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Staging of Memory: Monuments, Commemoration, and the Demarcation of Portuguese Space in Colonial Angola

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This article demonstrates how Portuguese leaders created historical representations celebrating Portuguese settlement as the supposed beginning of Angolan history. Accounts of Angolan history presented to the Angolan public in the 1930s–1950s deliberately represented Africans as heathens to be conquered and converted, with their presence often serving as an exuberant, exotic backdrop to Portuguese dignitaries. This cultural form of imperialism made use of both traditional and newer forms of commemoration to reinforce the image of benevolent colonialism. After Angolan nationalists launched a war for independence in 1961, Portugal's colonial narrative shifted to emphasise the creation of a multiracial, modernising Angola.

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