

**LUSOPHONE AFRICAN POETRY:  
AT HOME AND IN THE DIASPORA\***

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When the subject in question is the Lusophone African Literature, one has to bear in mind that there are expatriate people who have moved from their countries and settled in other African countries or even beyond, like Europe and the Americas. For the purpose of illustration one may remember that here in the United States there are colonies of Capeverdeans scattered around the country. The same fact is true of people from other African territories. The consequence is that this dispersion from the homeland provokes unity among them when they are in foreign lands where they start a new life. Considering that nobody forgets his people and country when he is lonely, far from home, it is obvious that homesickness takes place and a way to exteriorize their feelings is through poetry (and Literature in general, of course). On the other hand, there is another aspect which is very important and ought to be focused on: the ideas the person expatriated may espouse through his work.

Based on this statement I am going to point out some aspects of the exiled African writers as they are reflected in their Literature. Some are praised and some are denounced in this Literature written by/for African people from the Portuguese speaking countries.

First of all, there are those writers who denounce the problems and sufferings of their people as created by the power politics. All these and more are reflected in their poetry. One may say they seek spiritual contentment through exile in their own work; in their written word as a form of escapism. In Marxist parlance it is what is called alienation.

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Sometimes they look for refuge in things that bring only good memories, as Alda do Espírito Santo (from São Tomé e Príncipe), for instance in her poem "Descendo o bairro" she remembers her childhood, saying:

Eu vou trazer para o palco da vida  
pedaços da minha gente,<sup>1</sup>

"Avó Mariana" is another representative example of the image of the past, her past. Alda do Espírito Santo—who was imprisoned by the P.I.D.E. for political activities—denounces the wretched life of her fellowmen as in "No mesmo lado da canoa":

É assim que eu falo,  
Meu irmão contratado numa roça de café<sup>2</sup>

The "contratado" motif is as important element in the Lusophone African Literature because of it affected thousands of people, disrupting their lives, separating husband from wife, parent from children. The poetry of Mozambique reflects similar concerns as it lyrically records the effect of migratory labour in South African mines.

The contract system appears in other works, like in Francisco José Tenreiro, from São Tomé e Príncipe:

Na beira do caminho  
Sinhá Carlota  
está pitando no seu cachimbo.  
.....  
Veio do Sul  
numa leva de contratados.  
Teve filhos negros  
.....  
Teve filhos mestiços.<sup>3</sup>

Also in "Canção do Ilhéu" by Tomaz Medeiros one sees the person exiled in his own poetry<sup>4</sup>. He puts a view of a past hope in his poetry:

Aquela criança que trago comigo,  
Pulsando comigo na dança das veias,  
Pulsando comigo nos ais que se apagam,  
.....

1 Manuel Ferreira, *No reino de Caliban-II* (Lisboa: Seara Nova, 1976), p. 454.  
2 Ferreira, *Caliban II*, p. 457.  
3 Alfredo Margarido, *Poetas de S. Tomé e Príncipe* (Lisboa Antologia da Casa dos Estudantes, 1963), p. 48.  
4 After he studied in Lisbon, Tomaz Medeiros went to study in USSR and he had prepared one essay about the evolution of the poetry in S. Tomé. But until now I have not heard anything about its publication.

Pulsando comigo, comigo pulsando,  
Aquela criança que trago comigo,  
Pulsando comigo na feira de Ponto,  
Caminhos que vão perdidos no mar,  
Horizontes fechados perdidos no mar,  
Perdidos no mar, perdidos no mar,  
Aquela criança que trago comigo,  
Não pára, Candinha,  
Não pára jamais.<sup>5</sup>

These writers had used their literary vein to sink in the feelings of their people and denounce their sufferings or talk about the good things they felt in their islands. That is the case, for example, of Jorge Barbosa<sup>6</sup> in his book *Ambiente* (1941): he brings the image of the sea in the poem "Irmão" where he exalts the Capeverdeans who used to go in the whaling ships trying to find a better way of life in America through migration:<sup>7</sup>

Cruzaste Mares  
na aventura da pesca da baleia,  
nessas viagens para a América  
de onde às vezes os navios não voltam mais.<sup>8</sup>

Pedro Corsino Azevedo, also from Cape Verde, left in his poem "Terra-Longe" the profound feelings of one exiled in a hospital in Portugal in the last days of his life, dying of tuberculosis:

Aqui, perdido, distante  
das realidades que apenas sonhei,  
cansado pela febre do mais-além,  
suponho  
minha mãe a embalar-me,  
eu, pequenino, zangado pelo sono que não vinha.  
.....  
'Terra-longe tem gente-gentio,  
gente-gentio come gente.'

5 Ferreira, *Caliban II*, pp. 478-79.  
6 Jorge Barbosa had already broken with the traditional models of the poetry in *Archipelago* (1935), starting, then, the Modern Capeverdean poetry.  
7 There is a very relevant movement of migration shown in poetry as well as in novels and short-stories written by many authors, as Manuel Lopes, Baltasar Lopes, Manuel Ferreira, Gabriel Mariano, José Aureliano Gonçalves, Luís Romano and many others. This theme is a recurrent in all Capaverdean Literature.  
8 Manuel Ferreira, *No reino de Caliban I* (Lisboa: Seara Nova, 1975), p. 91.

terra-longe! terra-longe!...

- Oh mãe que me embalaste!
- Oh meu querer bipartido!<sup>9</sup>

Especially in the years before the Independence of the ex-portuguese colonies, many African had tried to free themselves from Portugal and the result was a political work of fiction and poetry in which this group of people acted through their written word; they used the writings as a weapon against their ideological oponents. Some of them wrote during the process to reach Independence. In this group I would like to mention the names of Pepetela, Uanhenga Xitu, Mário António, Luandino Vieira, Agostinho Neto — in Angola.

In Cape Verde, among others, there is the wellknown poet Ovídio Martins who became totally deaf in consequence of the miserable sufferings undergone as a political prisoner; the author of *Caminhada* acurately pointed out, in 1962, in Lisbon, in the poem "O único impossível":

#### Mordaças

A um Poeta?  
Não me façam rir!...  
Experimentem primeiro  
Deixar de respirar  
Ou rimar... mordaças  
Com Liberdade.<sup>10</sup>

or like he emphasized in 1973, close to Independence; when Ovídio was in Amesterdan:

Nosso amor de liberdade  
e de justiça  
Será contemplado  
e o nosso povo terá direito ao pão <sup>11</sup>

Also in Mozambique the writers claim for Independence, as Rui Knopfli who in a strong way declares himself one African when he "expresses his bipolarity of European and African" as Manuel Ferreira very acurately penned down<sup>12</sup>. Knopfli writes:

Europeu, me dizem.  
.....  
mas africano sou.

9 Ferreira, *Caliban I*, pp. 119-20.

10 Ferreira, *Caliban I*, p. 187.

11 Ferreira, *Caliban I*, p. 187.

12 Manuel Ferreira, *Literaturas africanas de expressão portuguesa, II* (Venda Nova-Amadora, Portugal: Instituto de Cultura Portuguesa, 1977), p. 86.

Pulsa-me o coração ao ritmo dolente  
desta lua e deste quebranto.  
Trago no sangue uma amplidão  
de coordenadas geográficas e mar Índico.<sup>13</sup>

Some of them exalt Mother-Africa in their poetry like Armando Guebuza in "Mãe África":

.....  
Oh, Mãe África de negros de ébano  
correndo, caindo ao som do chigubo!<sup>14</sup>

or Noêmia de Sousa, considered by the critic one of the best poets of Mozambique, talking about the migratory movement of their people:

Somos fugitivas de todos os bairros de zinco e caniço.  
Fugitivas das Munhuanas e dos Xipamaninas,  
viemos do outro lado da cidade  
com nossos olhos espantados,/nosas almas trancadas,  
nossos corpos submissos e escancarados.<sup>15</sup>

As well as José Craveirinha in a loud voice of protest, personifies his color through the coal in "Grito Negro", saying:

Eu sou carvão!  
E tu arrancas-me brutalmente do chão  
e fazes-me tua mina, patrão.<sup>16</sup>

In Guiné-Bissau too, there are people using poetry as a strong weapon. For instance, in a very peculiar way, José Carlos Schwarz writes his poems in crioulo. In one, for example, he poeticises about a child crying in front of the battle:

Quê qui minino na tchora  
I dur na si curpo  
Quê qui minino na tchora  
I sangui qui cansa odja.<sup>17</sup>

13 João Alves das Neves, *Poetas e contistas africanos de expressão portuguesa* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1963), p. 61.

14 Mário de Andrade, *O canto armado* (Lisboa: Sá da Costa, 1979), p. 71.

15 Neves, *Poetas e contistas*, p. 59.

16 Mário de Andrade, *Na noite grávida de punhais*, 3ª ed. (Praia, Cabo Verde: Instituto Caboverdeano do Livro, 1980), p. 180.

17 Andrade, *Canto armado*, p. 125.

In another poem he lyricises the child as his father was taken away by the oppressor:

Dispus que é lebal  
ku tchur dí minino  
sim ninguim  
Dispus que é lebal  
Cansera panti pa tudo alma  
Mininos mininos  
Bo para tchora<sup>18</sup>

And in São Tomé, Carlos Espírito Santo was born in 1952; he had political activity after the April 25 as a member of the MLSTP. He worked in the Ministry of Information and Popular Culture in São Tomé where he had the opportunity of spreading his ideological point of view. After this, he moved to Portugal to study at the University of Lisbon. His poems were published in a book form with the title *Poesia do Colonialismo*<sup>19</sup>. The poems are a testimony of one period in the Literature of São Tomé e Príncipe when the voice of the poets was silenced by the forces of the Colonialism. They make part of its History as the publishers of his book say in the introduction of it.

In his poems one sees since the picture and memories of when he was a boy of seven years old emphasizing that he knew also the work of his ancestors and his own, because even as a child he had to work hard as if he was slave:

Sou moleque  
há sete anos nascido  
não conheço senão o trabalho  
dos meus avós  
herdei tamanha riqueza  
de madrugada me levanto  
para entregar meu corpo à escrava labuta  
quando o patrão  
desce à sua bonita cidade  
eu moleque  
caminho correndo<sup>20</sup>

The fast pace of his life —a kind of running— is reflected by absence of punctuation along the whole poem, which ends with an advertisement:

18 Andrade, *Canto armado*, p. 123.

19 Carlos Espírito Santo, *Poesia do Colonialismo* (Lisboa: Africa Editora, 1978).

20 Espírito Santo, *Poesia do colonialismo*, p. 24.

“Mas cuidado Patrão”, because the poet is ready to fight against that repression.

The exile is shown at different levels in Carlos Espírito Santo's poetry. One was this mentioned above where he looks behind him, he goes back to his childhood, as well as in the poem he remembers the battle which took place in Batepá, in 1953, one year before he was born. He says in “Criminosos de Batepá”:

.....  
Criminosos de Batepá  
Verdugos de 53  
Enlutastes a minha terra  
Vós sanguinários de 3 de fevereiro  
Massacrastes o meu povo  
A História sedenta de vingança ébria pela fúria dos séculos  
Assanha-se em desafio contra vós infames  
Pela Paz e Justiça do Povo de S. Tomé e Príncipe.<sup>21</sup>

Another level occurs when Carlos Espírito Santo talks about people coming from other Portuguese speaking African countries in search of better life, and finding disillusion only. One may point out especially two of them. The first one is that encountered in “Filho de contrato” symbolizing the Cape Verdean who goes to S. Tomé e Príncipe in search of job as ‘contratado’:

São Tomé é degredo!  
degredo de serviçal!  
.....  
ele sonha  
Com S. Vicente de Cabo-Verde  
berço terra natal!  
terra de contrato  
terra de trabalho duro  
S. Tomé é degredo!  
degredo de serviçal!<sup>22</sup>

In similar fashion he describes the Mozambican who receives strokes of the whip from the foreman because he had to rest a little in order to recover the strength to continue the hard work. One more time, Carlos Espírito Santo ends the poem with one advertisement, but in this case it is a question: “Até quando Patrão?”<sup>23</sup>.

21 Espírito Santo, *Poesia do colonialismo*, p. 38.

22 Espírito Santo, *Poesia do colonialismo*, pp. 63-68.

23 Espírito Santo, *Poesia do Colonialismo*, p. 21.

And in this way, with the last illustrations, one focus exile within Africa, but in another country such Cape-erd and Mozambique, both to S. Tomé e Príncipe in the two Santo's poems mentioned above.

Migration is a common fact as, for example, the Capeverdeans going to Guiné-Bissau, as happened with the writers Artur Augusto, Terencio Anahory and Fausto Duarte. Guiné-Bissau inspired some of them to produce their writings, such is the case especially of Fausto Duarte, who although he returned to Cape Verde, he continued to write about Guiné-Bissau.

Another peculiar exile in another African Portuguese-speaking country is the case of Angolans such as Agostinho Mendes de Carvalho, which native name is Uanhenga Xitu — in the way he signs his books. He was put in the famous prison in Tarrafal (in the island of Santiago, Cape Verde) where he received a sentence of ten years. There he wrote his fiction based in his childhood in order to avoid what was happening at that moment. There he passed a bad time, in which besides short-stories and other novels, wrote three times *Mestre Tamoda* — and all these times he saw its destruction by the hands of the oppressor. I am going to quote some poems he wrote while he was there, but they were published only recently in his last book: *Os sobreviventes da máquina colonial depõem....*

Prendeste-me  
 Ai, prendeste-me  
 Porque gritei viva Angola  
 Quando um dia voltar  
 Terei na cabeça uma grinalda de mussequinha  
 Na mão direita rabo de leão  
 Na mão esquerda rabo de onça  
 Nos pés alparcatas de pele de elefante  
 E andarei pela rua gritando  
 Liberdade, Liberdade, Liberdade  
 E...e...  
 Com todo folego gritarei bem alto:  
 Viva Angola.

That is the poem that opens the mentioned book; let us quote some parts of the poem that closes it:

Eu também queria deitar uma lágrima  
 no óbito da mamã XIKA  
 e, na hora de sair o caixão, dizer:  
 NDAI Uôôô...  
 Mas, mas não posso  
 .....  
 Eu também queria pôr Kisumbe na mão,  
 .....  
 Eu também queria vestir-me de Kahididi

com grinalda de musekenha na cabeça  
 com ervas de mulambuiji à tiracolo  
 cruzando o peito e as costas,  
 com as mãos em leque e em movimento  
 de mágoa, didilando a mamã XIKA.  
 Mas, mas não posso.

.....24

There are also the African who settle in other countries outside the African Continent. In the exile outside of Africa, I will go back a little further in the last century to point out Antonia Gertrudes Pusich with her book: *Elegia à memória das infelizes vítimas assassinadas por Francisco de Mattos; na noite de 25 de junho de 1844*<sup>5</sup>.

It is important to keep in mind some African writers — blacks and mulattoes — who went to Portugal and registered their own protest through poetry &/or fiction. Once there, they had the chance of spreading their ideas as they came in contact with other intellectuals. They discovered a common link: isolation, and consequently, the desire to escape.

This escapism, most of the times, is derived from their exile in another country where they felt homesickness. One may say that some poets tried to exile themselves in their own loneliness such as Onésimo Silveira who was born in Cape Verde, going later on to S. Tomé e Príncipe, and from there to Portugal, finally he returned to Cape Verde. Exiled and linked to the PAIGC he lived in France, China and Sweden. Whatever he is, he claims for freedom through fight:

Atrás dos ferros da prisão  
 É preciso levantar os braços algemados  
 Contra a prepotência!  
 Atrás dos ferros da prisão  
 É preciso afogar a noite em gritos de luz  
 Para a voz, de todos os homens!<sup>26</sup>

Away from the motherland, these men might observe their people in two aspects: because they were out, and sensitively, because they belonged to the same group, and so they felt the same anxieties as their people.

24 Published in Lisbon, by Edições 70, 1980, pp. 31 and 124-25. Besides these two poems, there are two more along the novel *Os sobreviventes da máquina colonial depõem*; one is on pages 48-49; the other one written in his native language, Bantu on page 50.

21 The Capeverdean Gertrudes' book was published in 1844 in Lisbon. Cf. Manuel Ferreira, *Literaturas africanas de expressão portuguesa I* (Venda Nova-Amadora, Portugal, 1977), p. 13.

26 Onésimo Silveira, *Hora Grande* (Nova Lisboa, Angola: Publicações Bailundo, 1962), p. 41. It is said by Manuel Ferreira that Onésimo Silveira is living now in Sweden. Cf. *Caliban I*, pp. 187-88.

Living far from home, sometimes they can act more effectively because they will be able to denounce the iniquities which they could not do before Independence. Now, even exiled, they work for benefit of the countries they love. They may feel proud in spreading their literature through their work published or only passed among them or even only heard from their mouths. They work in different places sharing their own lives. Considering that in very small countries like the islands of S. Tomé e Príncipe, they are too few to have any profound effect on their countries, or in the words of Preto-Rodas, about S. Tomé e Príncipe:

The present social structure is unmistakably colonial: the 60,000 inhabitants include a small number of Portuguese speaking whites and a mass of blacks and mulattoes who speak either popular Creole dialect called Forro or the native tongues of their African homelands.<sup>27</sup>

There are exiled people since the beginning of the discovery of S. Tomé e Príncipe, whose first inhabitants "were a motley group of exiles, traders, and recent, if unwilling, converts from Judaism"<sup>28</sup>. After this, the slaves were many, and nowadays — besides those mentioned above — there are also black workers from the African Continent.

These facts reflect a contrast from the point of view in some poets as, for instance, Caetano Costa Alegre and Francisco José Tenreiro. The first one invokes the beauty of the black girls of his country, as in "A Negra":

Negra gentil, carvão mimoso e lindo  
 Donde o diamante sai,  
 Filha do sol, estrela requeimada,  
 Pelo calor do Pai,<sup>29</sup>

While Costa Alegre claims his 'negrismo' as in a poem where he discuss the question of color:

A minha côr é negra  
 indica luto e pena;  
 .....  
 A tua raça é branca  
 Tu és cheia de graça  
 .....  
 Todo eu sou um defeito,  
 Sucumbo sem esperanças,  
 .....

27 Preto-Rodas "Cape Verde and S. Tomé e Príncipe — A search for Ethnic Identity". In Donald Burness, *Critical Perspectives in Lusophone African Literature* (Washington D. C.: Three Continent Press, 1981), pp. 119-117.

28 Preto-Rodas, *Cape Verde*, p. 129.

29 Ferreira, *Caliban II*, p. 428.

Tu és a luz divina,  
 Em mil canções divagas,  
 Eu sou a horrenda furna  
 Em que se quebram vagas!...<sup>30</sup>

Francisco Tenreiro exalts the black color in a view of 'negritude', as in the long and very expressive poem "Mãos". Then, these two exiled poets in Portugal sang the isolation and their color in two different and opposite views. While Caetano Costa Alegre presents contrasts<sup>31</sup>, as he calls one of his poems: "Contraste", Francisco José Tenreiro shows that pigmentation is nothing in "Canção do Mestiço". But both poets — Caetano and Francisco — knew how painful is to stay far from home. For instance, it belongs to Caetano these marvelous verses, showing the sufferings of one exiled:

A! que diga o exilado, o forasteiro,  
 Se pode ser o riso companheiro  
 De quem vive tão longe da família!<sup>32</sup>

and Francisco wrote a poem full of synesthesias with a strong chromatism in its verses talking about homesickness:

Caminhos trilhados na Europa  
 de coração em África.  
 Saudades longas de palmeiras vermelhas verdes amarelas  
 tons fortes da paleta cubista  
 que o Sol sensual pintou na paisagem;  
 saudade sentida de coração em África  
 ao atravessar estes campos do trigo sem bocas  
 das ruas sem alegria com casas cariadas  
 pela metralha míope da Europa e da América  
 da Europa trilhada por mim Negro de coração em África.<sup>33</sup>

The action of these people as political activists allowed them to work in different levels, developing and spreading concepts about their fellowmen and making their countries better known to the world through their literary and political writings. Francisco Tenreiro, for example, as a deputy for his country in the Portuguese National Assembly has dedicated his poetry to the African man and his world, while he traveled through Europe and South America.

30 Ferreira, *Caliban II*, pp. 430-31.

31 It is curious that the contrast in Caetano Costa Alegre starts in his own name — "Alegre", meaning "Happy", because in fact, he did not have anything connected with happiness in his life.

32 Ferreira, *Caliban II*, p. 433.

33 Ferreira, *Caliban II*, p. 443-44.

Also from S. Tomé e Príncipe there is the poetess Maria Manuela Margarido, living and working in France and so spreading the customs and culture of her motherland among her acquaintances. Maria Manuela Margarido is a committed poetess who also writes good poetry. She talks about her island in "Memória da Ilha do Príncipe". About anxiety for liberty she expresses her feelings "Sòcòpé". In the poem "Roça", Margarido uses the dawn to express this anxiety:

A noite sangra  
no mato,  
ferida por uma aguda lança  
de cólera.  
A madrugada sangra  
de outro modo:  
e o sino da alvorada  
que desperta o terreiro.  
É o feitor que começa  
a destinar as tarefas  
para mais um dia de trabalho.  
.....  
E sonhas na distância  
uma vida mais livre,  
que o teu gesto  
há-de realizar.<sup>34</sup>

Her poetry is rich in images and in themes: migration also gets a place in Manuela Margarido's poem "Serviçais"; as well as the protest against the invader in "Vós que ocupais a nossa terra". In the latter poem, she condemns the white settlers who grabbed huge chunk of land, leaving the indigenous people landless:

Derrubam as árvores fruta-pão  
para que passemos fome  
e vigiam as estradas  
receando a fuga do cacau.<sup>35</sup>

From Cape Verde the poet Corsino Fortes, as an ambassador in Europe, had the opportunity of spreading the feelings of his people, especially through his book of poems, *Pão & Fonema*. Let us illustrate with verses of the poem "Emigrante":

Todas as tardes o poente dobra  
o teu polegar sobre a ilha  
E do poente ao polegar

34 Margarido, *Poetas de S. Tome*, pp. 81-82.

31 Margarido, *Poetas de S. Tome*, p. 84.

.....  
cresce  
um progresso de pedra morta  
Que a Península  
Ainda bebe  
Pela taça da colônia  
Todo o sangue do teu corpo peregrino  
.....  
Quem não soube  
Quem não sabe  
Emigrante  
Que toda a partida É potência na morte  
E todo o regresso É infância que soletra<sup>36</sup>

The image of 'blood running' that appears in the first lines is a recurrent in "Terra a terra"<sup>37</sup>.

Another Capeverdean linked to the Diplomatic life and who divulgates a lot his country is the essayist, writer and poet Luís Romano who lives part of the time in Cape Verde, and part of the time in Brazil. In Brazil he founded the periodical *Morabeza* in which he publishes the works written by African writers, including himself. There is one peculiarity in his *Morabeza*: besides literary work written in Portuguese, he also publishes in the African language, the Creole. Let us illustrate with one of his poems, "TÊ LÔG":

Tê lôg tê lôg terra d'nhes gente  
ess' mar de Crist' quê nhe camim  
Mundo já cabá ne mei d'ar quente  
paciência d'pôve já tch'gá na fim  
.....  
Tê lôg tê lôg 'cês tud' tê lôg  
Dês companhá tud' fial cristôm  
Q'ônd tchuva dá 'cês mandá tch'mam'  
pá'm' bem sem'nhá um p'lar de tchôm<sup>38</sup>

A curious fact about the African Continent is that it has not only given the world a host of exiles, but that it has also received some. An example of this is the Portuguese Tomás António Gonzaga who went to Brazil in the XVIII century as a judge. Later on he was involved in the "Inconfidência Mineira" and, consequently, he was sentenced to exile in Mozambique where he wrote the second part of his famous book of poems: *Liras*.

36 Corsino Fortes, *Pão & Fonema* (Lisboa: Sa da Costa, 1980), pp. 39-41.

37 The poem is on page 49 in *Pão & Fonema*.

38 Ferreira, *Caliban I*, p. 303.

I would like to finish my presentation by recalling one poet already focused: Francisco José Tenreiro, who in the poem "Negro de todo o mundo" summarizes the experience of Lusophone black diaspora<sup>39</sup>

O som do gong  
ficou gritando no ar  
que o negro tinha perdido  
Harlem! Harlem!

América!  
nas ruas de Harlem  
os negros trocam a vida por navalhas!

América!  
nas ruas de Harlem  
o sangue de negros e de brancos  
está formando xadrez.

Harlem!  
Bairro negro!  
Ring da vida!

Os poetas de Cabo Verde  
estão cantando...  
Cantando os homens  
perdidos na pesca da baleia.  
Cantando os homens  
perdido em aventuras da vida  
espalhados por todo o mundo!

Em Lisboa?  
Na América?  
No Rio?  
Sabe-se lá!

Escuta  
É a morna...  
Voz nostálgica do caboverdeano  
chamando por seus irmãos!  
Nos terrenos do fumo  
os negros estão cantando.  
Nos arranha-céus de New-York  
os brancos macaqueando.  
Nos terrenos de Virgínia  
os negros estão dançando.  
No show-boat do Mississipi

39 Representative points of view about Black Diaspora are presented by Elisa Larkin Nascimento in her book *Pan Africanism and South America* (Buffalo: Afrodiaspora, 1980).

os brancos macaqueando.  
Ah!

Nos estados do sul  
os negros estão cantando

A tua voz escurinha  
está cantando  
nos palcos de Paris.

Folies-Bergères!

Londres-Paris-Madrid  
na mala de viagem...

Só as canções longas  
que está soluçando  
dizem da nossa tristeza e melancolia!

Se fosses branco  
terias a pele queimada  
das caldeiras dos navios  
que te levam a aventura!

Se fosses branco  
terias os pulmões cheios  
de carvão descarregado  
no cais de Liverpool!

Se fosses branco  
quando jogas a vida  
por um copo de whisky  
terias o teu retrato no jornal!

Negro!

Na cidade da Baía  
os negros  
estão sacudindo os músculos.

Ui!

Na cidade da Baía  
os negros  
estão fazendo macumba.

Oraxilá! Oraxilá!

Cidade branca da Baía  
frezentas e tantas igrejas!  
Baía...  
Negra. Bem negra!  
Cidade de Pai de Santo  
Oraxilá! Oraxilá!<sup>40</sup>

40 Margarido, *Poetas de S. Tomé*, pp. 13-54