship, without consequences for the author.

Pressaga's second, sarcastic dedication is to the regime's dictator ('A SUA EXCELENCIA O EXCELENTÍSSIMO / PROFESSOR DOUTOR / ANTÓNIO DE OLIVEIRA SALAZAR', TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE MOST EXCELLENT / PROFESSOR DOCTOR / ANTÓNIO DE OLIVEIRA SALAZAR), and to one of the Estado Novo's most vociferous opponents, the communist Álvaro Cunhal.⁹³ The end of the 'era do pequeno torcionário / do paternal cachaço do eh! seu preto sujo [...]' (era of the petty torturer / of the paternal arrogance of the 'oi! dirty black', *Pressaga*, p. 1) is the point of departure for the speaking subject. The revolution provokes the poet to reflect on his inaction under the regime, and to look to the possibility of his having a future in Mozambique.

Mozambique's looming independence raised questions as to who would be counted as Mozambican. *Pressaga* foregrounds Mozambican national identity as a category in flux. The first note that precedes the ode lists the ninety-nine 'autores de algum modo moçambicanos' (authors who are in one way or another Mozambican) whose 'cintilações'

⁹³ 'dedicatória dois', *Pressaga*. The three dedications and two notes that precede the ode appear on unnumbered pages. The dedication to Salazar recalls the title of José Cardoso Pires's satirical fable *Dinossauro Excelentíssimo* (first published 1972). The anonymous, eponymous dinosaur is Salazar. José Cardoso Pires, *O Dinossauro Excelentíssimo* (Lisbon: Publicações Dom Quixote, 1999).

(scintillations) feature in the ‘poema de bancada’ (cooperative poem) that appears on pages 17-23 of *Pressaga*.⁹⁴ The list is eclectic, featuring Portuguese- and Mozambican-born poets, journalists and prose writers. Grabato Dias includes figures such as Glória de Sant’Anna, Eugénio Lisboa and Eduardo Pitta, as well as the controversial figure of Knopfli.⁹⁵ The last three names on the list are those of Mozambique’s first president, Samora Machel, his first wife, Josina, and Jorge Rebelo, the future Information Minister and head of Frelimo’s Central Committee. The fourth from last name is that of the author of *Pressaga*. Grabato Dias’s proximity to three major political figures in post-revolutionary Mozambique undermine his claim, in the main text of *Pressaga*, that his future in Mozambique was uncertain.

Having said his sarcastic farewells to the colonial state (pp. 1-8), Grabato Dias arrives ‘do nada’ (from nothing) at the customs office of a new nation and immediately recognizes himself in the photo of his newly issued passport and in the face of his ‘diverse’ compatriot, the customs officer: ‘Olhei o guarda-fiscal e ele era eu. / Tão evidentemente diverso, que só podia ser eu. / Sob a poderosa maxila africana, eu ainda’ (I looked at him, the border officer, and he was me / So evidently diverse, that he could only be me. / Beneath the powerful African jaw, me, nonetheless). The new nation, characterised by its diversity, is a home for Grabato Dias, whose multiplicity had made him a stateless nomad. In his new passport photo, Grabato Dias sees the reconciliation of his individuality and his multiple identities, which are juxtaposed to the Pessoaan image of the ‘arca do espanto’ (the trunk of

⁹⁴ The note reveals that the same poem had been published in the newspaper *Notícias* and *Tribuna* on 28 July 1974 with the title ‘27 de Julho — Poema de Bancada’.

⁹⁵ For a discussion of Knopfli’s exclusion from the Mozambican canon, see Manoel de Souza e Silva, *Do Alheio ao Próprio* (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo; Goiânia: Editora da Universidade Federal de Goiás, 1996), pp. 105-107.

startledom) — a reference to the trunk in which Fernando Pessoa left behind most of his writings, including those of his heteronyms:

Abri o passaporte absolutamente novo
E vi-me fotografado e reconheci-me
E abri a arca do espanto porque pensava que éramos muitos
mas reconheci-me pelo olhar e nenhum mentia. (p. 11)

I opened the brand-new passport
And I saw my photograph and I recognised myself
And I opened the trunk of startledom for I thought that we were many
but I recognised myself in the way the subject of the photograph looked at me and it did not lie.

In this new nation, identity will not be a mendacious fiction; a mask worn to protect the wearer's name. One of *Pressaga's* unresolved tensions is between Grabato Dias's dream of the Mozambican nation as a space in which the (white Portuguese) individual can be many and the political reality that the settler community's place in Mozambique was not guaranteed. The customs post is situated at the border of a speculative nation of Grabato Dias's own imagination.

The adoption of a new nationality allows Grabato Dias to leave behind the past, and start anew: 'Como a uma mala, abri as mãos e declarei-me todo. / Só trazia comigo o que não fora' (As one would do with a suitcase, I opened my arms and I declared all of myself. / All that I carried with me was what I had not been before, p.11). Grabato Dias's declaration that he has arrived at the customs office with no baggage, psychological or otherwise, is soon belied by the poet's recollections of his actions under the *Estado Novo*.

In a lengthy section of the ode (pp. 25-59), the poet recalls a series of childhood memories. One of these is a recollection of the poet's visit to Lisbon Zoo during the *Exposição do Mundo Português* in 1940, where the speaking subject remembers seeing a

black Guinean boy displayed in a wooden cage.⁹⁶ The poet-as-child identifies this Guinean boy with his ‘brinquedo melhor [...] o meu pretinho da guiné de lata pintada’ (best toy, my tin black boy from guinea). The child attempts to ‘fly’ towards his Guinean ‘brother’, ‘que só trazia tanga com tanto frio’ (who was only wearing a tanga in the icy cold). The child’s ‘flight’ is prevented by the wooden bars of the cage in which the Guinean boy and his family are held. At the end of the episode, the poet-as-child transforms into the cold felt by the Guinean boy, as the speaking subject in the present and the poet’s past-self coalesce. The former’s guilt — provoked by his present knowledge and the author’s first-hand experiences of Portuguese colonialism — tinges his memory of the event:

e de repente ó glória vooei! [sic.] Com o sobretudito aberto em asas
 com as asas empurrando-me veloz, sem peso, levando-me
 aaiii dolor! a quilha do peito rudemente travada por uma grade de paus
 aiiiii dolor! por uma grade de paus enterrados no chão
 travando-me no voo para o meu irmão da guiné
 fazendo-me reconhecer que não tinha asas, que tinha sobretudo
 que sobretudo, sobretudo tinha frio, que eu agora era o frio.⁹⁷

and suddenly oh boy I took flight! With my *surtout* sprouting wings
 the wings rapidly pushing me forward, lifting me up, weightless,
 ouch! the keel of my breast rudely caught on the wooden stakes
 ouch! wooden stakes stuck in the ground
 blocking my flight towards my guinean brother
 forcing me to realise that I did not have wings, that what I had was my *surtout*
 that *surtout*, *surtout* I was cold, that I, at that moment, was the cold.

In the present, the poet refuses to identify with the child who was unable to overcome the barrier separating him from his ‘irmão da guiné’ (‘A criança que eu era, não é eu. É uma criança em que eu era’, The child that I was, is not me. It is a child in which I was)⁹⁸ and swears to his inability to reach a state of patriotic fervour (‘Seria seguramente incapaz numa

⁹⁶ Summarizing Ângela Guimarães’s study ‘O Labirinto dos Mitos’, Cláudia Castelo writes that the 1934 Exposição Colonial do Porto and the 1940 Exposição do Mundo Português represent two key instances in which the cultures and traditions of peoples colonized by the Portuguese were levelled (nationalized) through annulation and domestication, as the different peoples on display were presented as a ‘amalgama indiferenciadora, sob a protecção da Mãe-Pátria’. Cláudia Castelo, ‘O Modo Português de Estar no Mundo’: *O Luso-tropicalismo e a Ideologia Colonial Portuguesa (1933-1961)* (Porto: Afrontamento, 1998), pp. 123-124 (124); Ângela Guimarães, ‘O Labirinto dos Mitos’, in *O Estado Novo: Das Origens ao Fim da Autarcia: 1926-1959*, 2 vols, (Lisbon: Fragmentos, 1987), II, pp. 107-121 (113).

⁹⁷ In the original text there is an enlarged space between ‘glória’ and ‘vooei! [sic.]’. It is not clear whether the additional spacing is a printing error or a deliberate choice. *Pressaga*, p. 39.

⁹⁸ In the original text, there is no space following the full-stop that ends the first sentence of the quotation. *Pressaga*, p. 40.

praça de gente madura / de gritar: POR-TU-GUE-SES! ou VIVA A PÁTRIA vivó’,
Certainly, in a square packed with grown individuals, I would be unable / to shout POR-TU-
GAL! or LONG LIVE PORTUGAL!, p. 40) for a country from which he is alienated.
Grabato Dias’s sworn inability to partake in anti-Estado Novo posturing betrays his
disquietude towards his inaction under the regime.

Grabato Dias’s recollections of his position under the Estado Novo reach a climax
in the narration of a subsequent episode in which the poet, as a child, draws a swastika on a
lavatory wall with the urine spurting out of his penis. When the child emerges from the
lavatory, a disgruntled man waiting outside (a ‘perfeito ogre’, perfect ogre), asks aloud: ‘que
é que o menino esteve a fazer tanto tempo?’ (boy, what have you been up to all this time?.
p. 48). The innocuous question posed by this ‘sacanhinha’ (bastard) threatens to ruin (‘lixar’)
Grabato Dias’s ‘poema épico’ (epic poem), as the ogre’s words haunt the pages that follow.
They go to the heart of the poet’s preoccupation in *Pressaga*: that he was complicit with a
regime that he only opposed behind closed doors and in enigmatic, coded messages. What
was Grabato Dias doing all that time under colonialism?

When Grabato Dias returns to the urination episode later in *Pressaga*, the poet-in-
the present denounces the fascist symbol that he had drawn as a child:

Fecho definitivamente a carcela como quem conta sílabas
de um verso cheio de falsas tónicas e vogais surdas
denuncio, avivo, a suástica [...] e assobio entre dentes abrindo a porta sem temor ao ogre [...] no lugar alegre de nem lembrar se mexi de facto na carcela.
(p. 59)

I definitely zip up my flies like someone counting the syllables
of a verse full of false tonics and silent vowels
I denounce, nay, I reanimate the swastika
and I whistle between my teeth, opening the door, undaunted, to the ogre
happy that I cannot remember whether I unzipped my trousers or not.

The poet's attempt to draw a line under the subject — to 'definitively zip up his flies' — is likened to the scansion of an off-beat verse; a syncopated gesture that does not sound right to the poet. The act of denouncing is immediately and ambiguously followed by the verb 'avivo', as if the act of denouncing painfully resurrects the memory that he disavows. Although the poet claims to be in the happy position of not remembering whether he unzipped his trousers or not, the final verse belies a fundamental unease.

Pressaga represents a coming to terms with the speaking subject's role in the perpetuation of the regime, as someone who only cryptically — it is suggested, barely — opposed the Estado Novo. Rather than celebrate the end of Portuguese colonial rule and the imminent independence of Mozambique, the poet looks worriedly to the future. Grabato Dias's attention is turned to three distinct futures: the world that his great-great-great-grandson, his 'tetranelo', will inherit from his ancestors; his son's future; and, crucially, his own.

In his musings on the future of Mozambique, the speaking subject alternates between dystopian and utopian visions. The poet's ecological and knowingly selfish concerns overlap. Grabato Dias wishes that his distant relation will live in a 'mundo muito mais verde e recheado de cores moventes' (much greener world, full of variegation), with plenty of time 'para o meu tetranelo ler os meus versos / tornados recordação de família, na pior das hipóteses' (for my great-great-great-grandson to read my poems / which will have become little more than a family memento, at worst, p. 77). The thought of every tree felled and not replanted — for lumber to be used for housing construction (p. 76) — upsets the poet, who

sees deforestation as a threat to the ‘circulation’ of his poems.⁹⁹ For Grabato Dias, unsustainable deforestation is so ‘serious’ a problem that

todas as manhãs, por duas horas
deixo a musa ao diabo e sigo ao universo das trazeiras [sic.] da casa
tratar de uma machamba maluca com tudo e um pouquinho de cada coisa
a ver se salvo o universo e os meus versos com ele. (p. 77)

every morning, I tell my muse to go to hell,
and for two hours I follow the universe out to my backyard
to care for a potty shamba with a bit of everything growing in it
to see if I can save the universe and my poems with it.

Grabato Dias’s concern that he will not be read recurs in his poetry.¹⁰⁰

In *Pressaga*’s final section (pp. 78-119), the poet slips between the future timeframes enumerated above; the past, under the colonial regime; and, the present moment from which the poet speaks. The overlapping of timeframes is neatly contained in the following stanza, in which Grabato Dias addresses his son:

Vem frio de muito longe na minha vida. Desconfortável mas familiar [...]
um frio
da pressaga traição que nos fará a vida, um arripio um mio
de vento rasgando-se nas folhas das bananeiras que nós dois plantámos
pensando saber que já não comeríamos o fruto. (p. 81)

The cold returns from far away in my life. Uncomfortable, yet familiar
a cold
of a foreshadowed betrayal that life will deal us, a shiver, a meow
of wind tearing through the leaves of the banana trees that we two planted
thinking that we knew that we would never eat their fruit.

The ‘frio’, into which the poet-as-child had transformed at the end of the 1940 Lisbon Expo’ episode, returns, from far away, to haunt the poet-in-the-present. The ‘cold’, the poet’s unease, is immediately linked to the presaged betrayal that he foreshadows for himself and for his son. That betrayal refers to the possible exclusion of Grabato-Dias-the-settler from the project of Mozambican nation building, an exile that the poet thinks is undeserved: ‘Alguém [...] comerá [o fruto], tu ou um outro. Talvez não eu / embora pense merecer ao

⁹⁹ Quadros’s ecological concerns are expressed by Mutimati in *Eu, o Povo*, in which the poet discusses FRELIMO’s mechanization scheme and the environmental destruction that the colonial war entailed.

¹⁰⁰ I discuss the theme of Grabato Dias’s fraught relationship with posterity in chapter four.

menos estas bananas' (Somebody will eat the fruit, you or somebody else. Perhaps I won't / although I believe that I have earned, at the very least, these bananas, p. 81).

The first and only mention of *Pressaga*'s title corresponds to the poet's uncertainty surrounding his place in the new nation. In *Pressaga*'s concluding lines, Grabato Dias looks forward to a distant, speculative future in which '[o] tribalismo inter nações' (inter-national tribalism, p. 117) has ended and 'os passaportes sejam peças de museu inexplicáveis' (passports are inexplicable museum pieces, p. 118).¹⁰¹

Grabato Dias's critique of nationhood in *Pressaga* is principally aimed at the Estado Novo's Portugal, which made the poetry of Camões a 'propriedade privada alienável' (a private property to be sold, p. 66), owned by the Portuguese state.¹⁰² For Grabato Dias, Camões is a global poet, 'um perpétuo emigrante / tostado ao sol de abaixo de gibraltar e não de abaixo de braga' (a perpetual emigrant / toasted beneath the sun in Gibraltar rather than in Braga). His Camões is an itinerant poet unbounded by national frontiers and an example of Quadros's figure of the Portuguese emigrant who 'awakens' a poet through experiences outside Portugal: 'Definitivamente é emigrando que um português acorda poeta' (Definitively it is in emigrating that a Portuguese awakens a poet, *Pressaga*, p. 84).

¹⁰¹ In an article on the history of the Portuguese passport, Victor Pereira explains that emigration was 'partially nationalized' under the Estado Novo through the founding of the Ministry of the Interior body, the Junta de Emigração (through a decree of 28 October 1947), which was effectively granted a monopoly over the issuing of emigration passports. The granting of passports was an opaque process, 'devised to prevent the popular classes from leaving the country and to submit their mobility to the scrutiny of the agents from the Ministry of the Interior'. The conservative stance of the Junta de Emigração was rooted in a conception of the 'emigrant as a threat to public order' and a fear, stated by the Junta's chairman from 1949-1968, that easier access to passports would lead to mass emigration of the 'lower classes', 'leaving Portuguese employers to face a shortage of workers and the Armed forces deprived of soldiers'. Under the Estado Novo, the mobile Portuguese emigrant was seen as a subversive element. Victor Pereira, 'The Papers of State Power: The Passport and the Control of Mobility', in Luís Trindade, *The Making of Modern Portugal* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), pp. 35-36; p. 38.

¹⁰² I discuss the appropriation of Camões by the Estado Novo in the following chapter.

The Portuguese becomes a poet in spaces that lie outside the borders of the home-nation.¹⁰³

Grabato Dias's globalized utopia is a space in which a poet can be simultaneously Portuguese and Mozambican.

Grabato Dias's utopia is the vision of a subject who fears that he has no place in the two potential countries of his birth. *Pressaga* exposes the limits of Grabato Dias's ambiguous inter-identity at the end of empire. According to him, he is at risk of being suspended between two stalls; in a geographical and temporal no-place.

Conclusion

In the colonial period, Grabato Dias marshals his identity as a privileged colonized subject to speak back to authority. His anti-colonial colonial identity relies on irony as a strategy to mock the colonial authorities and to critique the system that they uphold. In the immediate aftermath of the Carnation revolution, Grabato Dias, rather than celebrate the end of authoritarianism and colonial rule, worries that Mozambique's independence and the legitimizing of Mozambican culture and identity as distinct from those of Portugal excludes him from the new nation. The ambiguity of the colonial period, where, for anti-colonial white settlers, Mozambican identity folded into their anti-colonial Portuguese identity, would be replaced, Grabato Dias fears, with a period where white settlers would have to pick a side: Portugal or Mozambique. In *Pressaga*, Grabato Dias's anxiety lies in the disjunction inherent to Mozambican identity between universalism and nationalism.

¹⁰³ In contrast with the voyager Camões, Pessoa is humorously described as a domestic and interior poet who 'passou a vida descrendo da vida mas não de si / contando o tempo por copinhos de tinto e aspirinas / contando as sílabas numa máquina de escrever sonora' (spent his life lacking faith in life but not lacking it in himself / counting the time in wells of ink and doses of aspirin / counting syllables on a loud typewriter, *Pressaga*, p. 83).

Grabato Dias's fears were unfounded. Like most of the white population that stayed in Mozambique after the Carnation Revolution, Quadros continued to benefit from the socially privileged position that he had had enjoyed during the colonial period. Quadros had connections amongst high-ranking officials within the Frelimo apparatus, such as Luís Bernardo Honwana.¹⁰⁴ Unlike Grabato Dias, who only tentatively describes himself as somewhat Mozambican, Quadros never assumed a Mozambican identity.

In *Pressaga*, Grabato Dias's utopian vision of a world in which national boundaries are dissolved and passports are superfluous is located in a deferred and uncertain future. *Pressaga*'s quixotic futurity is the speculative home of the poet's 'tetranelo': 'Não quero que o meu bem amado tetranelo passe a vida / a ver por filmes antigos o mundo de hoje, o que resta' (I would not wish that my beloved great-great-great-great grandson spent his life / watching what remains of our world in old films, p. 78). Two futures are implied in *Pressaga*. These two timeframes are mapped onto the following couplet from the first draft of the poem, a fragment of which appears in the second edition of *40 e Tal Sonetos* (1975): 'haverá um lugar com cadeiras de enfim / esperar o tempo todo que os tempos se resolvam' (there will be a place with chairs set up to await, / at last, the resolution of the times).¹⁰⁵ The speculative space imagined by Grabato Dias is one where the poet will wait for his utopia: the tangible and passport-less world that he hopes his great-great-great-grandson will inherit. For him, Frelimo-ruled Mozambique and a democratic Portugal are only the steppingstones, of uncertain footing, on the path to that future.

¹⁰⁴ Quadros frequently visited the house of Nely Nyaka, Honwana's mother, to whom he brought honey. Nely Nyaka, *Mahanyela: A Vida na Periferia da Grande Cidade* (Maputo: Marimbique, 2018), p. 132.

¹⁰⁵ 'Ode *Pressaga*: dois fragmentos de uma 1ª versão', in *40 e Tal Sonetos* (2nd ed.). As noted above, the second edition of *40 e Tal Sonetos* is unpaginated.

The anti-authoritarian strategies of irony, mockery and duplicity that Grabato Dias deployed in *40 e Tal Sonetos de Amor e Circunstâncias* were implemented in 1972 in the first of Quadros's two major literary pranks. In *As Quybyrycas*, which I discuss in the following chapter, Quadros simultaneously uses and self-reflexively questions those strategies in his discussions, in *As Quybyrycas*, of the ethics of engaging with the Portuguese canon.

**The Canon and Authority: Duplicitous Writers and Totalitarian Readers in *As
Quybyrycas* (1972)**

DCXLI

Rompe a manhã solene e marchetada
cheia toda de mágoa e piedade
iluminando a praia e a triste ossada
de um sonho. Na fria claridade
há um fino silêncio de acabada
peça pelos teares de outra verdade...
E vê o Rey na falta de outra voz
um desenhado vôo de alvatroz...

Canto Sete

DCXLII

Agora sabe. Neste entendimento
com a Voz Celeste que lhe fala escrita
a branco no azul, todo o tormento
acaba! Hoje sabe que a desdita
não é senão provado merecimento.
Pois que a atenção divina não evita
aos seus dilectos toda a crua prova
antes de os aceitar na Sua Obra!¹⁰⁶

DCXLI

The solemn and patterned dawn broke,
brimming with pain and piety,
illuminating the beach and the sad
skeleton of a dream. In the cold clarity,
the delicate silence of a newly finished
garment, woven in the fabric of another truth...
And the King sees in the lack of another voice
the sketch of an albatross's flight...

Canto Seven

DCXLII

Now he knows. In this communion
with the Celestial Voice that speaks to him
through the clouds written in the sky, his torment
is extinguished! Today he knows: misfortune
is naught but proof of his worth.
For divine attention does not exempt
His predilects from cruel trials
before their incorporation in His Plan!

¹⁰⁶ There are two editions of *As Quybyrycas*. The first was self-published in 1972 and is unpaginated. A second, revised version was published by Afrontamento in 1992. I quote from the second edition. *As Quybyrycas*, pp. 214-217. All quotations are followed by the Canto number and then the stanza number of the quoted text.

At the end of the sixth canto of *As Quybyrycas*, King Sebastian watches his armada, recently constructed for a military expedition to North Africa, destroyed by a violent storm. Addressing God, Sebastian cries out into the wind, asking his ‘Senhor’ (Lord) why he has destroyed the ships with which he would ‘merecer os teus sinais / combatendo hindustãos, chinos e jaus’ (become worthy of your signs / fighting Hindustanis, Chinese and Javanese, VI, DCXXXVI, p. 213). Sebastian begs for a sign that God has forgiven him:

Dá-me uma voz, um cheiro, um travo a figo
uma claridade, um definido
volume, qualquer coisa adonde esteijão [sic.]
os sinais de meu erro e Teu perdão.
(VI, DCXXXVIII, p. 213)

Give me a voice, a smell, a feto of fig,
a blinding light, a defined
volume: anything that manifests
the signs of my error and Your pardon.

The signs that Sebastian expects are varied and ambiguous. His putative search for divine assent is rather a crisis of self-confidence. The morning after the storm, Sebastian, in contrast to his hopes of the night before, does not hear a voice at all. The sign that Sebastian receives, and which convinces him that he is the keystone of God’s divine plan, is, rather, the ‘falta de outra voz’ (lack of another voice, VI, DCXLI, p. 214) — a non-sign, a silence.

The silence that follows the storm is misleading rather than revelatory; it is the product of ‘teares de outra verdade’ (the fabric of another truth, VI, DCXLI, p. 214). Sebastian’s interpretation of the non-sign is deluded, hinted at by the use of synaesthesia. He ‘sees’ in the silence, in the lack of sound, the traced flight of an albatross: in Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and Charles Baudelaire’s sonnet, an ambiguous, doubled symbol whose meaning is shifting, connoting good luck and penance; beauty and ugliness. Sebastian is presented as a dangerous mis-reader who contorts language — the Voz Celeste (Celestial Voice) is said to be ‘written’ in clouds across the sky (VII, DCXLII, p. 217) — to fit his megalomaniac delusions. Sebastian is reading a text that no

one sees with authoritative conviction, suggested by the repetition of ‘sabe’ (he knows) in the first stanza of the seventh canto. As an authoritarian reader, Sebastian reduces the ambiguous non-text in the sky to one interpretation: he is God’s captain and must conquer the heretic peoples of North Africa and Asia.

The dangers of misreading are foregrounded in *As Quybyrycas* and the preface, by Jorge de Sena, that frames the poem. These texts dramatize the extent to which the ambiguities of literary language leave literary works prone to appropriation by political authorities who can make language mean what they want it to. Language is thus framed as an unequal medium and the control of it as an asymmetrical power struggle between writers and readers of differing positions of authority.

The struggle between who holds authority over textual interpretation is dramatized in Roland Barthes’s ‘La mort de l’auteur’ (1968). At the conclusion of his essay, Barthes displaces the authority of authors onto readers:

[...] il y a cependant quelqu’un qui entend chaque mot dans sa duplicité, et entend de plus, si l’on peut dire, la surdit   m  me des personnages qui parlent devant lui: ce quelqu’un est pr  cis  ment le lecteur [...]. Ainsi se d  voile l’  tre total de l’  criture: un texte est fait d’  critures multiples, issues de plusieurs cultures et qui entrent les unes avec les autres en dialogue, en parodie, en contestation; mais il y a un lieu o   cette multiplicit   se rassemble, et ce lieu, ce n’est pas l’auteur, [...] c’est le lecteur.

[...] there is [...] someone who understands each word in its duplicity and who, in addition, hears the very deafness of the characters speaking in front of him — this someone being precisely the reader [...]. Thus is revealed the total existence of writing: a text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author.¹⁰⁷

Barthes’s re-ascribing of hermeneutic authority comes with a caveat. His *lecteur*, much like his conception of the author, refers to a specific notion of readership and the reader who embodies it: ‘homme sans histoire, sans biographie, sans psychologie; il est seulement ce

¹⁰⁷ Barthes, ‘La mort de l’auteur’, in *Le Bruissement de la langue*, p. 66; Barthes, ‘The Death of the Author’, trans. by Stephen Heath, in Se  n Burke, *Authorship: From Plato to the Postmodern* (Edinburgh: University Press, 1995), p. 129.

quelqu'un qui tient rassemblées dans un même champ toutes les traces dont est constitué l'écrit' (the reader is without history, biography, psychology; he is simply that someone who holds together in a single field all the traces by which the written text is constituted).¹⁰⁸ Barthes's singular Reader is an anonymous figure who will assail the authority of the Critic, whose 'reign' has been guaranteed by the tyranny of the Author.¹⁰⁹

Barthes's conception of the ideal Reader is not radically different from the figure of the critic whose demise he simultaneously announces and prophesises. Barthes's *lecteur* is pointedly 'someone' — and a man — with a learned culture that enables him to tease out the rich intertextuality of a given text. Barthes's Reader and his negative conception of the Author are chimeric figures; subjects who, through the acts of writing and reading, absent themselves completely from the production of meaning. Barthes's Reader is a self-effacing critic; a privileged subject with extensive learning and culture on whom absolute authority is conferred.

Barthes invests his Reader and the text with the total hermeneutic freedom that the restrictive notion of the post-Romantic author limits. In 'Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?', Foucault argues that there is a disjunction between the totally free 'proliferation' of meaning that authors should guarantee for their texts and the operationally restrictive impact that the figure of the author has on textual interpretation. For him, the author is 'le principe par lequel on entrave la libre circulation, la libre manipulation, la libre composition, décomposition, recomposition de la fiction' ([the principle] by which one impedes the free circulation, the

¹⁰⁸ Barthes, 'La mort de l'auteur', in *Le Bruissement de la langue*, p. 67; 'The Death of the Author', trans. by Heath, in Burke, *Authorship: From Plato to the Postmodern*, p. 129.

¹⁰⁹ For an explicit framing of Barthes's notion of the power imbalance between writers and readers, see 'Écrire la Lecture', where Barthes emphasises the link between authorship and authority. Barthes, 'Écrire la Lecture', in *Le Bruissement de la langue*, pp. 33-36.

free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition, and recomposition of fiction’).¹¹⁰ As *Quybyrycas* makes the case, however, that the conferring of authorial authority onto certain groups of readers in authoritarian contexts leads to the inverse of Barthes’s prophesised results. In authoritarian contexts, authoritarian readers — for Quadros and Sena — limit what texts can mean and determine what authors represent in precisely the same way as Foucault’s and Barthes’s notions of the Author. Furthermore, Barthes’s outlining of a hermeneutic power struggle between Author and Reader does not account for the intermediaries that shape and frame texts in contexts such as that of Mozambique in the 1970s and 1980s: the academy and the State.

According to the paratexts that frame the poem, including Sena’s preface, *Quybyrycas* is an unearthed sequel to Luís de Camões’s *Os Lusíadas* (1572). The poem was published in 1972 as an homage to Camões on the four-hundred-year anniversary of the publication of his epic poem. *As Quybyrycas*’s title page gives two potential authors: Camões — in a ‘highly suspect’ attribution — and Frey Ioannes Garabatus, the second of Quadros’s pennames to appear, in 1971.

Garabatus’s début was in the second issue of *Calíban*, which published three of his sonnets, along with a biographical text that identifies Garabatus as King Sebastian’s confessor and a companion of Camões.¹¹¹

In my analysis, *As Quybyrycas* and *Eu, o Povo* (1975)— which I discuss in the next chapter — should be understood as practical jokes. Quadros was the architect of several

¹¹⁰ Foucault, ‘Qu’est-ce qu’un auteur?’, in *Dits et écrits*, I, p. 859. ‘What Is an Author?’ translated by Josué V. Harari, in *The Foucault Reader*, edited by Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), p. 119.

¹¹¹ Rui Knopfli and João Grabato Dias, *Caliban*, 2, Lourenço Marques (1971), p. 64.

similar pranks while he was in Mozambique.¹¹² In the publication of *As Quybryrcas* and *Eu, o Povo*, Quadros was aided by an informal support network of friends and colleagues, who transported the texts, delivered them to the relevant authorities, and publicized them. Maria Benedita Basto has partially reconstructed the story of *As Quybryrcas*'s publication in an article published in 2014.¹¹³

In this chapter, I explore Sena's and Quadros's strategies for interrogating the Portuguese canon and historiography through a re-framing of *Os Lusíadas* and the image of its author. Sena's preface and the main text raise questions over the extent to which authors enable or resist the ideologizing of their own work. Is the ideology of a given work conferred on it by its readers or intrinsic to it? Can the author of a text prevent their work from becoming appropriated for political ends?

The Ethics of Aesthetics

My real blindness lay in not seeing that the one didn't exclude the other: poetry and ideology were different languages, different psychic levels — very different — but they addressed the same reality. There was no real inner contradiction between the two.

Birgitta Trotzig¹¹⁴

In an article of 1975 (translated into English in 1988), Birgitta Trotzig, describes ideology and poetry as two distinct languages: two ways of describing and viewing the world. For

¹¹² Quadros infamously pranked a professor of architecture while in Mozambique. The professor unearthed a mock prehistoric vase buried by Quadros, thinking that he had made a ground-breaking archaeological discovery. In a separate incident, Amélia Muge received a parcel containing a manuscript for the *Cancioneiro dos Galapitoões* [sic.], written and prepared by Quadros, and a proposal to publicize the 'discovery' of the manuscript. The *Cancioneiro* had been referenced in issue 2 of *Caliban* as an anthology featuring Garabatus's poetry. Both stories were related to me in an interview with Muge, April 2018, Lisbon. The reference to the *Cancioneiro* appears in Knopfli and Grabato Dias, *Caliban*, 2, p. 64.

¹¹³ Maria Benedita Basto, 'As Quybryrcas de António Quadros/Frey Joannes Garabatus: une transgression littéraire du colonialisme portugais comme pratique de l'extrême', in Miguel Rodrigues and David Marilhacy, *De l'extrême: pratiques du contemporain dans le monde ibérique et latino-américain* (Editions Hispaniques, Paris, 2014), pp.121-133.

¹¹⁴ Birgitta Trotzig, 'Poetry and Ideology', *CrossCurrents*, 35 (2/3) (1985), 309.

her, the two languages are mutually untranslatable; mutually irreducible, one into the other. Trotzig's account of the relationship between poetry and ideology is framed by her development as a poet after World War II and her definition of the latter a correction of an acknowledged misconception that ideology exclusively corresponds to the extreme examples of Nazism and Stalinism. Her nuancing of her conception of ideology, as it relates to poetry and to religion (Trotzig was a Catholic), frames poets' political work as distinct from party politics but nevertheless political: the 'esthetic [sic.] activity, putting words together, implies an ethic, an ethical treatment of reality'.¹¹⁵ Poetry's political function, in authoritarian contexts, is, for her, humanistic and, specifically, anti-fascist:

Art questions the given. When images instead try to force themselves to create a false unity, they proclaim their own lie—witness the fascist architecture of the thirties, the Soviet Union's huge and empty monuments. There is the society of exploitation, constriction, and uniformity, of denial, amputation, and exclusion. Against this society we must deploy living languages—explosive and image-filled, questioning social illusion and evoking the deepest levels of reality.¹¹⁶

Although Trotzig exorbitates language's potential as a tool of oppression and the key to liberation from that same oppression, with poets implicitly and improbably cast in the role of the liberators of the downtrodden,¹¹⁷ her proposition is useful in its simultaneous acknowledgement of the presence of ideology in poetry and the refusal to reduce poetry to ideology.

The overlap of literature and politics in the contexts of colonial and post-colonial Mozambique troubles the notion that the literary and the political are distinct phenomena. This position was formulated by Immanuel Kant in 1790, in *Kritik der Urteilskraft*

¹¹⁵ Trotzig, 'Poetry and Ideology', 308.

¹¹⁶ Trotzig, 'Poetry and Ideology', 313.

¹¹⁷ Trotzig's article ends with a heady flourish in which language is cast as the site of societal oppression and the key to resisting that oppression: 'The power struggle within society takes place on the level of language. Society can take over and sterilize the languages of nations with their ironies and spontaneous new patterns of thought, making language the outrider of spiritual colonialism. That political decade, the sixties, taught me what working with language really is. It taught me how important it is that even the most insignificant worker in the vineyard not give up; it taught me that in language is the seed of mental liberation, that the renewal of language can lead to the renewal of life'. Birgitta Trotzig, 'Poetry and Ideology', 314-315.

(translated into English by Eric Matthews as *Critique of the Power of Judgement*), as the difference between the two kinds of ‘reflective judgements’ that observers make of objects and which Kant terms ‘aesthetic’ and ‘teleological’ judgements. According to Gordon Graham, theories of art have broadly fallen into two camps, corresponding to those who uphold and those who reject Kant’s premise: those that seek to determine or defend the notion of the perceived essence of art and those that conceive of art as a sociological or political phenomenon. The respective positions of these two groups of thinkers are in direct conflict with each other.¹¹⁸

R. G. Collingwood and Peter Strawson belong to the first group. Each has separately re-articulated Kant’s opposition between aesthetics and ethics, adopting extreme positions according to which artworks, compared to other objects, are so unique as to imbue them with an ineffability. In the *Principles of Art* (1938), Collingwood defines art (proper) as referring to artworks that are the products of a distinct kind of creative activity: the expression (as opposed to arousal) of emotion, which is art (proper)’s sole purpose.¹¹⁹ Aligning himself with Stuart Hampshire and Margaret MacDonald, Strawson distinguishes aesthetic assessments of objects from other kinds of judgements. He argues that the aesthetic appraisal of objects is distinctive from other assessments because the aesthetic experience of an artwork is concerned wholly and exclusively with the totality of the aesthetic features of an artwork and that aestheticians are not interested in anything outside it, including its relationship to other artworks.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Gordon Graham, ‘The Marxist Theory of Art’, *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 37 (2) (1997), 109.

¹¹⁹ R. G. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art* (Oxford: University Press, 1938), pp. 105-124.

¹²⁰ Peter Strawson, ‘Aesthetic Appraisal and Works of Art’, in *Freedom and Resentment and Other Essays* (London; New York: Routledge, 2008), pp. 196-207.

Marxist-influenced thinkers such as Terry Eagleton, in contrast, have held that art is a historical and social construction. Eagleton argues that there is an intimate relationship between literature and ideology, with the latter tacitly informing individual tastes and the construction of literary canons:

If it will not do to see literature as an 'objective', descriptive category, neither will it do to say that literature is just what people whimsically choose to call literature. For there is nothing at all whimsical about such kinds of value-judgement: they have their roots in deeper structures of belief which are as apparently unshakeable as the Empire State building.¹²¹

For him, the position that 'art is for art's sake' has important political implications. He argues that the historic concern amongst intellectuals with aesthetics in Modern European culture has functioned to preserve the political supremacy of the bourgeoisie. However, Eagleton, in *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*, sees — with due caution — in aesthetics and art the potential for the undoing of this cultural hegemony: the aesthetic — for him, a fundamentally 'contradictory, self-undoing sort of project' — works against itself and the dominant political class that has instrumentalized it.¹²²

In postcolonial studies, Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha have similarly troubled the presumed gap between texts and everything outside them and have made the case that the political function of postcolonial criticism is to tease out the ambiguities and tensions within colonial texts. Spivak confers on postcolonial women intellectuals the responsibility of problematizing colonial discourses whereas Bhabha, whose position is more extreme, argues that the uncertainties, paradoxes and tensions of colonial discourses prevented colonial rule from enjoying a total hegemony — a contention that has been critiqued by Benita Parry.¹²³ In a related way, Kwame Anthony Appiah argues that the use of European

¹²¹ Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), p. 14.

¹²² Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), p. 2.

¹²³ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', in *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. by Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 1993), p. 104; Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 138; Parry, 'Signs of the

languages and the engagement with European imperial narratives and discourses by post-colonial thinkers and writers makes these ‘tools’ into ‘double agents’: ‘Now that the objects of European imperialism have at last become the subjects of a discourse addressed both to each other and to the West, European languages and European disciplines have been "turned", like double agents, from the projects of the metropole to the intellectual work of post colonial cultural life’.¹²⁴ For these diverse thinkers, art, the aesthetic and language have historically served as cultural tools of oppression in the overlapping capitalist and colonial systems but these tools can also be made to serve a reverse agenda.

In *As Quibyrycas*, Quadros’s reframing of *Os Lusíadas* involves stripping the text of its pro-imperial ideological function in favour of a presentation of Portuguese rule overseas in terms of colonial domination. According to Josiah Blackmore, *Os Lusíadas* is an ideological work in its attempt to galvanize imperial fervour in a context of waning enthusiasm for the Portuguese imperial project.¹²⁵ For him, drawing on a distinction between the terms ‘imperial’ and ‘colonial’ made by Ania Loomba according to which ‘imperial’ refers to the processes of ‘domination and control’ that originate from the metropolis and ‘colonial’ to the ‘result’ of imperialism in the subsequently established colonies,¹²⁶ the ideology of *Os Lusíadas* and of the chronicler Gomes Eanes de Zurara – identified by Blackmore as one of Camões’s principal historiographical sources — is imperial rather than colonial:

Zurara and Camões do not on the whole occupy themselves with Portuguese colonial presence; their texts are more imperial in that they focus on a practice of establishing power through knowledge of other lands that radiates outward from the metropole and returns in the form of a text. Camões is silent about Portuguese

Times’, in *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique* (London; New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 61. I discuss Parry’s critique of the work of Bhabha and Spivak — as examples of the disproportionate textualizing bias in postcolonial studies — in the fourth chapter of this thesis.

¹²⁴ Antony Appiah, *In my Father’s House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 56.

¹²⁵ Josiah Blackmore, *Moorings* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), p. xviii.

¹²⁶ Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, 3rd edn (London; New York: Taylor and Francis Group, 2015), p. 28.

colonies— in fact, he ignores the colonial history of the entire west African coast in favor of the ideological factors that, for the poet, always and necessarily motivated expansion into Africa. Camões structures his poem on an ideal of maritime, expansionist itinerancy originating in Portugal and Lisbon, as does Zurara.¹²⁷

There is a peculiar anachronism to the pro-imperial ideology of Camões's texts, in which a past maritime adventure — Vasco de Gama's rounding of the Cape of Good Hope — becomes a prophecy of Portugal's future imperial glories. Camões's outlook configures the imperial endeavour as unfinished and its dominion ever-expanding — the infinite Portuguese sea, in Fernando Pessoa's later formulation.¹²⁸ Paul Dixon notes that this temporal frame places Gama's voyage and Camões's epic account of it at a 'vertex' in Portuguese history.¹²⁹ Dixon's choice of the term 'vertex' to describe the position occupied by Gama's voyage and its account of it in *Os Lusíadas* is suitably ambiguous: it encodes the latent anxiety in *Os Lusíadas* towards the imperial project, in which Gama's voyage simultaneously stands as its zenith and the start of its decline.

In *As Quibyrycas*, Quadros establishes a similarly convoluted temporal frame: the poet claims that he prophesizes the future through an attentive re-examination of the past. This 'future', in *As Quibyrycas*, is an ambiguous timeframe that refers to two distinct but overlapping subject positions: the reconstructed standpoint of a disillusioned post-Alcacer-Quibir Camões and the vantage point of the anti-colonial Grabato Dias/Quadros. The (anti) colonial posture in *As Quibyrycas* is turned to the present-past, as opposed to the past-future of *Os Lusíadas* that omits the consequences of Portuguese imperial domination: the violent reality of colonial authoritarian rule.

¹²⁷ Blackmore, *Moorings*, p. xxiii.

¹²⁸ See 'Padrão' and 'Mar Português', in Fernando Pessoa, *Mensagem* (Lisbon: Ática, 1993), pp. 62-63; p. 72.

¹²⁹ Paul. B. Dixon, 'History as Prophecy in Camões's *Os Lusíadas*', *Luso-Brazilian Review*, 22:2 (1985), 147.

The Canon and Authority

A specific imperial ideological function was imposed on *Os Lusíadas* by the Estado Novo during the colonial period: the poem was used to justify Portugal's continued presence in its African colonies. As Eagleton notes, literary canons are constructions, 'fashioned by particular people for particular reasons at a certain time'.¹³⁰

According to Ralph Hexter, the canon and the literary histories that undergird its formation have tended to be mapped onto a language and a nation: 'the history of a literature itself maps onto the history of a language, understood as "a national language," and [...] both language and literature map on to and "express" the nation itself in some mystical and mythical way'.¹³¹ In this way, the forming and shaping of canons are inherently ideological processes in that they involve the selection of the works and authors that supposedly characterise a nation. In the colonial and post-colonial contexts in Mozambique, where the state had close control over the canon, the configuring of the nation and its history through the canonizing of literary works was a statal ideological projection.

The Estado Novo placed censored versions of select texts by authors such as Camões, Eça de Queirós and Fernando Pessoa that appeared to conform to the regime's ideological underpinnings (Catholicism, social conservatism, nationalism, authoritarianism) onto the national curriculum and excluded other works, by the same authors, which appeared to challenge those ideological tenets.¹³² In the case of Camões, the Estado Novo fabricated

¹³⁰ Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, p. 10.

¹³¹ Ralph Hexter, 'Canonicity', in *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Latin Literature* (Oxford: University Press, 2012).

¹³² Eça de Queirós's *A Cidade e as Serras* (1901) was preferred over the anti-clerical *O Crime do Padre Amaro* (1875-1880) and *Os Maias* (1888), in which Queirós scathingly critiques the Lisbon-based and —

a counter-memory of Camonian readings through a revision of late nineteenth-century imperial historiography as written by members of the Geração de 70, such as Oliveira Martins and Antero de Quental. This group of writers cited the discoveries as one of the primary causes of Portuguese decadence at the end of the nineteenth century.¹³³ The Geração de 70's revision of Portuguese imperial history was accompanied by a critique of the Portuguese colonial project in Africa.¹³⁴ Under this reading of Portuguese imperial history, *Os Lusíadas* stands as both the epopee of the Portuguese nation and its epitaph.¹³⁵

In contrast, Estado Novo educational programmes sought to present authors such as Camões, Almeida Garrett and Eça de Queirós as national heroes through selective teaching of these writers' works.¹³⁶ According to Cunha, 'as famosas passagens críticas ou [as] que sublinham a decadência do império' (the well-known critical passages or those that underline the decadence of the empire) in *Os Lusíadas* were excised from the curriculum.¹³⁷ Under this process, an Estado-Novo-Camões was constructed during the period 1936-1954.¹³⁸ As Frederick G. Williams notes:

figuratively and literally — incestuous elite of late 19th-century Portugal. The second part of Pessoa's mystic-nationalist rewriting of *Os Lusíadas*, *Mensagem* (1934), was also placed on the national curriculum.

¹³³ Carlos M. F. da Cunha, 'O Camões do Estado Novo: Receção e Ensino', in Maria do Céu Fraga, José Cândido de Oliveira Martins, João Amadeu Carvalho da Silva, Maria Madalena Teixeira da Silva, Manuel Ferro, *Camões e os Contemporâneos* (Braga: Centro Interuniversitário de Estudos Camonianos, 2012), p. 253.

¹³⁴ Members of the Geração de 70 called for Portugal to abandon its African colonies. Eça de Queirós even called for the colonies to be sold to the British Empire. Margarida Calafate Ribeiro, 'Uma História de Regressos: Império, Guerra Colonial e Pós-colonialismo', *Oficina do Centro de Estudos Sociais*, 188 (2003), 14-15. Eça's critical stance towards Portuguese colonialism, specifically the former colony of Brazil, is apparent in the text 'O Brasil e Portugal', originally published as 'Um Artigo do *Times* sobre o Brasil'. Eça de Queirós, *Cartas de Inglaterra e Crónicas de Londres* (Lisbon: Livros do Brasil), pp. 163-174.

¹³⁵ Antero de Quental, 'No Tricentenário de Camões', in *Prosas*, 3 vols (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade), II, p. 309. See also Oliveira Martins, *Camões, Os Lusíadas, e a Renascença em Portugal* (Porto: Livraria Internacional de Ernesto Chardron, 1891), p. ix; p. 108.

¹³⁶ In the case of Eça, the Estado Novo selectively taught the author's latter works, constructing the image of a 'late' Eça, framed by the dictatorship as a traditionalist and nationalist writer who had returned to his 'rural' roots in his ancestral lands in Tormes in the North of Portugal. Cunha, 'O Camões do Estado Novo: Receção e Ensino', note on p. 254.

¹³⁷ Cunha, 'O Camões do Estado Novo: Receção e Ensino', p. 256.

¹³⁸ Cunha, 'O Camões do Estado Novo: Receção e Ensino', p. 256.

Camões e os estudos camonianos eram [em 1972] ainda, em certa medida, propriedade de um governo fascista e dos estudiosos “oficiais” das universidades, que assiduamente se protegiam dos que, vindos de fora e sem autorização, se quisessem intrometer na sua área de estudos.¹³⁹

Camões and studies of his work were [in 1972] to a certain extent, the property of a fascist government and the ‘official’ University scholars who assiduously protected themselves against those foreign, unauthorized researchers who sought to meddle in their field.

Eduardo Lourenço argues that Camões has, at times, been a political football in Portugal, whose works and image have been seized upon for ideological rather than literary reasons. He says that Camões is the ‘objeto das nossas paixões nacionais, que são menos literárias ou culturais do que ideológicas, patrióticas, cívicas e por vezes partidárias’ (the object of Portugal’s national passions, which are more ideological, patriotic, civic and, at times, party-political, than literary or cultural).¹⁴⁰

Thus, in the colonial context (and, indeed, after independence, as I discuss in chapter three), to be canonical was to be authorised by the state; in the case of contemporary writers, it represented intellectual and political compromise and a surrendering of authorial autonomy. Quadros’s self-publication of his works granted him relative autonomy in the context of censorship and spared him relying on publishing houses to print his work. Except *Eu, o Povo* (FRELIMO) and the second edition of *As Quybryycas* (Afrontamento), all of Quadros’s works were self-published. The autonomy granted by self-publication came at the cost of reduced distribution and has contributed to his omission from the post-colonial canons of Portugal and Mozambique. Even *As Quybryycas*, an engagement with one of Portuguese literature’s canonical texts, has been largely ignored by Portuguese readers and the academy.

¹³⁹ Williams, ‘Prósodia, Paródia, Prosa: O Prefácio de Jorge Sena a *As Quibíricas*, de Frei Ioannes Garabatus’, in *Jorge de Sena: O Homem que Sempre Foi* (Lisbon: ICALP, Ministério da Educação, 1992), p. 221.

¹⁴⁰ Eduardo Lourenço, ‘Romantismo, Camões e a Saudade’, in *Portugal come Destino seguido de Mitologia da Saudade* (Lisbon: Grádiva, 1999), p. 147.

Reframing Camões: Jorge de Sena's Preface

É o momento de declarar, agora que finalizamos estas modestas considerações introdutórias de uma publicação a tão vários títulos estrondosa, que a precipitação em editá-la quanto antes, neste ano do centenário de *Os Lusíadas*, não nos deu tempo — esmagados ao peso das nossas obrigações de camonólogo não oficial — para ler atentamente, de uma ponta à outra, *As Quibíricas*. O que faremos na primeira oportunidade. Mas desde quando é tradição em Portugal, ou em Portugal se exige, que um prefaciador tenha lido a obra que prefacia? Pelo que as circunstâncias até nisto nos fizeram obedecer às mais lúdimas tradições da cultura portuguesa. (*As Quibyrycas*, p. 36)

Now that we have finalized our modest and introductory considerations of a publication that is, in ways more than one, tumultuous, the time has come to declare that the speed with which the poem had to be edited, in this year of the fourth centenary of *Os Lusíadas*, meant that we did not have sufficient time — snowed under as we are with the obligations of an unofficial Camonian scholar — to read carefully, from the first octave through to the last, *As Quibyrycas*. A task that we will carry out at the earliest opportunity. But when has it ever been the tradition in Portugal, or has it been required of prefacers in Portugal, that one read the work that one prefaces? Indeed, the circumstances in which this preface was written compelled us to obey the most authentic traditions of Portuguese culture!

In the penultimate paragraph of his preface to *As Quibyrycas*, Sena makes a startling revelation: he has not read the poem about which he has spoken with supreme authority. With the comically pompous verbosity characteristic of his text, Sena declares that he, a self-styled ‘camonólogo não oficial’ (unofficial Camonian scholar), was too busy to read the poem through to the end. In this way, Sena positions himself as an outlier in relation to the literary academy in Portugal who is nevertheless highly familiar with the practices of the academy.

In 1972, Sena was in exile from Portugal. Sena was a Portuguese literary critic, author and political dissident who fled Portugal for Brazil in 1959, where he stayed until 1965, before moving to the USA. There, he taught at the University of Wisconsin (1965-1970) and the University of California, in Santa Bárbara (1970-1978). He met Quadros on a trip to Mozambique in the summer of 1972. His self-stylising as a ‘camonólogo não oficial’ is a reference to his exclusion from the Portuguese academy.

At the same time that he marks his distance from the academy, Sena, in the preface, ironically indulges in the practices of the Camonologians that he mocks and parodies his

own work as a Camões scholar.¹⁴¹ Although Sena ironizes the scholarly preface as a genre, his text functions as an effective preface to the poem that he introduces; his text sets out many of *As Quybyrycas*'s concerns, locates the poem in the context of Camonian criticism and indulges in the impishness of Quadros's prank.

In the paratexts that frame *As Quybyrycas*, there are many hints that the poem and its preface are not what they appear to be. The title page, which mimics the title page of *Os Lusíadas* in terms of layout and typography, is dated 1972. In the first paragraph of the preface, Sena ironically asserts that the poem is attributed to a 'conhecido e estimado poeta por certo quinhentista, Fr. João Grabato' (well-known, esteemed and *most certainly* *sixteenth-century* poet, Friar João Grabato [my emphasis]), whose name 'na melhor tradição dos nunca assaz louvados humanistas, macarrònicamente latinizou' (in the best tradition of the never sufficiently praised humanists he macaronically Latinized, p. 15). Here, Sena points to the fact that Quadros Latinized the name of his contemporary penname, João Pedro Grabato Dias, to create a fictional sixteenth-century author. Indeed, throughout the preface, Sena refers to Ioannes Garabatus as João Grabato.

In the preface, Sena dismantles the authorial image of Camões constructed by the Portuguese academy under the Estado Novo by turning to the poet's biography, which he reinvents using apocryphal accounts of Camões's life after his return to Portugal. In this way, Sena rewrites the biographical and genealogical study of Camões that he published in 1961 and to which the title of his preface directly alludes.¹⁴² These invented biographical

¹⁴¹ Sena includes an absurdist comparative analysis of the number of cantos and stanzas in *Os Lusíadas* and *As Quybyrycas* respectively that mirrors his numerological readings of Camões's epic in Sena, 'Estrutura de *Os Lusíadas*', in *A Estrutura de Os Lusíadas e Outros Estudos Camonianos e de Poesia Peninsular do Século XVI* (Lisbon: Portugália, 1970), pp. 55-183.

¹⁴² The title of the preface to *As Quybyrycas* is 'Um Imenso Inédito Semi-Camoneano, e o Menos que Adiante Se Verá'. The title of the biographical and genealogical study first published in 1961, in Rio de

details are mobilised to highlight the ambiguities of Camões's work and thereby counter his image as pious national hero. Furthermore, the biography of the occluded master-author, Quadros, is weaved into the preface and made to overlap with the fictionalized biographies of Camões and Garabatus.

Sena's parody of academic discourse involves a bulky referencing apparatus. Williams notes that the many footnotes in the preface — which becomes more paratext than main text as the preface progresses — that cite fictional and non-fictional authors 'dão legitimidade ao prefácio e servem para mostrar ao leitor que o escritor se preparou convenientemente, ao passo que, muitas vezes, essas mesmas técnicas são usadas apenas para disfarçar a falta de substância dos trabalhos' (legitimize the preface and serve to demonstrate to the reader that the writer has done the appropriate amount of background reading at the same time that, on many occasions, those same techniques are used merely to disguise the cited works' lack of substance).¹⁴³ On a formal level, the footnotes reinforce one of Sena's implicit arguments: that the dominant Portuguese historiographical narratives put forward by the Estado Novo and conservative academics are highly selective readings of Portugal's past activities, which rely on denial and omission. Many of the footnotes contain anecdotes about the sexual and violent imperialist activities which, Sena suggests, have been suppressed by the shapers of Portuguese historiography. Alternative takes on Portugal's past and the evidence that would support these subversive narratives have been relegated to a marginal status.

Janeiro, is 'Ascendentes e Parentes de Camões, *Os Lusíadas*, e o Mais que Adiante Se Verá'. The study was reprinted in *A Estrutura de Os Lusíadas e Outros Estudos Camonianos e de Poesia Peninsular do Século XVI*, pp. 5-54.

¹⁴³ Williams, 'Prósodia, Paródia, Prosa: O Prefácio de Jorge Sena a *As Quibíricas*, de Frei Ioannes Garabatus', in *Jorge de Sena: O Homem que Sempre Foi*, p. 221.

Sena frames *Os Lusíadas* as a prologue, providing a sweeping overview of ‘quanto veio depois’ (all that followed), including: Alcacer Quibir, the unification with Spain (1580-1640), the Lisbon earthquake of 1755, the Napoleonic invasion and concomitant occupation by the British, the Portuguese civil war of 1828-1834, the fall of the monarchy, the establishment of the Republic and the dictatorship period, which Sena ironically refers to as ‘o meio século ulterior que colocou Portugal enfim na vanguarda das nações não apenas ocidentais mas de outros pontos cardeais e colaterais geralmente incluídos na Rosa dos Ventos’ (the past half-century that put Portugal in the vanguard of not just Western nations — in fact, of all of the cardinal and collateral points generally included on the Compass Rose, *As Quibyrycas*, p. 18). Each of these catastrophes was, Sena sardonically muses, an attempt

para criar-se o Canto Undécimo que faltava à plena integridade de um prodigioso país que atingiu finalmente aquele superior centro de imóvel estabilidade na vertigem dos mundos e no desabar dos impérios, em que o movimento se identifica com a inércia, e a vida pública e privada adquire [sic.], entre gravatas [...] brilhantinas e inaugurações de fontenários, a rigidez perene da morte que a imortalidade isenta daquela putrefação a que os cadáveres, por falta de consciência nacional e cívica, soem entregar-se.
(p. 18)

to create the Eleventh Canto that our prodigious country had been lacking — a country which had finally reached that superior centre of immobile stability amongst the collapse of worlds and empires, in which movement is identical to inertia, and public and private life acquire, in the midst of neckties, slicked-back hair and ribbon-cuttings, a perennial and deathly rigidity, whose immortality spares it the putrefaction that corpses, through a lack of national or civic conscience, are wont to undergo.

The eleventh canto of *As Quibyrycas* recounts the death of King Sebastian — the first of many disasters to befall the Portuguese in the elided historical period between Camões’s epic and the colonial period.

The central question that Sena’s preface addresses is that of the identity of the author of the manuscript, which, according to him, was uncovered by its editor, Grabato Dias, without a cover or authorial attribution. Sena’s hypothesis that *As Quibyrycas* was written by Camões as revenge against King Sebastian is grounded in his wildly extrapolatory and conjectural readings of apocryphal accounts written by Camões’s contemporaries —

fictional and non-fictional. His dubious academic practice, he notes ironically, faithfully follows the hallowed traditions of *Camonologia*.

The quest for the identity of *As Quibyrycas*'s author is accompanied by a reframing of Camões's authorial image. The duplicitous nature of *Os Lusíadas* reflects the double life led by Camões in Portugal, having returned from India. Sena's search for the identity of the author of *As Quibyrycas* is a double-edged gesture similar to Lourdes Cortez's preface to *As Laurentinas* (analysed in chapter four). Sena is not interested in Camões's biography; he uses a reinvention of the author's biography to counter the Estado Novo's image of Camões as a paragon of Catholic piety and to put forward his own counter reading of *Os Lusíadas*.

To evoke Camões's double life in Lisbon, Sena cites an apocryphal account written by a contemporary of Camões, Luís Franco Correia, whose text is dripping with Sena's irony. It rehearses the hypocrisy and posturing patriotism that Sena mocks in his own contemporaries.

According to Sena, Correia's insights into Camões's double life have been suppressed by the Portuguese academy, along with any references to *As Quibyrycas*. The preface's eighteenth footnote suggests that a reference to *As Quibyrycas* made in an apocryphal work authored by a Fr. António da Purificação may have been concealed by anonymous agents.¹⁴⁴ The twentieth footnote points to the process, discussed earlier,

¹⁴⁴ The reference to *As Quibyrycas* supposedly appears in the seventh volume Fr. António da Purificação's 'rare work', titled *História Apologética e Gloriosa da Aparição e Milagres da Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Lapa, de Aguiar da Beira, ou Repositório Cronológico Crítico, Didascálico, Filosófico, Ético, Político, etc., dos Varões Ilustres de Ambos os Sexos que Honraram por Feitos e Virtudes a Seráfica Ordem os Defensores da Virgindade de Maria, Fundada naquela Igreja pelo Insigne Antístite Episcopal de Castelo-Branco, D. Agostinho de Azevedo e Mello de Castro Surrupita, no Ano da Graça de Nosso Senhor, de 1576, Obra Moral e Espiritual, Dedicada ao Ínclito Talento e mais Partes do Excelentíssimo Senhor D. Alexandre da Cunha e Silva de Sampaio Villasboas, Eminente Marquês de Alcabideche, 3º do Seu Título, 18º Senhor da Tábua de Ferreiros, Comendador de Castrim na Ordem de Santiago, etc. e do Conselho de Sua Majestade*

whereby the Portuguese canon and Portuguese literary history are shaped by a select group of people, who choose which information is shared with the wider public. In a framing similar to that used by Grabato Dias in *Pressaga*, which was published two years after *As Quybyrycas*, Sena describes knowledge and truth as lying in the hands of the nation, which has privatized its culture (*Pressaga*, p. 66). The shaping of Portuguese historiography privileges works that have been published, ignoring the alternative histories told in the works of ‘contemporâneos menos discretos’ (indiscreet contemporaries, note 20, p. 23). It is implied that, in the Portuguese context, publication is a process of political compromise whereby the author conforms to the state’s ideology. National culture is a ‘bem’ (good), but it certainly is not a ‘bem comum’ (public good). Archives are the ‘guardians’ of national culture for they contain the unpublished works that interrogate the image of the nation that the state has constructed. In this framework, the archive is a site of national repression.

As *Quybyrycas* represents the side of Camões that the Estado Novo and the Portuguese academy have suppressed because the poem and the poet’s association with Frey Ioannes and his drunken set would besmirch the image of Camões as a figure of ‘moral e bons costumes’ (morality and decorum) for school children. Through mimicry, Sena presents the Estado Novo’s stance towards its culture as protectionist and isolationist; the dissemination and shaping of Portuguese culture are top-down processes, in which only an exclusive group of people participates. Authors such as Camões are protected from meddling ‘estrangeiros’ (foreigners) who approach Camões with ‘curiosidades’ (curiosity), deprived

Fidelíssima. The volume ‘que geralmente falta’ (that is generally missing) is precisely the seventh volume that contains the reference to *As Quybyrycas*. The copy ‘consulted’ by Sena is in the French National Library in Paris. The fact that the page with the reference to *As Quybyrycas* has signs that someone had tried to tear it out leads Sena to question whether ‘houve intenção de suprimir[...] a referência às Quibiricas?’ (the individual in question intended to suppress the reference to *As Quybyrycas*?, note 18, p. 23).

of the ‘mais acendrado patriotismo lusíada’ (the purest Portuguese patriotism), which threaten to ruin Portugal’s cultural heritage (note 20, p. 23).

According to Correia’s account, on his return to Portugal, Camões split his time between the friars of São Domingos and the disreputable patrons of his local tavern. Camões used the friars to

[...] passar o poema [*Os Lusíadas*] por limpo e santo, e não suspeitarem dele Camões até que Deus fosse servido chamá-lo à Sua Divina Presença por morte dizia ele que não de pena ou penúria, nem de pátria em competição de doença com as suas partes baixas também marcadas pelos erros e o mau exercício das faculdades viris, mas de puro fazer-se o que não era, por amor mais de seu poema que de sua vida ou salvação. (pp. 24-25)

sanitize and sanctify *Os Lusíadas*, so that no one could suspect that it was by Camões until such time as God requested him before His Divine Presence, through death — he maintained— not of sorrow or penury, nor through patriotic competition with the country’s riddled private parts, his and the country’s organs both being marked by sin and the poor exercise of their members; rather, to make pure that which was impure, more out of his love for his poem than a sense of self-preservation or desire for salvation.

Camões’s intimacy with the friars is a cynical ploy designed to make his poem ‘clean’ and ‘holy’; in other words, according to the narrator, a ruse with the purpose of creating a separation between the author and his poem (‘não suspeitarem dele [o poema] Camões’; ‘de puro fazer-se o que não era’) so that his poem might be judged objectively by those ‘que viram no poema [*Os Lusíadas*] liberdades e atrevimentos impróprios de tão nobre poesia’ (saw in *Os Lusíadas* liberties and daringness inappropriate to such noble verse, p. 24). According to Correia, Camões had his eye turned to posterity. He was concerned with how his poem would be read, rather than with his own salvation — the implication being that Camões’s Christian faith was performative. The narrator also paints Camões, whose riddled genitals embody the problems that plague his country, as promiscuous, an image that runs counter to ‘sua condição de génio celibatário e estéril’ (his condition as celibate and sterile genius, p. 30), which, according to Sena later in the preface, is befitting of great figures of Portuguese culture. Correia’s account implies that the parts of *Os Lusíadas* which are authentically Camonian have been mostly wiped from the text by the friars who sanitized

the poem and its author's image. His account also implies that Camões thus unwittingly created the conditions for his poem's becoming appropriated by later political regimes. Camões's complicity is with the evils of his time and those of posterity.

Not all traces of Camões's bohemian life have been erased. Correia's account provides a glimpse at a counter-image: the man who drank with unseemly and irreligious characters such as Fernão Mendes Pinto, who is censured by Correia for being the author of 'uma obra de sua vida andeja que era tudo dito pelo contrário em fingidos louvores de Chinas e Japões e outras terras bárbaras e ignorantes da lei de Cristo' (a work about his adventuring life in which all is recounted back-to-front in feigned praise of Chinas and Japans and other such barbarian lands that are ignorant of the Law of Christ, p. 25).¹⁴⁵ Camões's stated reasons for visiting the tavern, according to Correia, were evangelical: Camões was supposedly on a mission to convert the 'matalotagem' (sailors) who frequented the establishment, with the assent of the friars, and to 'acrisolar-se em sua viritude' (enhance his virtue through trial and temptation), by living in close proximity with the sinful temptations of drink and depravity (p. 25). Correia's account betrays the fact that the temptation of sin proved too much for his friend and that Correia too was a patron of the tavern, even if he — as a good Catholic! — kept his distance on the occasions that '[eu] via [Camões] rindo ou falando e ouvindo dizeduras indignas de homem bem nascido e cumpridor dos deveres de bom católico e fiel súbdito dos reis de Portugal que ele cantara com tão discreto primor' (I saw Camões laughing at and uttering and listening to speech unbecoming of a well-bred gentleman upholding the duties of a good Catholic and loyal subject of the kings of Portugal, about whom he had written with such discreet refinement,

¹⁴⁵ Fernão Mendes Pinto is the author of *Peregrinação*, 2 vols (Mem Martins: Publicações Europa-América, 1995).

p. 25). One of the worst members of that ‘gente baixa’ (lowly folk, p. 25) was a certain João Grabato, who encouraged Camões to write a sequel to *Os Lusíadas*. Camões’s double-sided biography — a reflection of his ambiguous epic — contains the features for the author’s making and unmaking as a figure Catholic respectability. Correia’s account, like *Os Lusíadas* and *As Quibyrycas*, is a text whose ambiguities leave it prone to multiple ideologically motivated readings.

The other side of Camões is embodied by the figure of Ioannes Garabatus. The attribution of *As Quibyrycas* to Garabatus¹⁴⁶ was a conscious breaking of the promise that Camões had made in *Os Lusíadas* to write a laudatory poem recounting Sebastian’s reign: ‘E era parte da combinação entre tão grande poeta e frade tão desavergonhado que nem de frade usava o hábito, que o poema havia de ir em nome do frade e não dele, porque assim como o rei não cumprira com o poeta, o poeta não cumpriria com o rei em cantá-lo de seu mesmo nome’ (and it was agreed, according to the terms of the prank devised by the great poet and the shameless friar — a friar so shameless, indeed, that he did not wear a habit! — that the poem would be in the friar’s name and not in Camões’s, for as the king had not lived up to his promise, the poet would not keep his by singing an epic in his name, p. 26). These lines point to Garabatus’s status as a drunkard and blasphemous alter ego of Camões: both men who returned disillusioned from voyages that were part of Portugal’s imperial expansion. Indeed, Sena describes Garabatus as Camões’s alter ego later in the preface (p. 28). That *As Quibyrycas* reflects the duplicitous nature of Camões’s poetry is manifested in the poem which, according to Sena, bears the marks of interventions by Garabatus.

¹⁴⁶ Although de Sena, on the whole, refers to Ioannes Garabatus as ‘João Grabato’, I, for the sake of clarity, refer to the dubious author of *As Quibyrycas* as Ioannes Garabatus or Garabatus, to distinguish him from João Pedro Grabato Dias.

Sena's hypothesis that *As Quybryrcas* is a work of composite authorship is articulated in a passage where he mocks the 'melhor tradição impressionista da camonologia, a que assim prestamos a nossa homenagem' (best impressionist tradition of Camonology, to which we pay homage, note 22, p. 27), formulated in the repetitive 'método circular da tradição camonológica' (circular method of the Camonological tradition, note 23, p. 27):

Que o poema é "camoneano" [...] não sofre a menor dúvida: basta lê-lo e sentir que assim é. Que o estilo patenteia a intenção de escrever numa linguagem semelhante à das cartas de Camões um poema que *não fosse dele*, é evidente. Que o frade terá, aqui e ali, posto muito de sua lavra, para melhor cumprir a promessa feita ao amigo e desvirtuar alguma camonidade excessiva e não consentânea com a intenção originária é patente. (p. 27)

That the poem is 'Camonian' is beyond doubt: it is suffice to read it and feel that it is. It is evident that the style manifestly reveals an intention to write, in a language similar to that used in Camões's letters, a poem *that is not by him*. It is evident that the friar has, here and there, put touches of his own in order to uphold the promise that he made to his friend and to distort any excessive Camoninity or any Camonian features inappropriate to the author's original intention.

There is an ambiguity, here, as to what makes a poem 'Camonian'. Sena suggests, curiously, that a text that is 'excessively' Camonian is not Camonian at all. In this way, plays on the equivocation that the adjective 'Camonian' encodes. For conservative critics of Camões, for whom the poet's letters besmirched the image of Camões as national hero, 'Camonian' represents a take on Camões and his poetry that quashes all other interpretations. For Helder Macedo, Camões's letters are a valuable to understanding the tensions within Camões's literary works and his humour.¹⁴⁷ Sena suggests that the non-Camonian moments in *As Quybryrcas* — the instances where Garabatus may have changed the manuscript handed to him by Camões — were added with Camões's consent and do not betray the 'intenção originária' (the author's original intention, p. 27): Camões's revenge against his king, in the form of a denunciation of his disastrous reign. In this way, Sena aligns himself with

¹⁴⁷ Helder Macedo, 'O Testemunho das Cartas', *Camões e a Viagem Iniciática* (Lisbon: Abysmo, 2013), pp. 109-123.

Quadros's reading of Camões: an approach to Camões's poetry that takes into account its ambiguities and which draws out the humour of the original works.

The teasing out of what is occluded in Camões's work is a paradoxical process that involves a potentially anachronistic reappreciation of the poet. Sena refers to the extent to which readings of Camões are contextually bound: 'cada época tem *Os Lusíadas* que merece' (every epoch has *The Lusíadas* that it deserves, p. 27). Here, Sena points to the process described by Eagleton whereby authors and their works are continually shaped and reshaped over the course of generations: 'All literary works [...] are 'rewritten', if only unconsciously, by the societies which read them; indeed there is no reading of a work which is not also a 're-writing'.¹⁴⁸ For Sena, the 'amargor satírico e espírito anti-épico' (satirical bitterness and anti-epic spirit) is a guarantee of *As Quibyrycas*'s authenticity, for these features make the poem 'uma obra para os leitores esclarecidos do nosso tempo' (a work for enlightened authors of our time) — those enlightened contemporaries who have lost faith in what it means to be Portuguese. The work is a 'celebration' of the battle of Alcacer Quibir, which 'não puderam fazer, por falta de talento e de perspectiva, os poetas então contratados para isso mesmo, em vez daquele que deixaria à posteridade a epopeia e a anti-epopeia, o prólogo e o epílogo' (poets who, at the time, were contracted to do so, could not have written, in contrast to he who would leave for posterity the epic and anti-epic, prologue and epilogue, p. 27). Here, Sena makes a distinction between mercenary poets who have lacked the perspective and talent necessary to perceive the significance of Sebastian's defeat in North Africa, and the anonymous '[...]aquele' — the double subject Camões/Grabato — who left behind a dual perspective on Portuguese imperialism. For Sena, the academy and the poets they laud have been complicit in a wilful blindness to the violence of the Portuguese Empire.

¹⁴⁸ Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, p. 11.

Sena suggests that the duality of Camões's vision is rooted in his experiences overseas. The other side of *Os Lusíadas* — its anti-epic counterpart, *As Quaybyrycas* — comes from the Empire.

According to Sena, the manuscript for *As Quaybyrycas* was discovered in Mozambique, in the possession of the Grabato Dias da Silva e Quadros family, who are direct descendants of Frey Ioannes (p. 28).¹⁴⁹ In Grabato Dias's 'Posfacto' to the second edition of *As Quaybyrycas*, the links between the Grabato Dias and Quadros family suggested in Sena's preface are further developed.¹⁵⁰ Grabato Dias 'transcribes' extracts from the diary of his grandfather, an *alferes* called José Homem Telles de Quadros, who was charged with looking after the 'espólio' (spoil) of his relatives "das Índias" (from Portuguese India). This 'espólio' contained various imperial relics: masonry blocks from Goan Churches and an archive of texts which includes: '3 tomos em verso antigo' (three tomes of ancient verse). The first two tomes correspond to two distinct versions of *As Quaybyrycas*, written in different handwriting. The third tome is a heavily damaged anonymous text whose title is barely decipherable.¹⁵¹

According to Grabato Dias, the extracts in question were written while José Quadros was interned in a hospital in Inhambane, where he received treatment for wounds sustained in a battle during the incipient war against the Emperor of Gaza, Ngungunyane. Much like

¹⁴⁹ In 1893, the manuscript passed through the hands of Mouzinho de Albuquerque, who, 'reflecting the decadence of his time', was more familiar with controversial French novels and was thus unable to appreciate the value of the poetry in his possession. Sena cites a collection of short texts by Júlio Dantas, called *Pátria Portuguesa* (1914), which contains a short story that describes Mouzinho de Albuquerque's suicide in a coupé holding *Cruelle énigme*, by Paul Bourget. In Dantas's text, Albuquerque is framed as an emasculated war hero who languishes in his sedate routine in Lisbon, where he is the schoolmaster of Portugal's penultimate monarch, Carlos I. Júlio Dantas, 'Mouzinho', in *Pátria Portuguesa* (Lisbon: Bertrand, 1914), pp. 231-242.

¹⁵⁰ 'Posfacto', *As Quaybyrycas*, 2nd edn, pp. 365-366.

¹⁵¹ The title of the third tome reads: P.RNAS.. The missing letters are, presumably, *a*, *u* and *s*, to spell PARNASUS.

the Portuguese colonial project, the official history of which José Quadros's letter 'distorts', the various scions of the Quadros family are in decline: '[a] n^a família que era raça boa e agora até primas tenho de capucha e tamanca' (our family was once of solid stock, but now I count amongst my cousins peasant women). In a letter to his mother, José explains that he has left instructions for the trunk to be dispatched to her should he die. José's determination to send these objects to his mother is owing to the fact that an ancestor of his, a Jesuit called António Quadros, was the architect of various churches in Portuguese India and Asia. For seventy-eight years, the 'arca' — the same name of the mythicized trunk of the other dominant canonical figure in Portuguese literature, Fernando Pessoa — was lost and a family myth of a lost treasure from India persisted until 1971. Grabato Dias reports that that year, a grandson — identified in a footnote as António Quadros, whom Grabato Dias thanks for his work in the recuperation and deciphering of the manuscript — travelled to the North of Mozambique 'em ar de brincadeira e como pretexto a uma viagem às Ilhas do norte de Moçambique' (with a mischievous air and with the pretext of holidaying on the Islands of Northern Mozambique).¹⁵²

In the preface, Sena conjectures that the poem was given to Garabatus in a trade for a son (named Vasco Grabato, after Vasco de Gama) that Camões had with Dona Shezarada da Cunha Dias, the wife of a descendant of the Sultan of Melinde — the interlocutor of Vasco de Gama's history of Portugal in *Os Lusíadas*.¹⁵³ Garabatus kidnapped Shezarada and took her to the Island of Mozambique, where they lived in a non-exclusive relationship, during which Shezarada slept with Garabatus's friends, including Camões (pp. 28-29).¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² In an article of 1994, José Forjaz describes a trip that he and Quadros took to the Ilha de Moçambique. José Forjaz, 'António e a Ilha', *Jornal de Letras: Artes e Ideias*, Ano XIV, 632 (1995), p. 22.

¹⁵³ In Canto I, XXVII of *As Quixobyrycas*, the poet boasts of the many children that he sired all over the Portuguese empire.

¹⁵⁴ Diogo do Couto encountered Camões on the Ilha de Moçambique in 1569. Maria Vitalina Leal de Matos, 'Biografia', in *Obras Completas de Luiz Vaz de Camões: Volume 1, Épica e Cartas*, p. 15.

According to this uncertain genealogy, Quadros and Grabato Dias are potentially both descendants of Camões. Camões's exchanging his child for his poem was done, Sena infers, to cement his status as a celibate male genius (p. 30).

Shezarada da Cunha Dias's full name is an indication of the many Portuguese lovers that her female ancestors had, including, possibly, Diogo Dias and Tristão da Cunha.¹⁵⁵ In a lusotropicalist vein, Sena, thus, frames Portuguese imperial contact as a sexualised encounter between Portuguese men and the women they met overseas. Shezarada's name encodes the history of sexual relations between the women of her family and the Portuguese. Her body metonymically represents her land in the euphemistic insinuation, in footnote twenty-five, that, like many Portuguese, Vasco de Gama had 'dropped anchor' in Melinde (note 25, p. 29). Footnote thirty-two underlines Shezarada's complicity in the sexual economy of Portuguese imperial expansion: she was the owner of a harem whose services the clergy, the military and civil authorities all took advantage of (note 32, p. 30).

Garabatus and the activities of his family are representative of the seedy and violent side of Portuguese imperial expansion. Sena's parenthetical tracing of the Grabato family history parodically mimics the Estado Novo's sanitizing of violence, human trafficking, slavery and rape with a discourse of 'cultural exchange' or miscegenation. In note thirty-seven, Sena alludes to the theorizing of miscegenation and its fraught co-option by the Estado Novo, referencing the tension in a miscegenated Portuguese identity between cultural mixing and a Luso-Christian essentialism rooted in the Estado Novo's allegiance to Catholicism (note 37, p. 33). In each intervention by the Grabato family, contemporary Portuguese commentators have distorted, sanitized or ignored the facts. Where the legacy of

¹⁵⁵ Tristão da Cunha was the first viceroy and governor of Portuguese India.

the Grabato family's actions in Africa are still felt, all links to them have been erased or occluded.

The references to the violence of Portuguese expansion are mostly contained in the substantial footnotes that accompany the main text. Whereas Sena notes that Garabatus's kidnapping of Shezarada provoked violence between the Malindians and the Portuguese in the main body of the text, he remarks in a footnote that a contemporary Jesuit account of the incident incorrectly attributes blame to the Malindians, whom the Portuguese blamed for the rape of the wife of a Portuguese trader (note 26, p. 29).

Garabatus brought Camões's son back to Portugal, who later returned to the Island of Mozambique, to his mother. The progeny of Camões/Grabato became heavily involved in the violent activities — arms trading and slave trafficking — that accompanied the Portuguese imperial project. In footnote thirty-three, Sena notes that Garabatus's descendants were slavers whose practice of never breaking up enslaved families — because entire families were transported, presumably for greater financial profit — was hailed by a Fr. Joaquim Lucideno de Ataíde for its 'suma humanidade' (supreme humanity). In the same note, Sena says that the Grabato family were involved in the trafficking of black women to the 'haréns da Arábia que hoje diríamos Saudita' (the harems of the Arabia that we now call Saudi) and their instruction in elite harem schools. All connection between the Grabato family's involvement in these practices and modern-day sex slavery between African countries, such as Ethiopia and Nigeria, and Saudi Arabia has been erased (note 33, pp. 30-31). Sena suggests that this occlusion of the underside of Portuguese imperialism is owing to wilful mis- and non-reporting, and to the more general decline in Portugal's activities overseas: the demand for the Grabato family's trades (arms, slaves, prostitution) 'os

reduzi[u] a uma mediania mais do que modesta, de que se não recuperaram para cima do anonimato do vulgo’ (reduced them to a more than modest mediocrity, from which they never recovered, remaining in the anonymity of ordinariness, pp. 31-32). The history of the Grabato/Camões family represents the half-occluded history of violence of the Portuguese empire, which *As Quibyrycas* and its preface — as non-canonical texts — unmask.

The comic displacing of the violent profiteering of Portuguese imperialism onto Grabato Dias’s and Quadros’s ancestry entails an indulging, in particular, of the sexual activities of Portuguese men at home and overseas. In footnote thirty-five, Sena makes the case for the Grabato family’s noble heritage. He recounts an anecdote involving Fernão Grabato, a cousin of D. Mécia Lopez, one of D. Sancho II’s lovers. The anecdote is an extended penis joke. Fernão Grabato, who is famed for his prodigious member, is called to Sancho’s court, at D. Mécia’s behest, to display his gigantic protuberance. Unable to get it up before the court, Fernão quips that he can only achieve an erection in royal beds. When Sancho orders D. Mécia to lift her skirt, Fernão defends his inability to perform on command by arguing that ‘súbdito e vassalo dedicado respeitadamente ao seu rei que o seu membro mais do que ele era, não podia este erguer a cabeça mais alto do que a do próprio, mormente quando as dimensões fossem maiores que as do mesmo rei com quem em caso qualquer deveria competir’ (as a subject and vassal respectfully dedicated to his king, sporting a member larger than his Majesty’s, he could not lift his head higher than his King’s, especially given the superior size of his own in comparison with that of the King, with whom one ought not compete under any circumstances, p. 32). Sancho’s appreciation of Fernão’s quick wit suggests an informal and friendly relationship with the crown that reflects Quadros’s own relationship with the political authorities during the colonial period.

Sena's making the Grabato Dias/Quadros family complicit in sexual deviance and violence is part of his homage to Camões, whose 'olhar ambivalente' Isabel Almeida has underlined in his letters, which 'ao devassar — com graça e gozo — erros e fraquezas, deles não esconde ser cúmplice' (in disclosing — with good humour — sinful behaviour, Camões does not hide his complicity in such acts).¹⁵⁶ Sena's Camões delights in sexual excess; in the bohemian life described in Camões's letters before he left for India and which Sena recreates for the post-India period. However, Sena's critique of the sanitizing of imperial and colonial practices and the incompatibility of lusotropical and moralizing Christian discourses to describe the Portuguese imperial project makes light of the histories of rape and prostitution with which the Portuguese were involved. In Sena's preface, sex, including the rape of women by men, is exclusively comic material.

King Sancho and Fernão Grabato's bonding over a bawdy joke reflects the paradox of humour as a critical political tool. Whereas in the 'demissionetos' from *40 e Tal Sonetos* analysed in chapter one pranking authority earned Grabato Dias a promotion, in the anecdote from Sena's preface Fernão Grabato enhances his reputation before the king. In both instances, Sena and Quadros conceive of a relationship to power whereby the anti-authoritarian opponent mocks the powers-that-be with no danger of reprisals: indeed, Grabato Dias (in the sonnet) and Fernão Grabato are rewarded for their misdemeanours. Such a framing points to the little risk that Grabato Dias/Quadros ran in writing anti-authoritarian texts and suggest that there is a certain toothless-ness to mocking or pranking political authority. At the same time that Sena presents the Estado Novo's project of establishing a canon founded on omission and suppression as an absurdist endeavour

¹⁵⁶ Isabel Almeida, 'Introdução às Cartas', in *Obras Completas de Luiz Vaz de Camões: Volume 1, Épica e Cartas* p. 379

doomed to its own undoing, he suggests that the very strategies adopted by him and by Quadros/Grabato Dias to oppose that project— duplicity, mockery and parody — entail a complicity with that which they oppose. In contrast, the poet — in *As Quaybyrycas* — will present those very methods as potentially dangerous in the wrong hands.

The preface ends with an ironic plea for forgiveness addressed to the Velho do Restelo, Adamastor, Téthys, Vénus and Bacchus — all characters from *Os Lusíadas*. The first two voice the anti-imperial concerns censored under the Estado Novo and the last three are associated with sex in Camões's epic:

E que o Velho do Restelo e o Adamastor, assim como Téthys, Vénus e os outros deuses incluindo o Padre Baco, nos perdoem a todos, e sejam para tanto estas *Quibíricas* o ramo de louro e mais temperos tão necessários ao bom gosto da vida e das palavras em torrente, nesta era de pílulas de poesia e outras.
(pp. 36-37)

And I pray that the Old Man of Belém and Adamastor, not to mention Tethis, Venus and the other gods — including Father Bacchus — forgive us all, and that these *Quaybyrycas* serve as the laurel wreath and the seasoning that is so necessary to giving flavour to life and to an endless flood of words, in this age of the poetry pill and other such contraceptives.

The concluding sentence is accompanied by a footnote which makes reference to papal opposition to the contraceptive pill. Thus, Sena concludes his text with a reinforcement of one of his implicit arguments: Camões and his salacious poem are absurdly unsuitable for the conservative Catholic ideology of the Estado Novo. For Sena, the very texts that the Estado Novo appropriated, along with non-canonical works, can be used to challenge the political appropriation that they underwent.

Speaking Truth to Power: The Ethics of 'Poeting' in *As Quaybyrycas*

[Sebastião] Tem bons conhecimentos variados
do latino e na escrita faz progresso
mais cêdo [sic.] que o comum embora os fados
permanentes o tenham num regresso
estranhíssimo...enigmas rodados
por seus escritos têm [sic.] vário ingresso
no círculo cortesão que o corteja
sem que mal ou desvio alguém preveja.
(V, CDXXI, p. 157)

Sebastian's knowledge of Latin
is extensive and in writing he progresses
earlier than is common, but the ever-present
fates hold him back in a highly unusual
regression. The enigmas that furrow
his writings allow for multiple points of entry
and in the circle of courtesans that surround him
none sees in his script evil omens.

In the description of Sebastian's upbringing in Canto V of *As Quibyrycas*, the poet describes the young prince as a precocious pupil who begins writing from an early age. In a curious manoeuvre, an implicit parallel is drawn between Sebastião and António Quadros/Grabato Dias. According to Eugénio Lisboa, Quadros was a precocious child whose peculiarities led his teachers to believe that he had learning difficulties.¹⁵⁷ In a section from *Facto/Fado* (1984) in which Grabato Dias describes 'his' childhood in Northern Portugal, he alludes to his teachers' reaction to his quirks:

Quando na escola oficial me forçaram a que MiM fosse EU
Não podia achar-me tão perfeito e desconheci-me.
Explicaram a recusa por atardo mental.
(*Facto/Fado*, p. 22)

In official school, when they forced Me to be I
I could not think of myself as being that perfect and so I did not recognise myself.
They saw in my rejection proof of mental retardation.

Like Grabato Dias's self-consciously impenetrable poetry, Sebastião's texts are enigmatic. In a gesture similar to that of Sena in the preface, where the violence and brutality of Portuguese imperial conquest is pinned on the Grabato Dias/Quadros family, Quadros, here, cryptically likens himself to King Sebastian, the megalomaniac writer king. The poet identifies enigmatic writing as a sign of evil. For him, ambiguous language, in the hands of the powerful, is dangerous.

Sebastian is a writer and a reader conscious of the role that literature plays in the shaping of history. In Canto V, the poet suggests that Sebastian's obsession with surpassing

¹⁵⁷ Lisboa, *Acta est Fabula*, III, pp. 331-332.

his forebears stems in part from his readings of chronicles recounting the deeds of former Portuguese monarchs (V, CDXXV, p. 158). At the end of the canto, looking out to sea, Sebastian dreams of conquering the East with his armada and surpassing the feats of the rulers of antiquity. He imagines his accomplishments celebrated in his own writings: ‘Vê-se por seus escritos celebrado’ (He sees himself celebrated for his writings, V, DXIX, p. 182). In his fantasy, Sebastian’s immortalisation relies on the writing of his glories. His deluded power fantasies are authoritarian and authorial.

Whereas the poet identifies dangerous power in enigmatic writings, he is less certain, however, that his own ambiguous poem is an effective anti-authoritarian tool given the proclivity of political authorities, as identified by Sena and Quadros, to use the interpretative fertility of ambiguous texts to select the particular meaning, of many, to which the text will be reduced. Whereas Sena suggests that Camões’s poetry is ideological in that it has been made to serve a pro-imperial and patriotic political message by the Portuguese academy and the Estado Novo, Quadros’s text is alternately an apology for and a critique of the ideological underpinnings of Camões’s epic.

As *Quybyrycas* is an eleven-canto poem of 1180 octaves, one canto and eighty octaves longer than *Os Lusíadas*. The poem narrates the life of King Sebastian, from his birth until his death at the battle of Alcaçer Quibir, focusing on select episodes that Quadros recreates. The poet’s focus oscillates between Sebastian and the ‘povo’ (people) who suffer at the hands of his megalomaniac ambitions. These episodes are interspersed with musings on the ethics of writing poetry and the relationship between *As Quaybyrycas* and *Os Lusíadas*. The poem, as Williams and Murilo da Costa Ferreira note, is richly intertextual: besides the persistent references to *Os Lusíadas* and Camões’s lyric poetry, the text is littered with

allusions to Fernando Pessoa's *Mensagem* (1934), Mendes Pinto's *Peregrinação* (1614) and Bernardo Gomes de Brito's *História Trágico-Marítima* (1735-1736).¹⁵⁸

The first four cantos of the poem situate Sebastião's reign within the broader context of Portuguese imperial decline. In canto I, the poet evokes the abandoning of Mazagão by the then regent of Portugal and Sebastian's grandmother, Catarina. In canto II, he describes the Portuguese empire as overstretched. He outlines a series of negative factors, including the ill-disciplined behaviour of the Portuguese outside Portugal; the lack of supplies from Lisbon; the capital's slow response to overseas disputes; the profiteering of captains and viceroys, who divert the financial gains of expansion away from the crown; the lack of local expertise of Portuguese captains, owing to the brevity of their three-year posts; and, the dangers of voyaging in poorly-made ships. In cantos III and IV, the poet describes a shipwreck off the east coast of Africa, after a Portuguese ship is attacked by Corsican pirates. A certain Frey Johannes is identified as a member of the shipwrecked crew. Canto V describes the infancy of the precocious Sebastian, whose quixotic imperial designs and religious intolerance are evidenced at an early age. Canto VI recounts the inauspicious beginning of Sebastian's reign. Lisbon is beset by a year-long plague, prompting Sebastian and his court to flee the capital. The indigence and hardship faced by the king's subjects is contrasted with Sebastian's construction of an opulent palace and his grandiloquent plans to conquer North Africa. Canto VII evokes the persecution of *cristãos novos* (the term given to Jewish people who were forcibly converted to Catholicism) by the Inquisition in a description of an *auto da fé*. In Canto VIII, the poet describes Sebastian's arrival in Ceuta. The poet's evocation of the hedonism of a dinner party attended by local dignitaries and the

¹⁵⁸ See Williams, 'Who and What Constitutes Mozambican Poetry?', *Mediterranean Studies*, 195-199; Murilo da Costa Ferreira, 'O Entrelugar da Nação Pedagógica e da Nação Performativa Portuguesa em *As Quybyrycas*', (doctoral thesis, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 2007); Ferreira, 'A Epopeia Pós-Moderna Portuguesa: Dissimulação e Simulação em *As Quybyrycas*', *Abril*, 4:7 (2011), 91-104.

royal party is contrasted with his description of a slave market. The final cantos evoke Sebastian's ill-fated campaign in North Africa, culminating in the defeat of Portuguese forces at Alcacer Quibir and Sebastian's death during the battle. In the final Canto, the poet foreshadows the end of the Portuguese Empire through an intertext with the concluding poem of Pessoa's *Mensagem*, 'Nevoeiro'.¹⁵⁹

In the opening thirty octaves, the poet positions himself in relation to *Os Lusíadas* and sets out his intentions for his poem. His ethical poem seeks 'the truth' through an interrogation of historiography and a questioning of political and authorial authority. These opening stanzas point to the multiple intended addressees of his poem: King Sebastian, his courtiers, the poet's fellow writers and posterity. In this section, I analyse the poet's setting out of his poetic ethics in *As Quibyrycas's incipit*.

The poet's positioning of his text in relation to *Os Lusíadas* entails a latching onto the features of the poem that were censored by the Estado Novo and a rejection of devices, such as the pagan gods, that he deems inappropriate for his purposes. In the opening stanza, the poet, like Camões, calls upon the fates only to state his invocation is not made 'porque [os 'Altos fados'] detêm / maior poder que o meu neste meu passo / mas só porque é galante e o quero e o faço' (because they hold / a greater power than me in my venture: / rather, because it is gallant to do so, and I want to and, thus, I shall do so, I, I, p. 41). The false modesty of the incipit to *Os Lusíadas* is reformulated as blatant self-assurance. The poet invokes the fates not because they provide him with 'rútilo e seguro/ génio de meu ofício [para esta empresa]' (the blazing and assured / poetic genius required for this undertaking, I, I, p. 41); he addresses them because their encouragement assures him of his genius. The

¹⁵⁹ Pessoa, 'Nevoeiro', in *Mensagem* (Lisbon: Ática, 1993), p. 106.

fates, along with the pagan gods, the Tagides and Adamastor, are later dismissed by the poet: ‘para explicar o error luso, / mais que um error divino será de uso’ (to explain Portuguese failings / divine failings will not suffice, I, XI, p. 43). The speaker implies that the divine framework defers responsibility away from the perpetrators of the crimes that he will describe.

The ambiguous poetic subject, Camões/Garabatus, is ‘em restelo’ (I, IV, p. 41), a reference to the Velho de Restelo who, at the end of Canto IV (stanzas 95-104) of *Os Lusíadas*, warns of the perils of the Portuguese imperial project, highlighting the problems that Portuguese expansion brought to the domestic arena. The poet aligns himself with his fellow artists who ‘buscam excelentíssimo / remédio pelas sendas da verdade’ (search for a most excellent / remedy along the paths of truth) and who do not produce art that praises ‘[o] vilíssimo / Cortesão, ou cortez vilão’ (the abject / Courtesan or the courteous villain, I, VII, p. 42). Truth is a serum for the ‘devouring’ that these veracity-seeking poets undergo by not praising villainy, embodied by the ‘Cortesão’ and the ‘cortez vilão’: villains and the abject courtiers who surround them. In this way, the poet blames perpetrators of villainy and those who are complicit in it. In critiquing those who are complicit with authority, the poet positions himself as an outsider who is not close to power.

The warning against the problems with Portugal’s imperial project in *As Quibyrycas* is a pseudo-divination; in fact, as is suggested in the poem’s opening, the poet’s cautioning against Portugal’s imperial expansion and subsequent colonial settlement is a warning from the future:

Adonde futurar esteja vedado
a irracional profeta ou adivinho
estará meu estro e minha musa ao lado
por galante me não dizer sozinho.
Ali estarei, bebido no passado

com razão de biscouto e um pinto em vinho.
Dali vos trarei novas e relatos
e uma crua lição na voz dos factos.
(I, III, p. 41)

That future impossible to divine
for irrational prophets or seers
is where I will take inspiration, my muse by my side,
for is it not gallant to have company?
There I shall be, drunk on the past,
with my biscuit ration and a draught of wine.
Thence I will bring news and accounts
and a cruel lesson voiced by the facts.

Unlike Pessoa in *Mensagem*, the poet divines with some assurance of Portugal's future. The poet is positioned as a messenger from the future ('ali') in relation to his putative 16th century audience. In this way, Quadros — like Sena — winks at and nudges his readers, pointing to the artifice of his poem. Although the poet admits that he cannot have been present at many of the events that he recounts, given that much of the poem is set overseas and he was unable to extricate his flesh from the 'pátrio tejo' (our country's Tagus) to which he was — in aggrandizing language typical of Grabato Dias in *A Arca* — 'slave', he justifies his ability to narrate as a poet who foreshadows with 'claro entendimento' (clear understanding):

[...] não creiam ser este um sortilégio
por que trocara a alma a dianho ou mago.
Antes creiam ser só e excelente
modo de interpretar o que é presente.
(I, XIII, p.44)

be assured that this is not some witchcraft
whereby I have bartered my soul to a devil or a wizard.
Rather, know that this is merely
an excellent way to interpret the present.

In the following stanza, the poet appears to go back on his claim that he foreshadows ('pressago') when he asserts: 'Profécias não faço' (I do not make prophecies, I, XIV, p. 44). The poet's distinction between 'foreshadowing' (pressagar) and 'prophecizing' (fazer profécias) serves to assert the poet's authority to speak about the future with his superior understanding of the past and the present:

Se o pormenor vos tolhe o entendimento
e perguntardes como o saberei
sabei que as cousas têm nascimento
sempre em causas passadas. [...]

(I, XIV, p. 44)

If details are a barrier to your comprehension
and you wonder how I could possibly know this or that,
remember that things are always
born out of that which has already happened.

The poet's stated focus on the future is, in fact, a meditation on the present: on Portuguese late colonialism. For Quadros's contemporary readership, the past is the key to understanding the present; the fact-based lesson ('na voz dos factos', I, III, p. 41) that will shine light (aclarar[r]) on those areas of Portuguese history that the fates invoked by Camões and the pagan gods that populate his poem did not visit: 'Onde fados e deuses não andaram / vão voando meus versos e o aclaram' (Those places where the fates and the gods dared not walk / are where my verses shall fly to cast a clarifying light, I, II, p. 41). In this way, the poet situates his self-consciously anachronistic poem as a historical correction of *Os Lusíadas*.

The poet's casting light on the parts of Portuguese history that *Os Lusíadas* ignored is part of the poet's search for the truth 'por caminhos da arte' (along art's trails, I, XII, p. 43). In a similar way to Sena, the poet, thus, puts forward *Os Lusíadas* as a deceitful work. Indeed, the poet even admits to having 'lied' to King Sebastian (I, XXV, p. 47). Later in the poem, the speaker, highlighting the difference in experience between the younger poet who penned *Os Lusíadas* and the older narrator of *As Quibyrycas*, suggests that 'truth' is an aesthetic:

Mas hoje, o ponto extremo onde me vejo
por idade chegado, me aclara
o entendimento. E uns restos do desejo
que outrora tive de cantar em rara
obra de engénio [sic.] e valho (onde o sobejo
amor que a tudo tenho, fosse clara
e rudemente imposto por escrito)
me faz achar no Vero outro Bonito.
(II, CCXLII, p. 103)

But today, this promontory on which I stand,
the vantage point of advanced age, clarifies

my understanding. The vestiges of the desire
that I once had to sing a singular,
exquisite and precious work (where
my overabundant love for all would be
clearly and rudely inscribed) impels me
to discover in Truth a different Beauty.

Form and aesthetics are potentially barriers to truth. In this way, the poet suggests that poetic aesthetics is an ethical question. In his defence of his use of scatological language in the description of the siege of Mazagão at the end the first canto, the poet, overcome with ‘mourning’, claims that his words will create ‘outro lugar [...] para a vergonha’ (a place for shame, I, LXXVII, p. 60). Although the poet comments on the inadequacy of language to evoke the olfactory, visual and visceral horrors of carnage, he hopes that his words will deconstruct the glorious veneer with which Camões and other narrators of Portugal’s military history have sanitized the violence of Portugal’s imperial conquests. The aesthetic and imagetic tools deployed by Camões in *Os Lusíadas* are thus identified as serving an unwitting ideological function.

The poet addresses his text to multiple audiences. He invokes various figures of authority: the gods, King Sebastian, his courtiers, the nobility and the clergy. Addressing Sebastian directly, he claims that his voice is ‘a voz do Homem, justa pelos séculos’ (the voice of Man, justified by past centuries I, XVII, p. 45), positioning himself as a spokesperson for a collective subject in a rhetorical gesture similar to those undertaken in *Arca* and *Eu, o Povo*, which I analyse in the next chapter. The poet can speak truth to power because, unlike noblemen and the clergy — whom the poet places in the same camp as ‘tunantes’ (crooks) — he is not cowed by the

angustiada altura dos infantes
que sufocam em vós, e é vossa lenha
esbrasearei no canto que início
que quero claro forte e correntio.
(I, VI, p. 42)

anguished heights of the crown princes

that suffocate you, and which are the kindling
that I will set alight in this song,
which I desire to be strong and eloquent.

Whereas the powers-that-be are firewood whose burning suffocates the ruling elite, the poet will use the ‘infantes’ as the firewood with which he will ignite his poem. Authority is the spark that stimulates his poem and gives it energy. In this way, the poet positions himself as entirely separate from political authority.

In contrast to Sebastian, the poet, he claims, is not disconnected from ‘the people’: ‘Cousa estranha é crescer-se ante uma grei / de quem nunca se vê olhos frontais’ (‘Tis a strange thing to grow up before a people / whose eyes one never meets, I, XXXVIII, p. 50). The poet wants his text to be ‘correntio’, in the dual sense of ‘flowing easily’ and ‘being generally accepted’, by the ‘povo meúdo’ whose discourse the poet wishes to shape:

E a ti povo meúdo [sic.] cantarei
sem ilusórias tubas nem esperança
de me ver futurado no que sei
ser hoje a vossa fala de criança.
Mas onde mais vos honre honrarei
o que em mim é melhor e em vós é lança
apontada ao futuro dos futuros
quando os trigaís do amor forem maduros.
(I, V, p. 42)

And to thee, callow people, I will sing
without illusory fanfare or the hope
of seeing myself futured in your
children’s speech of today.
And where I pay you most credit,
is my honouring of what is best in me,
and, in you, a spear pointed to the future of future peoples,
in a time when the wheat fields of love are ripe for harvest.

The poet’s words are directed towards the future, in the hope that his poetry will shape the ‘speech’ of future generations. These lines also point to a concern, expressed elsewhere in the poetry of Grabato Dias, over whether and how the poet’s texts will be read by posterity. Using imagery of growth similar to that used elsewhere by Grabato Dias in discussions of this topic, the poet will ‘honour’ those in his ‘popular’ audience who have their eyes directed at a better future. Grabato Dias frequently frames a poet’s work as a long-term activity which

will only bear fruit in a distant future. Given that Camões's language is framed by the poet and Sena as mendacious and duplicitous, the notion that the poet's language may shape his future readers' discourse is a fraught process under which the poet's language risks being misunderstood or misappropriated. If the poet's language shapes his readers' language, the poet is unable to control that process.

The poet claims that his words' ultimate destination is the 'people', but he is unsure that this childish audience is ready to hear his poem. Although his poem is addressed to a future 'povo', his work is not popular. He declares his intention to scorn artists who

[...] das artes fazem beneficio
do aplauso soez pecunioso
e encontrem fácil eco no comício
das canoras galinhas pelo brumoso
beira rio das feiras [...]
(I, VIII, p. 42)

use the arts to benefit from
common pecunious applause
and who find an echo in the hubbub
of the singing birds, down by the foggy
riverbank of a country fayre.

An implicit distinction is made between commercialism and populism; between writing for money and writing to or for 'the people'. The poet suggests that one group of 'popular' writers inevitably sells out: their popularity comes at a cost. There is also a distinction drawn between contemporary and future audiences. The true popular work is addressed to a future public, not to a contemporary readership. Artists who sell out — politically or commercially — are not free agents; the poet's position as an outsider is the necessary condition for his freely speaking his mind and speaking truth to power.

Along with denunciation and duplicitous praise, the poet identifies laughter as one of his strategies for denouncing authority:

[...] aos que o ofício
nunca tolheu as mãos do calo ao osso

farei pulha escarnida e desonesta
que a risa [sic.] de algum modo assusta a besta.
(I, VIII, p. 42)

I will mercilessly and dishonestly prank
those whose hands are not calloused
by the labour of writing,
for laughter frightens the boor.

The poet's threat of a dishonest prank is a meta-allusion to *As Quybyrycas* as a fake 16th-century epic. Unlike the 'farsa / de bem folgar' (jolly farse) by the courtly playwright Gil Vicente that Sebastian watches during his childhood, whose jokes the Catholic censors have removed, rendering it 'atrophied' (V, CDXLVII, p. 164), the poet's uncensored text — addressed to a dead Sebastian, rather than to a living monarch and their court for appreciation — mocks its author's enemies.¹⁶⁰

The poet's challenge to King Sebastian entails a simultaneous assertion and undermining of his own authority.

XXII

Sabei senhor que por humilde tomo
o que em mim é dizer com força o crer
e que não há vaidades no assômo [sic.]
com que assomo às janelas de o dizer.
Estou tão longe do ponto onde meu rumo
apontara nos tempos, que sei ver
a estrelada distância que separa
o nosso desejar da meta ignara.
[...]

XXV

¹⁶⁰ In Canto IV, the poet recounts the defining moment when a certain friar named Joannes decided that laughter was his chosen — duplicitous — strategy to defy authority. During a shipwreck, the 'fidalgo roupeiro' (royal valet) who had assumed command of the crew of a destroyed Portuguese vessel is murdered by an upstart. After delicately suggesting that a replacement for the dead captain is required, Garabatus is struck by the killer and, speaking to Camões after the incident, recalls: 'Desde esse dia se me faço tonto / é já com outro tento e outra manhinha / que as forças de apear ruim senhor / encontre-as no rir escarniador' (From that day on, if I play the clown / I have an ulterior motive, an occluded agenda / for the secret to bringing down a bad master / is mocking laughter, IV, CCCLXI, p. 139). With heavy sarcasm, Garabatus praises the new captain. He claims that the captain's punch to his ear has corrected him of his deafness. In a framing similar to that of Grabato Dias in *A Arca*, analysed in the next chapter, Garabatus claims that his words have had an insidious effect: '[...] meu louvor já dava fruto atraz / das palavras com que o entrecia: / todo o grupo mirava o capitão / e via enfim o porco no dragão' (my praise bore fruit behind / the words with which I flattered him: / the group looked at the captain / and at last saw that the dragon was a pig in disguise).

Cantando-vos a aura e a vizinha
 empresa em que empenhais o mal havido
 empenharei cantar mais do que a minha
 consciência de já vos ter mentido.
 Destemperei outrora a lira asinha
 cantando o luso surdo e endurecido.
 Mas hoje cantarei o error do Homem.
 Que os futuros, do error a lição tomem.
 (I, XII-XXXV, pp. 46-47)

Know, my Lord, that my convictions
 are asserted, though forcefully, with humility
 and there is no vanity in the anger
 with which I cry out of the window.
 I am far removed from the destination
 that my path erstwhile pointed to, for now I see
 the starry distance that separates
 our desires from our unenlightened objective.

In singing to you about your fame
 and your undertaking to undertake evil
 I will undertake to sing about more than my
 consciousness of having lied to you.
 Back then I played my lute out of tune,
 when I sang about the deaf and hardened Portuguese.
 But now I sing about Man's error,
 so that posterity may learn from those failings.

The poet states that his authority derives from his experience as an older poet at the same time that he undercuts his previous work through his admission that he lied to Sebastian in *Os Lusíadas*. Whereas the poet played his lyre out of tune when he sang of the ‘luso surdo e endurecido’ (the deaf and hardened Portuguese), he now verses on ‘o error do Homem’ (Man's error) and, indeed, Camões's implied errors in *Os Lusíadas*. Thus, Camões-Garabatus acknowledges the mistakes he made in *Os Lusíadas* and asserts his intention to finish what he started in his epic poem (IX), framing *Os Lusíadas* — like Sena — as a prologue. In this way, the poet, in *As Quixobyrycas*, subverts the authorial authority of Camões in *Os Lusíadas*. His subversion of authorial authority is also a challenge to how Camões has been read under the Estado Novo; to reading as a totalitarian exercise.

Authors, according to this framing, occupy ambiguous positions of authority. Texts and their authors have the potential to shape their readers' discourse, but this process is fraught given the threat of intervention by meddling intermediaries, such as the academic

scholars that Sena mocks in the preface. Contrary to what his readers might believe, the poet is no omnipotent being. The poet's status of master of his creation is a mistaken belief:

Se credes que me creio Deus e Mando
só porque rudo Canto canto — e vão —
por orgulho ou loucura estais tomando
o que por mim é já batido chão
pois que ao poeta sempre está esmagando
o peso do passar da Criação.
Sobre mim e por mim passa a injustiça
que guerra e sangue em ódio cru atíça.
(1, XX, p. 45)

If you believe that I think myself God and the Law
because I sing this crude Song (in vain!)
you mischaracterise me as mad or proud.
I am a humble patch of earth,
forever trod over, as is a poet's lot,
by the weight of passing Creation.
The injustice that war and bloodshed in raw hatred
stoke up, run over and before me.

The poet, if he is a deity, is a detached creator deprived of the power to command. He is an onlooker who is trampled upon by mistaken charges of arrogance and by the injustices of warfare and hatred. The poet, thus, aggrandizes the affliction of his position as an observer of human injustice. Furthermore, the poet claims that he has no control over his unruly texts: the Creation that tramples all over him. In this way, the poet disavows responsibility for his text and for the violence of warfare, which Camões glorified in *Os Lusíadas*.

The poet's claim that he lacks authority is in tension with his self-positioning as a teacher whose poetry contains lessons for his readers. Unlike poets who 'canta[m] vento' (blow out hot air), the speaker, in Canto II, emphasises the ethical obligation to 'perfect [...] all Creation'; the same 'creation' that the poet, earlier, said trampled all over him:

Existe um Universo e nós com ele
obrigados a crer na obrigação
de promover, do interno osso à pele,
o afeiçoar de toda a Criação.
Ele é o Verso Único e nele
os versos detalhados caberão.
(II, CXXXVI, p. 74)

There exists a Universe and we with it
obliged to believe in the obligation

to promote, with every fibre of our being,
the perfecting of all Creation.
It is the Uni Verse and in it
more detailed verses will be welcome.

Although the poet claims to be a disempowered deity, he nevertheless seeks to intervene in his ‘creation’; to correct, rather than merely identify, the unjust practices that he denounces.

If the poet’s words are to take effect, his readers must heed his poem and do something with it:

Não falta autoridade no que digo
que por valia já mostrei que posso
acrescentar nos mais o que no migo
vou escabichando desde muito moço.
E acreditai, irmãos, que este pascigo
não chega a encher a falta de um almoço.
Nele insisto por outra obrigação
mais alta que enfiar, no bucho, o pão.
(II, CXXVIII, p. 75)

There is no lack of authority in what I say
for I have proved, through merit, that I can
improve in others that which I have been nitpicking
in myself since I was a young boy.
And believe me, my brothers, this pasture
will not suffice to compensate for a missed
meal. I insist that you partake out of loftier motives
than merely baking bread in your gut.

The poet’s providing this information, likened to pasture, is not sufficient to yield his desired results. If the poet’s words are to take effect, his readers, in turn, must use the sustenance provided by the poet to do more than simply ‘bak[e] bread in their gut’— a strange metaphor suggesting that the digestion of poetry is also its cooking; although a poem is a finished product that the poet has crafted, its interpretation by readers is as important as its production by the poet. The poet’s authority resides in sharing the results of his careful self-examination to his readership. The poet is a teacher with lessons to impart but his authority relies on his readers’ granting it to him; in their believing that he, specifically, has lessons to impart from his own experiences.

The poet is likened to a lonely nomad who shares their knowledge and experience with pilgrims that he meets on his journey (II, CXXX, p. 75). Writing and reading are solitary experiences, but the search for ‘truth’ and the dissemination of it is an ethical imperative for poets: an ‘alta intenção’ (a lofty intention) to which poets and artists ‘fica[m] obrigado[s]’ (are obliged, II, CXXXI, p. 75). The ethical imperative to search for the ‘truth’ does not solely lie with the poet. His readers, too, are required to recognise the ‘quality’ of the poet’s work. In a vinous metaphor that recurs in the poetry of Grabato Dias, the poet implicitly likens the writing and reading of poetry to the production of vintage wine (II, CXXXII-CXXXIII, p. 76).¹⁶¹ The poet notes that the production of a fine wine does not rely exclusively on the varietal cépage, to which he implicitly likens himself: there are various external factors (sunlight, the earth, the harvesting and the crushing of the grapes) that contribute to a wine’s quality, good or bad. The poet concludes his oenological metaphor with an apparently incongruous comment:

é mostrando as filhas que a viúva
unteja os iscos de atrair donzel;
casadas elas, só se chega ao posto
velho de mau pedir e pior gosto.
(II, CXXXIII, p. 76)

showing off her daughters, the widow
greases the hooks with which she attracts a bachelor;
once her daughters are married, she reaches
the old station of bad requests and even worse taste.

In a mixing of metaphors typical of Grabato Dias’s poetry, the poet draws a parallel between the production of wine as a collective process, at the mercy of the elements, to a widow’s marrying off her daughters. Whereas the poet is implicitly likened to the ‘casta’ (variety of grape) in the first metaphor — as the dubious source of a poem’s ‘quality’ — in the second he is compared to a widow who exploits her daughters to attract suitors. The widow’s actions

¹⁶¹ I discuss an instance where Grabato Dias uses similar imagery in *A Arca* in the following chapter and a case from *Sagapress* in chapter four.

do not get her out of the bind of dependency in which she found herself: in marrying off her daughters, she becomes dependent on her sons-in-law.

Later in the canto, the poem returns to the image of the ‘casta’, imagining a time in which the descendants of the figures of authority who benefited from Portuguese imperial expansion will enhance their own reputation through a rewriting of their participation in the violence of imperial domination that will frame their contribution as constructive rather than destructive:

Sei que um tempo virá em que o vilão
tenha aqui completa consciência
aquando acrescentar a seu braço [sic.]
sobre o sangue vertido, a excelência
não das armas de luta, mas do pão
porque luta.
(II, CXXXVI, p. 77)

I know that a time will come in which the villain
will have complete consciousness
when he adds to his coat of arms,
bathed in blood, the excellence
not of weaponry, but of the bread
for which he fights.

The ‘villain’, the agent of violence that the poet targets in his text, will claim to have struggled for bread — a false narration given that bread, a few stanzas earlier, is put forward by the poet as a metaphor for his own edifying poetry, which is entirely opposed to the violence that the villain’s family has committed. The villain, the poet suggests, will cunningly appropriate language to mask and reframe his participation in imperial violence, a manoeuvre that the poet denounces:

Eis porque, irado venho, por nojoso
denunciar o que usa da palavra
para justificar o enganoso
vergel de mais enganos que em si lavra.
Ele crê-se senhor, e por seu gozo
tem sua inteligência como escrava
crendo que a vida é jogo e ele ganha
mascarando no verbo o horror da sanha.
(II, CXXXV, p. 77)

This is why I denounce, angry and sickened,
he who uses language

to justify the deceitful
orchard in which he cultivates deception.
He fancies himself a lord and for his own pleasure
he enslaves his intelligence
believing that life is a game, in which the victor
masks the horror of bloodshed in language.

The orchard, the metaphorical site of verbal manipulation, is a place in which poets, readers and figures of authority vie for the control of language and its interpretation. Although the poet criticises figures of authority who use discourse to sanitize violence, he — or, at least, the author he is pretending to be — admits elsewhere in the poem that he did the same in *Os Lusíadas*.

The poet's foreshadowing of villainy's appropriation of literary texts and their authors to rewrite history leads the poet to conclude that the essence of poetry — the 'casta' — is at the mercy of voracious readers who greedily devour texts:

E a casta se verá que menos é
do que aparenta, e vive só do adorno
e condição de quem, da testa à ré
come do boi nem lhe deixando o corno.
(II, CXXXVII, p. 77)

And it will be revealed that the varietal cépage
is worth less than it appears, and relies on the adornment
and condition of whoever
devours the bull, not even leaving a horn behind!

In this way, texts and their authors are framed as dependent on their readers.

Whereas the poet describes himself as a disempowered divinity painfully aware of his impotency, Sebastian has a god complex. According to the poet, Sebastian's obsession with North Africa is an anxiety to equal or surpass his predecessors' deeds during his kingship. As one of the key figures of Portugal's failed imperial project, Sebastian embodies the authoritarianism of Portuguese colonial rule.

For the poet, political authority is the mis-conferring of divine attributes onto human individuals. From a young age, Sebastian believes that he is charged with a divine mission and spends his childhood impatient to reach his majority and become king (V, CDXXXIX-CDXLI). According to the poet, where human figures of authority are imbued with divine right, God's will becomes the justification for violence and authoritarianism:

Quando a grandeza é muita — e em poder falo —
pólvora e pez passam a Voz de Deus:
tanto mais alto fala mais o calo
é a fala comum dos povos reús [sic].
Deste modo o que era basto é ralo.
No que havia em convir mais há incréus
e se um Deus, por pequeno, ostenta barba,
lhes opõem, dos Seus, braços e adarga.
(I, XLIX, p. 53)

Where there is much might — power, I should say —
gunpowder and pitch become the Voice of God
and the louder it speaks, the more silence
becomes the common tongue of the accused peoples.
In this way, that which was compact becomes loose
and should a Godling affront the people with his beard,
they oppose him with bare arms and a shield.

Where authoritarianism runs rampant, gunpowder and pitch, symbols of Portuguese imperial domination, are interpreted as the voice of divine authority, which quashes the 'fala comum' (common tongue) of the presumed 'guilty' peoples subjected to imperial violence. In the face of Portuguese violence, these peoples — contrary to the civilizing mission of the Portuguese imperial project — are more inclined to heresy than to Christian conversion. According to the poet, religious devotion in general is fraught because it entails allegiance to human representatives of a divinity; to 'sages' to whom political power is conferred (I, L, p. 53). 'True prophets', on the other hand, preach 'love' and 'harmony' even where that love is not reciprocated. As an individual to whom political authority is conferred, the poet, like prophets, has an ethical imperative to preach peace over warfare.

The Christian God in whose name the Portuguese waged war overseas is thus presented as a political construct. Making a distinction between the initial phase of

Portuguese expansionism — during which period, the behaviour of ‘ao menos [...] alguns’ (some Portuguese, at least), was characterised by ‘respeito’ (respect), ‘irmandade’ (brotherliness) and ‘amor’ (love) — and the authoritarianism and superciliousness of the subsequent imperial and colonial domination, the poet argues that the Christian symbol of the cross is a labile sign that was misinterpreted by those driven by ‘cobiça da mais fria’ (the coldest greed): ‘Tudo em nome da cruz como se a cruz / fora de pau de brandir e não de luz’ (All in the name of the cross, as if the cross / were a stick to be brandished, rather than a torch with which to cast light, II, CLI, p. 81). The poet contrasts the colour-blind ‘Deos [sic.] Universal’ (Universal God) with the ‘Deos parcial’ (Partial God) that the Portuguese follow, who denies the ‘diverso Útil, [que] acontece’ (useful diversity that they encountered, II, CLVI, p. 82).

In this way, the poet suggests that imperialism and colonialism are ultimately doomed to fail. He wonders how posterity will judge the Portuguese:

Como nos olharão, no tempo, os filhos
destes filhos que ao tempo outros serão?
Que pensarão de nós e destes trilhos
que um labéu permanente lhes trarão?
Acendemos, no hoje, tais rastilhos
que dois dilúvios não apagarão
esquecidos que ao fazer a cama assim
como a filhos deitamos, não e sim
(II, CLIX, p. 83)

In time, how will the children of these children
regard us, for, in that time, they will be different?
What will they make of us and of these trails
which have cast a permanent blemish upon them?
We set alight, today, fuses
that two floods will not put out,
forgetting that in making our bed in such a way,
we tuck two children in: one called Yes, the other No.

The poet fears the judgement of the descendants of the peoples that the Portuguese colonized in a post-colonial era. He warns that the ‘European forces’ that are at work to erase the violence of imperial expansion (‘esquecer a inútil sanha / com que extensos exércitos

desdobra', II, CLXVI, p. 84) are doomed to fail. The poet's 'prefiguring' of the independence movements of countries such as Mozambique, however, is laced with melodrama:

Que vingança haverá no dia a vir
— que como a história ensina sempre vem —
em que o bárbaro alcance em seu sorrir
a segurança que ora a gente tem?
Que de contas e ajuste hão-de sofrer [sic.]
as inocentes gerações que sem
culpa mais do que essa, hão-de [sic.] nascer
pela rota traçada ao tempo a haver?
(II, CLVIII, p. 82)

What vengeance will be wrought, in a day to come
— for history teaches us that it is inevitable —
in which the barbarian's smile encodes
the assurance that we now possess?
What righting of wrongs will innocent
generations suffer; they, whose only crime
is their ancestry, will be born
on the route traced by a time to come?

The poet, here, pivots and interpolates the Portuguese powers-that-be in a paranoia-infused imagining of a reversal of colonial violence: the subjugated 'barbarian', the poet warns, will have their vengeance — of unspecified magnitude and form — on their former oppressors.¹⁶² He laments that those who will suffer the consequences of such a violent reversal will not be the agents of colonialism. Instead, future generations will be punished for the actions of their forebears.

The violent and punitive settling of accounts that the poet prefigures never came to pass. There was no equivalent of the Nuremberg trials in the aftermath of the Carnation Revolution. Many of the top figures in the Estado Novo fled to Brazil without ever appearing in court.

¹⁶² Quadros's comments are set against the backdrop of the exodus of the *pieds-noirs* (people of French or other European origin) from Algeria in 1962 after the country's independence from France.

Conclusion

In *As Quybryrcas*, the poet sets out a poetic ethics according to which authors have an imperative, in authoritarian contexts, to reopen the canon and re-appropriate texts and writers who have been commandeered by authoritarian regimes. For him, textual ambiguity is a source of peril: it is the poet's best defence against political appropriation, which depends on closing down textual meaning, and his greatest weakness. As Eagleton, writing in 1995, remarks on the relationship between postmodernism and the notions of truth or fact (words that recur in *As Quybryrcas*), ambiguity is fraught terrain for leftist cultural critics. He notes that those very institutions that leftist critics oppose are adept at weaponizing ambiguity, duplicity and dissimulation and that those very tools, in the hands of its opponents, are not always as subversive as their wielders might claim or wish them to be:

Gross deception, whitewash, cover-up and lying through one's teeth: these are no longer sporadic, regrettable necessities of our form of life but permanently and structurally essential to it. In such conditions, the true facts — concealed, suppressed, distorted — can be in themselves politically explosive; and those who have developed the nervous tic of placing such terms as 'truth' and 'fact' in fastidiously distancing scare quotes should be careful to avoid a certain collusion between their own high-toned theoretical gestures and the most banal, routine political strategies of the capitalist power-structure. [...] It is unwise to assume that ambiguity, indeterminacy, undecidability are always subversive strikes against an arrogantly monological certitude [...].¹⁶³

Quadros, in *As Quybryrcas*, is concerned with the asymmetrical power struggle between writers and readers; how ambiguity and the truth function unequally in authoritarian contexts.

Quadros's project in *As Quybryrcas* is the inverse of Portuguese canonization and the construction of Portuguese historiography as characterised by Sena. Whereas canonization is a process whereby an author and an author's place in history are selectively

¹⁶³ Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*, p. 379-380.

framed, Quadros and Sena position themselves as writing against the ‘forgetting’ of the non-canon; of the narratives rejected and omitted by the Estado Novo.

The re-interrogation of the canon is a task for writers and for readers. At the poem’s conclusion, the poet reminds his readers of their responsibilities:

MCLXXIX

Jornadas que encetara ainda lego-as
geradoras a outros que as intentem
desde que as não valorem pelas légoas.
Se na jornada própria me acrescentem
chega isto a meus ossos. Nunca as tréguas
ou hoje ou amanhã os amolentem.
Sete fadas me fadem nesta fala
julhos do amor da Voz que a minha cala.

MCLXXX

Estas fadas invoco. E não esconjuro
mais fados que os legítimos à rima.
Ninguém me tome por demais seguro
inda que me censure a munta estima
que a mim dedico no saber-me puro.
Aos fados por galante trouxe acima
e agora os deixo aqui. Sem embaraço
que meu canto em vós conta neste passo!
(XI, MCLXXIX-MCLXXX, p. 360)

The journeys that I began I now pass on,
like seeds, to others for them to undertake
provided that they do not judge them by the distance travelled.
If these others surpass me in my journey,
I say that my bones can only do so much. May peacetime,
now or in the future, never soften them.
May seven fates grant me, for my work,
Many summers of the Voice’s love, for mine is now silent.

These fates, I invoke. And I do not conjure
any more fates than those necessary for rhyme.
May no one think me excessively assured,
even if I am censured for the high esteem
in which I hold myself in knowing that I am pure.
Those fates, whom I invited at the start of my poem,
I now deposit here. I am not embarrassed
that my song counts on you for what follows!

The poet’s work is done. He passes his seminal words on to those who dare read his poem and, as writers, attempt to surpass it. The poet’s hope that his ‘bones’, now at rest, will remain strong, suggests a concern that his work will become irrelevant in a future time of peace (‘as tréguas’).

He leaves his poem to the fates and to his readers. Perversely, the poet's displacing of authorial authority onto readers is exactly the process that he identifies as being at the heart of politically motivated mis-readings of literary texts. The poet's intervention, the putative rewriting and rereading by Camões of his previous work, was undertaken precisely to correct the kind of political misinterpretations that the poet fears his own readers might make. If those manipulative readers become, like him, 'seminal' writers, a project similar to that carried out by the poet in *As Quybyrycas* may be enacted on his text.

The poet's fears are unfounded. *As Quybyrycas*, along with the rest of Quadros's work, has been largely ignored by readers and researchers. Most of his texts have suffered the fate to which marginal works, according to Sena in his preface, are consigned: the poetry of Grabato Dias and Ioannes Garabatus are held in the archives — often the closed stacks — of select libraries in Mozambique, Portugal, the US and the UK. *As Quybyrycas* was not appropriated by the barbarians mentioned in canto II in an act of vengeance against Portugal. *As Quybyrycas*, instead, has fallen outside the post-colonial canons of Portugal and Mozambique.

In 1975, Quadros was the architect of another literary prank. The publication of *Eu, o Povo* under the name Mutimati Barnabé João raises ethical questions of a different order to those discussed in *As Quybyrycas*. In the next chapter, I analyse *Eu, o Povo* and its blueprint, the 1971 ode *A Arca*, in light of the questions concerning who is empowered to speak on whose behalf that the texts raise.

I/We, the People: Onymous, Anonymous and Collective Subjects in *A Arca*, *Eu, o Povo* and *O Povo é Nós*

Aqui é que vinha a matar o sacrossanto “falo por mim”
ou o “na minha modesta opinião” ou ainda “a meu ver!”
Mas ainda aqui o poeta assume a voz da voz comum
ou a comunidade assoma ao balcão do poeta assumindo
a responsabilidade do negócio, pela caixa registadora
onde se contabilizou o movimento das muitas opiniões
com os massos de vales das retiradas sub-reptícias [sic]
os trocos divididos por castas e as pratas falsas.

Here I set out to kill the sacrosanct ‘I speak on my behalf’
or ‘in my humble opinion’ or even ‘for my part!’
But even here the poet takes on the voice of the common voice
or the community takes command of the poet’s shop counter, shouldering
responsibility for the business and operating the cash till
where the movement of differing opinions are accounted for
with the piles of vouchers for underhand withdrawals
small change organised by currency and fake silver.
(*Pressaga*, pp. 62-63)

Mutumati é a voz individual que corporiza a voz colectiva. *Eu, o Povo* é agora pertença de Moçambique. O Povo Moçambicano é o seu autor.

Mutumati is the individual voice that embodies the voice of the collective. *I, the People* is now the property of Mozambique. The Mozambican People is its author.
(Unnamed and anonymously authored paratext to *Eu, o Povo*)

The quoted passage from *Pressaga* (1974) that serves as the first epigraph to this chapter points to a concern in João Pedro Grabato Dias’s poetry about the ambiguity of authorial identity in works of literature in which individual writers claims to speak on behalf of others. In it, the speaker suggests that he speaks simultaneously on behalf of his community and as an individual. His rejection of individual poetic expression in favour of a collective mode transforms the voice that speaks in his texts. He sees two possibilities for collective poetry: the poet’s assumption of the ‘voz da voz comum’, or the commandeering of the poet’s trade by the community. In either case, the notion of a poem’s voicing a collective subject is problematic given the variety of individual subjectivities that constitute a collective. Furthermore, for him, the construction of a collective subject involves underhand and opaque transactions: the cash register holding a diversity of opinion is raided by anonymous agents and the money divided into authentic coins and fakes. It is unclear whether the embezzling

individuals will take the fake or the real coins, and how they will use them.

For Grabato Dias, the construction of a collective subject is an opaque process that triangulates anonymous, onymous and collective subjects. According to him, the creation of a collective subject depends upon the effacement of the onym that fashions it, but the disappearance of the individual author is no guarantee that the concerns of the collective will be voiced. He is concerned about the behind-the-scenes politics that go into the construction of collective identity and is unsure whether it is possible for collective poetry to account for the diversity inherent to any group.

The kinds of dubious practices that Grabato Dias describes in *Pressaga* are at work in the second epigraph to this chapter. The text is an anonymously authored epigraph that precedes the poems of *Eu, o Povo* (1975). In the note, authorship of the collection is transferred from the individual author, Mutimati Barnabé João, to the Mozambican people by an anonym. The anonymous scribe is the collection's editor, Rui Oliveira, a Portuguese publisher who had close ties to FRELIMO. Oliveira passed *Eu, o Povo*'s poems onto senior figures in the party, who decided to make use of them in a publication to coincide with Mozambique's independence celebrations.

The paratext epitomizes the paradoxes of *Eu, o Povo*'s publication. According to it, the book is the property of the Mozambican people because they are its author. The copyright notice, printed on the preceding page, identifies the legal owner of the poems: 'Deste livro não pode ser feita qualquer reprodução, fora de Moçambique, sem autorização da FRELIMO' (No reproduction can be made of this book outside Mozambique without authorization from FRELIMO). *Eu, o Povo*'s paratexts simultaneously disguise and unmask

the occluded authorial authority behind the text: FRELIMO. They raise questions over what it means for authors to speak on behalf of a people. What are the political implications of FRELIMO's and Mutimati's/António Quadros's claiming to speak on behalf of the Mozambican people? Is the figure of the individual author incompatible with a collective project? Who, ultimately, is the author of *Eu, o Povo*?

I, We, the People: Authorship in Colonial and Post-Colonial Mozambique

In colonial and post-colonial Mozambique, to be an author was an inherently political role. In the absence of opposition parties and a free press under the Estado Novo and Frelimo-ruled Mozambique, poetry was a privileged medium through which authors could voice political discontent. In the colonial period, anti-colonial poetry functioned as a means of speaking truth to power, denouncing colonial violence and asserting Mozambican literature as a valid category, distinct from Portuguese or 'overseas' literature. In the post-independence period, Frelimo effectively neutralized the function of literature as resistance to power by instrumentalizing a constructed historical memory of the anti-colonial struggle to legitimize it as the ruling party of Mozambique. Thus, in the post-independence period, paradoxically, anti-colonial and anti-authoritarian poetry was appropriated by Frelimo as part of its cementing of a political hegemony.¹⁶⁴ This process was compounded by the reality that several writers were integral members of the Frelimo party machinery, such as Marcelino dos Santos, Nelson Saúte and Luís Bernardo Honwana. Similarly, the practice of self-criticism (*autocrítica*) stood in place of the right for other parties to form and challenge

¹⁶⁴ Drawing on Anthony D. Smith's writings on nationalism, Basto argues that Frelimo's specific form of nationalism was a 'nacionalismo cívico' which was legitimized by Frelimo's rule in the anti-colonial struggle and its anti-imperialist stance. Basto, *A Guerra das Escritas: Literatura, Nação e Teoria Pós-Colonial em Moçambique* (Lisbon: Vendaval, 2006), pp. 63-64.

Frelimo's hegemony.¹⁶⁵

During the period of late colonialism, Quadros was exposed to the features of an authoritarian colonial regime. He wrote highly coded poems whose anti-colonial politics were adeptly masked from the censors. As a result of his experiences under Portuguese colonialism, Quadros was able, in Frelimo-ruled Mozambique, to identify the latent authoritarian and paternalistic tendencies of the new government, and to code his subversive interrogations of the party's discourses.

Given the high levels of illiteracy in Portuguese, most Mozambicans did not have access to print culture or to national political discourse. In this context, authors bore a responsibility of speaking for the voiceless. Grabato Dias's concern in *Pressaga* and elsewhere is with what it means for an individual to speak on behalf of others; in the tensions between individual authors and the collective subjects that they claim to embody.

As discussed in the previous chapter, in 'La mort de l'auteur' (1968) and 'Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?' (1969), Barthes and Foucault lament the tyrannical rule of the Author. Foucault suspects that the figure of the Author is unkillable; that the post-mortems of post-Romantic authorship, of which Barthes's essay is the most well-known example, paradoxically serve to preserve the author's primacy in transferring the properties traditionally associated with authors onto writing: 'Je me demande si [la notion de l'écriture] ne transpose pas, dans un anonymat transcendantal, les caractères empiriques de l'auteur' (In current usage, however, the notion of writing seems to transpose the empirical

¹⁶⁵ Newitt, 'Mozambique', in Chabal, *A History of Postcolonial Lusophone Africa*, p. 207.

characteristics of the author into a transcendental anonymity.)¹⁶⁶ For Foucault, the anonymity of the Barthesian notion of *écriture* conceals the Author. Later in his paper, Foucault identifies anonymity as irreconcilable with post-Romantic modes of reading: ‘L’anonymat littéraire ne nous est pas supportable; nous ne l’acceptons qu’à titre d’énigme’ (Since literary anonymity is not tolerable, we can accept it only in the guise of an enigma).¹⁶⁷ Running through Foucault’s paper is a desire that authorial anonymity will become acceptable. His point of departure is a question posed by Samuel Beckett: ‘Qu’importe qui parle, quelqu’un a dit qu’importe qui parle?’ (“What does it matter who is speaking,” someone said, “what does it matter who is speaking”).¹⁶⁸ As Andrew Bennett remarks in a comparison of Foucault’s paper and Barthes’s ‘La mort de l’auteur’, Foucault emphasises that in post-Romantic modes of reading who speaks — or who readers think speaks — in a given text matters, at the same time that he ‘yearn[s] towards a future in which our only response to such a question would be a shrug or, as Foucault puts it, at the close of the essay, a ‘stirring of an indifference’. Foucault wants it to matter not at all who is speaking’.¹⁶⁹ Foucault’s paper thus runs two distinct operational and utopian definitions of anonymity against each other. The former corresponds to the post-Romantic function of anonymity, which is perceived as a lack or an enigma to be uncovered; the latter, to a desired state of affairs where the identity and biography of authors is of no interest to readers.

In the contexts in which Quadros wrote and published, Foucault’s utopian function of anonymity and Barthes’s notion of the dead author are problematic. That Mutimati,

¹⁶⁶ Foucault, ‘Qu’est-ce qu’auteur?’, in *Dits et écrits*, I, p. 823. ‘What Is an Author?’, trans. by Harari, in *The Foucault Reader*, p. 104.

¹⁶⁷ Foucault, ‘Qu’est-ce qu’un auteur?’, in *Dits et écrits*, I, p. 823. ‘What Is an Author?’, trans. by Harari, in *The Foucault Reader*, pp. 109-110.

¹⁶⁸ Foucault, ‘Qu’est-ce qu’un auteur?’, in *Dits et écrits*, I, p. 820. ‘What Is an Author?’, trans. by Harari, in *The Foucault Reader*, pp. 101.

¹⁶⁹ Andrew Bennett, *The Author* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 19.

according to the narrative of *Eu, o Povo*'s genesis that circulated at the time and which was peddled to senior members of FRELIMO, was a dead author was the condition that enticed FRELIMO to appropriate his poems. Furthermore, Barthes and Foucault presume that the political motives behind the fashioning of the text or of the image of the author are of no interest. As noted in the previous chapter, the highly politicized context of authorship in which Quadros wrote makes it impossible to speak of literature and politics as absolutely distinct from each other.

The cases of *As Quaybyrycas* and *Eu, o Povo*, as literary pranks, challenge the notion of the intentional fallacy proposed by W. K. Wimsatt and M. C. Beardsley, to which Foucault and Barthes tacitly subscribe as proponents of models that consider texts as totalities that exist independently of the irrelevant external factor that is the author and their biography. Wimsatt and Beardsley state that the intentional fallacy describes a flaw in approaches to poetry whereby a text's successes or failures are judged according to the extent the text fulfils the author's stated or presumed intentions. In a rhetorical manoeuvre similar to Barthes's displacing of authority over the text from the Author to the Reader, Wimsatt and Beardsley assert that the text is a public property because its form is language ('the peculiar possession of the public') and its object 'the human being, an object of public knowledge'.¹⁷⁰ Like Barthes, they are opposed to critics having authority over the text. They draw a distinction between this notion of the text as publicly shared and the intentional fallacy, the focus of which is on the 'private' thoughts and experiences of the author.

The context of high illiteracy in Mozambique complicates the notion that texts are a public property because (the Portuguese) language was a barrier to access to written

¹⁷⁰ W. K. Wimsatt and M. C. Beardsley, 'The Intentional Fallacy', *The Sewanee Review*, 54:3 (1946), 470.

discourses. The epigraphs to this chapter underline the fact that the motivations of the author and the other individuals and institutions involved in the publication, editing and dissemination of literary texts are of interest.

Indeed, in the case of *Eu, o Povo*, Quadros and FRELIMO used each other for mutual benefit. FRELIMO members accepted *Eu, o Povo* for publication even after Quadros's identity was discovered. Quadros, in turn, invited FRELIMO's appropriation of his poems and resisted that process through his construction of a pseudo-anonymous fictional author: the dead *guerrilheiro* whose discourse barely conceals the identity of the occluded author, Quadros.

Kate Tunstall notes that anonymity can often function as a kind of pseudonymy in modern cultures. Commenting on a scene from *Curb your Enthusiasm*, in which Larry David discovers that an anonymous donation to an art gallery has been made by his friend Ted, Tunstall remarks that the pseudonymous function of anonymity, whereby anonymity points to the lack of a stated authorial identity, varies according to the differences between the ways in which knowledge circulates through written and oral exchanges:

[...] anonymous publication need not, in fact, mean that the author's name is unknown. Ted's name is a kind of open secret: it may not be written on the wall but it is known, and knowledge of it circulates by word of mouth. The relative values of writing and speech depend here (as they also do in, say, Plato) on their ability not so much to disseminate information as to control access to it; writing is inferior on the grounds that it speaks indiscriminately to everyone whoever they are (whatever their name is). Larry's name is there to be seen by the *hoi polloi*, while Ted's is available only to a privileged group, and as that knowledge circulates, it establishes insiders and outsiders, those in the know and those not, those who knew before others did. If Larry is so furious, it is not least because he only discovered that the anonymous donor was his "friend" Ted when his wife told him; she knew before he did.¹⁷¹

In Quadros's writings, there is no such neat distinction between the scriptural and oral realms as Quadros attempts to transpose the politics of inclusion and exclusion of the latter onto the

¹⁷¹ Kate Tunstall, "'You're Either Anonymous or You're Not!': Variations on Anonymity in Modern and Early Modern Culture', *Modern Languages Notes*, 126:4 (2011), 672.

former. In his works, there is a conscious attempt to control the dissemination of knowledge through the addressing of multiple and distinct readerships. The fingerprints left behind by Quadros are legible to the right audience.

Tunstall remarks that Ted's anonymous donation, in the scene from *Curb your Enthusiam*, is coded as self-effacing modesty: 'Larry discovers too late that having one's name displayed on the wall is a social *faux pas*, that, as it were, publishing a work with one's name on it is unseemly and vulgar, as compared to anonymous publication, the self-effacing nature of which is far more appropriate and dignified'.¹⁷² In the case of Quadros, there are interesting social politics regarding the openness with which Quadros identified as Grabato Dias after an initial period of coyness that might be attributed to shyness. In 1968, Quadros submitted an illustrated poem under the name 'Grabato de Tete' to the poetry competition held by the Câmara Municipal of Lourenço Marques. The poem won the award but Quadros never collected the prize. Eugénio Lisboa published the poem in *A Voz de Moçambique*, which he co-edited with Rui Knopfli, in an attempt to draw out the then unknown author. Shortly after, Quadros approached Lisboa to claim authorship of the poem and request a prefatory text for his début collection.¹⁷³ According to Lisboa, in an interview, Quadros sold *40 e tal Sonetos* door-to-door. It soon became common knowledge in the social circles through which Lisboa and Quadros moved that Quadros was Grabato Dias.¹⁷⁴ In the post-independence period, it was known at the Associação de Escritores Moçambicanos that Quadros published under the name Grabato Dias.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² Tunstall, "'You're Either Anonymous or You're Not!'", 672.

¹⁷³ Lisboa, *Acta est Fabula*, III, pp. 336-337

¹⁷⁴ Interview with Lisboa, Lisbon, August 2019.

¹⁷⁵ Interview with Armando Artur and Ungulani Ba Ka Khosa at the Associação dos Escritores Moçambicanos, Maputo, Mozambique (July 2018).

In Quadros's works, and in *Eu, o Povo* in particular, self-effacement is a political act. The disappearing of the author as a constant process, as opposed to a finality (a distinction that Bennett draws between Foucault and Barthes¹⁷⁶), in Quadros's works is part of a doubled-edged relinquishing of hermeneutic authority onto his readers. For Quadros, the Barthesian ascension of the tyrannical Reader is a process to be resisted. The lingering presence of the semi-occluded master author is part of Quadros's troubling the process whereby political authorities commandeer works of art: in contexts of censorship, the living author is an inconvenience.

Bennett and Nicolas Royle describe the figure of the author as a 'ghostly presence'. Their metaphor reconciles the tensions in Barthes's and Foucault's respective notions of the author as dying or dead:

It is not a question of simply denying or ignoring authorial intention: some hypothesis of what an author intends is an important element in reading and sense-making. But reading and sense-making invariably overflow 'mere' authorial intention. Correspondingly, we could say, it is not a question (as Barthes polemically argued) of simply 'removing' the author, but rather of acknowledging that s/he has a less central and authoritative, in some ways more ghostly role.¹⁷⁷

In the case of Quadros's poetry, the ghostly metaphor captures the way in which Quadros perversely denies his identity at the same time that he foregrounds that very abnegation. He is a pseudo-absence whose presence is pointed to but not explicitly announced. Whereas for Barthes and Foucault the author — as a flesh-and-blood individual — is an irrelevance, Quadros consciously operates games of hide and seek with his readers, pointing to his absence from the poems.

In foregrounding the absence of their creator, Quadros's pennames — in particular, Mutimati and Garabatus — point to their fictionality: to their status as frauds. In this way,

¹⁷⁶ Bennett, *The Author*, p. 20.

¹⁷⁷ Bennett and Nicolas Royle, 'The Author', in *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory*, 4th edn (Oxford; New York: Routledge, 2014), pp. 25-26.

Quadros's leaves clues for his readers that *As Quybryrcas* and *Eu, o Povo* are not what they appear to be. As pranks, these texts depend on a select group of readers being in the know and others being in the dark. Quadros's literary japes depend on the second group's being unaware that they are being tricked at first, only to discover that they have been pranked at a later date. Quadros's hand in *Eu, o Povo* and *As Quybryrcas* is, like Larry David's friend's donation, an open secret amongst the right people. Unlike the case in *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, in *Eu, o Povo* Quadros's secret was betrayed by the text, as I discuss later.

That Quadros leaves traces of the links between him and his fictive authors reflects his privileged position within the context of censorship under colonialism and the uneasy period for the white settler population after the Carnation Revolution. Despite Quadros's privileged position within colonial and post-colonial Mozambican society and his informal connections with high-placed individuals, the poems of his principal penname, Grabato Dias, often configure him as an outlier in relation to the cultures of Portugal and Mozambique. Unlike post-colonial African writers who, for Appiah, are often 'uncomfortable outsiders' alienated from the cultures that they seek 'to develop [...] in directions that will give them a role', Quadros is typical of certain European intellectuals who configure themselves as outsiders in relation to their native culture.¹⁷⁸ Insider-outsiders, Quadros's fictional authors critique from within: *Os Lusíadas* and Portuguese historiography are interrogated in a poem supposedly authored by a disillusioned Camões and the latent authoritarian tendencies of FRELIMO are challenged in a text supposedly authored by a Mozambican *guerrilheiro*. If Appiah's conception of the post-colonial African writer is of an uncomfortable outsider, Quadros and his fictional authors are comfortable contrarians with privileged access to power.

¹⁷⁸ Appiah, *In My Father's House*, p. 76.

In the epigraph from *Pressaga*, the effacement of the individual author is the necessary condition for poetry to become a collective activity. Grabato Dias questions whether the individuality of authors must come at the expense of the anonymity that attends the construction of collective subjects. He also suggests that the fashioning of collective poetry is opportunistic for political elites (the shady individuals who wrest control of the metaphorical cash till from the poet) and authors.

For Appiah, the struggle between the individuated authorial persona and collective authorial identity is a conflict shared by post-colonial African writers. In his analysis of the Nigerian Wole Soyinka's fashioning of his authorial image, Appiah argues that this conflict between Soyinka's (individuated) literary self and the oral culture — with its distinct (collective) conception of authorship — about and from which he writes is 'central to [his] situation as the archetypal African writer'.¹⁷⁹

Appiah's analysis of the condition of post-colonial African writers rests on a binary according to which the projects of European writers are concerned with a 'search for the self', whereas African writers are in 'search of a culture'.¹⁸⁰ He argues that 'though the European may feel that the problem of who he or she is can be a private problem, the African asks always not "who am I?" but "who are we?" and "my" problem is not mine alone but "ours"'.¹⁸¹

Soyinka's 'search for a culture', which is also the construction of a culture for a

¹⁷⁹ Appiah, *In My Father's House*, p. 78.

¹⁸⁰ Appiah, *In My Father's House*, p. 74.

¹⁸¹ Appiah, *In My Father's House*, p. 76.

largely non-Nigerian (but not necessarily non-European) audience, entails his establishment as simultaneously an individual author whose works are worth reading and as a representative of the culture that he is instrumental in fashioning in written culture and in a colonizing language — English. For Appiah, the outcome of the struggle that Soyinka's work dramatizes between the 'we' and the 'I' has been decided in advance: the individuation of African intellectuals and writers like Soyinka is the result of their 'taking up so passionately the heritage of the printed word' — a perhaps inevitable legacy of colonialism.¹⁸²

Appiah sees no problem with Soyinka's constructing an individuated authorial persona. He takes issue, however, with the way in which Soyinka attempts to reconcile the collective conceptions of authorship of his Yoruba culture with this persona. Appiah censures Soyinka's invocation of a generalized African metaphysics in the preface to his play *Death and the King's Horseman* as duplicitous and opportunistic. Appiah suggests two motives for Soyinka's downplaying the 'Colonial Factor' and his attendant emphasis on the metaphysical bent of his play: a rejection of an exogenous pan-Africanist gel (the shared socio-historical experiences of colonialism) in favour on a positive endogenous narrative of a shared African metaphysics, of which Yoruba cosmology would be 'one particularization'; and, a second, occluded motive, which is to do with Soyinka's construction of his authorial image — in Appiah's analysis, Soyinka puts forward the concept of a communal African metaphysics as a counter to an inherited tradition obsessed with authorial authenticity and 'the account of it as an exploration of the metaphysics of the individual self.'¹⁸³

¹⁸² Appiah, *In My Father's House*, p. 83.

¹⁸³ Appiah, *In My Father's House*, p. 82.

Appiah's analysis is instructive in its detection of the overlap of literature and politics in Soyinka's manoeuvre, a feature of Quadros's engagement with politics, as I discuss later in this chapter. Furthermore, Appiah suggests that Soyinka's creation of an authorial persona that attempts to reconcile individualism and collectivism is opportunistic. That said, Soyinka's hybridized authorial image is nevertheless mutually beneficial for the conflictual components that it sustains, the 'we' (Yoruba culture) and 'I' (Soyinka, the individual author): Soyinka's success as an author exposes a growing readership to his culture. Appiah's readings of Soyinka are in line with one of the broader arguments that Appiah makes *In My Father's House*: that is, to speak of an African literature or an African identity is not necessarily to reduce or erase the particular differences that distinguish distinct cultures and individual authors one from the other, but rather to identify common experiences to foster solidarity. For Appiah, the question is how those collective identities and subjects are configured and who does the configuring. Furthermore, he argues that the individual author is not necessarily at odds with a collective project.

A question that Appiah does not address, but which is nevertheless pertinent to his discussion of Soyinka's work, is that of empowerment: who is empowered to speak on whose behalf? What gives authors the right to speak on behalf of their culture, whether that right is claimed by authors themselves or conferred on them by critics? These questions are particularly pertinent to Quadros's configuration of the collective *and* individual subjects invoked in *Eu, o Povo*: the Mozambican 'people' and their dissident representative, the *mestiço* fictional author Mutimati. Given the implicit encoding of Mutimati's racial identity as *mestiço* or black in his Luso-African name, is Quadros's inhabiting of a racialised

colonised subjectivity a kind of literary blackface?¹⁸⁴ Can Quadros's challenge to the paternalism of FRELIMO's populist discourses be reconciled with his apparently paternalistic construction of a colonised subject?

The problems with creating a colonised (subaltern) subjectivity are explored by Gayatri Spivak in 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' (1983). For Spivak, any claim to 'represent' marginalised (subaltern) individuals or groups is fraught given that the reconstruction of marginalised subjectivities by privileged subjects is contaminated by that very process of mediation. Spivak's chapter grapples with two definitions of 'represent': the political and artistic or philosophical understandings of the term, which Spivak distinguishes as representation as 'proxy and a portrait'.¹⁸⁵

Spivak detects in attempts to represent marginalised peoples occluded, unstated, unconscious or disavowed ideological motives. In the case of a conversation between Foucault and Deleuze, which Spivak analyses at the beginning of her paper, the thinkers' collapsing of distinct (although, overlapping) categories such as theory and practice, sign and signifier serve to render the intellectual subject — the theorists who muse on 'the Subject of desire and power as an irreducible methodological presupposition; and the self-proximate, if not self-identical, subject of the oppressed' — 'transparent': that is, a-

¹⁸⁴ Williams has noted that Mutimati Barnabé João's Luso-African name points to a mixed African and European heritage. Williams, 'Who and What Constitutes Mozambican Poetry?', 192. Under lusotropicalist logic, the name identifies Mutimati as the likely son of a white Portuguese father and a black Mozambican mother. Forjaz explains the origins of Mutimati's name in his introduction to the Cotovia edition of *Eu, o Povo*: Mutimati is the name given to a hydraulic ram, a device for transporting water to a destination situated at a point higher in elevation than the source; Barnabé was the name of a lovable dog of Quadros's acquaintance; João refers to Quadros's son. Forjaz, 'Recordando António Quadros', in *Eu, o Povo* (2008), p. 12. The origins of the name Barnabé are hinted in a word-association diagram in *Facto/Fado*, where the word 'CÃO' is linked to the word 'BARNABÉ' by an arrow, *Facto/Fado*, p. 58.

¹⁸⁵ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', in *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. by Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 1993), p. 71.

ideological, identity-less, de-negated.¹⁸⁶ As such, Foucault and Deleuze fail to acknowledge the aporia of intellectual political work concerned with oppressed groups or subjects: intellectuals are, perhaps inevitably, ‘complicit in the persistent constitution of Other as the Self’s shadow’.¹⁸⁷ This act is a form of cultural imperialism, in that the Other is shaped by (Western) intellectuals who, paradoxically, seek or claim to seek to come into contact with, understand and/or represent the Other. For Spivak, the question to which postcolonial critics must attend is that of representation rather than authenticity: ‘what I find useful [in Derrida’s work] is the sustained and developing work on the *mechanics* of the constitution of the Other: we can use it to much greater analytic and interventionist advantage than invocations of the *authenticity* of the other’.¹⁸⁸ Spivak is dogmatic in her assertion that marginalized groups cannot be represented. The answer to the question posed by her article’s title is a resounding negative: ‘The subaltern cannot speak. [...] Representation has not withered away’.¹⁸⁹

Whereas Spivak is pessimistic about the possibilities of representing oppressed subjects by (privileged) intellectuals, Toni Morrison sees the reconstruction of the subjectivity of the Other — in the case of her novel *Beloved*, an ex-slave and her murdered child — as a politically and artistically productive project. In her foreword to the novel, Morrison frames *Beloved* as an attempt to explore questions of misogyny, racism and the reckoning of the US’s slavery past from a post-slavery perspective through the ‘imagining’ of the historic case of Margaret Garner — a slave who killed her two-year-old daughter to prevent her from being returned to slavery:

[...] I would invent [Garner’s] thoughts, plumb them for a subtext that was historically true in essence, but not strictly factual in order to relate her history to contemporary issues about freedom, responsibility, and women’s

¹⁸⁶ Spivak, ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’, in *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory*, p. 74.

¹⁸⁷ Spivak, ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’, in *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory*, p. 75.

¹⁸⁸ Spivak, ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’, in *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory*, p. 90.

¹⁸⁹ Spivak, ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’, in *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory*, p. 104.

“place.” The heroine would represent the unapologetic acceptance of shame and terror; assume the consequences of choosing infanticide; claim her own freedom.¹⁹⁰

Sethe — Morrison’s character, inspired by the historical figure of Garner — has a (ideological) representative charge. Although Morrison sees the potential for relating Garner’s history to issues about race and gender in post-slavery US society, she underlines the pitfalls of her endeavour: she describes slavery in spatial terms, as a terrain that is ‘formidable and pathless’, a ‘repellant landscape (hidden, but not completely; deliberately buried, but not forgotten)’. Her intervention, she writes, was to ‘pitch a tent in a cemetery inhabited by highly vocal ghosts’.¹⁹¹

In a lecture titled ‘Narrating the Other’, which overlaps closely with *Beloved*’s foreword, Morrison deploys a similar spatial metaphor to describe the function of narrative fiction in ‘being’ and ‘becoming’ the other. For Morrison: ‘Narrative fiction provides a controlled wilderness, an opportunity to be and to become the Other. The stranger. With sympathy, clarity, and the risk of self-examination’.¹⁹² Despite her faith in the possibility of the author’s being able to other themselves through fiction, Morrison cautions that such a project is fraught with the fundamental problem that there is necessarily a difference between the author and the subjects that she ‘imagines’. Indeed, in a different lecture from the same series, called ‘Being or Becoming the Stranger’, Morrison links the process of representing the Other to appropriation. For her, the construction of the Other is often a self-indulgent process whereby the self seeks to affirm their normality, humanity, strength, superiority and/or power in contrast to the lack thereof embodied and represented by the

¹⁹⁰ Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (New York: Vintage International, 2007), p. xvii.

¹⁹¹ Morrison, *Beloved*, p. vii.

¹⁹² Morrison, ‘Narrating the Other’, in *The Origin of Others: The Charles Eliot Norton Lectures* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2017), p. 91.

Other. The Other is thus a self-projection and the encounter with the Other an uncanny experience where the process of self-recognition is ‘romanced’:

[...] there are no strangers. There are only versions of ourselves, many of which we have not embraced, most of which we wish to protect ourselves from. For the stranger is not foreign, she is random; not alien but remembered; and it is the randomness of the encounter with our already known—although unacknowledged—selves that summons a ripple of alarm. That makes us reject the figure and the emotions it provokes—especially when these emotions are profound. It is also what makes us want to own, govern, and administrate the Other. To romance her, if we can, back into our own mirrors. In either instance (of alarm or false reverence), we deny her personhood, the specific individuality we insist upon for ourselves.¹⁹³

Here, Morrison paradoxically suggests that a non-appropriative representation of the Other involves ‘being’ or ‘becoming’ the Other; inhabiting the individual subjectivity of a given stranger rather than represent them.

The paradox of Morrison’s conception of the uncanny Other (as a figure of familiarity and estrangement) is exemplified in the titular character of *Beloved*, who, for Morrison, is ‘the haunter, the ultimate Other’.¹⁹⁴ Morrison contrasts the ending of her novel with the fate of Garner. She says that the ‘possibility’ that her version of Garner, Sethe, could forgive herself for killing her daughter ‘was not the final word. That would have to belong to the Other, the prime motivator, the reason for the novel’s existence, Beloved herself’.¹⁹⁵ That ‘final word’, ‘Beloved’, signifies an absence-presence — a haunting that points to a story and its protagonist that are half-remembered. Morrison thus suggests that there is an unrepresentable quality to her ‘ultimate Other’. Otherness at its most extreme, embodied by the dead child, can only be partially and imperfectly represented, in the literary sense, with the aid of (an author’s) imagination and empathy. The Other cannot be represented; the Other can only be ‘imagined’, ‘invented’ with the dead child providing fertile, if hazardous, terrain on which to carry out that process.

¹⁹³ Morrison, ‘Being or Becoming the Stranger’, in *The Origin of Others*, pp. 38-39.

¹⁹⁴ Morrison, ‘Narrating the Other’, in *The Origin of Others*, p. 91.

¹⁹⁵ Morrison, ‘Narrating the Other’, in *The Origin of Others*, pp. 86-87.

With regard to the political sense of representation — or speak on behalf of — Audre Lorde gives a more positive account of representational politics than that provided by Spivak. In ‘The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House’ (1984), speaking against the failures of white feminists in the US to include and promote feminists of colour and queer feminists, Lorde highlights diversity as a key motor in the enrichment and development of feminist thought and political work. Lorde’s advocating of diversity is underpinned by a conception of difference that rests on two axes: the interdependent ‘nurturing’ of individuals and groups; and, the function of difference as a ‘creativ[e] dialectic’:

Advocating the mere tolerance of difference between women is the grossest reformism. It is a total denial of the creative function of difference in our lives. Difference must not be merely tolerated, but seen as a fund of necessary polarities between which our creativity can spark like a dialectic. Only then does the necessity for interdependency become unthreatening. Only within that interdependency of different strengths, acknowledged and equal, can the power to seek new ways of being in the world generate, as well as the courage and sustenance to act where there are no charters.¹⁹⁶

Like Spivak, who rejects the tokenistic ‘laundry lists’ of women put forward by well-meaning academics, Lorde asserts the creative and productive function of difference.

In her address delivered at Harvard University February 1982, titled ‘Learning from the 60s’, Lorde argues that self-representation, furthermore, is fundamental for marginalised groups as the alternative is dominant groups’ (the media is the example cited by Lorde) doing the representing (or, mischaracterising) instead.¹⁹⁷ Furthermore, in a paper titled ‘The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action’ (1977), she emphasises the importance of individuals in this process of self-representation — in the specific case of her paper, rendering black women visible in US culture and society. She argues that black women have been subject to a double ‘distortion of vision’ whereby they have been ‘on the

¹⁹⁶ Audre Lorde, ‘The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House’, *Sister Outsider* (London: Penguin Classics, 2019), p. 73.

¹⁹⁷ Lorde, ‘Learning from the 60s’, *Sister Outsider*, p. 89.

one hand [...] highly visible, and so, on the other hand, have been rendered invisible through the depersonalization of racism'.¹⁹⁸ In this context, those with a platform have an ethical imperative to 'speak' (to speak, but also to write and to publish) and to 'share' (to publicize and promote the texts and the work of individuals whose 'words are meaningful to us').¹⁹⁹ The visibility of black women and, by implication, other marginalised groups, depends on the recognition of individual black women writers, intellectuals, activists and politicians.

Lorde makes the basic point at the start of the paper that her ability to speak, write and publish is contingent on her being alive. The paper, Lorde notes, was written shortly after a successful operation on a breast tumour. Lorde's linkage of the affirmation of her identity and her being alive is, curiously, in agreement with the premise of Barthes's inverse notion of the (figuratively) dead author: 'I am standing here as a Black lesbian poet, and the meaning of all that waits upon the fact that I am still alive, and might not have been'.²⁰⁰ Lorde's paper is one of several that Lorde delivered at the Modern Language Association's annual conference (this paper, in 1977). In 'The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House', Lorde underlines the importance of marginalised groups being present at academic conferences and critiques white feminists for not doing more to include black, poor and queer feminists in discussions. The invisibilization of marginalized groups is a process in which all are complicit; rendering them visible is work in which everyone can participate.²⁰¹

Reni Eddo-Lodge makes a similar argument in the seventh episode of her podcast series, titled 'White Women Crying is Racist!'. In the episode, Laurie Penny, whom Eddo-

¹⁹⁸ Lorde, 'The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action', *Sister Outsider*, p. 25.

¹⁹⁹ Lorde, 'The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action', *Sister Outsider*, p. 26.

²⁰⁰ The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action', *Sister Outsider*, p. 24.

²⁰¹ Lorde, 'The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House', *Sister Outsider*, p. 74.

Lodge interviews, identifies ‘passing the mic’ as an important part of the practice of white feminists in the anti-racist struggle. In an earlier segment of the podcast, a member of Sisters Uncut — a feminist direct action group that campaigns against cuts to domestic violence services in the UK — identified as Angelica makes the remark that gives the podcast its title. The comment was made in response to Eddo-Lodge’s account of how a white woman burst into tears at the first event in which she participated for the publicity for her book *Why I’m No Longer Talking to White People about Race* (2017).²⁰² In her subsequent analysis of the exchange, Eddo-Lodge characterises the audience member’s reaction as a ‘destructive individualisation’, which

takes the conversation away from an analysis of structural power, and moves it to a place in which we all need to look after that white person’s hurt feelings, give them a tissue and a hug, and tell them they’re not a bad person. Somehow the conversation ends in the place anti-racists are trying to drag it away from, which is tiptoeing around white people’s feelings.²⁰³

Taken together, the discussions with Laurie Penny and the activists from Sisters Uncut suggest a distinction between ‘passing the mic’ and a histrionic kind of self-effacement which risks placing the emphasis on a relinquishing of power and privilege by white feminists: the *handing over* is the event with political significance, rather than the political speech and activity by historically marginalised groups that follows it.

In *A Arca* and *Eu, o Povo*, two of the texts analysed in this chapter, the poet dramatizes his self-effacement and the handing over of his authority to his readers and the collective subjects invoked in those texts. To what extent, in *Eu, o Povo*, where Quadros

²⁰² The exchange between Eddo-Lodge and the crying white woman is briefly recounted in *Why I’m No Longer Talking to White People about Race* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), p. 105. Luvvie Ajayi and Ruby Hamad give similar accounts of what the former calls the ‘weary weaponizing of white women’s tears’ and the latter ‘strategic tears to silence women of colour’. Luvvie Ajayi, ‘About the Weary Weaponizing of White Women Tears’, *Awesomely Luvvie*, 17 April 2018 <https://www.awesomelyluvvie.com/2018/04/weaponizing-white-women-tears.html> [accessed 8 October 2020]; Ruby Amad, ‘How White Women Use Strategic Tears to Silence Women of Colour’, *Guardian*, 7 May 2018 <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/may/08/how-white-women-use-strategic-tears-to-avoid-accountability> [accessed 8 October 2020].

²⁰³ Eddo-Lodge, Reni, ‘White Women Crying is Racist!’, *About Race with Reni Eddo-Lodge*, 3 May 2018 <https://www.aboutracepodcast.com/7-white-women-crying-is-racist> [accessed 8 October 2020].

inhabits the constructed subjectivity of a Mozambican soldier, does Quadros grab or pass over the mic to the ‘Mozambican people’ — the subjects barred access to the nationalist project? Does the individualisation of the author (Quadros/Mutimati) stand in the way of the nationalist project? To what extent does Mutimati — the anonymous, absent individual — highlight or distract from the structural issues that *Eu, o Povo* highlights? What role do the individual and the collective have in the nationalist struggle, as envisaged by Quadros?

In this chapter, I examine the role of the ally (non-aligned, non-Mozambican) author in Mozambique in the 1970s through the cases of two texts: *A Arca* (1971) and *Eu, o Povo* (1975). I examine the ways in which the collective subjects invoked in these collections are constructed and how the author’s role is configured in contexts of collective political struggle. In works such as *A Arca* and *Eu, o Povo*, in what capacity does the poet speak? Does he speak as an individual or on behalf of a group or a party? What right does the poet have to claim to speak on behalf of people other than himself?

In *A Arca*, Grabato Dias agonizes over his proximity to power. He positions himself as a duplicitous insider who deploys his skills as a poet to resist, but not actively rebel against, his masters. In the ode’s concluding section, the poet leads his people in an act of defiance against the poet’s Master. The poem juxtaposes the anti-authoritarian struggle of the poet’s following with the speaker’s self-consciously fraught attempts to address posterity: anti-colonial politics are mapped onto the politics of authorship and readership.

A Arca is a blueprint for Quadros’s literary prank *Eu, o Povo*. In my analysis of *Eu, o Povo*, I discuss the relationship between the ‘I’ and the ‘people’ foregrounded in the collection’s title. In FRELIMO’s discourses, the ‘people’ was a discursive tool strategically

deployed to enhance the party's credentials as a non-elitist and 'popular' political force. The publication of *Eu, o Povo* by FRELIMO was a process whereby Quadros surrendered the subversive texts of a fictional freedom fighter to the very party whose discourses Mutimati reworks. Despite knowing the real identity of Mutimati, the FRELIMO members responsible for the publication of *Eu, o Povo* accepted it as the official 'hymn' of Mozambique's independence celebrations.

Grabato Dias's/Noah's Rebellion in *A Arca*

De altos senhores sou escravo. Eu, não vós.
Exijo para mim toda a vileza
De isto que é estar bem com os deuses todos
Não o estanto [sic.] consigo, de isto que é
Obedecer ao rei, e ter, traídas
Dentro do sonho, as mil sementes leves
De uma só ideia ou mil loucuras
Sem outro fim que o riso.
(*A Arca*, VII)²⁰⁴

I am slave to lofty masters. Me, not you.
I unreservedly claim, for myself, the baseness
Entailed in being pally with all the gods
And uneasy with oneself;
In obeying the king and having, betrayed
In one's dreams, the thousand seeds
Of one solitary idea, or a thousand insanities
With no other end but laughter.

At the beginning of *A Arca*, the poet describes his tricky relationship with his 'altos senhores'. In the text, Grabato Dias outlines his position as a high-placed opponent of the masters that commission his poem. For him, slavery is the self-loathing that comes from being on good terms with his overlords. The poet is uneasy about his relationship with authority and its various avatars (gods, masters and kings): his proximity to 'os deuses todos' and his obedience to his king is a betrayal of the 'mil sementes' or the 'mil loucuras' that populate his dreams. Despite his unease at being close to the masters that he opposes,

²⁰⁴ The text of *A Arca* is typed solely in capital letters. I have chosen to reproduce verses quoted from the poem uncapitalized. *A Arca* is unpaginated. All quotations from *A Arca* are followed by the stanza number in brackets.

Grabato Dias is unsure of what exactly he is betraying (seeds, or madness?), and whether he has the means to rebel usefully against his enslavers.

Grabato Dias's agonising over his position as an anti-authoritarian poet living under, but not actively resisting, an authoritarian regime reflects his creator's position within the political climate of colonial Mozambique. Quadros's opposition to colonialism was manifested through the little read and highly cryptic poetry that he self-published.

In this section, I analyse how Grabato Dias/Noah configures his relationship to the collective that he leads in a rebellion against his Master's order to save a select group of humans and animals from the impending apocalyptic flood. I situate Grabato Dias's idiosyncratic revolutionary politics within the context of the anti-colonial struggle in Mozambique. Grabato Dias is ambivalent regarding his role in the revolution that he starts at the poem's end and flags his suspicions of all forms of authority — even his own, as leader as of the post-diluvian society. Grabato Dias's position as an outsider in relation to his following has parallels with the Frelimo elite, many of whom came from relatively privileged backgrounds in the Mozambican context and spent much of the anti-colonial struggle outside Mozambique. His insistence on the importance of collective consent for a revolution to function reflects Frelimo's struggles to mobilise the large sectors of the Mozambican population that were largely unaffected by Portuguese colonial rule.

A Arca was written in a context of censorship. Although poetry was subject to strict censorship under the Estado Novo, the punishments for non-conforming white settlers such as Quadros were mild compared to those reserved for non-white Mozambicans. The literary magazine, *Caliban* (1971-1972), that Quadros ran under the name Grabato Dias with Rui

Knopfli was closed by the Portuguese colonial police (PIDE) in 1972. Quadros's experience with censorship was very different to those of the non-white Mozambican writers José Craveirinha and Luís Bernardo Honwana, both of whom were imprisoned by the PIDE.²⁰⁵ Quadros's privileged position within the fraught political context in which Grabato Dias's poetry was produced makes it hard to take seriously Grabato Dias's aggrandized claims of the risk that he runs in singing his 'double song' — in particular, his claim in *A Arca*'s refrain that he, alone, is 'slave' to the powers that be. Grabato Dias's repeated declaration betrays Quadros's disconnect from the political and social reality of colonized subjects in Mozambique, where forced labour was only officially abolished 1961-1962.²⁰⁶ Grabato Dias's claims of his dangerous imbrication with power — the risk that he runs as an opponent of colonialism — is, rather, a sign of his complicity with authority.

The reference to 'seeds' and 'laughter' in the quoted stanza points to two of the features of Grabato Dias's conception of the poet's role in resistance against authority. In the ode, the poet is likened to a cultivator, whose poem will sow the seeds of a future and, crucially, non-violent rebellion. As an alternative to violence, Grabato Dias suggests 'laughter' as 'suficiente e estricta arma' (a sufficiently strict weapon, CCXCVIII). Grabato Dias's pacifist stance stands in contrast to the position held by FRELIMO and its founding president Eduardo Mondlane, who, from 1964, saw armed struggle as the only means to achieve independence from Portugal.²⁰⁷ The roles of humourist and winemaker imply two kinds of distancing from the political reality in which the poet is inserted: the poet's ironic detachment and his deferring of the revolution to his 'children'.

²⁰⁵ Craveirinha was imprisoned by the PIDE in 1965. He remained in prison until the Carnation Revolution of 1974. He was held in solitary confinement 1965-1969. Honwana was imprisoned in 1964, the same year his only work, *Nós Matámos o Cão Tinhoso*, was published. He was released in 1967.

²⁰⁶ Michel Cahen, 'Seis Teses Sobre o Trabalho Forçado no Império Português Continental em África', *Revista do Centro de Estudos Africanos* (Universidade de São Paulo), 35 (2016), 150.

²⁰⁷ Newitt, *A Short History of Mozambique* (London: Hurst & Company, 2017), p. 141.

In the opening twelve stanzas, the poet describes his knotty relationship with his masters, before evoking his childhood as the son of a hunter and a shepherdess. In this long section, the poet provides an astrological and cosmological survey, with the Sun ('nosso senhor mais antigo', our most ancient master, CXVIII) at the centre; he dispenses guidance on how to hunt and fish ethically; he ruminates on humankind's relationship to the natural world; and, he outlines his pacifist stance, stating that he would be pained if any of his children resorted to violence to achieve a greater good (CXLI). In the poem's final section, Grabato Dias's Master addresses him as Noah and charges him with leading a select group of survivors aboard the eponymous Ark. The poet 'over-obey's' ('cumpri[r] por excesso', CCXXVIII) his master's command, inviting all humans and animals onto the boat. Inside, the poet and the various assembled creatures merge into a collective subject that rebels against their divine master. The ode ends with the poet's and the creatures' return to a world made anew, and the speaking subject's reflections on the guiding principles for this new world.

In *A Arca*'s opening stanzas, Grabato Dias is positioned as a dissident poet who takes advantage of his proximity to his masters, and their initial 'order' to compose a poem (I), to construct a double discourse through which he adopts the roles of authority's disobedient scribe and, in the poem's concluding section, the leader of a subjugated collective. Several addressees are invoked in *A Arca*: the 'altos senhores' who commission the poem; the poet's children; the poet's grandchildren; and, the poet's 'Senhor'. On an extratextual level, the ode speaks, obliquely, to the colonial regime; to Grabato Dias's limited contemporary readership, the settler community in Mozambique; and to his unknowable future readers.

Grabato Dias is dubious as to whether any of these groups will understand, or even read, his ode.

Grabato Dias claims to sing a double song, commissioned by his masters but destined for his children. The duplicitous intermediary is framed as a necessary but ethically compromised role:

[...] Se comecei meu canto
Por razão de senhor, isso redimo
Fazendo um duplo canto: um que agrade
Ao meu senhor e o lisonjeie na
Carícia da lenda, e um outro canto
Que seja a sarrazina clandestina
Da verdade, a praga contagiante
Das palavras mais puras e sonoras
A balisar [sic.] a barra dos futuros.
(CI)

[...] Although my master incited me
To begin this song, I atone for this
By creating a double song: one that pleases
My master, flattering him with caresses
Of legend, and another song —
One that might be truth's clandestine
Pest; the contagious plague
Of words most pure and mellifluous:
Beacons to guide posterities to their haven.

The poet 'atones' for his obeying his masters, who commission the poem, by writing a duplicitous text that pleases his master and subtly 'contaminates' his future readers with the truths that it contains. The poem is doubly seductive: his master will be seduced by the 'caress' of deceptive language ('lenda', which, in the twenty-eighth sonnet from *40 e tal Sonetos* refers to misleading pro-imperial Portuguese historiography²⁰⁸) and his future readers will be captivated by the purity and sonority of his text.

²⁰⁸ 'Da história historiada os uivos épicos...', in *40 e Tal Sonetos*, p. 37.

Grabato Dias's faith in his poem to have his desired impact on posterity is undercut later in the poem. In stanza CII, the poet is concerned that his double song will be misunderstood by his contemporaries and by posterity:

Outro castigo temo, que o esquecerem
O sentido das falas que construo.
Temo que os vossos filhos, destas falas
Outro sentido aclarem, e em perfidia
De entendimento ou por comodidade
Afeiçõem os deuses convenientes.
(CII)

I fear another punishment: that they will forget
The meaning of the speech that I elaborate.
I fear that your children will glean
Another meaning from my speech and that in perfidy
Of understanding or out of convenience
They will cosy up to the convenient gods.

Grabato Dias fears that his future public — his grandchildren — will read his poem in bad faith or make his words suit their own preconceived ideas. His anxiety betrays a preoccupation with the lack of recognition that his literary work received during his lifetime, and his concern that future readers will ignore or will not understand his poetry.²⁰⁹ The tension between legibility and illegibility here, as elsewhere in Grabato Dias's poetry, functions to tease his readers; he professes the ambiguous, multi-faceted and quasi-impenetrable nature of his text at the same time that he voices — legibly — his concern that his readers will misconstrue his verses.

In *A Arca*, Grabato Dias claims to be in the lonely position of being aware of his and his children's oppression. His privileged status as a poet grants him a platform from which to make his children conscious of their condition as slaves (CCC). The poet's role is that of consciousness-raising, evoked through metaphors of fertility and cultivation:

Se eu soubera
Filhos, que ser rebelde vos traria

²⁰⁹ In a letter written to Lourdes Cortez, dated 17 September 1971, Grabato Dias demonstrates that he was keenly aware of his lack of recognition, even if he claims that his lack of success does not bother him. I discuss the letter in chapter four. Lourdes Cortez, 'Carta 1 — 17-9-71', *A Ideia: Revista de Cultura Libertária*, 19: 77-79, 2016, p. 112.

Um só almude de vinho libertado
Uma tâmara só que fosse de
Autêntica alegria, agora mesmo
Anoitecer adentro, iria ao campo
De bacelinho novo e a madrugada
Chegaria mirando dois cordões
Da nova vinha já enxertada em
Libertada memória no futuro.
(II)

If I suspected,
My children, that rebelliousness would yield
A single almude of liberated wine,
A meagre date of authentic
Happiness, I would go, without delay,
To the field, and labour into the night
On a new vintage, so that the morning
Would herald the plantation of two
Cordons in the new vineyard, transplanted
Into a liberated future memory.

The stanza is a disclaimer. If Grabato Dias, so he claims, thought rebelliousness would bear any fruit, his revolution would begin right away. The poet doubts that his being rebellious is a productive course of action. Rather, as a high-placed opponent of the ‘altos senhores’, Grabato Dias can best serve his anti-authoritarian cause by marshalling his privilege and benefiting from his access to the power apparatus that he resists.

Born too early to take part in the rebellion of a future generation, Grabato Dias leaves the revolt to his children in the ode’s closing lines: ‘Filho rebelde ao pai sê-lo-á aos deuses / E, do humano, é penhor futuro’ (A child who rebels against their father, does so against the gods / And, is thus, a future pawn of humanity, CCC). In this way, the poet sets narrow parameters for the impact that his cryptic anthem of resistance can have in the toppling of his masters. Furthermore, the stanza belies Grabato Dias’s fear of the judgement of his future readers and his concern that they will condemn the poet’s inaction. The images of a hypothetical ‘liberated’ wine and of a vineyard ‘transplanted’ into a ‘liberated future memory’ point to Grabato Dias’s hope that his future readers will make sense of his poetic

production. Grabato Dias's chief concern is not so much the future, but how the past (including his poem) will be remembered in the future.²¹⁰

Grabato Dias's insistent looking towards the future raises the question as to who his target audience is. Does Grabato Dias speak to those amongst his contemporaries who are able — unlike, apparently, him — to stage a rebellion against the colonial regime? Or, is his cryptic invocation of his contemporaries, in fact, a performance rehearsed before his potential future readers, whose judgement and ill favour he fears? In short: does Grabato Dias posture, or does he interpolate?

A Arca's subtitle, which describes the text as an 'ode didáctica', suggests an intention on the part of Grabato Dias to teach his readership. Grabato Dias's leaving the real work, the revolution, to others, chimes with Quadros's pedagogical theory as elaborated in his 'Manifesto de Pintura' of 1958, published while he was a lecturer in Porto.²¹¹ His manifesto reflected the attitudes of several Northern Portuguese artists in the late 1950s and early 1960s, who sought to 'discover' the 'roots' of Portuguese culture through 'popular' or 'traditional' art.²¹² For Quadros, this search has two strands: 'São as crenças milenárias anteriores à História e que presas ao humus humano moldaram a fisionomia psíquica do Povo que inspiram o Artista. São, também, as próprias criações espontâneas da arte popular

²¹⁰ Grabato Dias likens wine to poetry in an untitled poem dated 12 July 1976 from the collection *Sagapress*. In the poem, Grabato Dias claims to 'consume' poetry written by other people like 'um vinho triste' (a sad wine). Continuing the vinous metaphor, he hopes that his own poems, with time and through a process of fermentation, will become transformed. His hope is that a future reader will drink his poem and, in turn, call it a 'sad wine'. The results of this fermentation process are uncertain and mixed. Moreover, how the poet's texts ferment is outside his control. The poem displays an acute awareness of how the ways in which poems are read change over time.

²¹¹ António Quadros, 'Manifesto de Pintura', in *Os Modernistas Portugueses: Escritos Públicos, Proclamações e Manifestos: Coordenados por Petrus que Imaginou a Obra e a Dirigiu e Deu à Estampa: Tempos Actuais & Prismas Críticos* (Porto: Textos Universais, 19??), pp. 49-63.

²¹² Fátima Lambert and João Fernandes, 'Porto 60/70: Os Artistas e a Cidade', in *Porto 60/70: Os Artistas e a Cidade* (Porto: Fundação Serralves, 2001), pp. 24-25.

que o jovem Pintor, atraído por essa herança rude e ingénua, procura valorizar e transmitir’ (The Artist is inspired by beliefs that precede History by thousands of years and which, glued to the human humus, have moulded the psychic physiognomy of the People. The young Painter, drawn to this crude and ingenuous heritage, seeks to draw attention to and disseminate the spontaneous creations of popular art, ‘Manifesto de Pintura’, p. 50). In looking to ‘popular art’, Quadros hopes to find inspiration for his own artistic production, and to contribute to the valuing of ‘popular’ artists, whose works the ‘Painter’ (read: the privileged artist, like Quadros) will co-authorize and exhibit.²¹³ Under Quadros’s conception of the pedagogue’s role, the teacher should self-efface to allow their students to flourish.

In *A Arca*, the poet as leader is a teacher. Despite *A Arca*’s sub-titular description as a ‘didactic ode’, Quadros’s ideal leader is a Socratic pedagogue, who embodies the mantra: ‘ensinar a aprender, aprender a ensinar’ (teach while learning, learn to teach).²¹⁴ Quadros’s pedagogical and artistic theory overlap concerning the upsetting of the vertical relationships that organize the false binaries of teacher/student and high culture/popular culture. The perturbing of a vertical relationship does not entail an inversion, but rather the potential (future) dismantling of the extant hierarchy altogether. Grabato Dias is conscious of the paradox of adopting the role of anti-authoritarian didact. In *Facto/Fado* (1984), he contrasts pedagogy with didacticism, implicitly likening the latter to education under Salazarist Portugal (*Facto/Fado*, p. 21).

The end of authoritarianism and of social hierarchies is deferred to an uncertain, speculative future in *A Arca*. In the meantime, the anti-authoritarian bourgeois artist serves

²¹³ Quadros has been credited with the ‘discovery’ of Portuguese ceramicist Rosa Ramalho and the Mozambican painter Malangatana Ngwenya.

²¹⁴ See ‘Ensinar é Aprender’, in *O Povo é Nós*, p. 13.

as a duplicitous intermediary between elites (the academy and the ruling political class) and the ‘people’ (popular artists and the fiction of a people as united through a national, ‘popular’ and ‘traditional’ culture). The poet as teacher, leader, translator, intermediary or leader is thus a transitional figure who should become superfluous when authoritarianism, in all forms, is finally toppled. In the intervening period, the poet, in *A Arca*, claims to speak to and as an inert and ignorant collective.

In the final section of *A Arca*, Grabato Dias’s Master names him leader of the select group of survivors of the imminent biblical flood (CCVII-CCIX). The doubled-subject Grabato Dias/Noah simultaneously obeys and disobeys his divine master’s command: instead of gathering a select group of humans to accompany him on the ark — as happens in Genesis — the poet invites all animals and humans on board. Grabato Dias justifies his adoption of the imposed leadership position, but he is not entirely at ease with the idea of being in charge of others. The assumption of a position of authority by the anti-authoritarian Grabato Dias is one of *A Arca*’s many paradoxes.

Once grouped together, the poet, humankind and the animal kingdom form a ‘grande corpo vivo’ (a large living body) with ‘uma só / Consciência, um espírito apenas / Um único querer determinado’ (one / Conscience, one mind / One determined will, CCXXV). The elision of the individual and the collective, however, is not total. The collective body is the poet’s (‘*meu corpo*’, my emphasis) and its resistance to its Master a dialogue between Grabato Dias/Noah, ‘o eleito’ (the chosen one), and his ‘Senhor’, conjugated in the first-person- and second-person singulars:

E a crua voz [do Senhor]: Cumpriste por excesso
E, por tal, mal cumpriste, minha ordem.
Essa lama de lãs e de bodum
Mungente, abandona. Tu e os teus,
Te disse, dessa fétida manada

Carraçosa de males, escolhe só
O que baste ao vosso sustentar.
Foste o eleito, aprende a merecê-lo
Que o coração de um chefe é seu rigor
E seu rigor é regra, só, do útil.

[...] Tirara da chefia outra lição
Diversa do senhor. Não era mais
Pertença de mim mesmo, mas ideia
Comum, substanciada em meu corpo,
E ainda que quisesse não podia
Imaginar-me fora dessa rota.
E em fala de serpente ou de raposo
Respondi ao senhor, em voz humilde:

Não sou tão rudo como imaginaste
Ao medir meu valor com a tua fala.
Sei bem que és meu senhor, e o teu poder
Melhor mo ensinara se o esquecera,
Nem digno seria da grandeza
Da tua criação, se, ao salvar-me
E aos meus, da tua praga, não salvaria
Todo o ser que é vivo...ó senhor
Criador da vida, em tua grandeza
Só podes ver da vida o seu conjunto!

Quiseste experimentar-me e ver se o servo
Que sou, merece o cargo excepcional.
Ainda que não possa como tu
Ver a razão potente porque somos
Só um corpo com tão diversos membros,
Ainda assim entrevejo que não posso
Sem contra ti marchar — e não o sonho! —
Castrar a vida em sua parte ou todo.
Somos órgãos irmãos do mesmo bicho
Por ti criado pra medir o tempo.

Embarcaremos todos, pois que todos
É que faremos um, e a esse queres.
{...}
(CCXXVIII-CCXXXII)

*And the cruel voice [of my Master]: You over-obeyed
And, thus, disobeyed my order.
These clothed scum, whining
And rancid — forsake them. I asked you
And your fellows to select only those
Out of this fetid herd — these malign
Cockroaches — necessary to your survival.
You were the chosen one. Prove your worth,
For a leader's heart is his rigour
And his rigour is the law of the strictly useful.*

[..] I had learned a lesson about leadership
Different to my Master's. I no longer
Belonged to myself, I was a common idea,
Substantiated in my body —
Even if I wanted to, I could not
Imagine myself any different.
And with a serpent's or a fox's tongue,

I retorted, in a humble voice:

*Your speech is an unfaithful measure of my worth:
I am not so brutish as you think.
I know that you are my master: should I
Forget it, your power would quickly remind me.
To forsake all living creatures and save
But my own skin and my fellows, would
Render me unworthy of your great creation.
Oh master, our creator, your might may only
Be glimpsed in the sum total of all life!*

*You wished to test me, slave that I am,
To see if I was worthy of this exceptional burden.
Though, unlike you, I cannot divine
The potent reason for our being
One body constituted of diverse members,
I realise, nevertheless, that to castrate
Life, in part or entirely, would be —
Oh, I shudder at the thought! — a betrayal!
We, brotherly organs of the same creature,
Are your creation, designed to measure time.*

*We will all embark, for we all
Will constitute one, such as you desire.*

The poet distinguishes his conception of leadership from his Master's, claiming that his democratizing approach, whereby he saves all humans and animals, is more worthy of his Master's creation than cutthroat utilitarianism. Much like the underside of the poet's double song — 'truth's clandestine / Pest' that will contaminate the poet's intended readership — the 'outra lição' ([...]other lesson) learned by the poet has taken hold in those that listen to him, the constituents of the collective, and become common sense. The process whereby an individual speaks as a collective is a process of indoctrination: the poet can claim to speak as a collective once he has seduced that collective with his contagious-because-truthful poetry. The poet's becoming a collective subject rests on the popular acceptance of his ideology and his and the collective's mutual resistance to a common enemy.

The poet's double song seeks to seduce two audiences: the 'vós' (alternately his children, grandchildren and the humans and animals that board his ark) and the 'tu', his 'Senhor'. Speaking in either the forked tongue of a snake or using the wiles of a fox, the

poet addresses his Master in an attempt to persuade him to spare all life. Feigning humility, the poet, in his doubled-edged speech, uses flattery and an ‘argumento falso’ (false argument, CCXXXII) to convince his Master to spare him and all living beings. The poet relies on his identifying of the absurdity of his Master’s command and his duplicitous language to coerce the powers-that-be into serving the oppressed, while consciously signalling to his followers — and, to his readers — that he seeks to resist power through his ironic declaration that he would never dream of going against his Master’s will. The poet assumes that his Master’s rule is unassailable. The toppling of authority must wait for a more propitious time for rebellion and, implicitly, a leader of resistance more willing to rebel.

Indeed, once aboard the ark, the poet only decides to defy his Master after he has the consent of his following, who resolve to return to the world that has been destroyed by apocalyptic floods: ‘Quando clara luz, clara ordem, / Brotou da colectiva consciência: / Voltar! [...]’ (Once piercing light, radiant order / Sprouted from the collective conscience: [We cried] *Go back!*’, CCXLVI). Rebellion against authority is only possible once the poet’s followers have consciousness of their oppression and the poet — supposedly alone in the knowledge that he and his people are oppressed subjects — has the backing of a following that can carry out the rebellion that he professes that only he is able to incite.

Although the poet remarks that, after the decision to disobey the Master has been taken, the powers-that-be are ‘pequenos / [...] perante a união / Dos pequenos’ (insignificant / before the unity / of the insignificant, CCL), he also frames the post-rebellion moment as uncertain and distressing. The reversal of the ark’s movement leaves the vessel and its passengers in freefall (‘abandonados fomos à vertigem da queda’, we were abandoned to the

vertigo of our plummeting, CCL). The poet's and his following's freedom comes with the cost of instability and anxiety:

[...] e caindo
Subíamos na funda consciência
De estar mais perto. De que véu,
De que oculto poder? Que senhorio?
Talvez a desvendada liberdade...

...Ou talvez a semente de indecisas
Escravidões futuras, de tibiezas
Sem aparente culpa de ninguém,
De indiferenças mornas, de desleixo
De falta de um pensar continuado
Nas coisas que, do simples, aparentam
Apenas o exterior, das mal-querenças
Songas, da feitura orbitada em cruas
Ordenanças sem résteas de respeito,
Virtude ôca [sic.], desamor e ódio...
(CCLI-CCLII)

[...] and in freefall
We rose up in the depths of our conscience:
We were closer...closer to what veil?
To what occult power? To what kind of lordship?
Perhaps, an uncovered liberty...

...Or perhaps the seeds of indistinct
Slaveries in the future; of seemingly
Blameless apathies; of tepid
Indifferences; of lack of care;
Of a lack of a sustained meditation
On those things that the uninitiated
Only glimpse the surface of; of shady
Ill-wills, orbiting cruel mandates,
devoid of respect, hollow
virtue, ill-feeling and hatred...

The poet fears that rebellion against one form of authority is no guarantee that authoritarianism will not return in some form or another. He is apprehensive of his following's becoming indifferent, lax and inattentive to the subtle processes whereby the oppressed become subjugated by the powerful. He suspects, perversely, that without a patent authoritarian antagonist, he and his people will succumb, through apathy, to a different kind of servitude in the future.

At the poem's end, the speaking subject remarks that his relationship with power is a 'traidora / Aliança' (treacherous alliance): 'Poderoso senhorio / Aceitei, mas com perfídia

o fiz' (I accepted/ lordship, but in perfidy did I accede, CCLXXIV). These lines point to a further caveat to Grabato Dias's anti-colonial stance: he is unsure that he, or anyone else, would be a better 'Senhor' than his current master; that leadership is anything other than a treacherous alliance with authority. Indeed, having ascended to power, the poet ironically remarks that he, much like the God that he has usurped, will rule over his people with a lofty indifference, coercing them to worship him with the fear of punishment and eternal damnation (CCLXXV).

In the final stanza, Grabato Dias restates his claim that he, alone, is slave to the powers-that-be. Before embarking on the ark, he, speaking in the first-person plural, had claimed that he and all human and animal life were 'slaves' with a common goal: 'Ali estávamos, escravos exigindo / Não a sua alforria, mas seu mando!' (There we were, slaves demanding / Not our right to freedom, but to rule!, CCXXV). Which is it? Is the poet, in particular and exclusively, a 'slave' or is all life under the yoke of a higher power? The elision of the individual and the collective in *A Arca* points to a feature of collective writings that Grabato Dias identifies in the epigraph to this chapter from *Pressaga*. Claiming to speak as a collective is often a rhetorical manoeuvre enacted by shady individuals in an attempt to erase the ideological particularism of a given text. In *A Arca*, Grabato Dias's gesture is subtly different: the collective subject is only formed when the poet's ideology is accepted by the collective whom the poet, in fact, entreats to subvert him at the poem's conclusion, as he urges his children to rebel against all forms of authority: 'Filho rebelde ao pai, sê-lo-á aos deuses / E, do humano, é penhor futuro' (A child who rebels against their father, does so against the gods/ And, is thus, a future pawn of humanity, CCC). The final couplet is a paradox: if the poet's children are to obey their rebellious father's orders, they, in turn, must rebel against him. At the poem's end, the individual speaking subject self-effaces, urging the

next generation to challenge an authority that the poet will not openly defy, and encouraging his children to disobey him. Unlike the deity that he has overthrown, the poet wishes that his creation will exceed him (CCLXXVIII). A perverse patriarch, the poet has consciously left the ‘ferment’ of his people’s rebellion against him in his text (CCLXXVI) in order that they, in turn, produce their own unpredictable ‘cantar ambíguo’ (ambiguous song, CCLXXVIII). The poet as didactic leader envisages poetry as a double-edged process whereby the text of the poet-pedagogue spurs his reader-pupils to produce texts of their own in a gesture of rebellion and homage.

The final couplet of *A Arca* reveals Grabato Dias’s suspicion of all forms of authority and of all leaders. Grabato Dias’s fear that his ‘altos senhores’ would be replaced by ‘perfidious’ masters — that one form of authoritarianism would be replaced by another — was confirmed in 1977, when FRELIMO’s Third Party Congress effectively established Mozambique as a one-party state.²¹⁵ In the words of novelist João Paulo Borges Coelho, the Congress ‘put an end to a relatively “liberal” period of transition characterized by confusion but also by enthusiasm, and aimed to outline and implement a socialist order’.²¹⁶

Quadros’s strategies for questioning power are duplicity and irony. *A Arca* raises questions over the utility, efficacy and, ultimately, the constructiveness of such strategies. Although Grabato Dias sees ‘laughter’ and ‘ambiguity’ as suitable ‘weapons’ in the struggle against authority, *A Arca*’s final couplet points to the political paralysis to which such tools threaten to consign Grabato Dias’s self-conscious and, ultimately, self-defeating poetics.

²¹⁵ At this conference, FRELIMO officially became a Marxist-Leninist vanguard state. Newitt, *A History of Mozambique* (London: C. Hurst, 1995), p. 542).

²¹⁶ João Paulo Borges Coelho, ‘Memories of Ruth First in Mozambique’, *Review of African Political Economy*, 35:117 (2008), 501.

Grabato Dias's ironic detachment betrays the position of his occluded author: a Portuguese settler uneasy about his complicity with the colonial regime and who was not directly involved in the anti-colonial movement. *A Arca* straddles and perhaps falls lopsidedly on one side of the line between critical distance and political disconnect.

Mutimati Barnabé João: A Double Agent Working in the Service of FRELIMO and

Quadros

Mas, Kamarada, que dor de dentes, que repugnante.
ouvir-te [sic.] falar de papo feito da alma popular
como se o gosto fosse um dado colectivo e primário
e não afinal o resultado inevitável
de haver tantos tú por aí desde sempre.
(Poem dated 15 July 1976 in *Sagapress*)²¹⁷

Komrade, how repugnant, how you make my teeth ache,
with your talk of the people's soul,
as if desire were a collective and primary property
and not, ultimately, the inevitable result
of there being many *yous* since time immemorial.

In a poem from *Sagapress*, written a year after the publication of *Eu, o Povo*, Grabato Dias objects to the way in which poems written by individuals were claimed as collective artistic expressions by FRELIMO.

The poet constructs an elaborate culinary metaphor: in the first stanza, he describes how, having skewered one 'sentimento' (feeling) on the 'bancada de sensações' (bench of sensations), he brings this feeling to the boil. Before the poet has had time to cook his ingredient properly, it is sent to the 'prensa da opinião social' (printing press of social opinion). Such is life, bemoans Grabato Dias at the beginning of the second stanza: 'feelings' are taken to the wrong laboratory (line 7), where they are studied with 'a luneta astronómica' (refracting telescope, line 8); they are weighed in pounds, and then their weight

²¹⁷ Like *A Arca*, *Sagapress* is unpaginated. This poem is taken from the first and main section of *Sagapress*, in which the poems are ordered chronologically.

is recorded in kilogrammes (line 9). The resulting concoction is a ‘zurrapa aguada’ (watery grog), seasoned with stray hairs from the chefs’ heads. Those responsible are in denial about their foul creation; they feign ‘profundeza’ (seriousness) by speaking to each other in hushed tones, treating it with a gravity that is undeserved:

[...] e ao fim de tudo
ainda esperam conseguir algo
e farão por justificar o ordenado e o nome
e festejarão pois profusamente sérios
a zurrapa aguada que fica no fundo.

and after it’s all over
they still expect to achieve something
and to justify their pay and their name
they will celebrate seriously and profusely
the dregs of the watery grog sitting at the bottom.

The poet refuses any association with this ‘collective’ process of creating a ‘popular’ work of art: ‘Que terei eu a ver com isto? / Arte? Expressão da alma popular?’ (What have I got to do with this? / Art? / The expression of the soul of the people?).

In the poem, Grabato Dias, however, does not deny that works of art *can* be collective. His objection is to the ways in which some putatively collective artworks are produced. Furthermore, he questions the way in which the terms ‘collective’ and ‘popular’ are understood by the comrade whom he addresses. The poem points to the paradox of Frelimo’s discourse of collective and popular production: collective artworks were frequently produced from the top-down. Poems, in particular, were appropriated by Frelimo and claimed as manifestations of a collective cultural revolution. Under this process, ‘the people’ were completely absent from the creative process. ‘Collective’ or ‘popular’ art, for Grabato Dias, is the ‘resultado inevitável / de haver tantos tu por aí desde sempre’ (the inevitable result / of there being many *yous* since time immemorial). His reasoning is that he and his *kamarada* are distinct subjects with ‘entenderes diversos’ (diverse opinions).

As Grabato Dias suggests in a different poem from *Sagapress*, dated 1 February 1977, the ideal collective voice would incorporate the distinct ‘timbres’ of the individuals that constitute the collective: ‘quando uma voz colectiva tornar absolutamente distintos e críveis / todos os timbres do indivíduo enfim uno; / tudo estará certo’ (when a collective voice renders absolutely distinct and credible / all of the timbres of the individual who is finally One / everything will be alright). Grabato Dias’s formulation encodes the paradoxes of his conception of a collective voice. For him, the ideal collective voice accounts for difference and division at the same time that it is the expression of a ‘unified individual’. Grabato Dias suggests that collective expression depends on the existence of a distinct collective subject. Although a collective voice should cipher individual differences, the condition for its existence is a collective political unity that has been ‘finally’ achieved. Grabato Dias’s position that collective discursive production is only viable once the collective, as a tangible political and social entity, has come into being contrasts with Frelimo’s use of collective discourses, one of the functions of which was to foster collectivism amongst distinct groups of people in the context of a campaign against ethnic tensions and ‘tribalism’, in which the ‘povo’ functioned as a unitary construction that located the common factor linking all Mozambican people in colonial exploitation by the Portuguese.²¹⁸ Indeed, in *A Arca*, Grabato Dias argues that a revolution is only possible with the active consent of the people in whose name the revolution is carried out.

An equivalence between the individual speaking subject and the people, analogous to that which Grabato Dias alternately criticizes and proposes in *Sagapress*, is established in *Eu, o Povo*’s title. Paradoxically, the collection challenges the notion that the ‘eu’ can claim

²¹⁸ Lorenzo Macagno, ‘Fragmentos de uma Imaginação Nacional’, *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais*, 24:70 (2009), 22.

to speak on behalf of the people: *Eu, o Povo* points to the potential vacuity of the ‘povo’ as a signifier given that a people is constituted of diverse individual subjects.

In this section, I argue that in *Eu, o Povo* Quadros attempts to reconcile the anti-colonial (as a means of speaking truth to power and resisting authoritarianism) and post-colonial (to contribute to the nationalist project or be a manifestation of it) functions of poetry noted in the introduction to this chapter. The answers suggested in *A Arca* to the question of how writers can productively participate in a political revolution are put into practice in *Eu, o Povo*.

Eu, o Povo was a prank orchestrated by Quadros, who was aided by a network of accomplices. According to Lisboa’s account, Quadros asked him to deliver the *caderno* containing *Eu, o Povo*’s poems, stained with mud and animal blood, to a senior FRELIMO member. Lisboa gave the manuscript to Rui Oliveira, who would become the text’s editor, and who, in turn, passed it on to the poet and then vice-president of FRELIMO, Marcelino dos Santos.²¹⁹ Shortly after handing over the manuscript to Rui Oliveira, Lisboa received a phone call from the author and then presidential adviser Luís Bernardo Honwana, who warned Lisboa that he had strong suspicions that the author of *Mutimati* was a ‘mutual friend’ of theirs. Feigning ignorance of *Mutimati*’s identity, Lisboa suggested that ‘the problem of authorship’ was of ‘little interest or, even, inconvenient’ for the party:

Se o livro *Eu, o Povo* interessava à Frelimo, pois que o usasse! O Luis [Bernardo Honwana] concordou inteiramente comigo e comunicou-me que era isso mesmo que a Frelimo pretendia fazer: imprimir o livro e distribuí-lo o mais possível. Eis uma decisão inteligente: nada de procurar o autor para o castigar. Iriam servir-se dele, no melhor sentido.²²⁰

If Frelimo were interested in *Eu, o Povo*, then they should make use of it! Luís was in total agreement with me and indicated that that was what Frelimo intended to do: print the book and distribute it as widely as possible. Their decision was an intelligent one: rather than hunt down the author and punish him, they would *use* him, in the most positive sense.

²¹⁹ Lisboa, *Acta est Fabula*, III, pp. 451-452.

²²⁰ Lisboa, *Acta est Fabula*, III, p. 453.

According to Luís Cabaço, when Jorge Rebelo discovered that Quadros was the author of *Eu, o Povo*, he said that ‘esta poesia é nossa’ (this poetry is ours).²²¹ FRELIMO’s acceptance of *Eu, o Povo* was politically expedient.

For Lisboa, the decision not to punish Quadros and, instead, make use of his book, was one of FRELIMO’s ‘finest hours’. Lisboa remarks that: ‘A verdade é que o livro era francamente *utilizável* pela Frelimo, desde que tivessem a dose de sentido de humor suficiente para tirarem partido de uma farsa sem maldade...’ (The truth is that the book was there for Frelimo to use, as long as they had enough of a sense of humour to play their part in an innocuous farse).²²² Who outdid whom, Quadros or FRELIMO? What tangible impact did Quadros’s prank have on Mozambican politics? The silence that has fallen upon the book (‘le silence sur l’oeuvre tomba’, in the words of Maria-Benedita Basto) in the years following its publication,²²³ and its excision from the revolutionary canon, would suggest that its impact was negligible.

Quadros never intended Mutimati’s identity to remain a mystery. In my analysis, the creation of Mutimati and the case of *Eu, o Povo* should be understood, much like the publication of *As Quaybyrycas*, as a practical joke. The publication of *Eu, o Povo* relied on certain individuals being informed of the identity of the collection’s author, whilst others remained in the dark. The clues left behind by Quadros suggest that he wanted to be outed at some point. Maria-Benedita Basto notes that the text of the original manuscript submitted to Rui Oliveira contained unconventional spellings and accent placements. A reader familiar

²²¹ This story was related to me by Luis Cabaço in an interview held in Maputo, July 2018.

²²² Lisboa, *Acta est Fabula*, III, p. 453.

²²³ Basto, ‘Enjeux, double je(ux): hétéronymie, genre et nation dans *Eu o Povo* de António Quadros /Mutimate Barnabé João’, in Basto, *Enjeux littéraires et construction d’espaces démocratiques en Afrique subsaharienne* (Paris : Éditions de l’EHESS, 2007), p. 190.

with the poetry of Grabato Dias would recognize these as features of the idiosyncratic orthography of Quadros's most prolific alter ego.²²⁴ Could a writer as highly self-conscious as Quadros have mistakenly failed to remove such a telling clue as to Mutimati's identity as the word *alpercatas*, the word for sandals in Quadros's native Beira Alta dialect?²²⁵ If Quadros truly intended Mutimati's identity to remain a mystery from the FRELIMO members he was pranking, why does his name appear on the edition published by FRELIMO, credited with the front cover's design?

Basto writes that *Eu, o Povo* has been traditionally read as an exemplary collection of 'poesia de combate'. Combat poems were written by FRELIMO soldiers fighting in the liberation struggle. The party published two volumes of combat poetry.²²⁶ Many of the poems in the collections are anonymously authored or are attributed to FRELIMO. For Russell Hamilton, collective and anonymous authorship were apposite to FRELIMO's ideological line, which sought to suppress individualism.²²⁷

Typically, combat poems were read as circumstantial pieces whose principal theme is the anti-colonial struggle. Analogous readings of *Eu, o Povo* have been oriented by the 'official' narrative of the book's publication and its author's anonymity, as written by Quadros and his accomplices — José Mota Lopes and Lisboa.²²⁸ *Eu, o Povo* is a collection

²²⁴ Basto does not make the link between the spellings in the original text of *Eu, o Povo* and Grabato Dias's idiosyncratic orthography. Basto, 'Enjeux, double jeu(x)', in *Enjeux littéraire et construction d'espaces démocratiques en Afrique subsaharienne* pp. 190-195.

²²⁵ In a phone call, Jorge Rebelo — the head of FRELIMO's Central Committee at the time — alerted Information Minister Luís Cabaço to the impossibility of a FRELIMO combatant using the word *alpercatas*. Interview with Cabaço, July 2018, Maputo.

²²⁶ FRELIMO, *Poesia de Combate*, 2 volumes (Lisbon: Frelimo, 1974).

²²⁷ Hamilton, *Literatura Africana, Literatura Necessária*, II, p. 55.

²²⁸ José Mota Lopes published two articles on *Eu, o Povo*. The first, called 'Poesia e revolução', appeared in issue 243 of *Tempo* on 25 April 1975, p. 18. The second was published two days before the collection was put on sale, titled '*Eu, o Povo, poesia autêntica do povo moçambicano*', in *Notícias*, 21 June 1975, p.2. Lisboa published an article on *Eu, o Povo* called 'Os trabalhos e os dias de um guerrilheiro poeta' in *Notícias*, 1 August 1975, p.10. After independence, Eugénio Lisboa gave classes on *Eu, o Povo* at the

of anachronist combat poems — texts written during the final months of the transition government, and after the Lusaka Peace Accord of September 1974 had been signed between the Portuguese and FRELIMO. The signing of the Lusaka Accords came at the end of a three-month extension of the colonial war, after FRELIMO refused to negotiate a ceasefire with the Portuguese in June 1974. According to Newitt, as noted in chapter one, FRELIMO's prolongation of the war after the April revolution left many white settlers uneasy about their future in Mozambique.²²⁹ Although FRELIMO professed that its Mozambique would be 'para todos', in practice FRELIMO did little to protect white settlers in Mozambique.

Basto argues that war is only the backdrop to *Eu, o Povo*. The poet's main concern is the organisation of Mozambican society in the future.²³⁰ Combat poetry was frequently anonymous. In the paratexts that frame the two volumes of *Poesia de Combate* published by FRELIMO, the poems selected are claimed by the party as manifestations of a popular or collective cultural production that contrasts with the art produced in colonial and capitalist societies by oppressive and exploitative elites who monopolize culture, excluding the people from it. The Mozambican Revolution (or rather, FRELIMO's revolution) seeks to create the conditions under which the Mozambican people will be able to

produzir, libertar a sua energia criadora que esteve sufocada durante tanto tempo. Esta coleção poemas é já o fruto da revolução. Esta poesia não fala de mitos, de coisas abstractas mas sim da vida de luta do povo, das suas esperanças e certezas, da sua determinação, da natureza, de Moçambique. A POESIA É AQUI UMA ARMA DE LUTA PARA A LIBERTAÇÃO.²³¹

As Basto has identified in her analysis of the *Poesia de Combate*, there is a tension between the homogeneity imposed on the anthologized texts and the diversity of voices inherent to

Universidade de Eduardo Mondlane — where Quadros was a teacher — without revealing Mutimati's identity. Interview with Ana Mafalda Leite, Lisbon, November 2018.

²²⁹ Newitt, *A History of Mozambique*, p. 539.

²³⁰ Basto, 'Enjeux, double je(ux)', in *Enjeux littéraire et construction d'espaces démocratiques en Afrique subsaharienne*, pp. 202-203.

²³¹ FRELIMO, *Poesia de Combate*, 2 vols (Lisbon: Frelimo, 1974), I, p. 7.

an anthology. In ‘Writing a Nation or Writing a Culture?’, she reveals that the poems selected for the volumes of *Poesia de Combate* were significantly altered by the editors.²³² Similarly, Rui Oliveira, the editor of *Eu, o Povo*, made important alterations to the original manuscript of Mutimati’s *caderno*. In the cases of *Eu, o Povo* and *Poesia de Combate*, the anonymity of the authors, combined with their status as members of ‘the people’, leaves their poems vulnerable to political appropriation by FRELIMO.²³³

The most significant changes to the original manuscript of *Eu, o Povo* relate to the addition of the title and the insertion of the short paratext quoted as an epigraph to this chapter, in which authorship of the collection is transferred from Mutimati to the Mozambican people.²³⁴ Whereas Basto notes that Rui Oliveira was the author of the inserted paratext, she does not ascribe authorship of the title to Oliveira.²³⁵ The possibility remains open that Quadros, the precise nature of whose role in the editing process is unknown, chose the title.

The notion that a composition written by an anonym becomes the property of a collective is exemplarily articulated by Papiniano Carlos in his preface to an anthology of revolutionary poetry published by the Associação Portugal-Moçambique: ‘Autêntica criação popular, muitos dos poemas não trazem autoria individual; de todos eles se poderá dizer que o verdadeiro autor é o povo moçambicano’ (Being authentic popular creations, the

²³² Basto, ‘Writing a Nation or Writing a Culture? FRELIMO and Nationalism during the Mozambican Liberation War’, in Eric Morier-Genoud, *Sure Road? Nationalisms in Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), pp. 116-120.

²³³ Basto, ‘Enjeux, double je(ux)’, in *Enjeux littéraire et construction d’espaces démocratiques en Afrique subsaharienne* pp. 190-195; 198-199.

²³⁴ The FRELIMO edition of *Eu, o Povo* — in which the quoted text appears — is unpaginated. The text does not feature in the editions published by Contexto (1984) and Cotovia (2008).

²³⁵ Basto, ‘Enjeux, double je(ux)’, in Basto, *Enjeux littéraires et construction d’espaces démocratiques en Afrique subsaharienne*, p. 191.

authorship of many of the poems is not attributed to individual authors; one could say of those texts that their true author is the Mozambican people).²³⁶

Basto describes this notion of authorial anonymity as ‘impossible’ in relation to a similar project: the composition of the Mozambican national anthem. She argues that the history of the composition of the anthem reveals three ‘different fictions of a subject-people’, ‘customarily designated by the term “the people”’.²³⁷ For Basto, the fiction of a subject-people germane to Quadros’s *Eu, o Povo* is the conception of the collective subject contained in the first call for proposals for the Mozambican national anthem, published in *Notícias* on 4 March 1975:

[...] the concept was that anybody could send in an entry that would represent the voice of everybody: any one entry would be equivalent to all the entries. Underlying this was the principle of an anonymity that would be constitutive of a collective body in motion, expressing itself through a voice made up of all voices, like the concept implicit in the title of the 1975 book *Eu, o Povo (I, the People)* by Mutimati Barnabé João and Grabato Dias.²³⁸

The call for proposals published in March 1975 asked for submissions that would extol the ‘powerful spirit of the Mozambican people’. In Basto’s analysis: ‘This people would at the same time be the ideal author-people and the ideal subject-people, a people that by writing itself should constitute itself through the writing [...]’.²³⁹ The paucity of submissions and their poor quality resulted in musician Justino Chemane being approached to compose the anthem.²⁴⁰

The writing of the national anthem through an open call for proposals was framed

²³⁶ Papiniano Carlos, ‘Prefácio’, in Associação Portugal-Moçambique, *As Armas Estão Acesas nas Nossas Mãos: Antologia Breve da Poesia Revolucionária de Moçambique* (Porto: Apesar de Tudo, 1976), p. 8. The anthology contains ‘Camarada Inimigo’ (pp. 89-90), ‘Venceremos’ (p. 91), ‘Operação da Guerra de Libertação’ (pp. 93-94) and ‘Pés da Mesa’ (pp. 95-96) from *Eu, o Povo*.

²³⁷ Basto, ‘The Writings of the National Anthem in Independent Mozambique: Fictions of the Subject-people’, *Kronos*, 39:1 (2013), 202; 186.

²³⁸ Basto, ‘The Writings of the National Anthem in Independent Mozambique’, 199.

²³⁹ Basto, ‘The writings of the national anthem in independent Mozambique’, 191.

²⁴⁰ Basto, ‘The writings of the national anthem in independent Mozambique’, 192.

by FRELIMO as a ‘collective’ composition. According to Basto, the March 1975 call for proposals was ‘internally contradictory’, resting on the premises of ‘the impossibility of anonymity as well as a possibility that any *one* (I) might be equivalent to *anyone* (the people)’.²⁴¹ Furthermore, FRELIMO’s framing of the call for proposals for the anthem revealed a condescending attitude towards the *povo* that established the party as distinct from the people that they governed: ‘In the postulation of this ‘people’ we see both an assumption of equality of intelligence and its opposite, an opposition that strengthens the capillarity or permeability of power in governmentality [sic.] – in Foucault’s sense – and the identification of the people with the disorganised and childish lower classes’.²⁴² In the production of the Mozambican national anthem and the editing of the *Poesia de Combate* volumes, FRELIMO took a top-down approach whereby only texts that conformed to the party’s idea of what constituted ‘national’ or ‘popular’ cultural production were selected.

FRELIMO’s understanding of ‘popular’ cultural production rested on two axes: that any texts considered for canonization conform to FRELIMO’s discourse and ideological underpinnings, and that the texts produced be authored by writers willing to surrender their texts to political appropriation, or who were in no position to oppose such a process. Indeed, the paratext authored and inserted by Rui Oliveira was added to the edition of *Eu, o Povo* published by FRELIMO to prevent any individual combatant claiming authorship of the collection.²⁴³ In Mutimati, FRELIMO discovered a poet whose texts proved resistant to the party’s attempts to nationalize *Eu, o Povo* through political appropriation.

In *Eu, o Povo*, Quadros enacts the surrendering of a double discourse (‘duplo canto’)

²⁴¹ Basto, ‘The writings of the national anthem in independent Mozambique’, 199.

²⁴² Basto, ‘The writings of the national anthem in independent Mozambique’, 191-192.

²⁴³ Basto, ‘Enjeux, double je(ux)’, in Basto, *Enjeux littéraires et construction d’espaces démocratiques en Afrique subsaharienne* p. 193.

to power dramatized in *A Arca*. With *Eu, o Povo*, Quadros seduced the powers-that-be with the lure of a collection of anonymously authored poems that deployed FRELIMO's buzzwords and discourses. The 'eu' that speaks in the poems is a slippery subject that elides individual and collective subjectivity, whilst simultaneously resisting the process whereby his discourse becomes the property of the state. Although *Eu, o Povo*'s title suggests that *Eu, o Povo* is a collection of poetry in which the poet, the 'eu', speaks on behalf of the Mozambican people, in fact, much like in *A Arca*, the poet rather addresses the *povo*, distinguishing himself from the people. The positioning of Mutimati in relation to the people reflects the position of Mozambican intellectuals, writers and politicians, many of whom were alienated from the cultures of the peoples that they claimed to represent.

The poet's relationship to the people is set out in *Eu, o Povo*'s titular poem.²⁴⁴ In 'Eu, o Povo', the poet draws a subtle distinction between himself and the *povo* on whose behalf he claims to speak. In the poem, the individual subject and 'the people' have a relationship of teacher/student, under which the poet informs the people of the productive potential of renewable energy sources, specifically water and wind power, using knowledge to which he has privileged access.²⁴⁵ The poem summarises many of the topics covered in *Eu, o Povo*'s twenty-seven poems: the harnessing of renewable energy sources, in particular water and wind power ('Vento na Produção', 'Caborinha Bassa'); the sustainable exploitation of natural resources ('Floresta de Frutos'); the need to coexist peacefully with animal species ('Povo do Mato'); and, the importance of grassroots and community projects ('Caborinha Bassa').

²⁴⁴ I quote from the first edition of *Eu, o Povo*, published by FRELIMO, which is unpaginated.

²⁴⁵ 'Eu, o Povo' was adapted by Quadros's friend Zeca Afonso and the composer Fausto into a song. It features on the 1978 album *Enquanto Há Força*.

Much like in *A Arca*, the poet in *Eu, o Povo* is concerned with humankind's relationship to the natural world. Playing on the multiple meanings of 'natural', the poet frames ignorance of and contempt towards nature as a legacy of colonialism: 'A tática colonialista é deixar o Povo no natural / Fazendo do Povo um inimigo da Natureza' (The colonialist tactic is to abandon the People to Nature / Thereby making the People Nature's enemy). Using imagery similar to that used by Grabato Dias in *A Arca*, the poet suggests that the people can 'befriend' nature by using technical knowledge to harness the power of the four elements.

In the poem, the people are alternately 'friend' and 'enemy' of Nature; aware of Nature's power ('força') and ignorant of it. There is a subtle distinction between the currently ignorant collective and the knowledgeable poet: 'Eu, o Povo Moçambicano / *Vou conhecer* as minhas Grandes Forças todas' (I, the Mozambican People / *Will apprise* all of My Powers', my emphasis). In this formulation, the *eu* that enunciates is double: the singular subject, Mutimati, who has knowledge to impart to the 'people'; and, the 'people' who do not yet 'know' their 'Grandes Forças todas'.

The distinction between a knowledgeable individual speaking subject and an ignorant *povo* is underlined in 'Vento na Produção', where wind-power is described as being 'à espera da cabeça do Povo para pensar' (waiting for the People's brain to think). The unthinking wind needs to be harnessed by the peasant, who can benefit from the skills and experience of the fisherman, to create a wind-powered generator. Mutimati imagines coordinating these two distinct groups — fisher people and agricultural workers — so that the latter can benefit from the skills of the former. The poet has the leadership and macro-vision needed to speak, articulate and organize the Mozambican people. A leader, who is

also a teacher, is required for the organization of distinct groups.

In ‘Pés da Mesa’, the intellectual (‘o estudante’) is charged with the same role: to organize distinct, skilled groups of Mozambican society. The poem ‘Pés da Mesa’ underlines the role that intellectuals have to play in the post-independence period. The poet adopts the speech of five different individual subjects: a peasant, a fisher, a factory worker, a student and a ‘soldado do Povo’ (a soldier of the People), whose speech concludes the poem. The text imagines the first four speakers (all masculine-gendered) debating ‘quem é melhor, quem é mais’ (who is better, who is greater) at a table. Each puts forward his argument:

Sem Eu camponês não há colheita não há pão de comer
Sem Eu pescador não há pesca não há carne de peixe
Sem Eu operário não há ferramenta para fazer comer
Sem Mim estudante, não há nada disso nem ciência para organizar.

Without Me the peasant there is no harvest there is nothing to eat
Without Me the fisherman there is no fishing there is no fish to eat
Without Me the mechanic there is no equipment to prepare food to eat
Without I the student, there is none of the above nor the science to organize it all.

Each individual, likened to a table leg, performs an indispensable role in Mozambican society: each is a *sine qua non* of a functioning nationalist project. However, it is hinted that the student’s role is the most significant given that without ‘science’, the scholar’s domain, ‘nada disso’ (none of this) — the fruits of the peasant’s, fisher’s and factory worker’s labour — can exist. ‘Science’ is the organizing principle that fosters cooperation between distinct groups.

Mutimati’s identification with the student is suggested by the similarities between the student’s description of his role as a coordinator and Mutimati’s practice in ‘Vento na Produção’, as an organizer of distinct groups of tradespeople. In ‘Vento na Produção’, Mutimati puts in practice the student’s theoretical proposition in ‘Pés da Mesa’. The student

is differentiated from his three comrades through his use of ‘Mim’ instead of ‘Eu’. In *Facto/Fado*, the poet declares his preference for the prepositional pronoun *mim* over the subject pronoun *eu*: ‘Quando na escola oficial me forçaram a que MiM fosse EU / Não podia achar-me tão perfeito e desconheci-me’ (In official school, when they forced Me to be I / I could not think of myself as being that perfect and so I did not recognise myself, *Facto/Fado*, p. 22).

At the poem’s end, the soldier resolves the debate. His mixing of metaphors, constructed using language associated with the professions of the five characters in the poem, mirrors the technique, used by Quadros throughout *Eu, o Povo*, of deploying the discourses and political buzzwords of FRELIMO in surprising situations. Mutimati momentarily recedes from view, allowing the four comrades to argue. Their discussion is resolved by the anonymous ‘soldier’ who is not of FRELIMO, but of the people. The anonym concludes his discussion by juxtaposing his description of the student’s tool, the book, and his conception of the ideal *guerrilheiro*:

O livro semeia a cabeça, forja a Inteligência da Mão
 Pesca o Conhecimento, luta com a Ignorância.
 O guerrilheiro Semeia a Unidade, Edifica o Trabalho
 Navega na Vigilância, Estuda o Serviço do Povo, Luta com a Divisão.

The book sows seeds in the brain, forges our Hands’ Intelligence
 Fishes Knowledge, struggles against Ignorance.
 The soldier Sows Unity, Erects Work
 Navigates Vigilance, Studies How Best to Serve the People, Struggles Against Division.

The ideal soldier is not a combatant fighting against the Portuguese. The exemplary guerrilla soldier’s role is socially constructive, and their enemy ‘division’ of the sort against which Mutimati militates in ‘Pés da Mesa’. As in *A Arca*, the poet in *Eu, o Povo* reveals a pacifist stance. In ‘Camarada Inimigo’ and ‘Estou Tranquilo’, Mutimati criticizes colonial and anti-colonial violence. The texts describe the poet’s encounter with the corpses of Portuguese soldiers. In ‘Estou Tranquilo’, the poet contemplates the dead body of a Portuguese soldier

that he has killed. His examination of the soldier's smiling face leads the poet to lament that only after shooting the soldier he realised that the Portuguese is not his enemy. In 'Camarada Inimigo', the dead Portuguese soldier is ambiguously described as a 'camarada trabalhando no campo inimigo' (a comrade working in the enemy camp) and as an 'agente duplo' (double agent). In a context where a soldier must stand firmly on one side or the other, the only way of framing a 'camarada inimigo' is as a double agent.

In 'Pés da Mesa', the soldier and his shadow, Mutimati, are anonymous subjects who serve as mouthpieces for Quadros, who co-opts the voices of fictional Mozambican characters. The student is co-authorized by the soldier, Mutimati in disguise. The soldier's skill with discursive manipulation, evidenced by his deft mixing of metaphors and reworking of tropes from FRELIMO's discourses, suggests that language is a malleable medium; a powerful tool in skilled hands. Although the anonym's voice — which is the speech of a Mozambican subject-in-information and the voice of the *povo* — is vulnerable to political appropriation, it can also resist the mechanism whereby anonymous and collective enunciations are co-opted by power.

The 'collective' or 'popular' writing of Mozambican nationhood, by FRELIMO and by Quadros, is a sham: the 'people' is a fiction whose voice is co-opted by Quadros in his prank on FRELIMO. The pseudo-absent author construct (A.Q./António Quadros) and the *Eu* which inhabits multiple individual subjectivities (fisher, peasant, student, soldier) represent the diversity of Grabato Dias's ideal of the Mozambican nation, as described in

Pressaga: a collective construct constituted of multiplicity, and in which individuals have agency.²⁴⁶

In *Eu, o Povo*, the poet's positing a collective that accounts for diversity has an ulterior motive. In poems such as 'Relatório', 'Camarada Inimigo' and 'Estou a ver', the continuation of the colonial war by FRELIMO is presented as pointless. In the collection's opening poem, 'Relatório', FRELIMO guerrilla soldiers are painted as oppressed and dehumanized subjects who are repeatedly sent out to fight the Portuguese who, in 'Camarada Inimigo' and 'Estou a ver', are configured as comrades wearing the wrong uniform and who, in turn, are oppressed subjects. Indeed, Mutimati, much like the dead Portuguese soldier in 'Camarada Inimigo', is a double agent subtly critiquing facets of FRELIMO-ruled Mozambique from the position of an insider. Much like in *Pressaga*, published a year before *Eu, o Povo*, Mutimati's collection betrays a concern over the place of settlers and the white population in post-colonial Mozambique.

In *Eu, o Povo*, there is thus a preoccupation with the configuration of the *povo* within political discourses. The poems play on the subtle positioning carried out by Mozambican statespersons and intellectuals whereby the speaker with privileged access to the Portuguese language is simultaneously a member of the people and not: the slippage between speaking on the people's behalf and addressing the people paternalistically. Quadros's strategy for avoiding the paternalism of collective discourse is self-effacement. The disappearance of the individual intellectual is dramatized in *Eu, o Povo*'s concluding poem, 'Venceremos'.

²⁴⁶ See chapter 1 for my discussion of the opening of *Pressaga*. Grabato Dias frames the new nation of Mozambique as a space in which an individual's many identities can be reconciled. *Pressaga*, p. 11.

In the poem, Mutimati, blinded during combat, retires from writing. Pires Laranjeira has argued that the dissolution of the *eu lírico* makes room for the Mozambican people's agency in the nation's future cultural production. Mutimati is the 'guerrilheiro, que se apaga para que o povo seja, colectivamente, o centro da Guerra de Libertação' (the guerrilla soldier who self-effaces so that the people can be, collectively, the centre of the Liberation Struggle).²⁴⁷

Using the language of the anti-colonial struggle, in 'Venceremos' Mutimati announces the *nós* as the new protagonists of the ongoing national struggle now that the 'luta' is 'independente' of the anonymous individual poet, who is implicitly likened to the erstwhile colonial master, Portugal:

Não poderei fazer mais a mesma tarefa
Mas a Luta continua pois é independente de um homem só
E haverá outra tarefa para dois ouvidos e uma língua.
Venceremos.

I can no longer carry out the same task
But the Struggle goes on for it is independent of one man alone
And there will be another task for two ears and a tongue.
We will be victorious.

Here, paradoxically, the collective and its individual representative become simultaneously (and impossibly) separated *and* fused. The 'independence' of the individual poet is his assimilation into the collective. The anti-colonial struggle and, implicitly, Mozambique's independence are framed as ongoing processes in which the role of individuals — leaders — must be reframed. Much like the ending of *A Arca, Eu, o Povo*'s pyrotechnic conclusion dramatizes the poet's relinquishing of his authority to his readers/pupils. In *Eu, o Povo* and its idiosyncratic anti-colonial blueprint, the author is a figure who only commands authority

²⁴⁷ Pires Laranjeira, 'A Guerra de Libertação Nacional de Ninguém e de Nenhures: Invenção e Verosimilhança de João-Maria Vilanova e Mutimati Barnabé João', in *A Guerra do Ultramar: Realidade e Ficção* (Lisbon: Editorial Notícias, 2002), p. 290.

because it has been conferred on him by the powers-that-be: the colonial Senhor and FRELIMO, the pseudo-absent author(ity).

Like Grabato Dias at the end of *A Arca*, Mutimati's attention is turned to a distant, uncertain future. Grabato Dias and Mutimati are positioned as men out of time — subjects out of place in the contexts in which they find themselves. The poet's children (*A Arca*) and the people (*Eu, o Povo*) represent the best hope for the realisation of the utopian designs of Quadros's fictional authors. Thus, Grabato Dias and Mutimati mark out the limits of their poems' contributions to an anti-authoritarian rebellion (*A Arca*) or the nationalist struggle (*Eu, o Povo*). Quadros's cryptic and little-read poetry can only do so much; the real task is left to others.

In 1979, Mutimati returned from his presumed death. That year, FRELIMO prevented Mutimati's return when Quadros attempted to publish a sequel to *Eu, o Povo*. *O Povo é Nós*, which I discuss in the next chapter, was published thirteen years later in Grabato Dias's name.

Conclusion

That *Eu, o Povo* was excised from FRELIMO's canon of Mozambican literature and *O Povo é Nós* was only published in 1991 in Portugal — twelve years after the poems were written and, according to the paratext that frames the collection, rejected by Frelimo — is evidence of Quadros's failure to reconcile the anti-colonial and post-colonial functions of poetry published in Mozambique. In the colonial period, Quadros occupied the position of a contrarian. In the post-independence moment, Quadros is left with a false choice as a writer:

get with the programme or put down the pen. The nationalist project had no place for Quadros's critiques.

To access the kind of readership that publication by the state granted authors, they, in the period following independence, needed to speak Frelimo's language. In the case of Quadros, the author also needed to be invisible; his identity simultaneously befitting Frelimo's conception of a member of the Mozambican people and anonymous so that the state could appropriate the work through the attribution of its authorship to the people. *Eu, Povo* demonstrates that the author's authority in post-independence Mozambique did not originate in 'the people': the state, the pseudo-absent author, is the authorizing agent. Quadros's pranking in *Eu, o Povo* confirms the suspicions of Grabato Dias in *Sagapress*: the individual who claims to speak as the collective is to some extent a fraud.

A Arca, the blueprint for *Eu, o Povo*, is revealing about the limitations of the political functions that poetry could perform in authoritarian contexts. In the ode, Grabato Dias captures the inherent overlap of politics and poetry in colonial Mozambique. He maps the political context of colonial Mozambique onto the perceived drama of writing poetry in a marginal and highly politicized literary context. Poetry is configured as a high stakes power struggle between the poet, the powers-that-be and his followers. The poet presents his dilemma as a double bind: he desires to write texts that will inspire his people to rebel at the same time that he emphasises the necessity to obscure his incitement of treachery from the authorities. Despite his claims of the high risk that he runs in writing an anti-authoritarian ode, the poet's explicit and legible setting out of his practice as a rebellious poet in a text that is, in many places, opaque and cryptic reveals the relatively little danger that his project entails. In posturing to his readership about his fraught relationship with authority, the poet

undermines the notion that his being an author places him in great peril. Besides two brief interventions from the poet's Master, the powers-that-be largely ignore and are unconcerned by the poet's misconduct.

Quadros's solution to the bind of carrying out political work in a medium — literature — that he perceives to be unimpactful and fraught with problems is self-effacement. Thus, by a different avenue to those pursued by Foucault, Quadros arrives at a similar conclusion to that reached by him: the function of authors is to disappear through writing. For Quadros, authorial authority is contingent on his readers' consent. Authorial authority is not necessarily stifling to readers' production of meaning.

In the contexts of colonial and post-colonial Mozambique, authorial disappearance takes on a political contour distinct to Barthes's and Foucault's conceptions of dead or dying authors. In Quadros's work, the author is an ephemeral subject whose disappearances should allow his readers — as reading and writing subjects — to produce meaning in his texts and, in turn, incite his audience to produce their own art and carry out the political work that the poet can dramatize, but not enact, through writing. The author's receding from view is a means of pranking power and highlighting absences and inconsistencies: the absence of the 'Camões em restelo' who pens *As Quibyrycas*, the side of Camões not appreciated by conservative Camonian critics; the absence of the people from the process of collective cultural production in Frelimo-ruled Mozambique in the 1970s; the absence of Mutimati from the cover of *O Povo é Nós* and from the Mozambican revolutionary canon; the limited space afforded to individual artistic production in the nationalist project. In this way, Quadros reconciles the double bind that Spivak describes in 'Can the Subaltern Speak?':

Quadros's representation of a voided Other highlights the absence of the Mozambican people from the nationalist project.²⁴⁸

This function of anonymity, in *Eu, o Povo*, points to the power inequalities between the various competing parties in collective discourses. The question that Foucault rejects at the beginning of his paper — who speaks? — is of fundamental importance in the case of a text where its editor, publisher (FRELIMO) and its author are vying for authority and authorship of it. The stated author — the vacuous signifier, the *povo moçambicano* — is little more than a political football in Quadros's and FRELIMO's power game. To return to the question that I asked at the beginning of this chapter, if anyone is the author of *Eu, o Povo*, it is certainly not the Mozambican people.

Like Quadros-the-author-function, the readers of Quadros's poetry are configured as pseudo-absences. Quadros conceives of the writing and reading of poetry as an interplay of subjectivities — a thwarted dialogue between borderline unintelligible and cryptic speakers and their unknowable readers. In the next chapter, I analyse Quadros's conception of his readers as the Other from whom he is invariably barred within the context of Mozambique as a marginal literary context.

²⁴⁸ Quadros's concern with the absence of 'the people' from the nationalist project is taken up again in *O Povo é Nós* in 'Papel e Esferográfica' (Pen and Paper), in particular the snobbery of elites: 'Venho de ouvir / Cinquenta e sete vezes [...] / A palavra Povo como se o Povo fosse o outros [sic.] / Os que não estavam ali a aprender atentamente / E Povo fosse muitas crianças grandes, sujas, nuas, ignorantes' (I've heard / Fifty-seven times / the word 'People' evoked as if the People were those others / Those who are incapable of learning attentively / and the People were a gaggle of oversized children — dirty, naked and ignorant, *O Povo é Nós*, p. 29).

‘Aos Amigos, Inimigos, e Queridos Indiferentes’: Quadros and His Readers

AOS AMIGOS
INIMIGOS
E
QUERIDOS INDIFERENTES

Epígrafe
epigrabática
epigramática
pregrabática
e épico-popular:

— Ó rapaz, o jornal é de hoje?
— Não, patrão é doji quinhenta!
(*As Laurentinas*, pp. 17-18)

TO FRIENDS
ENEMIES
AND
THOSE DEAR AND INDIFFERENT TO ME.

An
epigrabatical
epigrammatical
pregrabatical
and popular-epic
epigraph:

— Boy, is this newspaper twoday’s?
— No, boss: it’s too-fifty!

The framing texts of João Pedro Grabato Dias’s 1971 collection, *As Laurentinas*, reveal a concern, expressed elsewhere in the poet’s works, with (mis)communication. The text carries a split, ironic dedication to his readership and to his non-readers. It identifies three groups of people — friends, enemies and those dear and indifferent to the author — which can be re-divided into two sets: those who read Grabato Dias’s work (in whom he has inspired enmity or amicability) and those who do not (those who are oblivious to the poet’s work). The epigraph describes an instance of miscommunication between a colonized and a colonizing subject. The question of the ‘patrão’ (boss) concerning the date of the newspaper is understood by the ‘rapaz’ (boy) as an inquiry as to its price. There is an ambiguity, however, as to whether the vendor genuinely misunderstands the asker’s question or not. Does he take advantage of the similar-but-different nature of their respective ways of speaking to haggle for a higher price for his product?

In the essay that prefaces *Laurentinas*, Maria Lourdes Cortez draws a link between Grabato Dias's way of communicating with his readers and his relationship to the context in which he writes. The preface is framed by an autobiographical text provided by Grabato Dias, which I discussed in chapter 1. Lourdes Cortez's essay captures the peculiar relationship between text and context in Grabato Dias's poetry. At the same time that she asserts the primacy of text above biography, she emphasises the need to read Grabato Dias's poems in light of the contexts in which they were produced.

Echoing Roland Barthes, Lourdes Cortez disclaims the inclusion of the autobiography: 'Esta a "biografia" que João Pedro Grabato Dias fez chegar a nossas mãos. Não que lha tivéssemos pedido, nós que defendemos o primado absoluto da obra e olhamos o texto como a única totalidade significativa' (This is the 'biography' that João Pedro Grabato Dias forwarded to us. Not that we asked for him for one, given that we defend the absolute primacy of the work and we regard the text as the only signifying totality).²⁴⁹ Lourdes Cortez's disavowal of biography as a key factor in readings of literary texts is in tension with her inclusion of an autobiography at the author's request.

Lourdes Cortez's justification for reproducing Grabato Dias's autobiography is that the text is an attempt by the author to rewrite himself through language. In this way, Lourdes Cortez departs from Barthes's total rejection of authorial identity: 'Grabato Dias situa-se na própria densidade formal que amorosa e pacientemente "fábrica" para fazer crer que não vai exercer liricamente sevícias no mais trágico de si mesmo e para se "manifestar", face ao leitor, devidamente escudado' (Grabato Dias is located in the very formal density that he

²⁴⁹ Lourdes Cortez, 'Introdução', in *Laurentinas*, p. 5.

lovingly and patiently “fabricates” in order to make his readers believe that he will not self-flagellate, lyrically, in his most tragic vein, and in order to expose himself, duly shielded, before the reader).²⁵⁰ Thus, there are two fundamental, and interlinked, differences between the Romantic conception of the Author-God whose death Barthes announces and the fictional author Grabato Dias. First, as a constructed voice, Grabato Dias is a body-less writer. His body is a fiction birthed in script; he is a textual being with no corporeal, physical referent. Second, as Grabato Dias is a fictional identity, his autobiography is not a secondary or contextualizing source. The text provided by Grabato Dias to the editors of *Laurentinas* serves as a primary text through which the absent master-author (Quadros) rewrites himself through the creation of a fictional author.

Lourdes Cortez identifies the creation of an authorial identity as one of several ‘processos de distanciamento’ (distancing processes) at work in Grabato Dias’s poetry. Like his coy relationship with his readers, from whom he is ‘shielded’, Grabato Dias’s position in relation to the context in which he writes is calculatedly distant:

Ponhamos [...] a tónica no Verbo. O que não significa que consideremos o autor [...] situado nos limites do conforto intelectual, instalado na ambiguidade da palavra, acoitado densamente na linguagem [...] Grabato Dias é profundamente penetrado pelo espectáculo que o envolve, mas, ao criar, em prolongado cerimonial linguístico, os processos de distanciamento [...] transforma em voz aquilo que apenas poderia ter sido acto-reflexo, tradução imediata.²⁵¹

We will emphasise the Word, which does not mean that we will consider the author as situated in the confines of intellectual comfort, installed in the ambiguity of words, hiding in language’s density. Grabato Dias is profoundly penetrated by the spectacle that surrounds him, but, in creating — in a prolonged linguistic ceremony — distancing processes, he voices that which otherwise could only have been expressed as a knee-jerk reaction or an immediate translation.

There are four operative and interlinked distancing processes in Grabato Dias’s poetry: (i) a distancing from the social and historical context in which the author writes; (ii); the poet’s carnivalesque and ‘Rabelaisan’ humour²⁵² (iii) the alienating nature of Grabato Dias’s

²⁵⁰ Lourdes Cortez, ‘Introdução’, in *Laurentinas*, p. 9.

²⁵¹ Lourdes Cortez, ‘Introdução’, in *Laurentinas*, p. 8.

²⁵² Lourdes Cortez, ‘Introdução’, in *Laurentinas*, p. 7.

poetry, which, according to Eugénio Lisboa, defies (philo)logical analysis;²⁵³ (iv) and, in consonance with Lisboa's analysis of *O Morto*, the torturous self-consciousness with which Grabato Dias writes on topics such as mourning, which is contrasted, by Lisboa and Lourdes Cortez, with maudlin outpourings of unfiltered sentiment.²⁵⁴

Furthermore, Lourdes Cortez's framing of Grabato Dias's relationship to the historical, political and social context of early-1970s Mozambique functions to forestall charges of political and social indifference (and even betrayal) analogous to those levelled against poets such as Rui Knopfli.²⁵⁵ Indeed, Lourdes Cortez frames the poet's conscious distancing from the context that surrounds him — in particular, through humour, marked out as 'o processo mais constante de distanciamento em *Laurentinas*' (the most common distancing process in *Laurentinas*)²⁵⁶ — as a doubled-edged political move in which Grabato Dias plays the ambiguous role of a "clown" *truculento e também melacólico* (a truculent and melancholic clown').²⁵⁷ Grabato Dias's discourse is carnivalesque in the sense attributed to the term by Mikhail Bakhtin in his readings of François Rabelais: '[The carnival nucleus of medieval culture] belongs to the borderline between art and life. In reality, it is life itself, but shaped according to a certain pattern of play'.²⁵⁸ According to Lourdes Cortez, the carnivalesque in Grabato Dias is a subversive mode given to the 'destruição da ordem e do

²⁵³ In a different essay on Grabato Dias's poetry, Lourdes Cortez frames this second distancing process in Barthesian terms, stating that Grabato Dias's poetics prevents the kind of 'tonal' readings that Barthes, in *S/Z*, urges the reader to reject in his call to 'désapprendre la tonalité' (unlearn tonality). Barthes, *Œuvres complètes*, vol. II, p. 142; Lourdes Cortez, 'Grabato Dias e as Transgressões de Linguagem', in Sena, *Craveirinha, Grabato Dias, Rui Knopfli: Leituras* (Lourenço Marques: Minerva Central, 1973), note on p. 20.

²⁵⁴ In the short unnamed text that frames *O Morto*, Lisboa states that '*O Morto* não é bem uma meditação sobre os mortos e os vivos. É linguagem poética a propósito de uma meditação sobre isso tudo', *O Morto*, p. 4.

²⁵⁵ For a discussion of Rui Knopfli's exclusion from the Mozambican canon, see Manoel de Souza e Silva, *Do alheio ao próprio* (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo; Goiânia: Editora da Universidade Federal de Goiás, 1996), pp. 105-107.

²⁵⁶ Lourdes Cortez, 'Introdução', in *Laurentinas*, p. 8.

²⁵⁷ Lourdes Cortez, 'Introdução', in *Laurentinas*, p. 12.

²⁵⁸ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1984), p. 7.

regime habituais do mundo' (destruction of the habitual order and routine of the world).²⁵⁹

'Distancing' is not escapism. Grabato Dias's 'truculent' humour is, rather, a means to 'atingir terreno onde se pode enfim respirar, encontrado que foi, no grau exacto, o distanciamento' (reaching a space where one can finally breathe, once sufficient distance has been achieved).²⁶⁰ Grabato Dias's truculence ('traculência'), his biting humour, is thus a way of achieving the distance necessary to respond with 'clarity' to the context from which the poet, paradoxically, distances himself: '*Laurentinas* é poema a desejar ser a lucidez do homem que vive no esquecimento da opacidade que o rodeia' (*Laurentinas* is a poem that desires to provide the lucidity of a man living to forget the opacity that surrounds him).²⁶¹

Because the poet, ultimately, seeks to distance himself from the context that surrounds him in order to appreciate it with 'clarity', the possibility that biography and contextual details might elucidate the poetry as a secondary, contextualizing source is not entirely discounted:

A existência subjacente de uma situação histórica, se a quisermos abordar, terá de ser de forma menos simplista, abandonados todos os esquemas ingênuos de relação causa-efeito, tendo sempre presentes os processos de distanciamento que o autor estabelece face ao que o rodeia, e não esquecendo também que uma possível intenção não abarca o todo das significações entregues ao leitor e que a totalidade do sentido fica em suspenso, pela própria natureza ambígua da linguagem.²⁶²

Should we wish to approach the underlying historical situation, we must do so in a less simplistic way. We must abandon the naive paradigms of cause and effect, bearing in mind the distancing processes that the author establishes in relation to the context that surrounds him and not forgetting that his intention, whatever it may be, does not account for all of the meanings provided to the reader. We must also not forget that the totality of meaning is in suspense, owing to the very ambiguous nature of language.

For Lourdes Cortez, Grabato Dias's biography and the context in which his work is produced are useful to the reader when deployed to further an understanding of the mechanics of the poems and the techniques employed by the poet.

²⁵⁹ Lourdes Cortez, 'Introdução', in *Laurentinas*, p. 9.

²⁶⁰ Lourdes Cortez, 'Introdução', in *Laurentinas*, p. 9.

²⁶¹ Lourdes Cortez, 'Introdução', in *Laurentinas*, p. 13.

²⁶² Lourdes Cortez, 'Introdução', in *Laurentinas*, p. 7.

The ‘distancing processes’ at play in *Laurentinas* cannot be appreciated by a reader who is unaware of the context that ‘surrounds’ and ‘penetrates’ the author and the author’s relation to that context. Lourdes Cortez’s term ‘distancing processes’ shifts the focus — Barthes’s focus — from the absolute denial of an intimate relationship between biography and literary texts, to an appreciation of the ways in which the pseudo-absent author (Quadros) rewrites himself through poetry: an emphasis is placed on the process of the denial of identity and the whys and wherefores of the poet’s aloofness.

For Lourdes Cortez, if Grabato Dias’s poetry is read biographically, it should be read alongside the fictional autobiography that he has written for his readers and in light of the contexts from which the individual hiding behind the moniker Grabato Dias distances himself.

The question of the knotty relationship between text and context that Lourdes Cortez describes in her preface to *As Laurentinas* is a topic of debate in postcolonial studies. The issue of the relationship between text and context in postcolonial studies has concerned the discipline’s theoretical allegiances: is postcolonial studies predominantly a deconstructionist or historicist mode? Do deconstructionist readings of texts produced in colonial contexts necessarily run the risk of anachronism?

Context and Text: A Debate within Postcolonial Studies

In *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique*, Benita Parry critiques an identified tendency in postcolonial studies for critics to privilege discursive analysis over the study of material history. She describes this tendency as part of a linguistic or cultural ‘turn’ in literary studies, which is set against a broader shift in ‘social theory’, where the social has been ‘collaps[ed]

into the textual'.²⁶³ For Ania Loomba, the concern of postcolonial critics with linguistic and cultural — in particular, literary — issues and phenomena has often resulted in a kind of discourse analysis that 'collapses' the 'ideological and the material' one into the other, as opposed to 'uncover[ing] the[ir] inter-relation'. Loomba notes that this bias is owing to the training of postcolonial critics and researchers, who have predominantly been scholars in fields such as film, literature and art history.²⁶⁴

Parry identifies two negative facets to the exorbitant textualizing of postcolonial studies: the disavowal, by some critics, of Marxist theory and the concomitant dehistoricizing of colonialism through a decoupling of capitalism and colonialism;²⁶⁵ the rejection or omission of the contributions of the anti-colonial liberation movements and an associated blunting of the oppositionality inherent to the colonized/colonizer dichotomy in favour of models of complicity, exchange, negotiation and transaction.²⁶⁶

Parry's critique of the linguistic and cultural bias in postcolonial studies identifies two principal issues with regard to the relationship between text and context: the nature of the relationship between texts produced in colonial contexts and those same contexts; and, the politics of reading instituted by critics foreign to those contexts, owing, principally, to a

²⁶³ Parry, 'Beginnings, Affiliations, Disavowals', in *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique* (London; New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 3-4.

²⁶⁴ Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, p. 51.

²⁶⁵ 'At stake is whether the imperial project is historicized within the determining instance of capitalism's global trajectory, or uprooted from its material ground and resituated as a cultural phenomenon whose intelligibility and functioning can be recuperated from tendentious readings of texts'. Parry, 'Beginnings, Affiliations, Disavowals', in *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique*, p. 8.

²⁶⁶ '[...] where 'the politics of the symbolic order' displaces the more demanding politics operating in real-world situations, and a theoretical commitment to rejecting fixed subject-positions as ontologically faulty and dyadic polarities as epistemologically unsound acts to erase structural conflict, there is no space for anti-colonialist discourses which inscribe irreconcilable contest, or for anti-colonialist practices that were manifestly confrontational'. Parry, 'Beginnings, Affiliations, Disavowals', in *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique*, p. 8.

temporal distance and ideological differences which combine to produce a distortion of the texts under analysis.

Concerning the first issue, Parry is critical, in 'Signs of the Times' (1994), of Homi Bhabha's suggestion that the ambiguities, inconsistencies and disjunctions within colonial texts were significant barriers to the total hegemony of colonial rule, rather than a reflection (or 'register') of the disquiet and insecurities of colonial agents and authors writing in the context of colonialism:

If [Bhabha suggests that] discursive instabilities acted to inhibit colonialism's drive to mastery, undermined its programmes of domination and endangered its magistracy — a claim that is different from the proposition that discursive equivocations registered colonialist doubts and unease— then it is an astonishing assertion which contradicts countless narratives of the dispossessions the capitalist nation-states visited on other worlds, is at variance with the audible violence in their many colonialist utterances, and is perversely indifferent to explaining the success and longevity of the regimes they imposed.²⁶⁷

Bhabha's framing of the relationship between colonial power and the discourses that served — in conjunction with many other forms of cultural, political and economic power — to establish and maintain its hegemony aggrandizes role of intellectual work in the subversion of colonial power. In 'Problems in Current Theories of Colonial Discourse' (1987), Parry critiques Gayatri Spivak along similar lines for denying a voice to colonized subjects at the same time that she 'exorbitat[es] the role allotted to the postcolonial woman intellectual': 'Spivak [...] severely restricts (eliminates?) the space in which the colonized can be written back into history, even when 'interventionist possibilities' are exploited through the deconstructive strategies devised by the post-colonial intellectual'.²⁶⁸ In the same paper, for the same reason that she critiques Spivak's assertion that 'the subaltern cannot speak', Parry takes issue with Abdul JanMohamed's presentation of writing under a 'text/context paradigm where [it] is determined and "controlled" by political and economic imperatives

²⁶⁷ Parry, 'Signs of the Times', in *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique*, p. 61.

²⁶⁸ Parry, 'Problems in Current Theories of Colonial Discourse', *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique*, p. 20; p.23.

and changes “external to the field itself”, where the acquiescent discourse, already dictated by ideology performs the automatic service of the colonialist’. For Parry, this conception of the relationship between text and context circumscribes counter-discourses or counter-ideologies to a reactionary role.²⁶⁹ In Spivak and JanMohamed, the hegemony of colonialism is presented as total; its most marginalized subjects voiceless (Spivak) or reactionaries working inevitably within the constraining frameworks of colonial epistemes (JanMohamed). Where Bhabha (and Spivak) acknowledge that colonialism’s hegemony is not total, its undoing is (mis)placed in textual inconsistencies and ambiguities in colonial discourses and ironic rewritings of authoritative colonizing texts (Bhabha), or in the work of women intellectuals (Spivak).

Regarding the relationship between the colonial context and postcolonial critics, Parry identifies an anachronistic bias in Bhabha’s treatment of Franz Fanon, whose work, she wonders, Bhabha, in a foreword to an English translation of *Peau noire, masques blancs* (1952), may have attempted to ‘annex [...] to his own theory’:

By displacing Fanon’s work from ‘one political moment or movement’, relegating the extent to which it ‘historicizes the colonial experience’ and privileging the agonism and uncertainty of the colonial relationship over Fanon’s specifications of relentless conflict, Bhabha’s construction shifts the political charge of the text from inscriptions urging the colonized to insurrection in the uncertain hope of a transformed condition beyond the imperialist world order – a revolutionary impulse which Bhabha reads as Fanon’s ‘desperate, doomed search for a dialectic of deliverance’ – to Fanon’s meditation on the ambivalent identification, black skin, white masks, which makes it possible ‘to redeem the pathos of cultural confusion into a strategy of political subversion’. Such a reading, where aspects of *Black Skin, White Masks* congenial to Bhabha’s deconstructive practice are abstracted from the body of Fanon’s writings – within which this privileged mode can be seen as a provisional exploration of the colonial syndrome that was subsequently directed, with the poetry intact, towards cultural analysis and programmes for political action – obscures Fanon’s paradigm of the colonial condition as one of implacable enmity between native and invader, making armed opposition both a cathartic and a pragmatic necessity.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁹ Parry, ‘Problems in Current Theories of Colonial Discourse’, *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique*, pp. 31-32.

²⁷⁰ Parry, ‘Problems in Current Theories of Colonial Discourse’, *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique*, pp. 16-17.

For Parry, postcolonial critics must neither censoriously reject Fanon nor attempt to rescue his works by rewriting the antagonism of his framing of the colonial contest as agonism²⁷¹ and associated ambiguous terms such as negotiation, complicity and ambivalence which are more favourable to a postmodern sensibility.²⁷²

These critiques notwithstanding, in 'Problems in Current Theories of Colonial Discourse', Parry does not outright reject the projects of theorists such as Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha and Abdul JanMohamed. As the conclusion of her paper suggests, postcolonial theory, in her view, must attend to the 'material aggression' of colonialism and the 'epistemic violence' with which Spivak and Bhabha are principally concerned with a reading practice that is critical but not anachronistic.²⁷³ Parry's locating post-colonial critics outside 'colonial cultural hegemony' does not confer on them an outsider position, free from ideology. She is concerned with the diverse politics of reading implemented by critics within postcolonial studies, with particular attention paid to those who disavow Marxist theory.²⁷⁴

Quadros's poetry provides a productive case study to discuss the interlinked questions of historicity and discursivity raised by Parry in her critique of postcolonial criticism. His poems invite a double reading of his texts that considers them within the contexts in which they were written and from the critical perspective of an outsider, foreign to those very contexts of production. In a related way, Grabato Dias circumscribes a specific, limited function to poetry, which is contextually variable. As such, he consciously invites historicist and deconstructionist readings of his works.

²⁷¹ Parry, 'Signs of the Times', *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique*, pp. 62-63.

²⁷² Parry, 'Signs of the Times', *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique*, p. 56.

²⁷³ Parry, 'Problems in Current Theories of Colonial Discourse', *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique*, p. 36.

²⁷⁴ Parry, 'Problems in Current Theories of Colonial Discourse', *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique*, p. 17.

In this chapter, I analyse three texts that Quadros wrote in Mozambique and which he later collected in books that were published on his return to Portugal: *O Povo é Nós* (We Are the People), the spiritual sequel to and gloss of Mutimati's *Eu, o Povo*, dated 1979, Mozambique and published in 1991; the short stories that Quadros first published in Mozambique 1981-1982, in *Domingo*, and which were later republished as *Sete Contos para um Carnaval* (Seven Short Stories for Carnival), in 1991; and, *Sagapress*, a collection of poems dated 1976-1980, published in 1992. These texts were written at a time when Quadros's readership was greatly diminished as settlers gradually left Mozambique during the late 1970s and early 1980s. On his return to Portugal, Quadros's readership principally included those individuals who, like him, had lived in Mozambique in the 1960s, 70s and 80s.

In these texts, Grabato Dias grapples with the complexities of communicating to readers through poetic language and his situation as a writer with a limited contemporary readership. In previous chapters, I highlighted Grabato Dias's conscious addressing of multiple reading constituencies. The indeterminacy and multiplicity of the *eu* who speaks in a given poem by Quadros reflects the unknowability of the subjects who read. Written with different groups of readers in mind, Quadros's texts unravel to his readers according to the knowledge that they possess. The poems shift dramatically in meaning according to his readers' varying levels of appraisal. A reader who is abreast of the shared parentage of Grabato Dias and Mutimati reads *Eu, o Povo* differently to a reader who is unaware of the pennames' common lineage.

I indicated that in *A Arca* (chapter 3) and in *Pressaga* (chapter 1) Quadros alternately

addresses a contemporary readership — who Quadros fears does not understand or even read his poetry — and a future public. The odes reveal an anxiety related to the future arbitration of his literary production. Grabato Dias worries that future readers will misunderstand *A Arca* and *Pressaga* and judge his inaction under the colonial regime unfavourably.

Quadros's addressing of future readers leaves his texts open to posterity's arbitration. Haunted by the spectre of his speculative future readers, his texts invite an external, non-contemporaneous reading that will salvage the poems from the confines of the circumstances in which they were produced and the limited subjectivity that wrote them. The publication of *Eu, o Povo*, for example, involved pranking a FRELIMO elite who was largely ignorant of and/or uninterested in literature, with an eye to posterity, who would later make sense of the joke.

Quadros's hope that future readers will make sense of his texts is tentative given that he is not optimistic that his texts will be read by posterity. His readers are configured as absences that nonetheless condition the writing of his poems. Reading and writing appear as processes of thwarted dialogue between a poet whose readership is speculative and readers whose ability to understand the poems is in question. In *A Arca*, Grabato Dias positions himself as a subversive agent — like the 'double agent' in 'Camarada Inimigo' (*Eu, o Povo*) — whose opposition to authoritarianism risks going unread by the oppressed subjects he addresses. Grabato Dias's challenge to authoritarianism in *A Arca* and Mutimati's subtle critique of the latent authoritarian tendencies in *Eu, o Povo* risk falling on deaf ears: Quadros fears that power (the colonial regime and FRELIMO) will not read or will ignore his works, *and* he is concerned that posterity too will be oblivious to his anti-

authoritarian poetry. *O Povo é Nós* represents an attempt to revisit Quadros's project in *Eu, o Povo* through an ambiguous sequel/gloss of Mutimati's text that underlines poetry's function of critiquing authority.

‘Estou partido em dois com um espelho no meio’: The Self-ed Other in *O Povo é Nós*

O Povo é Nós was written four years after the publication of *Eu, o Povo*. It was published in 1991, seven years after Quadros's return to Portugal from Mozambique. As such, the text was written following the outing of Quadros as the author of *Eu, o Povo*, and after the silencing of Mutimati by FRELIMO, who removed Mutimati's poems from the second edition of *Poesia de Combate*.²⁷⁵ *O Povo é Nós* was composed after the Third Party Congress, which Quadros did not attend because he refused to wear a tie.²⁷⁶ A cryptic note that precedes the collection and which appears on the contents page makes reference to the blocking of *O Povo é Nós*'s publication by FRELIMO, without providing any details as to why the manuscript was rejected or by whom:

proposto como “argumento de base” a ser discutido, robustecido, etc., por um grupo de poetas a convidar. Guião para poema colectivo • bof.
produzido e proposto em Abril/Maio de 1979 para a campanha da década 80/90 e recusado sem comentários de tregos ou groianos • plaf. (*O Povo é Nós*, p. 9)

put forward as an ‘argumentative basis’ to be discussed, supplemented, etc., by a group of poets, to be invited. Script for a collective poem • bof.
produced and put forward in April/May 1979 for the campaign of the 1980s and rejected without comment, by Treeks and Grojans.

Rejected by Treeks and Grojans, *O Povo é Nós* and its author are situated outside the newly emerging canon of Mozambican literature. The reference to the expression ‘agradar a gregos e troianos’ (to try to please everyone) suggests that the poet sees himself as a contrarian outsider, aligning himself with the anti-authoritarian stance of Grabato Dias in *A Arca*.

²⁷⁵ Basto, ‘Enjeux/double jeux’, in *Enjeux littéraire et construction d'espaces démocratiques en Afrique subsaharienne*, pp. 189-190.

²⁷⁶ Interview with Borges Coelho, Maputo, July 2018.

Indeed, the poems of *O Povo é Nós* are more overtly critical of the new government than Mutimati's subtle critiques, in *Eu, o Povo*, of FRELIMO's mechanization programme and the party's continuation of the colonial war. Whereas in *Eu, o Povo*, Mutimati represented an insider positionality — a double agent working for Quadros and in the service of FRELIMO — in *O Povo é Nós*, the poet is an outsider who decries the continuities between the colonial and the post-independence periods ('Ensinar é Aprender'), who warns of the manipulative power of (Frelimo) discourses ('Racional Tem Duas Caras'), and who critiques corruption ('Txic Txic', 'Estou Vendo Só') and bureaucracy ('Por Favor', 'A Carimbada').

Although Grabato Dias's name appears on the cover of *O Povo é Nós*, there is an ambiguity as to who speaks in the poems. Is the speaking subject Mutimati, the blinded poet in whose style most of the poems are written, and to whom the collection is dedicated? Grabato Dias, to whom the collection is attributed? The Mozambican people, who, so the poet claims in the opening poem, dictate the collection ('A Voz', p. 11)? The ambiguity as to the author's identity confers a double function of *O Povo é Nós*, as simultaneously sequel to and gloss of *Eu, o Povo*. *O Povo é Nós* is thus similar to Quadros's project in *As Quibyrucas*, in which a poet of ambiguous identity interrogates Camões's *Os Lusíadas*. In *O Povo é Nós*, Grabato Dias, self-identified disciple of Mutimati, produces the kind of 'ambíguo cantar' (ambiguous song) described at the end of *A Arca*, where the poet, having usurped his Master's authority, foreshadows the production of ambivalent (subversive) responses to his text: '[...] É grande criador aquele a quem, / A sua criação excede, e conta / Outro ambíguo cantar que não previu' (A great creator is he who is / Overshadowed by his creation, and who counts on / The ambiguous song that he had not foreseen, CCLXXVIII).

Reading is a subversive act, writing self-defeating: Quadros's fictional authors engender — encourage, even — the undoing of their authorial authority.

The ambiguity as to who speaks in *O Povo é Nós* is sustained and left unresolved in the prefatory note, written by Grabato Dias, that frames the collection. In the 'Inclusão e Dedicatória' (Inclusion and Dedication), Grabato Dias, echoing Pessoa, dedicates the collection to his 'mestre' (master), Mutimati.²⁷⁷ The paratext foregrounds the multiplicity of first-person subjects that speak in the collection. The prefatory note is a meta-textual game of hide and seek, whereby the speaking subject denies his own individual subjectivity at the same time that he asserts his authorial idiosyncrasy.

The 'Inclusão e Dedicatória' begins with Grabato Dias arguing, cryptically, that his artistic production involves the simultaneous 'painting' of 'model' and 'artist'. Both are his model:

o procurar retratar pintor e modelo num mesmo enquadramento e num sóto de espelhos, dará sempre o desfocar de um, no precisar do outro.
[...] Qual sofre mais distorção e assalto da sombra? Pintor ou modelo?
Falso problema.
Um e outro são aqui o meu 'modelo' e o que perco num ganho no outro.
(p. 5)

the attempt to portray painter and model in the same frame and in an attic of mirrors, will always entail the blurring of one in favour of the specifying of the other.
[...] Which undergoes more distortion and is assaulted more by shade? Painter or model?
A false problem.
The one and the other are here my 'model' and what I miss in one I gain in the other.

Model and painter are always in the frame of Grabato Dias's poems; the evocation of the former necessarily entails the painting of the latter. In Quadros's poetry, the model is not merely a passive object painted by the poet/artist: the sitter is a pseudonymous subject who speaks.

²⁷⁷ 'Inclusão e Dedicatória', pp. 5-7. See Álvaro de Campos's text 'Notas para a recordação do meu mestre Caeiro (algumas delas)', in Pessoa, *Textos de Crítica e Intervenção* (Lisbon: Ática, 1980), p. 267.

Who ‘modelo’ and ‘pintor’ might be is impossible to ascertain. There are several potential combinations involving the triangulated authors Grabato Dias, Mutimati and the pseudo-absent Quadros-*pintor*, whose presence is hinted at by Grabato Dias’s use of a painting metaphor.

Grabato Dias explains that the publication of *O Povo é Nós* is potentially both a ‘caminhar na ampliação de uma dimensão já conhecida’ and a ‘regressão’. Grabato Dias argues that revisiting *Eu, o Povo* is not a backwards step; his speaking in ‘borrowed voices’ ensures that his poetic project is a ‘processo artesanal de investigar as dimensões da dimensão estabelecida’ (an artisanal process whereby one investigates the dimensions of the dimension that has already been established).

The investigation of a given topic can only proceed through a process whereby the poet ‘borrows’ the voices of others. Grabato Dias states: ‘Como autor, não tenho voz própria. Falo por vozes emprestadas’ (As an author, I do not have my own voice. I speak in borrowed voices). If the author has no voice of his own, and only enunciates in borrowed speech, then his ‘own voice’, Grabato Dias continues, is ‘o falar por vozes emprestadas’ (my speaking in borrowed/lent voices, p. 5). According to Grabato Dias, the writing of poetry necessarily involves processes of othering. The poet’s idiosyncratic voice is paradoxically that of others.

From whom has the poet borrowed these voices? Grabato Dias states that context (‘circunstância’) is his lender. He theorizes a relationship between poetry and circumstance according to which poetry is the ‘substance of circumstance’ and a means for questioning the circumstances in which the poetry was produced:

Toda a circunstância se auto-interroga investindo no saber específico da poesia.

Logo: 1ª afirmação — A poesia é a substância da circunstância.

2ª afirmação — O poeta é a voz própria das vozes emprestadas.

3ª afirmação — Só há poesia de circunstância.

(p. 6)

All circumstances undergo a self-examination through poetry's specific way of knowing.

Ergo: 1st affirmation — Poetry is the substance of circumstance.

2nd affirmation — The poet is the borrowed voices' own voice.

3rd affirmation — There is only poetry of circumstance.

Poetry is not a reflection of the context in which was written, nor is it controlled or determined by that context. Poetry, rather, is a product of its time and a specific response to that time. The reader is encouraged to consider what is absent from the poems: the contexts that are determinant in the production of the texts, but which must be sought out by the reader outside the poems. Grabato Dias's insistence on poetry's intimate relationship to 'circunstância' is perverse. If the reader is to understand fully the circumstances of the production and publication of *O Povo é Nós*, they must know the saga of the publication of *Eu, o Povo* and that of the prevented publication of *O Povo é Nós*, and, therefore, the link between Quadros, Grabato Dias and Mutimati. Quadros wants the reader to know the contexts but, equally, he does not want to *tell*.

The borrowing of other voices is fundamental to the poet's 'investigation'; to his coming into contact with the Other and moving outside his narrow subjectivity, thereby enacting the adage of the 'emigrante exilado' (exiled emigrant) that Grabato Dias cites: 'Vale mais tentar o salto / Que andar em redondo' (Better to take the leap / Than circle the perimeter, p. 6).²⁷⁸ The notion that poetry involves opening oneself up to the other, is immediately undercut, however, as the poet asserts that his poetry is not always public facing:

[...] diz o ditado do emigrado exilado:

Vale mais tentar o salto

Que andar em redondo.

Puxa. Que fala difícil! Diz o bem-aventado [sic].

²⁷⁸ The 'salto' was commonly used to refer to Portuguese economic migration to Portugal's colonies.

É que estava a falar para dentro.
 Os eus e os mins vivem de privacidades, incluso os códigos. (Explica-se, sem desculpa para o publicá-lo: É mais rápido pensar sozinho [sic.]).
 Agora vou falar para fora. Outros códigos, sempre códigos.
 Este livro é um Trabalho. A Comunicação é um Saber: uma ciência, uma técnica e uma arte no mesmo caldo.
 Este trabalho é uma contribuição engajada, militante, como eu a entendo. Não é um serviço.
 Vai barrando de alegria nas duas caras.
 Alegria não é manteiga.
 A Alegria é sempre provocatória e dialéctica: dois cornos agressivos.
 A manteiga é o que decorre da vaca metafísica do sectarismo.
 (Desconte-se o peso cultura [sic.] deste exemplo machista. Se tivesse dito, é o que decorre do borrego metafísico, estaria a ser racista, por razão igual...)
 Porque é Contribuição, leva todo um Povo na orla de luz da homenagem pessoal a um belo camarada, obreiro fraterno.
 Porque é trabalho árduo, transporta o humor alegre e a tripa fresca que pude merecer, entre compasso, esquadro e nível.
 Porque é Língua, acarreta passados e presentes, em divisas diversamente negociáveis.
 Disto tudo não me penitenciarei. Portanto, aí vai a dedicatória:

A MEU MESTRE MUTIMATI
 (*O Povo é Nós*, pp. 6-7)

According to the exiled emigrant's adage:
*Better to make the jump
 Than circle the perimeter.*
 'Crumbs. What difficult speech!', bemoans a well-meaning interlocutor.
 Thing is, I was talking to myself.
Is and *mes* subsist off privacy, including codes. (Let me explain, with no apologies for having published the adage: It's just quicker to think by myself).
 And now, I shall speak outwardly. More codes, always in code:
 This book is Labour. Communication is a Way of Knowing: a science, a technical skill and an art in the same broth.
 This labour is an engaged contribution — militant, as I see it. It is not a service.
 It spreads happiness on both faces.
 Happiness is not butter.
 Happiness is always provocative and dialectic: two belligerent horns.
 Butter is what the metaphysical cow of sectarianism produces.
 (Excuse the cultural weight of this *machista* example. Had I said, it is what the metaphysical lamb produces, that would have been racist, for the same reason...)
 Because it is a Contribution, it leads an entire People to the edge of a personal homage to a fine comrade, a brotherly labourer.
 Because it is arduous work, it carries with it whatever happy humour and fresh tripe that I could be worthy of, between compass, set square and spirit level.
 Because it is Language, it entails pasts and presents, in promissory notes that are negotiable in diverse ways.
 I will not repent of any of the above. So, here goes the dedication:

TO MY MASTER, MUTIMATI

Here, Grabato Dias states that the split subjects of his discourse, the '*Is* and *mes*', survive through coyness. Rehearsing the Barthesian author-death topos, Grabato Dias suggests the inverse of Barthes's proposition that the author is dead: the 'privacies' codified in 'difficult language', keep the author as split subject 'alive'. The poet's use of codes is double. He speaks in code when he addresses his readers and when he talks to himself: the codes

employed by the poet serve simultaneously to open up and to close off his text. Indeed, even when he speaks ‘outwardly’, the poet mixes familiar FRELIMO buzzwords of the late 1970s with cryptic and idiosyncratic imagery.

The idea of a discourse that alternately looks inward and outward places Grabato Dias’s readers in a frustrating position. How do readers approach a text in which the writer claims not to speak to them? How should readers confront a work that is deliberately closed off to them? If Grabato Dias’s poems contain ‘privacidades’, should his readers attempt to uncover them or, respectfully, pass over them? Would attempting to decipher these ‘privacidades’ prove fruitful? Would it be possible?

Grabato Dias’s theory of context in the preface to *O Povo é Nós* suggests that writing and reading are contextually situated actions: a given text is a product of and response to the context in which it was written, as is a given reading of a text. Such a theory configures the practice of reading as invariably anachronistic. Elsewhere in his poetry, Grabato Dias is ambivalent with regard to whether the anachronism inherent to reading is positive or negative; whether the gap — temporal, spatial and subjective — between writing and reading subjects opens up the text or closes off potential meanings.

In practice, Grabato Dias does not make the jump described in the emigrant’s adage. The Mozambican ‘people’, situated on the other side of the implied fence, is a discursive fiction and invention of FRELIMO/Frelimo and of Quadros/Mutimati. In both cases, the Mozambican ‘people’ represents a collective subject to be imagined, in the phrasing of

Benedict Anderson.²⁷⁹ The Other — as represented by the Mozambican people and its reluctant representative, Mutimati — is not so much a challenge to Quadros's thinking, as it is an aesthetic or diegetic opportunity. In the case of Mutimati, the creation of an anonymous FRELIMO guerrilla-poet offers creative possibilities for the master-author's games with power.

O Povo é Nós's final poem, 'Camarão e Respeito' (Shrimp and Respect, p. 59), sets out a discreet and violent conception of the relationship between Self and Other that Grabato Dias adumbrates in the 'Inclusão e Dedicatória'. The poem highlights the familiarity of the Other in Quadros's writing at the same time that it maintains an unbreachable wall between Self and Other. The poem suggests that the Other, the poet's mirror image, is intimately bound up with the author's individual subjectivity, but the recognition of the proximity of alterity has violent consequences.

The poem represents a dissonance in *O Povo é Nós*. Whereas the other poems in the collection are written in the contrivedly simplistic poetic discourse of Mutimati, the language of 'Camarão e Respeito' is closer to that of Grabato Dias.

The poem's title derives from its epigraph: 'Com camarão e respeito / vou no pôr do sol / à ponta vermelha' (With shrimp and respect / I go at sunset / to *ponta vermelha*). Ponta Vermelha refers to a coastal area in central Maputo, to the presidential palace and metonymically to the Mozambican presidency. The epigraph's reference to the presidential residence in Maputo, points to the proximity to power that Quadros and his pen-names enjoy.

²⁷⁹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. edn (London and New York: Verso, 2006), p. 134.

Indeed, Luís Calheiros suggests that *O Povo é Nós* was the result of a challenge by Samora Machel to write a gloss to *Eu, o Povo*.²⁸⁰

In ‘Camarão e Respeito’, the speaking subject looks from inside a mirror ‘para fora’ (outward). The speaking subject is triple: he is simultaneously the absent flesh-and-blood poet, his image in the mirror and the image of the flesh-and-blood poet as seen from inside the mirror.

The speaking subject is situated in the mirror. The first verse creates a dissonance. It is a corruption of the banal declaration ‘Estou olhando no espelho’: ‘Estou no espelho. Olhando’ (I am in the mirror. Looking). The *eu* is split into two subjects, two *eus*, by the mirror: ‘Estou partido em dois com um espelho no meio’ (I am cut in two with a mirror in the middle). These two distinct *eus* originate from the same third, triangulated arch-subject, who is absent. The differences between the *I* inside the mirror and the *I* outside it are underlined:

Estou êsse aí que não é mais que êste aqui [sic]
Mas é simétrico e diferente e contrariante
Fingindo obediência mas disposto ao inverso
E com mais perguntas lá que esta metade aqui vazia.

I am he over there who is the same as he over here
But symmetrical and different and contrarian
Feigning obedience but prone to its opposite
And with more questions over there than this empty half over here.

Painter and model are both in the frame. The ‘esse aí’ and the ‘êste aqui’ both have agency; the image in the mirror does not merely copy the actions of his corporeal twin. However, although the poet-in-the-mirror speaks, he seems unable to act. He is a voyeur that will witness his double’s suicide and will do nothing to stop it.

²⁸⁰ Luís Calheiros, “(...) um tal picardo que pinta uns monos e uns grandes sardões”, *Millenium*, 22 (2001). <https://repositorio.ipv.pt/bitstream/10400.19/884/1/um%20tal%20Picardo.pdf> [Accessed 16 June 2020].

Like Grabato Dias and Mutimati, the image in the mirror and the image on the other side of the looking glass stem from the same external referent. The flesh-and-blood poet is a conduit between the two images. Much like Quadros, he is a pseudo-absence: a master author whose presence is suggested but never explicitly announced.

In the second and third stanzas, the speaking-subject-inside-the-mirror regards his bodily complement, who hangs himself with a piece of cloth. At first, the sight of the chosen instrument of suicide impedes the voyeur's breathing and leaves him so cold that his blood coagulates into 'pedra mineral' (mineral rock). The hands with which the speaking subject's double hangs himself are alien, likened to 'luvas especialmente grandes' (especially large gloves). The mirror image and his twin maintain a hard stare, a 'recta bicuda' (sharp, straight line), as the latter hangs himself with 'método e cerimonia / Parando em cada momento num retrato severo de patrão' (method and ceremony / Stopping at every moment with the austere look of a master). The poet's inability to avert his gaze from a morbid spectacle recalls the 1971 ode *O Morto*, in which Quadros, through the construct Grabato Dias, describes at length a dead body.

In the final stanza, the spectacle of the suicide disgusts the speaking subject, leading him to lower his eyes in shame: 'Quando desvio baixo devagarinho os olhos por vergonha dele / Imagino os olhos dele devagarinho baixando com a minha vergonha' (When I slowly lower my gaze out of shame for him / I imagine his gaze slowly lowering with my shame). The 'recta bicuda' — the sharp line describing the meeting of the subjects' hard stare — softens as the two figures lower their gazes and the mirror image shares in the shame felt by his double: 'a minha vergonha / Amolecendo em vergonha a recta bicuda que sustentavamos

[sic.]’ (my shame / softening in shame the straight dagger that we had sustained). The experience of watching his double commit suicide leaves the voyeuristic speaking subject stunned: ‘Fico [...] / Parado e sem pensamento lógico como o rato na armadilha’ (I am left / Paralysed and without logical thoughts, like a rat in a trap).

In ‘Camarão e Respeito’, Quadros enacts the adumbrating of model and painter in a ‘sótão de espelhos’ (an attic of mirrors) described in the ‘Inclusão e Dedicatória’. The poem describes the position of being inside and outside simultaneously; a position inhabited by Grabato Dias and Mutimati in *A Arca* and *Eu, o Povo* respectively. In *A Arca*, that double position was ‘slavery’; in *Eu, o Povo*, the work of a double agent. In ‘Camarão e Respeito’, being outside and inside simultaneously is unsustainable.

The act of looking from inside out ends in violence. Rather than enact the adage of the exiled emigrant and come into contact with the Other, the poet-voyeur merely *looks* out and witnesses the suicide of his alienated double. Unlike the child-voyeur in *Pressaga*, who attempts to break into the cage of a Guinean boy on display in Lisbon Zoo (discussed in chapter one), the poet in *O Povo é Nós* does not even try to break through the looking glass. In ‘Camarão e Respeito’, the poet-voyeur is resigned to his double’s and his own death. As Grabato Dias writes in *Facto/Fado* of the ‘maquineta’ on which he composes his poetry: ‘Tudo o que faz é estar assistindo ao que está fazendo’ (All that my typewriter does is preside over what it is doing, p. 11).

Writing is Put to One Side: TBARN and the Post-Independence Period

We still wrote — but there was other work to do.

‘Confessions of Fausto Majistral’, in Thomas Pynchon, V., p. 326.

There is an eleven-year gap between the publication of *Eu, o Povo* in June 1975 and the publication of *Facto/Fado* in 1986. Besides a handful of poems attributed to Grabato Dias that appeared in journals, Quadros virtually ceased to publish poetry during that period. Quadros did write, but the majority of the texts produced in the late 1970s and early 1980s were only published on his return to Portugal.

After independence, publishing poetry was no longer a priority for Quadros.²⁸¹ He taught classes at the Universidade de Eduardo Mondlane, where he also ran TBARN’s research centre, inaugurated in 1976.²⁸² Clashes between the *reitor* Fernando Ganhão and Quadros, as well as a dispute between Quadros and the other members of TBARN, resulted in Quadros’s leaving the university in 1979, with Luís Faria and Amélia Muge, to establish a second TBARN in the Direção Nacional de Habitação (DNH), headed by José Forjaz.²⁸³ Quadros participated in DNH projects such as the construction of the mausoleum in the Praça dos Heróis in Maputo.²⁸⁴

The saga of the thwarted publication of *O Povo é Nós* reveals Quadros’s unwillingness to fit into Frelimo’s literary mould and, in turn, the party’s refusal to endorse

²⁸¹ Interview with Borges Coelho, Maputo, July 2018.

²⁸² TBARN was one of four research centres created in 1976 in the Universidade Eduardo Mondlane. The others were the Centro de Estudos Africanos, the Centro de Estudos de Comunicação and the Centro de Ecologia. Carlos Manuel Dias Fernandes, ‘Dinâmicas de Pesquisa em Ciências Sociais no Moçambique Pós-Independente: O Caso do Centro de Estudos Africanos’, (doctoral thesis, Universidade Federal da Bahia, 2011), p. 57.

²⁸³ One of the points of controversy was over the question of where to teach the TBARN classes. Quadros insisted on hosting the lessons at the university, which entailed the transportation of hundreds of agricultural workers from Gaza province to Maputo. The dean Fernando Ganhão, João Paulo Borges Coelho and other TBARN members believed that the project should travel to the provinces.

²⁸⁴ Unpublished CV, 1991.

the texts of a dissident voice such as Mutimati's.

The post-independence period represented an opportunity for settler artists, such as Quadros, to participate directly and practically in the nationalist project through the running of social programmes (such as TBARN), contribution to construction projects (such as the monument in the Praça dos Heróis) and participation in educational workshops.²⁸⁵ In a short memoir written in Philadelphia in 1987, Forjaz summarizes the challenges faced by artists in the ten years following Mozambican independence (1975-1985): 'Dez anos de amadurecimento político. Dez anos a aprender o que está por trás da técnica, a quem ela serve, a quem e para que servem as artes' (Ten years of political maturation. Ten years of learning what is behind technical work, whom it serves, whom and what the arts serve).²⁸⁶ Architects like Forjaz and artists like Quadros suddenly had an opportunity to deploy their skills usefully after a long period of limited artistic opportunities under colonialism. Russell Hamilton notes that the stagnation of literary activities, in particular, in post-independence Mozambique was owing to a lack of publishing infrastructure and the fact that writers were amongst the small group of educated individuals equipped to carry out the administrative and technical roles in the new nation. For this latter reason, writers, like Quadros, put their artistic activities to one side in order to give their time to other projects.²⁸⁷ Furthermore, Quadros's small readership became gradually reduced in the post-independence period; members of the settler community left Mozambique as the country's political situation worsened.

The intellectual elite to whom Quadros's artistic production was confined during the

²⁸⁵ Forjaz, *José Forjaz, Arquitecto: Ideias e Projectos* (Almada: Câmara Municipal de Almada, 2010), p. 87.

²⁸⁶ Forjaz, 'Ser Arquitecto', in *Pensar Arquitectura* (Maputo; Kapicua: Casal de Cambra; Caleidoscópio, 2018), p. 29.

²⁸⁷ Hamilton, *Literatura Africana, Literatura Necessária*, II, p. 69.

colonial period was cut-off from the social and political reality faced by most Mozambicans. The post-independence period represented an opportunity for Quadros to practice what he had preached in his 1958 ‘Manifesto da Pintura’ — to engage with a ‘people’, the Mozambican people, in the post-1975 context — and use his skills in the proposal, through projects such as TBARN, towards what Borges Coelho terms ‘a material solution for a new society, just and horizontally organized, where men lived “with nature at their side”’, even if such a project was carried out in a ‘perhaps somewhat naïve but very enthusiastic way’.²⁸⁸

The limitations of such an aspiration are explored in a series of *contos* that Quadros published anonymously in *Domingo*. The series was the only substantial publishing venture that Quadros undertook during the period between the publication of *Eu, o Povo* and *Facto/Fado*. The *Domingo* series is constituted of eighteen articles, published between 27 September 1981 and 24 January 1982, featuring theoretical and didactic texts, as well as the seven *contos*, with commentaries, that were later published as *Sete Contos para um Carnaval*. The texts in *Sete Contos para um Carnaval* are missing the glosses that were published in *Domingo*. The TBARN column published in *Domingo* corresponds to the DNH period.

The texts foreground various problems inherent to the nationalist project. These issues are schematized in the second article in the *Domingo* series into seven concepts: ‘*Habitat e Construção; Produção do Alimento; Conservação do Alimento; Água; Saúde; Energia; Comunicação*’ (Habitat and Construction; Food Production; Food Preservation; Water; Health; Energy; Communication). Particular attention is paid to the theme of communication, which is identified as one of three ‘*necessidades fundamentais ao Homem*’

²⁸⁸ Borges Coelho, ‘Memories of Ruth First in Mozambique’, 502-503.

([of] Man's fundamental needs), along with *Alimentação* (Sustenance) and *Abrigo* (Accommodation), in the second text in the series.²⁸⁹

The theoretical texts and the *contos* published in *Domingo* represent a genre shift for Quadros. Under the name Grabato Dias, Quadros had already published three didactic odes: the twin poems *O Morto* and *A Arca* in 1971 and, in the immediate aftermath of the Carnation Revolution, *Pressaga*. In these odes, Grabato Dias is anxious that his didactic poetry will be misunderstood by his reader-pupils.

In the post-independence period, Quadros had recourse to illustrated *contos* for his didactic writings. Much like *Eu, o Povo*, the *contos* published in *Domingo* are a sham-version of an established genre. *Eu, o Povo* is an anachronistic collection of anti-colonial combat poetry. The *contos* are highly sophisticated children's stories, featuring illustrations and talking animals, written for adults. Quadros's point of reference is not the *contos* of Lília Momplé (*Ninguém Matou Suhura*) and Luís Bernardo Honwana (*Nós Matámos o Cão Tinhoso*), who established short fiction as a highly politicized genre in colonial Mozambique.²⁹⁰ Rather, Quadros establishes a genealogy with the fables of La Fontaine, whom he refers to in the texts as 'lafuntène'. One of the stories, 'A História da Verdade Histórica das 10 Maçarocas' (The True Story of the 10 Ears of Corn), is identified in a gloss that features in the *Domingo* article where the *conto* was first printed, but which was not published in *Sete Contos para um Carnaval*, as the Mozambican version of La Fontaine's 'La Cigale et la Fourmi' (The Grasshopper and the Ant).²⁹¹

²⁸⁹ *Domingo*, 4 October 1981, p. 11.

²⁹⁰ Lília Momplé, *Ninguém Matou Suhura* (Maputo: Associação dos Escritores Moçambicanos, 1988); Honwana, *Nós Matámos o Cão Tinhoso* (Lourenço Marques: Sociedade de Imprensa de Moçambique, 1964).

²⁹¹ La Fontaine, 'La Cigale et la Fourmi', in *Fables* (Paris: Flammarion, 2007), p.75.

The theoretical discussions published in *Domingo* are complex, written in technical jargon and suffused with elaborate metaphors.²⁹² The theoretical texts contrast with the deliberate simplicity of language deployed in *Eu, o Povo* and the didactic manuals that Quadros wrote for the DNH.²⁹³ The constructed naivety of Mutimati's discourse was intended to fool FRELIMO and make the text accessible to the widest audience possible. In *O Que é o Bambú?* (What his Bamboo?), Quadros explains that he has written his coursebook in the simplest language possible:

[...] houve uma permanente preocupação em escrever num português simples e correcto mas esse esforço não foi levado às suas extremas consequências. Por tal razão achámos necessário dar o significado de algumas palavras e expressões, embora algumas delas tenham o seu significado dentro do próprio texto onde estão incluídas'.²⁹⁴

there was a constant concern to write in a simple and correct Portuguese, but this concern was not carried out to an extreme. As such, I thought it necessary to provide definitions for certain words and expressions. In some cases, these definitions are embedded in the main text when these terms appear.

Quadros provides a glossary of terms at the end of the manual.

Littered with cultural and political references, Quadros's children stories are written for an adult readership — specifically, the three percent who would have been literate in Portuguese and who would, therefore, have been able to read *Domingo*. In the fourth TBARN column, dated 18 October 1981, Quadros ironically alludes to the small size and specific socio-economic profile (urban, middle class) of his readership, who do not rely on subsistence farming:

Embora todos engajados na Produção e todos com as mesmas — ou quase, necessidades alimentares, poucos de nós (dentro dos poucos que sabem ler; dentro dos que lêem [sic.], os poucos que lêem o *Domingo*; e dentro dos leitores do *Domingo* aqueles que lêem com gosto e interesse a secção TBARN) poucos de nós, dizíamos,

²⁹² In a meeting with Quadros, Luís Cabaço admitted to finding the first text difficult to understand and suggested that many of *Domingo*'s readers would find it impenetrable. The comment upset Quadros. Cabaço and Quadros never spoke to each other again after that meeting. Interview with Luís Cabaço, Maputo, July 2018.

²⁹³ Quadros wrote four manuals for the DNH, and one for the Direcção de Propaganda e Publicidade. I thank Amélia Muge for allowing me to take copies of *O Que é o Bambú?* and *Curso de Gráfica*. TBARN, *O Que é o Bambú?* (Maputo: DNH/INPF, 198?); *Manual do Adobo* (Maputo: DNH/INPF, 198?); *Manual do Biodigestor* (Maputo: DNH/INPF, 198?); *Cal e Cal e é Manual* (Maputo: DNH/INPF, 198?); *Curso de Gráfica* (Maputo: DNPP, 198?).

²⁹⁴ TBARN, *O Que é o Bambú?* (Maputo: DNH/INPF, 198?), ficha 38.

têm tarefas na Produção do Alimento.²⁹⁵

Though we are all engaged in the Production [of Food] and we all have the same — or, rather, almost the same — dietary needs, few of us (‘us’ referring to the few who can read; and of those who can read, those rare readers of *Domingo*; and of those readers, the handful who read with delight and interest the TBARN section), few of us, as I was saying, actually have jobs related to Food Production.

The specific linguistic situation in Mozambique at the time of independence, when there was no clear *lingua franca*, meant that communication was a pressing issue.

The stories reveal concerns with the question of communication in post-colonial Mozambique. In the paratext that serves as an afterword to the story titled ‘Uma História de Leões sem Caçadores’ (A Story About Lions and Bereft of Hunters), published 8 November 1981, the author explains that the story serves to underline the ‘verbosidade, desnecessariamente [sic.] esotérica, que aparece colada à Ciência em geral e, particularmente às questões de saúde e doenças’ (the unnecessarily esoteric verbosity which appears to be a staple of Science, in general, and of questions of health and disease, in particular).²⁹⁶ He denounces the opacity of medical discourses and draws a parallel between obscurantist literature and prescriptions. He notes that jargon has a specific function in the development of knowledge at the same time that he criticizes the hermeticism of technical discourses:

É fóra [sic.] de dúvida que cada área do Saber tem um vocabulário próprio, que desenvolve, e dentro do qual se desenvolve, progride, um particular Conhecimento. É assim o futebol e assim a Física Atômica. Assim a Veterinária como o Calão de adolescentes. Mas fóra [sic.] da sua área específica, para que seja inteligível (se pode sê-lo) o Conhecimento tem de procurar e encontrar “equivalências e equivalentes”.²⁹⁷

It’s without doubt that each area of Learning has its own vocabulary, which develops, and within which a particular Knowledge develops and progresses. So it is with football and Atomic Physics; Veterinary Sciences and Adolescent slang. But, in order for Knowledge to be intelligible (assuming that it can be) outside its specific area, it has to seek out and discover ‘equivalences and equivalents’.

The author’s critique of the opacity of medical discourses is paradoxical given that Quadros’s works are often self-consciously cryptic. The author’s explicit glossing of his text

²⁹⁵ *Domingo*, 18 October 1981, p. 4.

²⁹⁶ *Domingo*, 8 November 1981, p. 21.

²⁹⁷ *Domingo*, 8 November 1981, p. 21.

in an afterword is an anomaly in Quadros's body of work. Indeed, the glosses for the stories, which were published in *Domingo*, are missing from *Sete Contos para um Carnaval*.

In 'História Misteriosa dos Té-Kin-Fins' (Mysterious Story of the Finallies'), the impenetrability of certain kinds of discourse is framed as an issue relating to the disconnect between elites and the wider population. In the story, a rabbit with a university degree and a porcupine technician fail to explain the water cycle to a crocodile and a tortoise. The rabbit is a parody of foreign experts based in Mozambique, who Quadros criticizes elsewhere in his work. The rabbit, Coelho Lente de Contacto, who has just arrived in Mozambique, having earned a degree in 'Problemática Africana' (the African Problematic) from an institution in the North or South Pole, alienates his interlocutors with his 'scientific' explanation of why his drenched ears are drooping. To them, the academic expression 'tirar licenciatura' (graduate) is alien; the crocodile hears 'atirar' (shoot) instead of 'tirar' and accuses the rabbit of betraying his species because he has joined the ranks of hunters who plague rabbit-kind (*Sete Contos para um Carnaval*, p. 34).²⁹⁸ After making a bawdy joke in which he explains — again, 'scientifically' — the improbability of his being the son of the tortoise, the snide rabbit flees. The animosity is mutual: the rabbit's interlocutors describe him as 'licenciado para insutar os pobres, o ordinário o licencioso [sic.]' (has a diploma in classist insults, the cheeky good-for-nothing, p. 35).

The porcupine's explanation is not much better received. The porcupine adumbrates the water cycle using the framework of the classical elements favoured by Grabato Dias in *A Arca* and Mutimati in *Eu, o Povo*. The crocodile and the tortoise reject the discourses

²⁹⁸ For quotations from Grabato Dias's short stories, I put the page number from the version that appears in *Sete Contos para um Carnaval*.

(dismissively described as ‘papos’) of the rodential ‘técnico’ who regurgitates the theories of his master, the absent owl:

- Diz o Mocho Sábio, meu Mestre, que é o Sol quem puxa essa água toda.
 - [...]
 - [O Mocho Sábio] Explica assim: O Sol é Fogo
 - [...]
 - Mestre Mocho é quem diz...A mim parece bem.
 - [...]
 - Mestre Mocho é quem diz: A Natureza nada faz e nada desfaz. Transforma tudo. A mim, não parece mal.
- (pp. 37-38)

“The Wise Owl, my Master, says that it’s the Sun that pulls all that water.”

“The Wise Owl explains it like this: the Sun is Fire.”

“It was Master Owl that said it. Seems good to me.”

“It was Master Owl that said it. Nature does and undoes nothing. It transforms everything. Not bad, don’t you think?”

The crocodile and the tortoise censure the porcupine for being his master’s lackey: ‘Este espinhoso espinhento abriu a torneira dos papos do Mestre Mocho [...]’ (this thorny porcupine has broken the seal of Master Owls’s gab). The porcupine’s association with his master and his uncritical parroting of the owl’s propositions are impediments to the crocodile’s and the tortoise’s taking the porcupine’s intervention seriously. The story’s afterword suggest that the disconnect between elites and the people is a two-way issue: ‘Apesar da incredulidade do Crocodilo e da Tartaruga, apesar da falta de explicação do Coelho (por falta de tempo), apesar da explicação mal costurada do Porco Espinho, o Leitor reconheceu o Ciclo da água’ (In spite of the Crocodile’s and the Tortoise’s incredulity, in spite of the Rabbit’s lacking explanation (owing to the shortness of time), in spite of the Porcupine’s incoherent explanation, the Reader will have recognised the Water Cycle).²⁹⁹ The people — represented by the Crocodile and the Tortoise — are suspicious of foreign experts and of the authorities, whilst the academic rabbit is too impatient to educate his listeners and the representative of the absent authorities is incapable of explaining the water cycle coherently to his audience.

²⁹⁹ *Domingo*, 1 November 1981, p. 10.

As in *A Arca*, in *Sete Contos para um Carnaval*, the authorities are distant and disconnected from those they rule. The porcupine is a mouthpiece for his master owl in the same way that the Mocho Sábio (Wise Owl), in ‘A Machamba Ideal’ (The Ideal Shamba), is an intermediary between the people and the absent Rei da Savana (King of the Savannah). Like in ‘A História Misteriosa dos Té-Kin-Fins’, education and the dissemination of knowledge are class issues. The scholarly owl arrives with great pomp and ceremony: ‘Dentro do respeito e com o Colar da Ostra — Ordem do Espírito Santo da Ciência — chega o Mocho Sábio, nas costas do Macaco-Cão para ficar mais alto’ (With due ceremony and sporting his Oyster Medal — Order of the Holy Spirit of Science — the Wise Owl approached, perched on the shoulders of the Portuguese Sheepdog, so that he stood taller, p. 20). The King’s order to create the ‘Machamba Ideal’ sows discord amongst the various groups of animals who have conflicting ideas over how the farm should be laid out. The owl contracts a giraffe architect called Kossa P’Skosso, whom he charges with creating his dream shamba. The giraffe’s egotistical plans (‘projecto ideal da machamba ideal, segundo a Regra Científica de formula $X=Eu$ ’, the ideal project for the ideal shamba, according to the Scientific Rule of the formula $X=Me$) please the high-ups (‘É machamba de pescoçudo e de asa leve’, It’s a shamba for the long-necks and those that can fly) but dismay the low-downs (‘Está mal mau, resmungam os baixotes’, “Oh boy, this is very bad,” grumble the low-downs, pp. 21-22). The giraffe laments that the owl’s instructions were not clearer and questions whether his and his master’s ideas are feasible.

Ultimately, the owl determines to ‘unir os sonhos de cada um e fazer a machamba do sonho de todos’ (unite each individual’s dreams and make the shamba of everyone’s dream, p. 22). At the text’s end, a ‘billipede’ called Marxengueléni concludes that the moral

of the episode of the ‘Machamba Ideal’ is that theories need to be adapted according to empirical experience: ‘Marxengueléni, o bicho patabilhão que andava por ali discreto, registou no caderno dos deveres: Um sonho é só ideia prévia. Revela-se idóneo pelas suas incidências, stop, e nas suas consequências. História da Machamba ideal, stop’ (Marxengelenin, the bilipede that was discreetly hanging around, recorded in his duty book: A dream is but a preliminary idea. Incidences, stop, and consequences reveal its suitability. Story of the Ideal Shamba, stop, p. 23). For the author, in order for the national project to function, the Marxist theories adopted by the government need to be adapted to the Mozambican context. Furthermore, the input of Mozambicans outside the ruling classes is required for the nationalist project to serve the Mozambican population. Leaders like the not-so-wise owl must listen to those they lead, rather than dictate their wishes — unclearly — to society. Although the owl’s speech, punctuated with ‘stops’, is authoritative, his messaging is unclear.

A different facet of the question of communication is explored in ‘O Cego, o Surdo, o Mudo e os Morsianos’ (The Blind Mole, the Deaf Hedgehog, the Mute Beetle and the Morsians), in which Quadros points to the limitations of spoken and written verbal language in multilingual contexts. The language chosen by Samora Machel for the nationalist project was Portuguese, despite the high levels of illiteracy in the language. Depending on how ‘language’ is defined, according to Armindo Ngunga there are between nine and forty-three languages spoken in Mozambique.³⁰⁰ Quadros’s story, written in Portuguese, would have been inaccessible to the vast majority of the Mozambican population. Likewise, when the texts were eventually published in Portugal in 1991, the stories were, by then, outdated and

³⁰⁰ Armindo Ngunga, ‘Monolingual Education in a Monolingual Setting: The Case of Mozambique’, *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 6:2 (2011), 180.

the products of a context that would have been alien to a wider Portuguese readership.

‘O Cego, o Surdo, o Mudo e os Morsianos’ dramatizes the successful attempts of a blind mole (Nadatopa / Topanada), a deaf hedgehog (Kispóbico) and a mute beetle (Kornixo Tenaz) to communicate with each other. Having overcome the obstacles impeding communication, the animals eventually manage to converse, before setting off on a trip to the Planet Mors: ‘O planeta da Comunicação em circuito fechado’ (The planet of closed-circuit Communication, p. 56). ‘O Cego, o Surdo, o Mudo e os Morsianos’ points to the need for alternative means of expression to verbal language.

In the theory of communication outlined in the short introductory paratext that frames the *conto* in the version published in *Domingo*, Quadros states that communication relies on the common ground (common codes) that speaker and receiver share:

Informação [...] é a parte que destacamos do conhecimento e não está ainda elaborada, tratada, inserida num contexto. O Emissor trata essa informação, codifica-a em função dos códigos comuns com o Receptor, produzindo a Mensagem. Essa é filtrada, destorcida, confundida e amalgamada com outras mensagens. A [sic.] parte que é absorvida, pelo Receptor, corresponde outra que o receptor reflecte: o Retorno da Informação. É este retorno quem [sic.] permite avaliar a justiça da mensagem e o valor dos códigos empregues. Na nossa história de hoje, tentámos comunicar ao Leitor alguma coisa do que é comunicação. Se houver retorno, houve comunicação.³⁰¹

We distinguish information from knowledge: information is that which is not yet elaborated, processed, inserted in a context. The Sender processes information, codifies it according to the codes that they have in common with the Receiver, producing the Message. The Message is then filtered, distorted, confused and amalgamated with other messages. The component absorbed by the Receiver is relayed in another form, which the Receiver reflects: Feedback.

This feedback allows us to judge the message and the value of the codes deployed. In today’s story, we have tried to communicate to the Reader about communication. Should there be feedback, there will have been communication.

Quadros’s description of communication suggests that the passage of a message from sender to receiver can lead to the ‘filtering’, ‘distortion’ or ‘confusion’ of that message, as well as its ‘amalgamation’ with other messages. His framing of communication as a process riddled with possibilities for miscommunication reflects Grabato Dias’s concerns in *A Arca* that his

³⁰¹ *Domingo*, 22 November 1981, p. 21.

cryptic ode will be misunderstood by his contemporaries and by future readers. The author also betrays a concern that his readers will remain indifferent to the text; that they will not respond actively to the story and ‘reflect’ on what they have learnt from it. The framing text of ‘O Cego, o Surdo, o Mudo e os Morsianos’ reveals the anonymous author’s concerns that his readers will misconstrue his story or, worse still, that the text will have no impact on them.

The *conto*’s opening outlines the problems that the three animals face when communicating with each other: ‘Bom dia, disse Nadatopa, delicada, quando sentiu rumor de outro bicho. Mas Kispóbico não ouviu nada. E Kornixo Tenaz não podia responder’ (“Morning,” said Nadatopa gingerly, when she heard the rustling of another creature. But Kispóbico didn’t hear anything. And Kornixo Tenaz was unable to reply, p. 53). Topanada/Nadatopa uses her acute hearing to discern that she has two companions. Her ‘ouvido magnífico’ (magnificent hearing) and her learning allow her to recognise that the seemingly frantic beating of the beetle’s antennae is, in fact, a series of messages encoded in ‘o Código da Morsa e do Morcego’ (Morse and Bat Code, p. 54).

The mole explains the genesis of the ‘Código da Morsa e do Morcego’ to the beetle: the language was invented by two members of the ‘Associação de Invisuais e Olho Pisco’ (Association for the Blind and Short-sighted), a walrus and a bat, who had become tired of only being able to communicate via ‘tapinhas no lombo um do outro’ (pats on the back, p. 54). The walrus and the bat’s primary motivation for inventing a common code is so that they can communicate complex messages.

Initially, the deaf hedgehog is the most excluded of the three animals. Although he

can speak, he cannot engage in the dialogue between the mole and the beetle. He is limited to repeating the pleasantries: ‘bom dia senhor, bom dia senhora’ (Morning Sir, Morning Madam). Similarly, the mole, who can speak, is only able to engage in dialogue with his companions once he deciphers the code in which the beetle speaks.

Familiarity with the codes in which their companions express themselves, and the willingness to learn and decipher new codes, are fundamental to the animals’ interactions. The mole and the beetle first communicate to the hedgehog through mime, before teaching him the ‘Código Morsa e Morcego’. Once all three parties are fluent in a common language, the mole changes his idiosyncratic way of expressing himself in the code to make it easier for the beetle to understand his ‘sotique’ (particular dia-click): ‘Se me permite, consócio Escaravelho, vou usar, para si só, este som tic tic pinçando com as unhas...tic tic tic tictic tic. Boa recepção?’ (If I may, dear Beetle, I will make, just for you, this ‘tick tick’ sound by clicking my nails...tick tick tick tick tick tick. Loud and clear?, p. 55). Dialogue in verbal language is abandoned once all the animals are able to converse in their common code, in their own idiolects. The narrator transcribes their indecipherable dialogue (pp. 55-56).

The animals climb to the top of the *imbondeiro* under which they had been conversing and embark on a Rabelaisian voyage to the Planet Mors, via ‘o Cú de Judas’ (the backend of nowhere) and the CCGG (*cooperativa dos criadores de gado da galáxia*, cooperative of the galaxy’s cattle farmers) bar. The planet is uninhabited except for multicoloured flowers that shake paperclips, making the ‘tic tic’ sounds of the ‘Código Morsa e Morcego’. The paperclips are imported from a ‘Planeta-Fábrica’ (Factory Planet) variously called ‘Economato’ (Economat), ‘Eco-no-mato’ (Echo-in-the-Jungle), ‘Ku-do-Mato’ (Jungle’s-Asshole) and ‘É-Tu-do-Mato’ (It’s-All-Jungle). ‘Economato’ is also the

name of the planetary system. The planets of the Economato system orbit the star ‘RA- ZÃO PURA’ (PURE REA-SON): ‘Embora todos os planetas aparentem girar à volta do seu sol, não têm órbitas fixas a não ser o Dia-de-Pagamento, o Planeta Sagrado’ (Although all of the planets appear to orbit the star, their only fixed orbit is, in fact, around PayDay, the Sacred Planet, p. 57). The lingua franca of Economato is the language of Mors.

In Economato, communication is only possible for those who enter into a system-wide economy. The flowers, alone, cannot speak. They make intelligible sounds using the paperclips bought and imported from the factory-planet Economato. The force that governs the movements of the planets in the system is financial rather than gravitational. Under the language economy of Economato, communication is only possible for those able to speak in the universal language; a code that requires capital.

At first, the animals are awed by the system’s flag, which depicts ‘3 macacos sentados, com as mãos simbólica e respectivamente nos Olhos, nos Ouvidos e na Boca’ (3 sitting monkeys, their hands symbolically, and respectively, covering their Eyes, Ears and Mouth, p. 57). However, they soon grow tired of speaking with paper clips. The animals exemplify the Frelimo mantra ‘contar com as próprias forças’ (count on your own strength), as they communicate using the tools that they have at their disposal: ‘com unhas, cornichos e dentinhos (cada um dá o que tem)’ (with nails, antennae and mandibles (each using what they possess), p. 56).

The story ends with Nadatopa, Kispóbico and Kornixo Tenaz returning to their *imbondeiro*. They open ‘por todo o mato, escolas peripatéticas de Tapinhas, Morsa & Morcego e do seu humilde trabalho vai havendo um vago éco no mato...’ (peripatetic

schools teaching the Back-pat, Morse and Bat Code throughout the bush and their humble work is having a vague echo in the jungle, p. 58). Significantly, the animals' work in the 'mato' is not aimed at promoting literacy; their objective is to help others communicate.

'O Cego, o Surdo, o Mudo e os Morsianos' exposes the limitations of verbal language as a communicative medium in a multilingual context, where the majority of the population are barred access to the national (system-wide) language. Like the flowers on the planet Economato, whose paperclips reverberate in a desolate and empty wilderness, writers have no public in Mozambique. Quadros, a writer with no readership, is aware of his quandary; but he cannot help but write. Quadros, through his Mozambican-born fictional authors — Grabato Dias and Mutimati — never managed, or intended, to reach a wider Mozambican readership. The people invoked in *Eu, o Povo* are ventriloquized rather than addressed. Quadros is aware that in order to address a wider Mozambican audience — that was mostly illiterate — he must find alternative means to communicate with them.

In the texts published in *Domingo* analysed in this chapter, Quadros practices the didactic role theorized for artists in his 'Manifesto de Pintura' and performed by Grabato Dias in *A Arca* and Mutimati in *Eu, o Povo* in a journalistic context and through the medium of the *conto*. Quadros's foray into a new genre did not entail a significant shift in his didactic practice. Like in the poems of Grabato Dias, in the *contos* the author flags the limitations of written discourses as a means of communication at the same time that he stresses the fundamental importance of effective communication in a functioning society. The paradoxes of the didactic *contos* point to the severe limitations of being an author in the national project given the absence of a substantial readership. Indeed, as Quadros's trajectory suggests, the practical work of TBARN was identified by him as a more productive way of using his skills

than publishing poetry after independence. The *Domingo* series represents an attempt to reconcile Quadros's practical work in the context of the TBARN project with his practice as an artist, in particular, the questioning function that he attributes to poetry.

In the poems from *Sagapress* that I discuss in the following section, Grabato Dias hints at a potential solution to the bind of having no contemporary readers.

‘Bancos próprios para sentinelas!’: Writing and Reading as a Power Struggle in *Sagapress*

Parece ser costume, uso e dever de quem expõe sua obra a um público, fazer acompanhar o produto por um razoado laudatório sob o disfarce crítico-histórico-estético e fazê-lo assinar por um desses nomes pomposos e prestigiantes que outra coisa não fazem que prefaciар catálogos. Disseram-me para me preocupar com isso. Preocupei-me. Desta preocupação nada saiu. Teria que ter virado lá muito atrás para merecer neste hoje duas palavras simpáticas dum entendido. Teria que conhecê-lo ou (horror maior) ter por amigo alguém que o conhecesse. Tenho-me por um simpático cão sem pulgas. Era pois necessário algumas bocas de entendido sobre o meu trabalho? Aqui estão, pela mão do melhor entendido delas. É belo e bom. Um honrado trabalho. Génio? Ponham a funcionar o vosso e merecerão o milagre das multiplicações do Pão. Não haverá fruição sem fruidor.³⁰²

It appears to be custom, common practice and duty of whoever exhibits their works to the public to have their product accompanied by a reasoned eulogy, in a critical-historical-aesthetical disguise and to have it signed by one of those pompous and prestigious names whose only function is to preface catalogues. They told me to concern myself with this. I did. That concern, alas, bore no fruit. I would have had to go back a long way to deserve, in this day and age, a couple of favourable words from an expert. I would have to know one or (worse still) have a friend who knew one. I figure myself a good, flea-free dog. Is it necessary to have a take on my work from an expert? Well, here it is, from the hand of he who knows it better than anyone else: an honourable work. Genius? Put your brains in gear and ye shall be worthy of the miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand. There is no fruition without a fruidor.

In his preface to the catalogue for an exhibition of his artworks held at the Portuguese embassy in Maputo in 1991, Quadros describes himself as a ‘cão sem pulgas’ (flea-free dog) — the ‘pugas’ (fleas) being ‘entendidos’, so-called experts whose praise is easily bought by their artist friends. Quadros makes a distinction between these ‘entendidos’ and critical admirers. Quadros questions the ‘necessity’ of appraisal from professional art critics, urging instead his public to engage their brains and make his work bear fruit. Using a metaphor of

³⁰² António Quadros, Catalogue of the 1991 Exhibition at the Portuguese Embassy in Maputo. The catalogue is unpaginated.

fertility that recurs in the poetry of Grabato Dias in relation to the production and reception of poetry, Quadros frames his public as the ‘fruidores’ without whom his work cannot flourish. Quadros’s preface reveals his awareness of and anxiety towards his lack of recognition as an artist. Recognition of his ‘genius’ is contingent on the critical engagement of a critical public.

A relationship similar to that between Quadros and his public is described by Grabato Dias in a letter asking Lourdes Cortez to write a preface for his 1971 ode *A Arca*. Here, Grabato Dias acknowledges the potential for a specific kind of reader — a critic who reads critically — to attract recognition to his poems:

[...] isto de se ter um leitor dá cá uma alegria! Passei toda a vida a explorar uma invenção pateta: bancos próprios para sentinelas! O pior é que as sentinelas sentinam de pé por via dos regulamentos e lá me ia sentindo frustrado e fruste! Agora tenho-a. Ajuda-me a a [sic.] ler-me a mim próprio, revivo quási [sic.] todos os momentos do ‘despejo órfico’ por suas mãos, sinto-me com mais ferramenta eu que sou tão ignorante de certas coisas, e depois, poça!, rebolo-me! Não estou vaidoso, sabe? Acredite-me. Estou é contentão. Já aprendi há muito a não interessar-me por um certo tipo de sucesso. A gente cá vai fazendo coisas melhor ou pior, e depois elas lá ganham, ou não, o seu significadozinho maior ou menor, não é? E, vocmecê [sic.], é dos que ajudam a aclarar esses significados.³⁰³

having a reader is great! I’ve spent my life exploring a silly invention: benches for sentinels! The worst is that sentinels, in accordance with the rules and regs, keep watch standing and that left me feeling frustrated and mediocre! And now, I have you as a reader. You help me to read myself, I almost relive all of the moments of the ‘orphyic outpouring’ through your hands, I feel better equipped, ignoramus that I am of certain things, and then, crikey!, I break out into laughter! I’m not vain, you know? You must believe me. What I am is very content. I learnt a long time ago not to aspire to a certain kind of success. Over here, there are people doing things, good and bad, and after they earn, or not, a greater or lesser significance, right? And you are one of those people who help to clarify those significances.

Grabato Dias’s description of Lourdes Cortez as a sentinel points to the highly self-conscience, paranoiac nature of Grabato Dias’s poetry, in which the poet is closely watched by figures of authority.

The contrast between Grabato Dias’s mooted of the idea of creating ‘benches’ for his sentinels to sit on and his realisation that sentinels carry out their duties standing up

³⁰³ Lourdes Cortez, ‘Dois Envios (Inéditos) de Grabato Dias a Maria de Lourdes Cortez Anotados por Esta’, *A Ideia: Revista de Cultura Libertária*, 77-79 (2016), 108.

describes the tension between Grabato Dias's urge to control his readers — to put them where he wants them to be — and the fact that his readers are uncontrollable and perhaps better placed to read his texts than he is. Earlier in the letter, Grabato Dias describes his frustration at being unable to read his poetry 'como se fosse de outro' (as if I were another). Unlike him, Grabato Dias's readers are able to read his poems from an external perspective. For him, the act of rereading his own work, with the help of his reader, Lourdes Cortez, is a reliving of the 'despejo órfico' (orphanic outpouring) of writing. Writing and reading are framed as complimentary processes — the poet's readers are fundamental to his development as an artist. Lourdes Cortez's readings are a 'tool' with which the poet has armed himself. As a reader, Lourdes Cortez's utility lies in her helping Grabato Dias to read 'himself' (a mim próprio) and in her ability to situate his poetry within the broader context of poetic production in Mozambique: to determine its relative greatness — its 'significado maior ou menor' (greater or lesser significance). Grabato Dias's self-description as 'contentão' (very content) with his lack of a 'certo tipo de sucesso' (certain kind of success) belies a concern over his lack of a readership and the lack of recognition that his works received during his lifetime.

In his poetry, Grabato Dias locates his readers in speculative, uncertain and distant futures. One of the many groups of addresses in the 1971 ode *A Arca* is the poet's 'filhos' — the children whom Grabato Dias charges with overthrowing his masters. In the closing section of the 1974 ode *Pressaga*, Grabato Dias imagines his 'tetranelo' — his great-great-great-grandson — reading his verses, 'tornados recordação de família, na pior das hipóteses' (transformed into a family memento, in the worst-case scenario, *Pressaga*, p. 77). Grabato Dias's conception of the position of his readers reflects his own position as a minor poet who published in the marginal literary contexts of colonial and post-colonial Mozambique.

In *Sagapress*, the poet is configured as an isolated figure who is distanced from his readers. Grabato Dias's isolation from his readers is both a reflection of the reality that his creator, Quadros, faced as an artist and poet in post-independence Mozambique and a strategy for dealing with that reality. Acutely aware that he is an author with a limited contemporary readership, Grabato Dias writes — obliquely and cryptically — to posterity, who is charged with making sense of his poetic production within and without the politically charged contexts in which his poems were written.

However, Grabato Dias's strategies for making his poetry speak to posterity are perverse. He alternately underlines his readers' role in the creation of meaning and worries about their inability to understand his difficult verses. Grabato Dias's poetry is often cryptic and borderline impenetrable, but his anxieties about his readers' inability to comprehend his verses are always expressed legibly. Although, throughout his work, Grabato Dias emphasises the intimate relationship between his texts and the contexts in which they were produced, he withholds crucial contextual information from his readers.

Sagapress is a collection of 'poesia com datas' (poetry with dates) written between June 1976 and March 1980, with most of the poems dated between June 1976 and August 1977. The collection reads like a diary of poems, many of which are highly self-reflexive meditations on the writing of poetry. The poems describe the relationship of resistance and dependence that Quadros establishes with his readers.

In *Sagapress*'s opening poem, dated 12 June 1976 and written in Nairobi, the writing of poetry appears as a theatrical performance enacted before the 'olhos da plateia' (the eyes

of the audience).³⁰⁴ The poem opens with a cryptic, tortuous quatrain:

É o que pode ser.
Só é o que pode ser.
Só o que pode ser, é.
Só o que é, o É.

It is what it can be.
It is only what it can be.
Only that which can be, is.
Only that which is, the Being.

Grabato Dias glosses the opening stanza; for him, the production of poetry is fundamentally ‘a simples tecnologia simples dos simples’ (the simple technology of simple simpletons), which involves the impossible process of ‘passando à sovela o cuspo da imensa paciência’ (spreading the spittle of immense patience on an awl). In a different poem, written three days after the opening text and also in Nairobi, Grabato Dias says that, when writing poetry, he buffers the words that he uses with his saliva, before using a nightingale’s spittle to glue the words to each other.³⁰⁵ In the opening poem, writing poetry is conceived as ‘uma gloriosa sofisticação’ (a glorious sophistication), involving the poet’s ‘coleando como uma fatia ofídia de fiambre inocente / (inocente o tanas...) entre duas grossas fatias de Espaço / cortados do lado do dentro dos cascos do Tempo’ (slithering, like a serpentine slice of innocent ham (innocent, my left elbow...) between two thick slices of Space / cut from within Time’s hull). The poet returns to this bizarre image at the text’s conclusion.

The poet’s spectators expectantly await ‘a mágica / do gesto hábil definitivo parcimonioso’ (the magic / of the dextrous, definitive and parsimonious gesture) of the poet-performer, who derives pleasure (‘gozo’) from complicating the ‘simple’ task of producing poetry and in drawing out the ‘gestures’ in which he expresses himself. ‘Magical’ and

³⁰⁴ Most of the poems in *Sagapress* are untitled. The text is unpaginated, with only the dates and locales of composition distinguishing the poems one from the other. The texts are ordered chronologically, except those in the final, short section ‘comunicados da última hora’, which contains twelve poems. I identify the poems from *Sagapress* discussed by their date and location of composition. ‘Nairobi: 12/6/76’.

³⁰⁵ ‘Nairobi: 15/6/76’.

‘parsimonious’, the poet is a coy performer who consciously hides his secrets of the trade from his audience, and ‘o arcanjo bêbado inocente que espera / poisado no ombro de todos e cada um’ (the drunk, innocent archangel waiting, / poised on each individual’s shoulders). The image of the archangels sitting on his audience members’ shoulders points to the poet’s self-conscious, paranoid literary production, whereby his texts are written under the watchful gaze of anonymous observers— like the archangel in this poem, the PIDE officer whom the poet attempts to evade in *Pressaga* (p. 79), the shepherd in the opening poem of *40 e Tal Sonetos* or the sentinels in the letter to Lourdes Cortez quoted earlier in this section — who haunt the text, conditioning its composition, its performance *and* its reception.

The archangels condition the poet-performer’s act and his audience’s experience of his show. The archangels’ drunkenness implies that they are not lucid spectators; they distort the double process of the production of meaning.

The poet-illusionist enjoys drawing his audience in with the promise of magic, and then keeping his public waiting: ‘no gozo cúmplice de prolongar prorrogar alongar’ (with the complicit delight of prolonging, proroguing, elongating). Underlying the word ‘gozo’ — from the verb ‘gozar’ — is the sense of the speaking-subject’s having fun at the expense of his ‘deceived’ and ‘expectant’ audience, who are duped by the performance’s mystery. According to Grabato Dias, the enjoyment is ‘complicit’: the poet and his audience take pleasure in the prolonging of the performance.

The text ends with the poet putting down his tool, interrupting the show: ‘Vou, vejambem, poisar a sovela, isto só, poisar a sovela’ (Look, I’m now going to put down the awl, that’s all, put down the awl). The ‘magic’ is indefinitely deferred, as the disarmed poet stares

fixedly into his public's eyes. In the serenely paradoxical position of being 'without patience' and 'in no way whatsoever impatient', the poet and his poem find themselves — like Grabato Dias's slice of ham in the second stanza — in a 'conquered space'. The poet's ideal position — this 'lugar conquistado' — is in the act of 'vendo no fundo dos outros / perspectivando-me a sério dentro do possível possível / ou um pouco mais...se possível!' (seeing in the depths of others, really perspectivizing myself within the possible possibility / or a little more...if possible!). Through others — the public before which the poet self-consciously performs — the speaker hopes, if possible, to gain an outsider's perspective on his poem-performance.

Deprived of his tool at the poem's end, the poet leaves himself in his readers' hands. All that the poet asks is that his audience read his text for what it is and not according to their expectations of what it should be: 'É o que é. / Não o que tem de ser' (It is what it is / Not what it must be). In this opening text, the poet describes his conception of writing and reading: the production of poetry is a hermeneutic power struggle between writers and readers.

For Grabato Dias, readers represent the external subjectivities that he wishes that he could occupy through writing. For him, the position of being outside the text and outside the subjectivity that produced it would allow him to anticipate his texts' reception. In the poem dated 8 January 1977, Grabato Dias describes the alterity of adopted writing subjects and self-critical reading subjects as spurious:

É chatíssimo cartografar o próprio mundo-próprio
para pasto da incredulidade alheia.
É mortificante tornar críveis todas as referências
e não poder jamais ver a coisa pelo lado dos outros
do ângulo dessa perspectiva especiosa que é ser os outros
sempre absurdamente não identificáveis connosco
sempre rigorosamente não coincidentes comigo

sempre estruturalmente alheios
e provavelmente certos desse seu ponto de vista.

It's a pain in the neck, having to draw a map of my own umwelt
for the pasture of the incredulity of others.
It's mortifying, this having to make all references credible
and never being able to see the thing through the eyes of others
from the angle of that specious perspective which is inhabiting others
always absurdly not identifiable with us
always rigorously not coinciding with me
always structurally other
and probably certain of their point of view.

Here, Grabato Dias reveals his scepticism about the dialogical nature of poetry. In this stanza and elsewhere in Grabato Dias's texts, poetry is configured as a two-way process involving the separate operations of reading and writing. The written text depends on its readership, but Grabato Dias cannot 'identify' or 'coincide' with his readers, nor, he fears, can they with him. Furthermore, his poems are difficult and require decoding. He fears that the map/poem that he draws will be ignored or prove illegible to his public.

Grabato Dias reveals a concern that he is unable to read his poem through the eyes of others; to pre-empt how it might be received by his public. He laments the impossibility of reading his poems 'pelo lado dos outros' (through the eyes of others); from the 'specious perspective' of a subject position other than his own. He describes poetry as an irksome dialogue between a poet whose words are not believed and readers who are assured of their interpretations, despite their inability to identify with the speaking subject and their 'structural' alienation from him.

Grabato Dias's framing of othering as an 'perspectiva especiosa' (specious perspective) is surprising given his self-description, elsewhere, as a split subject whose poetry contains *eus* of distinct and differing postures and positions. In other texts, Grabato Dias claims that othering comes naturally to him. In the letter to Maria Lourdes Cortez, for example, on the subject of his ode *A Arca*, Grabato Dias writes that his adoption of the voice

of Noah was smooth and unproblematic: ‘Na 1.ª pessoa surgiu como um relampago [sic], cresceram-me logo ali as barbas, fiquei Noé e pimba!’ (In the 1st person, he appeared like a lightning bolt: a beard suddenly sprouted, and, ta-da, I was Noah!).³⁰⁶ In *Sagapress*, however, imagining what his readers might think of his texts is impossible.

In a text titled ‘Notícia para ler duas vezes’ (A News Story to be Read Twice, dated 15 February 1977) Grabato Dias suggests that the comprehension of ‘coisas’ (things) and empathy with them is only possible when these are looked at from the outside. The act of interpretation can only be done well by an external agent; a third party able to study an object from without:

Todas as coisas
quando vistas atentamente pelo lado de fora
excedem largamente a sua função de objecto abjecto
para entrar objectivamente no canal dos lumes
para entrar decididamente no vórtice das significâncias
para sair definitivamente pela incrível pequenez do existir
para que a gente, nós os sensíveis, tenha pena delas
justificando a falta da pena que temos por tudo o resto.

All things
when seen, attentively, from the outside
greatly exceed their function of abject object
to enter objectively the tunnel of lights
to enter decidedly the vortex of significances
to exit definitely through the incredible smallness of existing
so that we, sensitive souls that we are, pity them
justifying the lack of pity that we have for everything else.

According to Grabato Dias, he, like the reader, is a sensitive soul. However, implicitly, as the writer, he — like the psychologically compromised subject that pens *O Morto* — is not positioned to read his own poems well. From Grabato Dias’s point of view, his texts can only serve the function of an ‘abject object’. Sensitive and engaged readers, by contrast, can usher the poems’ entry into an objective (rather than *subjective*, i.e. the poet’s) analysis and their exit from the margins (‘pequenez do existir’) to which Quadros feared his texts would

³⁰⁶ Lourdes Cortez, ‘Dois Envios (Inéditos) de Grabato Dias a Maria de Lourdes Cortez Anotados por Esta’, *A Ideia: Revista de Cultura Libertária*, 19:77-79 (2016), 106.

be consigned.

The notion that readers can rescue his poetry from obscurity is undercut in other poems from *Sagapress*. Grabato Dias's description of the contemplation of an object from an external perspective as 'objective' analysis is undermined in a poem dated 12 July 1976, in which 'poeting' — a double process entailing the writing and the reading of a text — is framed as an interplay of subjectivities. The poem reveals another of the functions of Grabato Dias's readers: their ability to highlight the distinctive qualities of his poetry. For Grabato Dias, all poems run the risk of becoming indistinguishable, one from the other. The poem operates on a tension between what Grabato Dias conceives to be the common starting point of all poetry, and his suggestion that individual poems, like vintage wines, have their own distinctive flavours.

In the first stanza, Grabato Dias claims to 'consume' poetry written by other people like 'um vinho triste' (a sad wine). Continuing the vinous metaphor, he hopes that his own poems, with time and through a process of 'fermentation', will become transformed. His hope is that a future reader will drink his poem and, in turn, call it a 'vinho triste'. The aging process is fundamental to Grabato Dias's poems being read as he would like. At the same time, the results of the fermentation process are uncertain. Grabato Dias can only 'hope' that his poems will improve in quality. The changes that his poems may undergo are mixed; with age, they might gain a 'peso audaz' (an audacious weight), but they may also take on an ambiguous 'travo alegre' (winsome acidity). How his poems ferment is, furthermore, outside the writer's control. Absent from Grabato Dias's metaphor is the yeast that makes his poem ferment: his readers who, with time, will read his poetry in ways that he cannot conceive.

In the third stanza, Grabato Dias claims to have glossed, in the second, *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* without having actually read the poem.³⁰⁷ This feat leads to the poet's claiming that: 'É da natureza do verso ser igual a sim mesmo / repetindo outro verso de insuspeita inexistência' (It is the nature of verse to be all the same / repeating some other verse of unsuspected existence). This because all poetry stems from a 'ponto reconhecível' (a recognisable point); the moment when 'o primeiro homem a questionar se questionou...' (the first questioning man questioned himself). The implied link between the poet's 'self-questioning' and poetry's function of looking 'para fora' reveals one of the fundamental mechanics of Quadros's poetry: 'looking out' is a fundamentally introspective process.

Grabato Dias describes poetry as an interrogative mode: 'Todo o verso acaba num ponto de interrogação' (Every line of poetry ends with a question mark).³⁰⁸ Poetry's 'interrogation' rests on the same metaphor elaborated in 'Notícia para ler duas vezes' of looking outside through a subjective lens:

Toda a Poesia é um olhar para fora
através da lente da própria natureza.
Assim a natureza de cada um
permite ir rasteando a natureza de todos [...]

All Poetry is a look outside
through the lens of one's own nature.
Thus, the nature of each one of us
allows us to track the nature of all of us.

There is an ambiguity to these lines that permeates the whole poem. Poetry cannot look outside itself, only writers or readers can do that. Who — writers or readers — looks outside themselves through the writing or reading of poetry? 'Notícia para ler duas vezes' would suggest that the potential for the poet to 'look outside' his own subjectivity at the poem that

³⁰⁷ Quadros translated several poems by Omar Khayyam into Portuguese. These translations were never published. Interview with Amélia Muge, Libson, July 2019.

³⁰⁸ 'Machava: 12/7/76'.

he has written is limited. Furthermore, the poet in Quadros's texts is often framed as a solitary figure, who is detached from his readers. The image of the 'lente da própria natureza' raises further problems. Is this lens a distorting or focusing optic through which to read poetry? Does the interplay of subjectivities that reading entails threaten to leave the text and the poet that wrote it misunderstood?

According to Grabato Dias, the last poet will close 'o grande ciclo de interrogadas ânsias / com um verso igual ao primeiro, mas não o mesmo' (the great cycle of interrogated desires / with a verse identical to the first, but not the same). Until then, 'poeting' ('poetar') is an imperial enterprise, encoded in the language of Portuguese overseas expansion. 'Poetar' is a cartographical exercise that leads to the 'levant[ar]' (raising) of the 'mapa integral dos comportamentos avulso [sic.]' (integral map of assorted behaviours). This metaphor and the others deployed by Quadros to describe 'poeting' are ambiguous. The map is not drawn, nor is it read; both actions are suggested by the verb 'levantar'. The verbs listed to describe the process of 'poetar' are in the infinitive or the gerund and carry no defined subject. The agents of 'poeting' could be writers and/or readers.

For Grabato, poetry will cease to be when writers stop 'questioning themselves' and when readers stop 'questioning' the poetry they read. There is little doubt that the highly self-conscious Grabato Dias will not stop his own torturous self-questioning. He fears that his poems will lose their distinctive flavour, their 'travo alegre' (winsome acidity), when they are not 'questioned'; when they are not read carefully and critically, thereby becoming indistinguishable from the texts of other writers. The poet's concern about not being read is not merely one of recognition; Grabato Dias is conscious of his future readers' potential to add value and meaning to his poetry.

Grabato Dias approaches the function of poetry as a means to ask questions in a different way in a poem dated 7 April 1978. In the poem, Grabato Dias discusses the role of authors in the post-independence period. His poem raises questions over the utility of authors who questions the state and the nationalist project in the post-independence period.

The text begins with a series of questions about the identity of the voices that ‘sing’ in victory songs:

Que vozes cantam realmente a vitória?
Os que gostam de ouvir cantar os outros
Ou aqueles que cantam os outros por eles?
Quem canta afinal, a Voz ou o cantador?
E que fica do canto cantado? Uma sensação?
Um sentimento? Há cantos alegres?
Ou será que a alegria nasce deles, sem que
Eles mesmos sejam alegres ou tristes, mas puros?

Which voices really sing victory songs?
Those that like to hear others sing
Or those that sing on others’ behalf?
Who sings, ultimately: Voice or singer?
And what becomes of the sung song? A sensation?
A feeling? Are there happy songs?
Or is it that happiness is stimulated by them, without
their being necessarily happy or sad, but pure?

Grabato Dias’s questions raise concerns about the celebration of Frelimo’s victory in the colonial war during the post-independence period. Frelimo’s role in the anti-colonial struggle was marshalled by the party to legitimise its governance of Mozambique after independence. Grabato Dias wonders whose victory independence is. Is it Frelimo’s? Is it that of the author who celebrates Frelimo’s victory over the Portuguese? Is it that of the absent ‘outros’ in whose name Frelimo claimed victory over colonialism?

In the poem, Grabato Dias appears to refer obliquely to *Eu, o Povo*, which he does not mention explicitly. Quadros was complicit in the celebration of Frelimo’s victory, through his submission of *Eu, o Povo* to Frelimo’s leadership and the subsequent publication

of the collection as the ‘hymn’ of the new nation’s independence. As I discussed in the previous chapter, *Eu, o Povo* represents an attempt to reconcile the anti-colonial (voicing of political dissent) and post-colonial (expression of the nationalist project) functions of poetry in Mozambique. Grabato Dias, in the poem from *Sagapress*, expresses doubts over the utility of the interrogative function of poetry:

Questões, questões, questões. Não há prazer
em questionar sempre tudo quanto.
Há o risco do Vício arriscando o ofício.
Há o risco da ineficácia vinda pela monotonia.
Há o risco de não passar da pedinçice às musas.
Há o risco de envelhecer de repente e não dar por tal.
Há o risco de não se arriscar nada sendo importuno.
Há o risco de estar jogando à cabra-cega sózinho [sic.]

Questions, questions, questions. There’s no joy to be had
in forever questioning this and that.
There’s the risk of the Addiction spoiling the task.
There’s the risk of inefficacy, owing to monotony.
There’s the risk of doing little more than pestering the muses with supplications.
There’s the risk of suddenly growing old and not realising it.
There’s the risk of not actually taking risks: just being importune.
There’s the risk of playing blind-billy’s bluff by oneself.

Questioning carries many risks. Importantly, the risks that Grabato Dias underlines are distinct from those that he claimed that he ran in *A Arca*, published during the colonial period, in which he claimed to be in peril. In the poem published in 1978, the ‘risks’ of asking too many questions are not to do with the poet’s potentially facing reprisals from the authorities. Indeed, Grabato Dias suggests that the questioning poet is in no danger at all: the inquiring author is an ‘importune’ armchair critic. He suggests that the contrarian approach is potentially ineffective, monotonous and obnoxious. He fears that asking too many questions is an addiction; that he is critical for the sake of it, without any specific objective in mind. He fears that questioning stifles creativity, given that it is little more than a way for the poet to ‘beg’ his muses for inspiration. Furthermore, the contrarian outsider, like the blind goat without anyone to guide him, lacking insider information, potentially makes critiques from a position of ignorance.

Having listed the potential pitfalls of using poetry as a vehicle for asking questions, the poet tentatively states: ‘Quem canta por conta sua / canta sempre com razão’ (Whoever sings on their own behalf / always sings with good reason). In an apparent justification for the project of *Eu, o Povo*, he disagrees with this statement, suggesting instead that the function of poetry is to speak on behalf of those who cannot:

É aqui que discordo comigo mesmo e com outros
A não ser que por conta sua seja já o estar cantando sozinho [sic.]
o ter assumido o cantar pelos outros que não saibam cantar no coro
dos cantadores por ofício de cantar alto os dogmas horizontais.

And yet here I disagree with myself and with others:
Unless your singing by yourself is done on your own behalf
to sing on behalf of others who cannot sing in the choir
of the singers tasked with singing horizontal dogmas from on high.

Here, Grabato Dias suggests that authors have an ethical imperative to preach on behalf of those who are excluded from political discourse. Paradoxically, he states that the author can only speak on the behalf of others if he sings ‘sózinho’. This paradox is reconciled if ‘sózinho’ is understood as politically independent. For Grabato Dias, only lone individuals, without ties to political parties or the state, can claim to speak for the disenfranchised through poetry. Importantly, Grabato Dias does not suggest that the poet voice the concerns of the voiceless. Rather, he proposes that authors should, paternalistically, put forward their own ‘horizontal’ — as opposed to vertical, hierarchical — teachings for the good of those they claim to represent.

The poet’s definition of the role of authors is immediately undercut. Although presumably a member of the ‘choir’ that professes to expound ‘dogmas’ for the benefit of those who are excluded from it, the poet worries that he has not made himself clear. The meaning that the poet wants to convey eludes him. Instead his poem throws up unintended nuances:

Estou-me cansando demasiado, andando demasiado em redondo
na pista dos ecos significando isto ou aquilo mas não outra coisa

sempre a outra coisa que não espera, que se persegue em vão

I'm getting too tired, walking in circles too much
following a road echoing with these meanings and those ones but nothing else
always that other thing that doesn't hang about, and which is chased in vain.

As elsewhere in *Sagapress*, there is an ambiguity as to whether the poet's failure to convey meaning is his fault, the fault of his readership or an inherent problem with communicating through poetic language. Indeed, the poet's suggestion that his text has not hit upon this 'outra coisa' (other thing) leaves open the possibility that his readers might divine that which the poet intended to say. Indeed, in the following stanza, the poet describes writing and reading as processes fraught with ambiguity. He contrasts writers and readers with 'os outros que não nós' (those others unlike us), who, according to him, lead their lives blissfully ignorant of the ambiguities of literature. Whereas in the opening poem of *Sagapress*, the poet describes writing as a theatrical performance, in the poem of April 1978, the poet likens writing to making oneself up in an opaque mirror:

Deste lado dos factos penteamo-nos num espelho de opacidades
numa planura de ambiguidade sem artifício ou pausa.
Deste lado das opiniões rebocamos o gosto sem apetite
do questionar furtivo e um tanto indigno das razões últimas
já sem aquela encantadora facilidade de encontrar deus
no fundo do pano de fundo, ou emergindo da caixa do ponto.

On this side of the facts, we do our hair up in an opaque mirror
a surface full of artless and unremitting ambiguity.
On this side of opinions we cake on the anorexic joy
of questioning, furtively and, I dare say, unworthy of my objective
lacking that charming ease of finding god
in the back of the background or emerging from prompt box.

Poetry is a game of dress up in which writer and reader are both implicated. In contrast to the opening poem of *Sagapress*, in which the poet describes writing as a process of conscious mystification, here he styles himself 'sem artifício' — he lacks the skill required to deceive his audience. Rather, the poet clumsily disguises (rebocamos) his 'furtive' questioning. He fears that his questioning is unworthy of his unstated final objective ('das razões últimas') and he is aware that asking questions will not necessarily provide easy answers.

The poem concludes with the poet's answering his first question with a paradox: 'Quem canta pois a vitória? / Os vencidos, já se sabe...' (Who, then, sings victory songs? / The losers, of course...). The poet's paradox points to the inability of Quadros and his pennames to reconcile the anti- and post-colonial functions of poetry in Mozambique. For Grabato Dias, a poet who obsessively questions and criticizes, to celebrate victory — of the nationalist project over colonialism — is a sign of defeat. As elsewhere in *Sagapress* and Grabato Dias's poetry more generally, there is a tension between the poet's explicitly telling his readers what he is doing and leaving his readers to their own devices. His tracing of his role, as he views it, as a poet in post-colonial Mozambique points to a concern that his contribution, in *Eu, o Povo* in particular, will be misunderstood. In a recurrent motif of Quadros's works, Grabato Dias presents himself as an anachronism: an author whose works are ill-fitting in the contexts in which they were written and published.

Conclusion

The poems from *Sagapress* analysed in this chapter frame the writing and reading of poetry as a frustrated interplay of subjectivities in which the speaking subject calls on his readers to interpret his poems in ways that he cannot; to be read from the external positionality that the poet cannot occupy. The poet's grappling with the complexities, difficulties and pitfalls of the fraught process of reading is part of his dramatizing of the specific problems of being a Portuguese-language author in colonial and post-colonial Mozambique — the issues of reaching an illiterate public explored in *Sete Contos para um Carnaval*.

In *Sagapress*, Grabato Dias confesses an inability to look outside his time and

outside his-selves. The ‘distancing’ that Lourdes Cortez identifies in her introduction to *Laurentinas* as necessary to the poet’s being able to assess the historical and political moment in which he finds himself is a frustrated process: the poet confesses an inability to read his poetry and assess his time as if he were another. In a slippage analogous to Grabato Dias’s persistent mapping of the problematic of being a minor Portuguese poet in colonial and post-independence onto the anti-colonial politics of the day, Grabato Dias’s readers are configured as the Other with whom his fictional authors are barred contact. As the final poem of *O Povo é Nós* suggests, the Other is uncannily familiar in Grabato Dias’s poetry: when the Other does appear, it is revealed to be nothing more than a projection of the Self. In this way, Grabato Dias describes the drama of being a minor poet with a small readership in a marginal literary context as one of loneliness and isolation.

Grabato Dias leaves his future readers to perform a dual task: to consider his poems within the contexts in which they were written *and* to rescue his poems from those marginal and politically charged contexts. Deprived of a sizeable readership in Mozambique and in Portugal during Quadros’s lifetime, the poetry of Grabato Dias gestures towards a potential, if doubtful, future audience.

Situated outside the subjectivity that produced a given poem and outside the historical and political context in which it was written, Quadros’s future readers are the detectives, counsellors, students and bystanders who make his poems mean something within and without the circumstances of their composition. As I discussed in chapter 2, Grabato Dias is alive to the dangers of politicized modes of reading that co-opt literary texts to support authoritarian regimes. For this reason, the anti-authoritarian Grabato Dias urges his readers to read subversively and doubt any kind of authority, political or authorial. For

him, betrayal of the text through a contrarian and anti-authoritarian reading is preferable to appropriation in the service of an authoritarian regime. Quadros's fictional authors consciously forestall future attempts to appropriate their writings through ambiguity, contradiction and difficulty deliberately deployed to trouble authoritative readings of them.

‘No fundo sou um grande ordinário [...] / E ignorante do meu lugar histórico, também’: António Quadros and the Future³⁰⁹

Porque é o futuro tão insidioso? Porque está
Sempre presente obturando as cáries
Rebocando as juntas do hoje em calhau rolado
Fortalecendo as argamassas pobres do passado
Corrigindo os prumos à jamais aprumados
Avançando uma cúpula sábia sobre as desordens?

Porque o temo, o futuro?
Porque lhe não dou inteiro o espaço da escrita
Mesmo, e sobretudo, quando pareço fazê-lo?
Porque não me inventaria um outro eu
Um ser de resoluções e passado passado a limpo
Num tempo consequência devorado por carpas
Não neto filho irmão mas avô pai tio velho?

Eu, que estou sempre realmente pensando futuro
Previendo em todo o segundo consciente inconsciente
A jogada próxima, a resposta, o comportamento
Eu, que não tenho tempo sequer para viver o passado
Que o recuso pelo que dói ou porque enlanguesce
Que nem sequer o sepulto sobre palavras definitivas
Eu que estou todo dele excluído por impulso dele próprio
Que não há esquina que dobre sem que pressinta o ogre
Que não há peão que não atropele antecipando
O horror de matar entre vísceras e empastes
Eu, o que nada tendo dito já tinha dito tudo
Sobre os acontecimentos que os derrames comentam
Produzo apenas uma escrita olímpica sobre o transposto
E, com o mesmo desdém infeliz da fera burlada no salto
Escavo entre entulhos, parasitando-se em todos os duplos.

Não passo do aicebergue virado aos fundos do frio
Crescendo sem querer notá-lo nos quatro quintos submersos
E mostrando só o quinto glorioso que também foi futuro
Não inventado mas decorrido sem outra culpa que tê-lo aceite
Porque, como futuro, ocorreu sempre à margem do desejo.

Why is the future so insidious? Why is it
Always present, clogging the weevils,
Covering the joints of today in pebbles,
Strengthening the miserable mortar of the past,
Correcting the forever righted supports,
Advancing a sage dome over disorder?

Why do I fear the future?
Why don't I dedicate all of my writings to it
Even, and especially, when I appear to do so?
Why don't I invent another he/I
A being of resolutions and a past wiped clean
In a time-consequence devoured by carps
Not grandson son brother rather grandfather father uncle old man?

I, who am always really thinking about the future,
Pre-empting every conscious unconscious second,

³⁰⁹ *Facto/Fado*, p. 116.

The next play, response, behaviour,
 I, who don't even have time to relive the past,
 Either I reject it because it's painful or because it languishes,
 Or I don't bury it in definitive words,
 I, entirely excluded from it on its own initiative,
 For there isn't a corner where I don't foresee the ogre about to round it,
 For there isn't a pedestrian the horror of whose murder,
 I don't anticipate, amongst mushed flesh and viscera,
 I, who having said nothing, had already said everything
 About happenings that have been commented on in spades,
 All I produce is an Olympic writing on that which is already out of date,
 And, with the same unhappy disdain of a feral animal captured mid-jump
 I excavate amongst the rubble, living parasitically off my doubles.

I am like an iceberg turned over into the cold depths,
 Growing, without wanting to notice that I am, atop four corners of a submarine hell
 And only displaying the glorious tip which, too, was the future,
 Not an invented future, rather, one that transpired, and my only crime was that I resigned myself to it,
 For, as the future, it has always happened at the margins of desire.

(*Facto/Fado*, p. 29)

In the quoted extract from *Facto/Fado*, Grabato Dias claims to be excluded from the past and from the future. For the poet, the future is insidious, overbearing and frightening. Despite the poet's claims that he always has the future on his mind and that he is able to predict imminent events, his foresight is myopic: posterity is a mystery to him. Indeed, the future that the poet sees has become past before he knows it. His 'olympic' writing concerns that which is already dated. The protruding tip of the iceberg to which he likens himself is a past that was once the future. He bemoans his inability to create a fictional author who is his descendant rather than a predecessor, such as Frei Garabatus, who could look back on the future-past with certainty. Unlike the friar, who, through an artificial temporal frame, foreshadows Portugal's violent colonial rule, Grabato Dias is unable to make predictions with any conviction. Indeed, although the poet, in *As Quybryycas*, perspicaciously foresees the end of Portuguese imperial rule, he is unable to chart the future of his own works. The poet's self-conception as a man out of time reflects his histrionic framing of authorship as the fraught negotiation of irreconcilable tensions.

In this thesis, I have argued that Quadros is interested in the relationship between authors and context: the contexts in which they work and those in which their writings will be received. A minor author writing in a marginal literary context, Quadros places his hopes for a readership and for recognition in posterity. Such a relationship with his future readers is fraught. Quadros's 'ethical poem' and historical correction of Camões's *Os Lusíadas*, *As Quaybyrycas*, demonstrates that to be an author is to follow a political and artistic practice (a poetic ethics) that will be subject to the scrutiny of posterity and its unknowable standards.

In his analysis of the canonization of seventeenth-century print writers in the eighteenth century, Andrew Bennett describes a 'fully-fledged "culture of posterity"' according to which 'poets are memorialized in the future just to the extent that they escape the prejudices of their own time and embrace what will become the standards of posterity'.³¹⁰ He notes that canonization, in this instance, operated anachronistically: the pioneering, eccentric and stigmatized writers of the seventeenth century were canonized by Romantics in the following century. Quadros is certainly an eccentric figure in the context of Mozambique's literary history. His work, however, is yet to find its place in the canons of Portugal and Mozambique. The difficulty of Grabato Dias's poetry, in particular, in which impenetrability is consciously deployed as a strategy to mask the texts' anti-authoritarian politics and to trouble any future attempts to reduce his poems to any singular, politicized reading have deterred readers and critics from approaching Quadros's body of work. The quoted passage from *Facto/Fado* is typical of Grabato Dias's meditations on the relationship between his work and his readers in the future: his language oscillates between legibility and frustrating opacity.

³¹⁰ Bennett, *The Author*, p. 48.

With time, Quadros's works may well age into the fine wines that Grabato Dias hoped that they would become in *A Arca* and *Sagapress*. However, the enigmas, in-jokes and cryptic references with which he peppered his work will likely become increasingly difficult to decipher as the memories of those who hold the answers to the riddles of Quadros's work fade. The critical distance that the passage of time opens up is double-edged: Grabato Dias is conscious that posterity will be both better- and worse-placed to unpack his poetry and recognise its quality than his contemporaries.

Although an eccentric case, the questions that Quadros's works raise are highly relevant to the question of what it means to be an author in Mozambique and more generally. As Frederick G. Williams notes, Quadros is a quirky case study whose situation reflects the problems inherent to the establishment of the Mozambican canon.³¹¹ Quadros problematizes oft-repeated commonplaces made about anti-colonial authors and writers branded as 'postcolonial'. Critics are wont to proclaim that these writers and their works 'resist' colonialism and neo-colonialism without interrogating what it means for an author or their work to 'resist'. What kind of 'resistance' did literature mount against colonialism? What can an author do in contexts of political struggles? How, in turn, can critics carry on the work of anti-colonial authors in their critical practice? Grabato Dias's answers to questions over the political function of authors are inconsistent and paradoxical. In a characteristic move, Grabato Dias, in *A Arca*, ironically aggrandizes his role as a poet in the anti-authoritarian contest against the powers-that-be at the same time that he narrowly circumscribes the role that authors play in political struggles. Poets and their poems can only do so much. Indeed, the political import of the writings of Mozambican authors has perhaps been exorbitated, owing to the fact that several of Mozambique's canonized writers held

³¹¹ Williams, 'Who and What Constitutes Mozambican Poetry?', 189.

leadership positions in Frelimo's post-independence government. In this context, it is important to decouple the artistic and political activities of these figures. This is not to downplay the artistic contributions of politician-writers. It is merely to point out the obvious fact that decisions made on a day-by-day basis by politicians and political advisers have a greater bearing on society and the people who constitute that society than any poem possibly could.

The period in which Quadros lived in Mozambique was a period of significant change. Amongst a host of transformations, what it meant to be an author in Mozambique altered considerably with the Carnation Revolution and the decolonization process that led to Mozambique's independence. In the years since Quadros's death in 1994, the literary landscape in Mozambique has seen further changes. The late 1980s and early 1990s saw the emergence of a new generation of writers who have since dominated Mozambique's literary scene. Mia Couto's much hailed début in prose fiction, *Vozes Anoitecidas*, was published in Mozambique in 1986.³¹² Ungulani Ba Ka Khosa's first novel, *Ualalapi*, was published the following year.³¹³ Paulina Chiziane published her début novel, *Balada de Amor ao Vento*, in 1990.³¹⁴ Although literacy rates in Mozambique have increased significantly since the 1970s and 1980s, the fundamental question of readership with which Grabato Dias grappled has not disappeared: for whom do Mozambican authors write? This question is particularly pertinent to the case of Mia Couto, who has substantial readerships in Portugal and in Brazil.

The internationalist context of the anti-colonial struggle, where texts by Mozambican authors circulated in Portuguese and in translation in anthologies and journals

³¹² Mia Couto, *Vozes Anoitecidas* (Lisbon: Caminho, 1987).

³¹³ Ungulani Ba Ka Khosa, *Ualalapi* (Lisbon: Caminho, 1998).

³¹⁴ Paulina Chiziane, *Balada de Amor ao Vento* (Lisbon: Caminho, 2003).

through liberation struggle networks, has been replaced by a situation in which prestigious publishing houses in Lisbon and elsewhere in Europe determine the fates of Mozambican writers. The notion that *moçambicanidade* and authorship in Mozambique have a peculiar exogenous quality to them has not disappeared. Furthermore, the commonplace that Mozambique is a place and *moçambicanidade* an identity in construction still holds sway. In 1972, Quadros predicted that the question of what it means to be Mozambican could only be solved with the passing of at least two generations:

Se eu soubesse o que é ser europeu, saberia talvez o que é ser moçambicano. Tirando o anedotário da coca-cola, falta a soma das criações de mais duas gerações, para que se possa definir o que é ser moçambicano, para bem ou para mal. Daí a tremenda responsabilidade do criador, hoje e aqui, onde o pouco que há por fazer. [...] Se à poesia de minha lavra se pode censurar a falta de tambores, luas africanos e queimadas, note que a que produzi de 50 a 64 pelos sucessivos exílios em que andei e onde o mental não foi o menor é impublicável por isso mesmo.

If I knew what it was to be European, perhaps I would also hold the answer to the question of what it is to be Mozambican. It won't be until two generations have passed, with their respective artistic creations, that we will be able to define what it is to be Mozambican, for better or worse. Hence the tremendous responsibility of the creative, here and now, where there is so little to do. [...] If my poetry may be censured for its lack of scenes depicting dancing around a campfire to the beat of drums and under an African moon, I would argue that the poems that I produced between 1950 and 1964 — a time during which I passed through several periods of exile, including a major kind of mental exile — is unpublishable for that very reason.³¹⁵

What it means to be Mozambican, like the 'quality', 'significance' and 'place' of Grabato Dias's poetry is endlessly deferred: the lot of the dubiously Mozambican artist in Mozambique is to produce art without knowing how it will be received and whether it will even be counted as Mozambican.

The quotation from *Facto/Fado* that serves as the title to this concluding chapter epitomises this knotty relationship with the future: 'No fundo sou um grande ordinário [...] / E ignorante do meu lugar histórico, também' (Ultimately I'm a great boor / and what's more ignorant of my place in history). Grabato Dias was certainly no 'ordinário'. He was neither ordinary or mediocre and he knew it: the word 'génio', although used with irony, is

³¹⁵ Quadros interviewed by Mota Lopes in *Tempo* (1972), quoted in Saúte, 'Os Escritores da Terra de Ninguém', *Público*, Leituras, 22 April 1995, p.4.

a word that recurs in Grabato Dias's self-descriptions. The impulse behind Grabato Dias's histrionic exclamation is revealed in the following line: Grabato Dias cannot predict what his place in history is. Unlike the writings of the authors cited above, who have managed to satisfy the nebulous standards of international literary markets, Quadros's works have been largely ignored by posterity. In this way, Quadros has performed the self-defeating gesture dramatized in the conclusions of *A Arca* and *Eu, o Povo*: the figure of the privileged contrarian is one destined for obsolescence.

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³¹⁶ The texts authored by Quadros are organized chronologically and according to attribution. Secondary sources are listed alphabetically.

³¹⁷ The last item in this list is a collection of unedited poems published in *Jornal de Letras* a year after Quadros's death in a section titled 'Homem de Renascimento: António Quadros/Grabato Dias'. The poems are: 'Carta para o Zé Craveirinha a Propósito do Prémio Camões em Tomar'; 'st. 03.06.94'; 'st. 15.06. 94'; 'd a i m a g i n a ç ã o'; 'santiago. 93/11/09'; and, 'Teresa Rosa: 13.03.93, 2 H. 1/4, madrugada, telefonou a teresa rosa das angústias: o rui nogar morreu, porra'. As well as the works listed in the bibliography, Grabato Dias's writings serve as the lyrics for twenty songs by Amélia Muge, including seven tracks from the singer's 1991 album 'Música': 'Senhorecos'; 'Sôbolos Rios'; 'Ervas de Cheiro'; 'O Sol (Esse Que Dizia)'; 'Mariazinhas'; 'Papãozinho'; and, 'Haverá um Lugar'.

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