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RESEARCH ARTICLE



Film cultures of conquest and domesticity: The family films of Silvano Santos and Agésilau de Araújo (1927-1929)

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ABSTRACT

The article analyses Silvano Santos's *Filmogramas*, a collection of hitherto neglected domestic films the Portuguese-Brazilian filmmaker (1886-1970) made in the late 1920s while accompanying his employer's family, the Araújos, in Portugal. Combining archival research, interviews, and film analysis, I reconnect the Amazonian and European experiences of (colonial) conquest and domesticity that Santos's life trajectory and film production depict and embody. The aim is to move beyond regional and hagiographic historiographies and build a more critical and anthropologically informed entangled history of a figure and an epochal milieu that continue to permeate and shape contemporary understandings of the past.

KEYWORDS

Amazonia; domestic films; film archives; Portuguese-Brazilian migration (1920s); Silvano Santos

I came across the films of the Araújo family by chance. The series was part of the filmography of Portuguese-Brazilian filmmaker Silvano Santos (1886-1970) which I had been studying in the context of another research project. Best known for his two films on the Amazon region – *No País das Amazonas* (In the Country of the Amazons, 1922) and *No Rasto do Eldorado* (On the Trail of El Dorado, 1925) –, Silvano Santos is a celebrated figure in Brazil.¹ The two pictures offer variations on the expedition film genre and have been analysed and discussed in relation to Brazilian regional identity, nation building, geographical exploration, and modernity (Souza 1978, 1999; Costa and Freire Lobo 1987; Costa 1988, 1996; Martins 2007, 2012, 2013; Morettin 2011; Stoco 2019). More recently, Santos has been revisited as part of the 'prehistory of ethnographic film' (Henley 2020, 65) and a 'pioneer' of this filmic genre.²

While known to Brazilian film scholars and historians, the domestic films Santos made for and with the Araújo family in Manaus and Portugal have been absent from these discussions. Although they have been referred to (Foster 2016, 64) and admired (Souza 1999, 385), their systematic study has, to my knowledge, never been attempted. There are several reasons for this. For many years 'home movies' were not taken seriously (Horak 1998). Confined to a small circle of spectators-participants (made up by family members and a few friends and acquaintances), the genre is believed to lack the artistic input that critics have associated with narrative fiction cinema and a small canon of documentaries. The authorship of the films poses another problem, as scholars have been

accustomed to working within an *auteur* framework. Clearly, Santos's domestic films would not have been made without his employer Agésilau de Araújo (1888-1976), whose family they aim to depict, but it is far from clear how this collaboration took place. Finally, that most of these films are set in Portugal rather than Amazonia (or Brazil), may also explain their relative neglect by Brazilian scholarship. The only text that deals exclusively (if only briefly) with this domestic production appears in a book sponsored by the Portuguese Town Hall of Sertã, where Santos was born. The author of this short piece attributes the general lack of interest in Santos's 'Portuguese' films to his 'more noble' Amazonian documentaries (Antunes 2014, 37), thus giving full expression to the national divide that has characterized the reception of this filmmaker's work.

Difficulty in accessing the films has been another obstacle to their study. Santos's work has had a poor preservation and survival record in Brazilian film archives. In 2019, no prints could be found at the Cinematheque of the Museum of Modern Art (Cinematca do MAM, henceforth MAM Cinematheque), in Rio de Janeiro (the first to receive Santos's films), and my visit to the Brazilian Cinematheque (Cinematca Brasileira), in São Paulo, yielded but fragments of his 'Portuguese films.'³ On my arrival in Portugal, I viewed the films conserved in the National Film Archive (ANIM) of the Portuguese Cinematheque (Cinematca Portuguesa–Museu do Cinema), in Bucelas. I was especially impressed by the *Filmogramas*, a collection of short domestic films made between 1927 and 1929, during the sojourn of the Araújo family in Portugal, which is the focus of this article.⁴ In it, I reassess Santos's film production in light of this set of films, which have been ignored or considered marginal to his more 'serious' documentary work. I do so by challenging perceived boundaries between domestic, industrial, amateur and professional film practices.

Drawing on Brazilian and Portuguese archives, the article also moves beyond national boundaries to stress the circulatory, migrant quality of Santos's filmmaking. The multi-situated character of my research confronted me with the role the Atlantic traffic of people, cameras and films has played in the history of Portuguese and Brazilian cinema – a history of migrants and migration and, by extension, of cinema as a practice carried out in and through mobility that remains to be told. True, Brazilian film historians have long acknowledged the presence of immigrants in local filmmaking and their contribution to Brazilian national cinema (e.g. Galvão 1975; Noronha 2015); however, to the best of my knowledge, no sustained attempts have been made to follow the movement of these filmmakers and their films across borders. In retrieving Santos's domestic work, I wish to stress the continuities and overlaps in his Brazilian and Portuguese production and reconnect the Amazonian and European experiences of (colonial) conquest and domesticity that shaped the lives of Santos and the Araújos and that permeate these films. Indeed, there has been a tendency to keep apart the practices of raw material extraction – be it rubber or moving images – generally identified with so-called 'peripheries' – and the practices of value creation – be it financial or cultural – generally identified with so-called 'centres.' But extraction and consumption, conquest and domesticity, commercial and domestic filmmaking are part and parcel of the same colonial venture. It is time we brought them together in one analytic field (cf. Cooper and Stoler 1997, 15). My analysis thus veers away from hagiographic historiographies that have posited Santos as a hero of Amazonian filmmaking and a pioneer of Brazilian cinema. It also contradicts static single-

nation historical perspectives, thus hoping to contribute to a critical entangled history or *histoire croisée* (Werner and Zimmermann 2006) of Silvino Santos's film production.

The article is divided into four parts. The first one offers an overview of Santos's life, focusing on his filmmaking activity. After establishing the place Santos occupies in Brazilian film criticism and historiography, I then turn to the archives and materials that have survived to carve an alternative approach to this filmmaker and his work. The article's two final sections concentrate on the *Filmogramas*, where domestic and industrial filmmaking practices would often converge. The contents and 'social life' (Appadurai 1986) of *Filmogramas no. 7* are discussed in the last section, as well as the epistemological consequences of keeping apart Santos's Amazonian documentaries from his Portuguese domestic films.

Research for this article consisted in repeated viewings and close reading of the films, as well as interviews conducted during fieldwork. Among these was an interview with Maria Teresa de Souza Araújo (n. 1927), one of the children depicted in the images. We talked in her flat, at a walking distance from the house where she was born and many of the films were made. Other primary sources include Silvino Santos's written memoir (1969) and assorted documents from the archives of MAM Cinematheque and the Royal Portuguese Reading Room (Real Gabinete Português de Leitura), in Rio de Janeiro. The article draws heavily on the research carried out by Brazilian anthropologist Selda Vale da Costa in the 1980s.⁵ It, nevertheless, mobilizes a materialist approach to film and the moving-image archive that moves beyond Costa's regional framework and allows for a more critical view of Santos's work.

My engagement with entangled history or *histoire croisée* also entails the reflexive historicization of the process whereby the films of the Araújo family were constructed as objects of study, from the moment they accidentally captured my attention through to the several research procedures I carried out to learn more about their current state and past trajectories. This 'process-oriented approach' was crucial for developing an ongoing, situated and adjustable rethinking of both the empirical object and the categories in use (Werner and Zimmermann 2006, 44–45). Serendipity thus forms an important part of this research.

A life in transit

The story of Silvino Santos is fairly well known.⁶ Born in Cernache do Bonjardim, a small village in Portugal, he arrived in the city of Belém-do-Pará, Brazil, in 1899, at the age of 14, to join the well-established colony of Portuguese immigrants that had been drawn to the Amazonian rubber boom in the late nineteenth-century, mostly to work as traders (Cancela 2016). According to his memoir, Santos travelled first class with a passage paid by an uncle. Over the next ten years, he relied on a dense network of family and acquaintances to work as a bookshop assistant in Belém, a travelling salesman on the Lower Amazon (exchanging merchandise for rubber), an assistant painter and photographer in Iquitos (Peru), and a clerk in his brother's grocery, in Manaus (Santos 1969, 11–19). Having settled in this city in 1910 (Costa and Freire Lobo 1987, 20), Santos set up a photography studio in 1912. In the same year, he met Peruvian rubber baron Júlio César Araña, the main associate of the Peruvian Amazon Co. (henceforth PAC), a British-registered rubber enterprise based in Peru that operated with British capital since 1907. PAC was facing charges of forced labour and torture of local Indian people and workers

from Barbados. In 1910 a British foreign office commission travelled to the Putumayo to investigate these charges.⁷ The main outcome was a report written by Roger Casement (1864–1916), British Consul-General in Rio de Janeiro, which was presented to the House of Commons, confirming the company's crimes (Casement 1912).⁸

It was against this backdrop that Araña hired Santos to take pictures of PAC's plantations in the Putumayo region. His aim was to refute Casement's accusations. Between August and October 1912 Santos visited and photographed the Putumayo at Araña's service, as part of an official Peruvian delegation (Santos 1969, 24). According to his memoir, the pictures were dispatched to the House of Commons, in England, and to Peruvian President Augusto Bernardino Leguía (Santos 1969, 25).

Believing that moving images would be more convincing as evidence, the Peruvian magnate sent the Portuguese photographer to Paris to train as a filmmaker. In 1913, Santos spent over three months in the French capital, at Pathé Frères and then the Lumière laboratories (Costa 1988, 185). On his journey back to Brazil, he met and married Ana Maria Shermuly, Araña's goddaughter and protégée. The couple then travelled for two months in the Putumayo, where Santos made the first moving images for Araña. Most of this material was lost at sea.⁹ With the outbreak of the Great War, in 1914, PAC was dissolved, the British inquiry came to a halt and Araña was never brought to justice.

In Manaus, with no capital of his own, Santos worked in his studio, accepting commissioned jobs to support himself and his family. In 1916, his first film was exhibited commercially – a short entitled *Índios Witotos do Rio Putumayo* (Witoto Indians of the Putumayo River), probably made with Araña's footage. In 1917 he made the short *Horto Florestal de Manaus* (Forest Plant Nursery of Manaus) for the government of the state of Amazonas. Between 1918 and 1920, he made propaganda films and actualities for the Amazônia Cine-Film, a Manaus-based company he founded with local businessmen and politicians. Santos also directed a feature-length documentary about the Amazon River, *Amazonas, o Maior Rio do Mundo* (*Amazon, the World's Longest River*), after travelling across the region with his camera for three years; but the master copy was stolen, causing the company's bankruptcy (Santos 1969, 40).

Aged 36, with two children, Santos decided to offer his services to trader and industrialist J.G. Araújo (1860–1940), a Portuguese migrant who had built a commercial emporium in Manaus at the turn of the century.¹⁰ Araújo hired Santos, in 1921, to make a film about the state of Amazonas for the International Exhibition of the Centenary of Brazil's Independence (Exposição Internacional do Centenário da Independência do Brasil). Travelling through the properties of J.G. Araújo and his associates on the Rio Branco (present-day Roraima), Santos made *No País das Amazonas* (1922), a paean to this magnate's products and business activities.¹¹ He was put under the direct supervision of Agesilau de Araújo, J.G.'s oldest son, who had studied in Switzerland and was keen on photography and cinema (Santos 1969, 38, 42). The two men would develop a lifelong relationship that would also extend to Araújo's growing family.¹²

The Exhibition opened in Rio de Janeiro on September 7, 1922, and ran until July 24, 1923. *No País das Amazonas* premiered in the Catete Palace in March to an audience of dignitaries and journalists. The film won one of the Exhibition's main prizes and had ample circulation in Brazil and abroad, where it was praised by the critics (Costa 1996, 197–214; Morettin 2011, 162–163).¹³ Santos and Agesilau de Araújo settled in Rio de

Janeiro for one year, filmed the precincts of the exhibition and made *Terra Encantada* (Enchanted Land, 1923), a newsreel-style documentary celebrating the city's main attractions. Encouraged by these achievements, J.G. Araújo incorporated Santos's cinematographic activity into the firm, which, in 1929, advertised the 'manufacture of propaganda films' and the import of 'Pathé cameras, projectors and films', along with a vast array of services, industrial wares and household commodities.¹⁴

When American millionaire and amateur geographer Alexander Hamilton Rice visited Manaus in 1924 to launch his seventh expedition, set to discover the headwaters of the River Branco, the Portuguese magnate indicated Santos to accompany him.¹⁵ *No Rasto do Eldorado* (1925) was the result of this collaboration. The film achieved notoriety inside and outside Brazil, where it circulated in several versions made by Santos and Rice.¹⁶ In Portugal, where he lived between 1926 and 1929, at the service of Agésilau de Araújo and his family, Santos made films about the villages he visited and the events he covered as a freelance filmmaker (notably, the 1927 Miss Portugal beauty contest).¹⁷ These were mostly short films that Santos would sell to producers, exhibitors and distributors to be projected as complements of the main feature film or integrated in newsreels.¹⁸

Back in Manaus, Santos continued to work at J.G. Araújo's cinema section until it closed in 1934 (Santos 1969, 56). With members of the 'Portuguese colony' of Rio de Janeiro, he set about compiling and synchronizing some of the images he had made in Portugal (Santos 1969, 60), probably in a last attempt to make a profit out of this vast material.¹⁹ With the death of the patriarch, in 1940, and the company's declining interest in film, Santos lost relevance.²⁰ His last feature-length film, *Santa Maria da Vila Amazônia* (1957), filmed in Kodachrome, was never exhibited (Costa 1996, 180).²¹ When he was 'discovered' in the late 1960s, shortly before his death, the Portuguese migrant was living alone on the edge of poverty.

The archives

Notwithstanding the longevity of his career and the variety of his filmic work, Silvino Santos is best known for the two films he made in the 1920s on the Amazon, which earned him the epithets of 'pioneer', 'filmmaker of the jungle' and 'filmmaker of the rubber cycle'.²² A regionalist and hagiographic strand of studies on Santos and his oeuvre began to take shape in the 1970s, after several Amazonian journalists, film society cinephiles and filmmakers paid homage to him at the First North Festival of Brazilian Cinema (I Festival Norte do Cinema Brasileiro), held in Manaus, in 1969.²³ These first critics found in Santos evidence against long-held views of the Amazon as a peripheral, backward, primitive, and dangerous – in one word, 'unmodern' – territory. Contrary to expectations, the Portuguese-Brazilian filmmaker had been able to penetrate the remotest recesses of the 'jungle' and put on display, as cinematographic 'revelation', its natural beauty, ethnographic diversity, and abundant economic resources. He was, in short, the living proof that cinema – that highest expression of modernity – had arrived in the region *at an early stage*. As Sávio Stoco has noted, Amazonian cinephiles and film critics discovered in Silvino Santos 'the Amazonian succedaneum for the myth of Brazilian cinema history' (Stoco 2019, 30). Indeed, for the Amazonian intellectual and artistic elites of the 1960s (and thereafter), the 'Luso-Amazonian' filmmaker stood for a long-awaited genealogy in which they themselves could find a place (Costa and Freire Lobo 1987, 117).²⁴

It should be pointed out that Santos's films *were not exhibited* on this occasion, remaining inaccessible to critics and spectators for many decades. In other words, it was Santos's life and what it represented *and not his films* that first caught the critics' attention. His life was, furthermore, subjected to a process of highlighting, shading, and erasing that has resulted in the crystalized narrative of pioneer and adventurous achievements that we know today.²⁵

That the films could not be watched brings me to the core of my research: the archive. In the 1980s, Selda Vale da Costa made several inventories of Santos's work, listing the materials that had been collected in different archives.²⁶ In Brazil, the main destination had been MAM Cinematheque, in Rio de Janeiro, where Santos's first films had arrived in the 1970s through the efforts of chief curator Cosme Alves Netto (1937-1996), born and raised in Manaus.²⁷ Travelling in Europe, in 1985, Costa came by other films in the Portuguese Cinematheque, in Lisbon.²⁸ Thanks to her research and diligence, the Portuguese institution would collect films located in Cernache do Bonjardim, at Santos's sister's, and in Lisbon, at the Araújo's (Costa 2014, 8). The Brazilian anthropologist also identified a print of *No Rasto do Eldorado* in the National Film Archive, in London, probably originating from the Royal Geographical Society.²⁹ Finally, through Costa's efforts, other reels belonging to Agesilau de Souza Araújo (son of Agesilau de Araújo) were transported from Manaus to MAM in February 1986.³⁰ Alves Netto was responsible for the transfer.³¹

In November 1986, Selda Vale da Costa listed almost 100 titles (including shorts and feature-length films), noting that 40 of them had located prints that were undergoing 'current restoration for future exhibition' (Costa and Freire Lobo 1987, 13).³² She also announced that the restoration of Santos's films would be funded by Embrafilme, a state company attached to the Ministry of Education and Culture, in a project that would involve the active collaboration of MAM Cinematheque, the Brazilian Cinematheque and the Portuguese Cinematheque.³³ The objective was to 'recuperate' Santos's films and have them ready for exhibition during the filmmaker's centenary celebrations.³⁴ In line with the project's 'protocol of intentions', all the materials acquired by MAM would be sent to São Paulo. The films that had reached the *carioca* institution in the 1970s had already found a place in the shelves of the Brazilian Cinematheque.³⁵

In fact, the 'recuperation' of Santos's films had been attempted before: announced in the press as early as 1981 within a different institutional frame, it had, nevertheless, produced no results (Stoco 2017, 170, n19). The identification, in 1985, of prints in Portugal and the United Kingdom had given that desideratum a new impulse, by binding it to an older programme of 'repatriation' (in those days' terminology) known as 'Prodigal Son' (Filho Pródigo), which aimed to have the Brazilian filmography that was dispersed in foreign cinematheques returned to Brazil.³⁶ Launched by Cosme Alves Netto in partnership with the Brazilian Cinematheque, the programme involved exchange of correspondence with and visits to European film institutions (in France, England, and Germany), but apparently yielded scant results (Souza 2009, 166).³⁷

Likewise, the Embrafilme project, which proposed to restore the totality of Santos's films, was interrupted, as the company's reorganization, carried out in 1987, was soon followed by its extinction.³⁸ FCB, which inherited DONAC's functions (and to where Ana Pessoa moved) had no budget in its first year and faced several difficulties thereafter.³⁹ The key signatories of the agreement disappeared: though he would remain attached to MAM Cinematheque until his death (Quental 2010; Núñez 2018), Alves Netto ceased

his directorial functions in 1988 and Luís de Pina died in 1991. The Brazilian Cinematheque restored *No Paíz das Amazonas* in 1986, making the film apt to circulate in screenings, festivals and special projections; and Selda Vale da Costa finished and published her research (1988, 1987).⁴⁰ Nonetheless, most of the project's preservation, restoration and dissemination plans failed to realize.⁴¹ More recently, *No Paíz das Amazonas* went through a second restoration and was issued as a DVD (Versátil Home Video, 2015), thus inaugurating a new phase in the protracted social life of Santos's films, as I discuss below.

With the exception of the materials of MAM Cinematheque – which were transferred to the Brazilian Cinematheque in the 1970s and 1980s and never returned – Santos's films have been kept in the same archives.⁴² When compared to the 1980s, their condition has probably deteriorated, as more epoch materials have been lost and access to the surviving prints (or to quality reproductions of its images) remains limited.⁴³ In the meantime, a vast and open pool of digitized images of Santos's work has emerged on the internet, often in a truncated form, with low resolution, and without editorial comments or any historical context. We can say that, to a certain extent, the digital afterlife of Santos's films replicates the fragmentariness that Selda Vale da Costa encountered and arduously tried to cope with in the successive lists, inventories, and synopses she made for MAM and the Brazilian Cinematheque. Guilherme Santos, the son of Silvino Santos, also mentioned this problem. In a statement included in the film *O Cineasta da Selva*, he is peremptory that what has survived of his father's work is fragments and offers a reluctant explanation:

Mr Agesilau – I shouldn't say it, but I will – he sold I don't know to whom, to make a ... to recycle, right, to make something else, some counterpart ... all those films, an enormous amount. What remains are fragments of the films, fragments, *it is not the film*. The film, maybe, doesn't exist anymore ... because it was all ... (gesture suggesting 'gone', emphasis as in original intonation).⁴⁴

Although they were not given away for commercial repurposing, the films Santos made on the Araújo family are equally fragmented. Yet, within this corpus, we also find a series called *Filmogramas* that was carefully edited to include opening titles, a storyline, and several intertitles. Unlike most of Santos's films, this series is in relatively good viewing conditions. Unlike his best-known work, it has little to do with the Amazon and Brazil. Or so it seems.

The *Filmogramas*

Santos's professional filmmaking, oriented towards the production of actualities, newsreels, and feature-length documentaries, was concentrated between 1913 and 1934. Nevertheless, from as early as 1921 to as late as 1960 he also made short family films. In 1986, Selda Vale da Costa counted '26 "domestic" films on the Araújo family, in Manaus and in Portugal', half of them set in Portugal (Costa and Freire Lobo 1987, 57). In June 2019, I viewed, in its premises, the extant domestic material currently held by the Brazilian Cinematheque.⁴⁵ The viewings revealed a miscellany of unedited, often repeated, images filmed in Manaus and Portugal during the forty years' period Santos worked for the Araújo family. On my return to Portugal, I then watched the collection of Santos's domestic films held by the Portuguese Cinematheque. My attention was

caught by ten films organized as a series originally titled *Filmogramas* (a term coined either by Santos or Araújo).⁴⁶ It is to these films that I now turn.

The *Filmogramas* series offers a light-hearted, often humorous, chronicle of the life the Araújos led between April 1927 and February 1928. This timeframe is given in the opening titles and intertitles, which identify the place, day, month, and year of the events we see on film, but the editing probably occurred later, as some of the films include images shot after that period. Agesilau de Araújo had moved with his family to Portugal in 1926, in search of treatment for his son Joaquim Frederico, who had been diagnosed with diabetes (Santos 1969, 54). Santos travelled with them, leaving his own family in Brazil.⁴⁷ They would return to Manaus three years later.⁴⁸

Although they do not follow a strict chronological order, the *Filmogramas* are arranged in the guise of a family journal, following many of the conventions of the newsreel. Lasting between 14 and 21 min each, the films have two main domestic settings: the house of J.G. Araújo, in Campo Pequeno, a recently-developed bourgeois neighbourhood in Lisbon, and a country house in Estela, the patriarch's hometown in the North of Portugal, where the children's grandmother lived.⁴⁹ As with most home movies, the images show family rituals like birthday parties, baptism and first communion celebrations, besides more prosaic events, such as bathing the baby, going to church or taking the child to the barber's for a haircut. It also includes walks in the city, a visit to the zoo (in Lisbon), and longer excursions to the countryside by car – a monumental Willys Knight that carries the whole family and is often treated as a visual attraction in its own right.⁵⁰ Most of the films have a loose, open-ended narrative structure; some (such as *Filmogramas no. 2*) even tell a story, demonstrating that Santos knew the film grammar and its techniques.

The main focus of these films, however, is the five children of Agesilau and Neuza: Philippe, Agesilau ('Lau'), Joaquim Frederico ('Quincas'), Renato ('Natinho'), and Maria Thereza (sic), whose names appear in the titles. They are often seen with their cousins Jayme and Julieta Laura ('Tiéta'), children of Aloysio, who were living with their grandmother following their parents' break-up.⁵¹ The family women – mother Neuza, aunt Aleth, nanny Maria and grandmother Adelaide – are also around.⁵² The children's fathers and grandfather, on the other hand, are rarely seen – not necessarily because they are behind the camera (as is the case with many home movies), but, most likely, because they are away. As far as I could gather, J.G. Araújo remained in Brazil during the family stay in Portugal. In 1925, aged 65, he had reorganized the firm as a joint stock company (Mello 2010). As the company's main shareholder, Agesilau had taken on added responsibilities that might have kept him away from home.⁵³

The *Filmogramas* show visits to the Lisbon port to bid farewell or welcome family and acquaintances in transit to or from Brazil (*Filmogramas no. 10* and *12*). On one occasion, one of the boys excitedly runs towards the camera, following an intertitle that explains: 'How fast can one run to meet one's daddy' (*Filmogramas no. 5*).⁵⁴ Agesilau may be behind the camera. However, in most films of the series, the cameraman must have been Santos, whom the intertitles address elsewhere as 'film technician' (*Filmogramas no. 1* and *no. 2*).⁵⁵ At one point, an intertitle gives him away: 'Granny! Look, Mr Silvino is filming' (*Filmogramas no. 5*).⁵⁶ In this and other *Filmogramas*, the Araújos pose, static, for the filming camera, as if they were taking a family portrait.

The cinematographer, of course, carried on with many of the practices developed by photography, Santos's first activity. That was the case of the practice pejoratively known, in Brazilian film criticism, as *cavação* or 'digging' – the making of documentaries for the wealthy elites (Galvão 1975), which could include capturing family and domestic scenes (Blank 2018). As a 'digger', Santos would have been expected to do the shooting. However, with the introduction of lighter cameras and the expansion, in the 1920s, of an amateur market, it is not unlikely that the father of the children would have also handled the camera (and one cannot completely rule out the participation of other members of the family, such as Neuza).

According to Maria Teresa, her father's filmmaking started with the birth of his first child, Philippe, in February 1920, before Silvino Santos was hired: 'it all started with the children, the first thing was starting to film the children'.⁵⁷ The collection of Santos's domestic images held by the Brazilian and Portuguese Cinematheques includes several close-ups of flowers, which Agésilau was especially keen on photographing.⁵⁸ Moreover, we sometimes see the Portuguese filmmaker, if only briefly, in front of the rolling camera. In one such instance, he is in the playground with the Araújo children, who are playing with another camera at being film directors and actors (*Filmogramas no. 1*). The intertitles make humorous references to Santos's patient efforts at initiating his rowdy pupils in filmmaking.⁵⁹

These and other edited images would probably be projected to family and friends on festive days. Maria Teresa recalled screening sessions at her grandparent's backyard, in Estela (probably in later years). The sessions would be announced during Sunday Mass and were held in the evening; they would have included films of Charlie Chaplin and Felix the Cat, which her father used to rent in Porto.⁶⁰ Araújo may also have sent the films to the members of the family who had stayed in Brazil (including J.G. Araújo) to keep them abreast of the children's growing up and thus strengthen family bonds. The care and detail that went into the writing of the intertitles put these films on a par with family letters. The familiar tone of the intertitles – which do not abstain from teasing family members – makes it unlikely that Santos, described as a humble, even servile, employee, wrote them. It is also unlikely that the Portuguese filmmaker would have dared to put himself in the films through either images or intertitles (as it regularly happens). The responsibility for directing and editing these films must have ultimately lied with Araújo.

The authorship of Silvino Santos's *oeuvre* has been a contentious issue: while Selda Vale da Costa and other scholars have tended to diminish the role of Agésilau de Araújo in order to vindicate Santos's artistic achievements (Costa and Freire Lobo 1987, 43; Costa 1988, 188–189), members of the Araújo family have dismissed Santos as a mere employee.⁶¹ In her interview, Maria Teresa insisted that her father was the one who 'organised' and made sense of the films, disqualifying Santos as an alcoholic who had no professional skills ('he had no degree, nothing'). These memories, which ignore Santos's early training in Paris and achievements, are anchored in a later period, when the Portuguese filmmaker must have been experiencing difficulties following his demotion in the Araújo firm. Once considered a family asset (within the limits accorded to a generally poorly regarded profession), he had become a liability.

It should be noted that Silvino Santos was well versed in domestic filmmaking when he made the *Filmogramas*. Most of the earlier domestic images that have survived are set in

Manaus.⁶² They show J.G. Araújo and his wife Adelaide meeting up with or hosting friends (who are often local dignitaries). The camera pays special attention to the smaller nucleus formed by the patriarch's two sons, their wives and children. In keeping with most domestic films, the focus falls on the family's reproductive members, relegating the *Comendador's* two unmarried daughters to the part of caring aunts. We see this in the images of Philippe and Jayme (respectively, Agesilau's and Aloysio's first-borns) made shortly after Jayme's birth, in September 1920, probably by Agesilau, as my interviewee claimed.

According to his memoir, Santos's first films on the Araújo family were shot soon after he was hired, in January 1921, using film stock leftovers of the Amazônia Cine-Film Company. It is worth quoting:

On January 1, 1921, I started working at J.G. Araújo's; salary, 400.000 réis per month. There were some negative film leftovers; the dark room was placed in the basement of mister Comendador Araújo. 60-metre-deep vertical tanks and rotating dryers with a motor were made to order. Manoel Alves, carpenter of J.G. Araújo, made them. All set up. A family film was made with the rest of the film stock I had. (Santos 1969, 42)⁶³

Santos employed a Bell & Howell camera, also acquired for this company, which he would use throughout his life.⁶⁴ This probably took place before he set off on his trip to Rio Branco to shoot *No Paíz das Amazonas*. The family would have accompanied him on shorter filmmaking excursions to the picturesque surroundings of Manaus. In any case, it is worth noting the filmmaker's closeness to the Araújo's domestic sphere. Santos recalls, in his memoir, that Araújo would spread the negatives over the large billiards table that stood on the ground floor of the family house. His wife Neuza would come down and help 'organise' the footage while Santos 'made the positive copies' in the basement (Santos 1969, 46). We can speculate that domestic and non-domestic footage would frequently meet on this improvised 'editing table.'

This may have happened at least once. At the beginning of *No Paíz das Amazonas*, there is a 4-minute sequence (Versátil Home Video DVD, 2015, 13:45-17:45) with a group of people – a few adults, several children, a woman that looks like the nanny, and two dogs. They are in an outing to the Grand Waterfalls Igarapé (Igarapé Cachoeira Grande) that includes a visit to the initial stretch of the projected road that would link Manaus to Rio Branco, where J.G. Araújo had properties and businesses (the places are identified in the intertitles). Although we cannot be sure that these images are contemporaneous with the shooting of *No Paíz das Amazonas* (Stoco 2017, 179–180), they eventually ended up in the documentary, along with the footage meant to promote the region's products and the family's industries. This was, of course, common practice in *cavação* filmmaking, wherein a very fine line separated private from public uses of family images (Morettin 2005, 143–144).

Filmogramas no. 7

The incorporation of Amazonian footage into domestic films also occurred. This is the case of *Filmogramas no. 7*, shot during the family's stay in Portugal. As I wish to demonstrate, this short film has had a singular trajectory – one that makes it stand out from the rest of the series. The opening title situates it in Apúlia, a beach near Estela. The date is '8-October-1927'. The Araújo boys (and a dog) are playing on a sea pond with a toy sailing

boat. They are wearing matching one-piece bathing suits, which sets them apart from the village children who gather around them in their everyday clothes. After a two-and-a-half-minute sequence showing the children's antics, an intertitle announces: 'A group delights over the narration of the celebrated feats of Mr. Silvino Santos in the Amazon jungle'.⁶⁵ This is followed by a shot of a few adults (by and large women with babies) seated on the sand. After three successive intertitles that allude (without images) to Santos's dream about working in the 'studios of Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer, in Culver City-California', a longer title introduces a narrative flashback of three and a half minutes that has Santos reminiscing over his expeditions on the Amazon. The images that follow – a duck hunt on the Madeira River and a group of Parintintin Indians – were lifted from *No País das Amazonas*, made five years earlier.

Filmogramas no. 7 emerged in the correspondence I found at MAM on Embrafilme's 'restoration' and 'repatriation' project of Silvino Santos's films. At one point, the director of the Portuguese Cinematheque, Luís de Pina, expressed the wish to have a copy of the film, the only one of the *Filmogramas* that existed (complete) in Brazil and that was lacking in the Portuguese film archive.⁶⁶ In a letter to J.G. Araújo's grandson, which hoped to convince him to deposit at MAM the reels that remained in Manaus, Cosme Alves Netto stressed the special interest the Portuguese Cinematheque had in Santos's *Portuguese* film production:

Given the advances in the research on Amazonian cinema pioneer Silvino Santos, whose cinematographic activity *comendador* Agésilau de Araújo greatly encouraged, we would like to express our interest in and concern with the material filmed by Silvino Santos that remains in Manaus. (...) In the last years we have tried to develop the restoration project of Silvino Santos's notable production – a project that has come to be with the invaluable collaboration of EMBRAFILME/Ministry of Culture and the Portuguese Cinematheque, in Lisbon. *Silvino Santos's Portuguese origin and the fact that he also filmed in Portugal has caught the attention of our Portuguese counterpart, which has spared no efforts to realise the restoration of the films of Silvino Santos's Portuguese period (...)*.⁶⁷

As discussed above, much of the Embrafilme project would never see the light of day, and no copy of *Filmogramas no. 7* is yet to be found in the Portuguese archive. In 2015, this short film was included, as an extra, in the DVD edition of *No País das Amazonas*, thus becoming the only issue of the *Filmogramas* that can be watched outside a film archive.⁶⁸

To my surprise, the DVD reproduces only the first part of *Filmogramas no. 7*, leaving out the visits the Araújo's made, two days later, to the Beiriz Rug Factory (Fábrica de Tapetes de Beiriz) and, one year later, to Lugar de Calves, the mansion of the factory's foundress, Mrs. Hilda Miranda Brandão, a Brazilian entrepreneur whose handcrafted rugs, established in 1919, were being promoted as a symbol of Portuguese tradition and good taste. The two visits are part of the longer version of the film (considered complete) that I viewed at the Brazilian Cinematheque.⁶⁹ In this copy, the *Filmogramas no. 7* does not close with the images of the Parintintin Indians. The five-minute footage that follows offers a rare glimpse into the milieu of successful Portuguese-Brazilian migrants (also known as *torna-viagens* – a term, no doubt, applicable to the Araújo's), who frequented each other's houses and had common (transnational) business interests. After visiting the rug factory and its manufacturing process, we see the family in the property of the Brandão family, with its French-style gardens, chapel, a pine forest, and a duck pond. The camera also records a meeting with a 'Mr. Zecharias Ventura', described as 'our

companion'.⁷⁰ It closes with images of a little monkey, which the intertitle sympathetically describes as 'an exile that has resisted the European climate'.⁷¹

In the absence of an explanation for the DVD's editorial choice, one guesses that the Amazonian subject (and not the film's integrity, safeguard, or access) was the criterion for including the film's first part (the children playing on the beach followed by the excerpt of *No País das Amazonas*) and excluding its second part (the visits to Beiriz and Calves). The DVD thus reproduces the divide between 'Amazonian' and 'Portuguese' subjects that has dominated Santos's scholarly reception. By so doing, it omits two sequences that importantly cut across that divide. First, the rug factory's process images, which would have tied in with the images filmed in Rio Madeira that document the transformation of wild ducks into (tasty) market goods. When watched together, these images highlight the industrial and profit-making drive that underpins the Portuguese-Brazilian migrant experience *both* in Portugal *and* Amazonia. It also omits the images of the domesticated South American monkey, symbolic of the hardships that shape the migratory venture (such as displacement, uprootedness and inhospitable weather). Pared of these images, the *Filmogramas no. 7* reduces Amazonia to a land of exciting exploration and open-frontier conquest, a depiction that is narratively rooted in the intradiegetic figure of daydreamer-cum-filmmaker Silvino Santos.

I would like to introduce, at this point, the disturbing and rarely addressed question of Silvino Santos's position vis-à-vis the violence that was perpetrated in the territories he filmed, especially against indigenous peoples. In Santos's films, there are no references, direct or indirect, to the protracted terror and its vestiges that anthropologist Michael Taussig encountered during his visits to the Putumayo, in the 1970s and 80s, which fed into his ethnographic writings.⁷² The film Santos made for Júlio César Araña in 1913 is lost. From that first film excursion to indigenous lands only a few metres of footage survived, which Santos, Araña's associates and others reused in subsequent films (Chaumeil 2009, 40). Santos's pictures of indigenous people, on the other hand, continue to circulate in photographic exhibitions and books to our days.⁷³ In a passage concerned with his 1912 visit to the Putumayo, in which he incorporated the committee led by Carlos Rey de Castro, Peruvian consul in Manaus and strong advocate of Araña's innocence (Chaumeil 2009, 51), Santos dismisses the accusations made against the Peruvian magnate:

The caravan that set out to investigate the atrocities committed by the white men against the Indians arrived at the conclusion that they were political intrigues of a certain Alcorta, hired by the government of Colombia. I went to Indian territory several times *and saw none of it*; the Indians brought rubber to exchange for tools, beads and a number of things that travelled in the Liberal to La Chorrera and El-Encanto. The Indians did the loading and unloading of the ship, *very pleased with themselves*, calling it their ship; when they had had enough, they stopped working. The civilised Indians, whom they called muchachos, prepared in the maloca [long communitarian house], next to the central shed, in cauldrons, food for all, but without salt. What the Indians really liked was tinned sardines; they made those cauldrons with rice and plenty of tinned sardines; *it was party time for them*. The Indian women and the curumins [young servant boys] also accompanied their husbands. When the ship sailed back, they went to their malocas only to return a month later with products; the Indians who lived on the river margins, and even those more at the centre, were taken by the ship, which would leave them in the harbours. *For them, it was party time*. The tuxauas [leaders] of each tribe placed their orders separately, of nets and many other things, which came with the next ship; large quantities of nets came and were distributed by the Indians according to the

products they brought. There were several tribes of Indians, the largest was the Huitoto, who were quieter; then, the Ocaina, the Andoke, tall and strong Indians, warriors; the Oregone and the Bora, also brave, in a total of 50,000 (fifty thousand) Indians. (Santos 1969, 24–25, my emphasis)⁷⁴

The account Santos gives, a few pages later, of his 1913 excursion to the Putumayo, now carrying a film camera and accompanied by his newly wedded Peruvian spouse, mentions ‘very nice days on board of the Liberal and a two-month honeymoon, with sugar, in the middle of the Indians’, concluding, ‘it was wonderful’ (Santos 1969, 31).⁷⁵ A high moment in the film’s shooting was a three-day dance that, according to Santos, gathered circa 2000 Huitoto Indians in Entre Ríos under the supervision of a ‘Mr Negrete’, whom Santos calls ‘chief’ – probably the station manager who worked (directly or indirectly) for Araña (Santos 1969, 32). It may well be the case that the scandal that had involved the region and attracted the attention of the international press had led to improvements in how the Indians were treated. Being at PAC’s service, of course, did little to guarantee Santos’s impartiality. His memoir testifies to PAC’s strong investment in the visit, which mobilized large numbers of PAC’s personnel, ranging from the highest ranks (like Araña) to local employees and collaborators intent on making the filmmaker’s journey a ‘pleasant’ experience (Santos 1969, 32–36). So, it is hardly surprising that Santos should declare, as he does, that he never saw any of the atrocities the company was being accused of; only people working and partying, as they do everywhere.

The analysis Michael Taussig made of the events occurring at the time allows for a different perspective. In his study on shamanism, colonialism, terror, and cure (Taussig 1984; 1987), the Australian anthropologist compiled an extensive list of tortures, abuse, indignities, and gratuitous aggressions (including murder) which indigenous men, women and children, as well as other workers and even PAC higher-ranked collaborators, were submitted to on a regular basis. The facts reached Taussig second hand – as, before him, they had reached Roger Casement and others – in the shape of other people’s accounts and rumours (Taussig 1987, 32). Given its extreme and excessive quality (in kind and number), these narratives would easily take on fantastic contours, causing the incredulity of many listeners. They were too terrible to be true, and therefore, *incredible* – as if the terrible needed to be contained within a certain measure to be credible. Taussig speaks of the ‘unreal atmosphere’ created by ‘the ordinariness of the extraordinary’ (Taussig 1987, 39), which challenged common sense and logic. What logic, after all, could there be in an extractive crusade that, depending on a labour force it considered as ‘scarce’ (local Indian populations), was carrying out its extermination (Taussig 1987, 31–32)? On the other hand, how could a film camera – Silvino Santos’s – committed to a positivist representational paradigm that conceived of documentaries (then called ‘natural films’) as evidence of reality, apprehend and record a ‘culture of terror’ that could not be *seen*, since it manifested itself mainly indirectly, by way of fantastic, sensationalist and melodramatic *tales* (Taussig 1984)?

I believe it is possible to identify, on at least two moments, traces of the terror that the filmmaker, according to his own testimony, never saw. We find the first moment in his autobiographical account of the 1912 visit to the Putumayo, the passage lengthily quoted above (Santos 1969, 24–25). If we put aside the positive qualifiers that permeate this narrative (which I have italicized), we obtain a remarkably detailed description of the system of debt peonage, widely recognized (then as now) as a type of forced labour or

even slavery (Serje 2021, 487–489). In only a few lines, Santos spells out how indigenous people supplied rubber in exchange of ‘tools, beads and a number of things that travelled in the Liberal to La Chorrera and El-Encanto’; he adds that it was they who ‘did the loading and unloading of the ship’ without being bound by a contract (‘when they had had enough, they stopped working’). Santos also offers an account of the local indigenous work force that collaborated with PAC (‘the civilised Indians, whom they called *muchachos*’), whose functions, described by Taussig and others, went well beyond cooking (Taussig 1984, 477; Serje 2021, 486). He mentions ‘the Indian women and the *curumins*’ who ‘accompanied their husbands’, without clarifying who these husbands were and why these women, who are put on a par with the servants, were ‘accompanying’ them. Finally, Santos describes the monthly regularity of these exchanges between the indigenous population and the ships, as well as the role the local hierarchies played in the process (‘the *tuxauas* of each tribe placed their orders separately, of nets and many other things, which came with the next ship; large quantities of nets came and were distributed by the Indians according to the products they brought’). All of this is stated in a factual, neutral tone that takes for granted the ordinariness of what is being described.

Indeed, Santos gives us a surprisingly precise account of the social actors, relations and practices that Colombian anthropologist Margarita Serje detailed in her study of PAC’s organizational structure and debt peonage system (Serje 2021, 482–489). The Portuguese filmmaker’s dismissive attitude also confirms her conclusion that ‘[f]orced credit and physical violence’ had ‘the appearance of a legally and institutionally sanctioned practice’ that endowed life under these brutal conditions with ‘a sense of normality’ that was crucial for the system’s daily acceptance, operation, and perpetuation (Serje 2021, 494). Following his elated account of the dances he witnessed (and joined in) in the 1910s and 1920s, which involved thousands of indigenous peoples, Santos observes, again, in a matter-of-fact way, ‘I believe today not as many Indians gather anymore’ (Santos 1969, 32).⁷⁶

Traces of the terror that permeated these frontier lands – no longer in the Putomayo, but in J.G. Araújo’s properties that Santos filmed for *No Paíz das Amazonas* almost ten years later – can also be found in *Filmogramas no. 7*. In the long sequence of the Madeira River, we are struck by the impressively high number of hunters and hunted animals. As film scholar Katherine Groo has demonstrated, images of men hunting and exhibiting their dead or injured catch before the camera are abundant in early moving-image archives (Groo 2019, 186; 192). They make up a subgenre of the expedition film – the hunting or *safari film* – that had great expression in the first decades of the twentieth century. True to the mission of advertising the natural resources and commercial value of J.G. Araújo’s estates, Santos does not confine his attention to the hunt; as I mentioned above, he also includes the process whereby the animals are cut and preserved in a *marinade*. It is the filmic juxtaposition of the duck hunt and the Parintintin Indians that ultimately hints – no doubt, in an unpremeditated and unexpected way – at the ‘culture of terror’, in Taussig’s sense, that dominated the region. As Sávio Stoco convincingly argues, one of the aims of the Parintintin sequence was to show that this ethnic group, famous for waging war on rubber traders and other explorers, had been ‘pacified’ (Stoco 2019, 257–259). Watching the feather-adorned heads of the Paratintin – whom the camera presents, following a long tradition in ethnographic filmmaking, as natural beings that merge with the forest fauna –, it is difficult not to think of them as potential hunting targets. They are the targets, in any event, of the ‘image hunter’ Silvino Santos who exhibits them to an

audience of friends and countrymen as evidence (and trophy) of his ‘feats in the Amazon jungle’. One of the titles that introduces the images – ‘there was no shortage of wildlife nor hunters there’⁷⁷ – describes a place where hunting (that is, killing) was almost a necessity and inevitability, such was the abundance of both ‘wildlife’ and ‘hunters’ in this part of the world. Oddly, this resonates with an entry in Roger Casement’s travel journal: ‘there were no labourers – there was no industry in Putumayo. It was simply a wild forest inhabited by wild Indians, who were hunted like wild animals and made to bring rubber by hook or by crook, and murdered and flogged if they didn’t’ (cit. Serje 2021, 491).

Conclusion

The encounter of the Amazonian cultural elites with Silvino Santos, in the 1960s, has been greatly responsible for the regionalist, biographic and even hagiographic vein that has since dominated most public accounts of this filmmaker. As I argue in this article, several factors have contributed to a skewed appreciation of Santos’s work, not least the scholars’ difficulty in viewing the films (which have remained physically inaccessible), but also their focus on Santos’s Amazonian production at the expense of his domestic (and Portuguese) work. The present article argues for the need to overcome this divide and study Santos’s neglected films in connection with his best-known works, thus bringing the images he made in the Brazilian Amazon and those he made in Portugal *within the same analytic framework*. A key component of critical post-colonial studies, this awareness of the spatial contiguities that bind colonial and metropolitan territories across borders is also a crucial feature of entangled history as I understand it and have tried to practise it here.

The recent edition of the DVD *No País das Amazonas* may help us to understand the epistemological and political implications of bringing Santos’s dispersed and hitherto unrelated materials ‘within the same analytic framework’. Despite being a landmark in the troubled preservation history of Silvino Santos’s filmography, the DVD supported by the Manaus town hall (Prefeitura de Manaus) and the Municipal Council of Culture (Conselho Municipal de Cultura) remains under the influence of the regionalist, biographic and hagiographic approaches that I have discussed in this article. This much suggests the opening title that has been added to the *Filmogramas no. 7*, included in the DVD as an extra, which describes what we are about to see as a ‘*delightful family film of the Araújo family*’ (00:05, my italics).⁷⁸ The description is in line with a widespread reception mode that tends to appreciate old family films for their apparent (and risible) idiosyncrasies, anachronisms, and general ineptness. Biographer Márcio Souza has similarly termed Santos’s domestic film production as ‘a delicious material’ (1999, 82).⁷⁹ On closer inspection, however, we realize that the adjective ‘delightful’ included in the DVD’s paratext echoes the verb employed in the intertitle that, in the original film, introduces the Amazonian theme: ‘A group *delights* over the narration of the celebrated feats of Mr. Silvino Santos in the Amazon jungle’ (3:42, my italics). An awkward sense of continuity is therefore established between Santos’s 1920s audience and us, the 2020s DVD audience, who are also expected to ‘delight’ in watching the filmmaker’s ‘feats’ ‘in the Amazon jungle’, now through a ‘delightful’ family film.⁸⁰

This kind of anachronistic continuity keeps us within the same interpretive framework that has celebrated Santos’s Amazonian films and dismissed or treated as mere curiosity

his domestic films. By bringing the two kinds of production on the same plane of analysis – in an entangled history of Brazilian and Portuguese filmmaking – it becomes possible to sidestep the narrative of pioneer and adventurous accomplishments that has so heavily been brought to bear on Santos's work and address more uncomfortable issues like the history of conquest and the culture of terror that also informed that life and work. The aim is not to depreciate Silvino Santos's place in the history of Brazilian, Portuguese, and world cinema, nor claim he was wilfully complicit in colonial terror. The idea of putting side-by-side family films and such a dark chapter of Amazonian history may seem perverse but, as I have tried to demonstrate, the connections are inscribed in the films themselves – in how they were produced and what they show (or cannot show). The materialist approach I have sought to mobilize treats these films as archival fragments that have had long and imbricated social trajectories. By (re)connecting the Amazonian and European experiences of (colonial) conquest and domesticity in Silvino Santos's life and work we gain better knowledge not only of that life and work, but also of the historical processes that were in place in the Portuguese-Brazilian world that Santos and the Araújo family shared and helped to build through and beyond these films.

Notes

1. I use the orthography of the original title, 'rasto' rather than 'rastro'. Unless otherwise stated, all translations from Portuguese and Spanish are mine.
2. See the 'Silvino Santos' entry on The Silent Time Machine, a website designed and implemented by British anthropologist Paul Henley: <https://www.silenttimemachine.net/film-makers/santos-silvino/> (accessed 2 August 2023).
3. According to Hernani Heffner, archivist and chief conservator at MAM Cinematheque, only a fragment of *Terra Encantada*, Santos's film on Rio de Janeiro, has been preserved. Interview with Hernani Heffner, Rio de Janeiro, July 10, 2019. At the Brazilian Cinematheque, my enquiries were circumscribed to Santos's 'Portuguese films'.
4. The Portuguese Cinematheque also holds copies of *Flagrantes da Indústria e do Comércio no Amazonas* (Snapshots of Industry and Trade in the Amazon), *Silvinadas*, and *Filme da Família Araújo no. 1 and 2* (Film of the Araújo Family 1 and 2, attributed title), which are set in the state of Amazonas.
5. Selda Vale da Costa's research on Silvino Santos started around 1981 (Costa 1996, 3) and culminated in a master's dissertation in anthropology (1988) that was informally supervised by Brazilian film historian Maria Rita Galvão (Costa and Freire Lobo 1987, 13–14). According to Costa, her project was initially supported by the CPCB – Centre of Researchers of Brazilian Cinema (Centro de Pesquisadores do Cinema Brasileiro) and *Cinetema*, a short-lived programme funded by Embrafilme to stimulate national research on Brazilian film history. Interview with Selda Vale da Costa, Lisbon, October 10, 2019.
6. The biographical account that follows draws mainly on Silvino Santos's unpublished memoir and on previous research. The reference is given whenever I found contradictory versions. I am grateful to Selda Vale da Costa for access to the full transcript of Santos's manuscript, which is kept in the archives of the Amazonian Museum (Arquivos do Museu Amazônico), in Manaus, which I did not visit.
7. Even though there had been earlier instances of public condemnation in the Spanish press (Chirif 2009, 19–20), the inquest was triggered by a series of English articles titled 'The Devil's Paradise: A British-owned Congo', attributed to American explorer Walter Hardenburg and published in the British newspaper *The Truth* on 22 September 1909. The British press was especially interested in the involvement of Barbadian workers, considered British subjects.

8. Casement had become famous for his human rights defence of rubber workers in King Leopold II's Congo. His participation in the 1916 Easter rising against the British would bring his life to a tragic end. For details on Casement's report, see Taussig (1984, 473–478).
9. According to Santos (1969, 37), a German submarine attacked the ship that was carrying the negatives to Lima.
10. Joaquim Gonçalves Araújo, known as 'J.G.', arrived in Brazil through family connections when he was 11 years old. Taking advantage of the decay of the rubber cycle, he acquired properties and expanded his businesses, becoming one of the wealthiest men in Manaus. In 1893, he married D. Maria Adelaide da Silva, daughter of a local lawyer and politician, who introduced him to the elites of Manaus. In 1899, he was awarded the title of *Comendador* (Mello 2010). The couple had four children: Agésilau Joaquim Gonçalves de Araújo; Aloysio (also graphed Aluísio or Aluysio) de Araújo; Adelaide Maria de Araújo ('aunt Morena'); and Aleth de Araújo. Agésilau's and Aloysio's children are the protagonists of the films I discuss below.
11. *No País das Amazonas* was officially admitted to the exhibition in February 1922, but most of the shooting was completed by October 1921. For a detailed analysis of the contrived admittance process, see Morettin (2011, 152–173).
12. Santos dedicated his memoir, which recalls the Araújo boys with affection, to 'my good friend Joaquim Frederico Souza de Araújo', Agésilau de Araújo's diabetic son (Santos 1969, 70–71). Selda Vale da Costa, who read correspondence exchanged between Santos and the Araújos, has confirmed the filmmaker's strong links with the family (1988, 188).
13. The film would travel to several international fairs, in Brazil and abroad, well into the late 1930s (Stoco 2017, 166).
14. This included products like rubber, balata, and derivatives; Brazil nut; guarana; building materials; fishing equipment; weapons; electrical materials; fabrics; drugs; perfumes; petroleum and derivatives; toys; gramophone records; motor cars and spare parts; typing machines; biscuits, chocolate, sweets, among many others. The advert appears in the *Album da Colônia Portuguesa no Brasil* (Album of the Portuguese Colony in Brazil, 1929), p. 665, available at the Real Gabinete Português de Leitura, in Rio de Janeiro.
15. The Rice expedition left Manaus on August 20, 1924, and ended prematurely, in July 1925, without achieving its goal. Among the scientific instruments it employed was a hydroplane (which enabled Amazonia's first aerial views), shortwave radio, and photographic and filming cameras. For a more complete and detailed account of this expedition and the films that came out of it, see Martins (2012, 2007).
16. *No Rasto do Eldorado* was exhibited for the first time in the American Geographical Society, in New York. Having premièred in Manaus in October 1925, it then circulated in other Brazilian cinemas from June 1926 onwards (Costa 1988, 192–193). Rice used Santos's footage to illustrate his public lectures and produce a documentary around 1930 (Martins 2012, 235–236).
17. Besides *Miss Portugal*, which was originally 60 min long, Selda Vale da Costa identified 35 shorts filmed and exhibited in Portugal in this period (Costa 1988, 196; 199). See also the sheet entitled 'Filmografia de Silvino Santos em Portugal (1927-1929)', 1 page, Arquivo da Cinemateca do MAM, file 9091.
18. Santos was probably taking advantage of the Portuguese 'Law of the hundred metres' from May 6, 1927 (decree 13564), which made the exhibition of a nationally produced 'complement' with that minimum length compulsory in commercial cinema venues (cf. Sampaio 2022, 4).
19. Portuguese immigrants Alfredo dos Anjos, Amélia Borges Rodrigues and Celeste Bastos, founders of Cosmo film productions, were involved in this project. The only film thus made appears to have been *Terra Portuguesa – Minho* (1934), which has been lost. Santos lived in Rio de Janeiro, attending J.G. Araújo, between 1935 and 1937 (Santos 1969, 58–59).
20. Santos made his last trip to Portugal in 1942. On his return, he found out that the Brasil Hevea plant, where he had been working since 1934, had been sold and he was moved to 'a deposit of old things' (Santos 1969, 68).
21. For the filmography of Silvino Santos, including his domestic films, see Costa and Freire Lobo (1987, 147–203), Costa (1988, 231–283) and Costa (1996, 224–239).

22. The expressions can be found, respectively, in the films *Silvino Santos: O Fim de um Pioneiro* (Silvino Santos: The End of a Pioneer, 1970, 14'), directed by Domingos Demasi and Roberto Kahané (with text by film critic Alex Viany), and *O Cineasta da Selva* (The Filmmaker of the Jungle, 1997), directed by Aurelio Michiles, and in Márcio Souza's biography, *O Cineasta do Ciclo da Borracha* (The Filmmaker of the Rubber Cycle, 1999). As Sávio Stoco has demonstrated, the 1970 film contains the main ideas that have moulded Santos's reception (Stoco 2019, 27–33). Except for Viany, all the authors involved in these works were from Manaus.
23. I thank Eduardo Morettin for calling my attention to the regionalist contours of this first criticism. The Brazilian film historian has stressed the part Santos's Amazonian films played in the construction of an idea of 'brazilian-ness' both in Brazil and abroad (Morettin 2011, 152; 166). On Santos's critical reception and its connections with regional and national myths, see also Stoco (2019, 20–33).
24. Selda Vale da Costa coined the term *luso-amazonense* (Luso-Amazonian) to refer to Silvino Santos and herself (Penido 2000, 1092). According to her, 'Amazonia was never Brazil' (Penido 2000, 1102–3). For a brief but elucidating comment on the region's integration (or lack of it) in Brazilian national (and imperial) projects, see Souza (2000).
25. The notion that Silvino Santos was a film 'pioneer' is, at best, inaccurate. Cinema arrived in Manaus in April 1897 and other filmmakers had been treading the region, such as Major Luiz Thomaz Reis, known for his films among indigenous peoples, and Ramon de Baños, who made newsreels in Belém (Penido 2000, 1092). When Santos learned his trade in Paris, the 'novelty period' had worn out.
26. These lists can be found in the archives of MAM Cinematheque, file 9091.
27. According to Costa and Freire Lobo (1987, 13), Santos handed over the first films to Alves Netto. The charismatic director of MAM Cinematheque had met Silvino Santos through his father, Cosme Ferreira Filho, who had written the intertitles of one of Santos's films, in the 1930s (Costa 1996, 238). Ferreira Filho also played a key role in the late 1960s 'discovery' of the Portuguese filmmaker (Costa and Freire Lobo 1987, 113).
28. In January 1985, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian granted a 5-month scholarship to Selda Vale da Costa to research Silvino Santos in Portugal under the supervision of Luís de Pina and the Portuguese Cinematheque. See MAM Cinematheque administrative archive, 'Portugal' file. The visit took place between April and November 1985. Interview with Selda Vale da Costa, Lisbon, October 10, 2019.
29. A 35mm print of *No Rasto do Eldorado* would be deposited in the Smithsonian Institution in 1994. It has become part of its Human Studies Film Archives with the generic title 'Hamilton Rice Expedition films'.
30. In a letter to MAM Cinematheque and the Brazilian Cinematheque, dated March 11, 1986, Ana Pessoa mentions this acquisition; another document entitled 'Filmes trazidos de Manaus para o MAM em Fev/86' ('Films brought from Manaus to MAM in Feb/86') confirms the films' arrival. See MAM Cinematheque archive, file 9091.
31. In an undated Telex to Luís de Pina (probably from early 1986), we learn that Alves Netto travelled to Manaus to '[negotiate] the films' rights with the family of the *Comendador* Agésilau Araújo'. In the original: 'Estarei em Manaus, entre 19 e 23, negociando os direitos dos films do SS com a família do Comendador Agésilau Araújo.' See MAM Cinematheque administrative archive, 'Portugal' file. According to Selda Vale da Costa, the agreement enabled the materials' temporary loan for restoration purposes. Interview with Selda Vale da Costa, Lisbon, October 10, 2019.
32. The original reads: 'restauração atual para futura exibição.'
33. The Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian and the University of Amazonas are also cited (Costa and Freire Lobo 1987, 13) but fail to appear in the documents I examined. Ana Pessoa, who worked for the non-commercial division of Embrafilme (DONAC), mediated the agreement.
34. The plan was to exhibit the restored films in the Brasília Festival, in September 1986, which would mark Silvino Santos's hundredth anniversary. The agreement also anticipated an itinerant film screening accompanied by a catalogue and the publication of Vale da Costa's

- master's dissertation. See letter from Ana Pessoa to Cosme Alves Netto, 'Cinematca do MAM, Rio Janeiro, 2 December 1985', MAM Cinematheque archive, file 9091. A full retrospective exhibition and screening in Manaus, to be held in November 1986, was also envisaged (Costa and Freire Lobo 1987, 128), but seems to have ultimately given way to a 'Photographic and Iconographic Exhibition' (Costa and Freire Lobo 1987, 8).
35. In MAM's file cabinet (*fichário*), there is at least one record of 35mm materials arriving in March 1975 and evidence of others arriving earlier. I also found letters exchanged with São Paulo in 1978 and 1979 that document the regular dispatch of films (including Santos's) to the Brazilian Cinematheque. See MAM's administrative archive, 'Brazilian Cinematheque' file. MAM's decision to entrust the Brazilian Cinematheque with its nitrate copies goes back to the 1960s (Souza 2009, 107). This practice intensified after a fire swept through the *carrioca* museum (though not its film archive) in 1978. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s the Brazilian Cinematheque received film materials from private and public entities from all over the country (Souza 2009, 116, 134-136).
 36. The programme's aim was to acquire the originals, not duplicates. Interview with Hernani Heffner, Rio de Janeiro, July 10, 2019.
 37. Among other instances, I came across a letter from Alves Netto to French Gaumont from March 10, 1980, expressing interest in acquiring this firm's films shot in Brazil in the 1910s and 1920s. There is also a report on a journey to Berlin signed by Carlos Roberto de Souza (from the Brazilian Cinematheque), with an annexe intitled 'Filmes com assuntos brasileiros no Bundesarchiv' ('Films with Brazilian subjects in the Bundesarchiv'). See MAM Cinematheque's administrative archive, file 'Projecto Filho Pródigo'. The current timeline of MAM Cinematheque dates the Prodigal Son project to 1980. See: <https://mam.rio/cinematca/cinematca-cronologia/> (accessed 12 December 2022).
 38. Founded in 1969 as a state-owned film producer and distributor, Embrafilme or Brazilian Company of Films (Empresa Brasileira de Filmes S.A.) had a short and convoluted life. In 1987, the federal government dismembered it to create, in its place, the Fundação do Cinema Brasileiro-FCB (Brazilian Cinema Foundation), which took over the activities of the DONAC/Embrafilme. The company was dissolved in March 1990, in keeping with Fernando Collor de Mello's national privatisation programme (Programa Nacional de Desestatização or PND). See: <http://ctav.gov.br/institucional/historico/> (accessed 12 December 2022).
 39. Interview with Ana Pessoa, Rio de Janeiro, July 5, 2019.
 40. The restored copy of *No Paíz das Amazonas* was screened in Paris in 1987, during the Brazilian Film Screening (Mostra de Cinema Brasileiro) held at the Georges Pompidou Centre.
 41. I could not confirm whether the homage to Silvino Santos planned for the Brasília Festival took place. According to Ana Pessoa, the moment *No Paíz das Amazonas* ('everyone's darling') was preserved, the other films fell behind, as their relevance to Brazilian film history was more difficult to justify. Despite Selda Vale da Costa's research, Santos was not an established figure in Brazil and there were other priorities. Interview with Ana Pessoa, Rio de Janeiro, July 5, 2019.
 42. The return of Santos's films to MAM emerges as an issue in correspondence exchanged between the two Brazilian cinematheques throughout the 1990s (and before). A poignant instance is a fax dated January 19, 1996, wherein Cosme Alves Netto asks Bernardo Vorobov [sic] to confirm the material existence, in the Brazilian Cinematheque, of a list of films (most of them from the 1920s). In the postscript, the former curator adds: 'I also need to know what you have there by Silvino Santos' (in the original: 'Também preciso saber o que existe aí de Silvino Santos'). A few days later, Alves Netto would pass away. See MAM's administrative archive, 'Brazilian Cinematheque' file.
 43. The first lot of Santos's films, sent to São Paulo in the 1970s, was destroyed in the 1982 fire and other materials, such as the films I discuss in the next section, have disappeared. There is an undated 19-page list entitled 'Situação do acervo do MAMRJ na Cinematca Brasileira' (Situation of the MAMRJ collection in the Brazilian Cinematheque) that confirms the loss of Santos's films in 1982. See MAM's administrative archive, 'Brazilian Cinematheque' file.

44. *O Cineasta da Selva*, Versátil Home Vídeo DVD, 2009, 01:08:05-01:08:35. In the original : 'O Senhor Agesilau – eu não devia dizer, mas vou dizer – ele vendeu não sei pra quem, pra fazer uma ... pra reciclagem, né, de fazer outra coisa, um correlato qualquer ... esses filmes todos, uma quantidade enorme. O que existe ainda são fragmentos dos filmes, são fragmentos, não é o filme. O filme talvez não existe não, não existe mais ... porque foi todo ... '.
45. This consisted of eight VHS cassettes: VV00102M; VV00660M; VV00661M; VV00662M; VV00663M; VV00664M; VV00665M and VV00666M. According to the Brazilian Cinematheque, the images originated in eight 16mm film canisters sent by MAM and labelled 'non-identified material'. They were viewed by Selda Vale da Costa in November 1985. In February 1987, Costa revised and separated parts of this material, which were then telecined by TV Bandeirantes, resulting in the eleven U-Matic tapes which generated today's VHS access copies. The Brazilian Cinematheque has confirmed that most of these images have lost their filmic support. It has also conceded that some of the original film materials may have been excluded from the telecine process (email to the author, 16/07/ 2019). The low-quality videos are all that remains.
46. The Portuguese Cinematheque holds materials (identified as such) of *Filmogramas no. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10* and *12*, and a film called *Lisboa* (attributed title), which I believe is part of *Filmogramas no. 11*. I watched the series at ANIM as individual digital copies: 7003423; 7003063; 7003422; 7003241; 7003424; 7003425; 7003243; 7003245; 7003246; and 7003421. The films were deposited in the mid-1980s. According to Maria Teresa, they had been brought from Estela to Lisbon and were (reluctantly) given away after the intercession of a cousin who had worked for the Portuguese state television (RTP). Interview with Maria Teresa de Souza Araújo, Lisbon, August 19, 2021.
47. According to Santos, they were in Portugal when the military coup of May 1926 toppled the Republican government leading the way to Carmona and Salazar's dictatorship (Santos 1969, 56). According to Maria Teresa, her mother was pregnant with her when they crossed the Atlantic, which situates their voyage in October 1926, at the earliest. Interview with Maria Teresa de Souza Araújo, Lisbon, August 19, 2021. Santos may have travelled earlier or may be referring to the political instability that ensued.
48. Agesilau, Neuza, their five children, a maid and Silvino Santos are in the List of Passengers of the R.M.S. Hildebrand, from Booth Line, which departed from Lisbon on September 21, 1929. I thank Selda Vale da Costa for access to this document.
49. Estela is also where the family grave is located. Interview with Maria Teresa de Souza Araújo, Lisbon, August 19, 2021.
50. In 1926, the J.G. Araújo firm was 'agent and unique seller' of this car make in the state of Amazonas (Costa 1996, 148, fig. 37). The 1929 advert of the *Album of the Portuguese Colony in Brazil*, mentioned above, also features the Willys Knight among the company's products.
51. Interview with Maria Teresa de Souza Araújo, Lisbon, August 19, 2021.
52. Aunt 'Morena' had just joined a convent, in France, to become a nun, hence her absence. Interview with Maria Teresa de Souza Araújo, Lisbon, August 19, 2021.
53. Maria Teresa referred to her father as 'grandfather's right arm'. Interview with Maria Teresa de Souza Araújo, Lisbon, August 19, 2021.
54. In the original: 'Como se corre para ir ao encontro do Papá.'
55. In the original: 'tecnico cinematografico.'
56. In the original: 'Vovó! olhe que o Snr. Silvino já está filmando!'
57. Interview with Maria Teresa de Souza Araújo, Lisbon, August 19, 2021.
58. Interview with Maria Teresa de Souza Araújo, Lisbon, August 19, 2021.
59. There are brief appearances of Santos in *Filmogramas no. 1, 2, 3, 5*, and *8*. He also appears in loose frames in the videos I watched at the Brazilian Cinematheque.
60. Interview with Maria Teresa de Souza Araújo, Lisbon, August 19, 2021.
61. Selda Vale da Costa concedes that Santos and Araújo may have shared the films' direction, editing and titling, but is positive that 'the camera operator was always Silvino Santos' (1988, 232). Film historian Jurandyr Noronha describes Agesilau de Araújo as 'director and editor of the Manaus Cycle', specifying that he 'was producer and editor [*montador*] of

- documentaries he also co-directed with Silvino Santos' (Noronha 2008, 74). None of these authors explicitly mentions the domestic films.
62. These unedited images can be viewed at the Brazilian Cinematheque.
 63. The original reads: 'Em 1º de janeiro de 1921 comecei o trabalhar na Casa J. G. Araújo; ordenado, 400.000 réis mensais. Havia um resto de filmes negativos; o quarto escuro foi instalado nos baixos da casa do sr. Comendador Araújo. Mandou-se fazer tanques verticais para 60 metros, secadoras com um motor para girar. Foi o Manoel Alves quem os fez: era o marceneiro da casa J. G. Araújo. Tudo instalado. Fez-se um filme da família com o resto do filme que eu tinha.'
 64. Santos described it as 'the best in its days, the same camera Metro Goldwin Mayer filmed with' (Santos 1969, 38), or, in the original: 'a melhor da época, igual a que a Metro Goldwin Mayer filmava'. Shot in 35mm, the films would then be reduced to 16mm. Santos also mentions a fixed-focus Pathé.
 65. In the original: 'Um grupo que se delicia com a narração das celebres [sic] façanhas do Snr. Silvino Santos nas selvas do Amazonas'.
 66. Pina also showed an interest in the 'fragments attributed to *Terra Portuguesa*' and the second part of *Viagem a Portugal* (Journey to Portugal). See letter from Ana Pessoa, December 2, 1985. MAM Cinematheque archive, file 9091.
 67. Cosme Alves Netto, letter to Agesilau de Souza Araújo, November 6, 1985, quoted in Stoco (2017, 171, n28), my emphasis. The original reads: 'Com o avanço da pesquisa em torno do pioneiro do cinema amazonense, Silvino Santos, cuja atividade cinematográfica foi grandemente incentivada pelo comendador Agesilau de Araújo, gostaríamos de expressar nosso interesse e preocupação pelo material filmado por Silvino Santos ainda existente em Manaus. (...) Nos últimos anos temos procurado desenvolver o projeto de restauração da notável produção de Silvino Santos, projeto esse que se vem transformando em realidade com a inestimável colaboração da EMBRAFILME/Ministério da Cultura e da Cinemateca Portuguesa, em Lisboa. A origem portuguesa de Silvino Santos e o fato de ter ele também filmado em Portugal interessou à nossa congênera lusa, que não tem medido esforços para concretizar a restauração dos filmes do período português de Silvino Santos (...).'
 68. A one-minute excerpt of *Filmogramas no. 7* had been used in the prologue of Aurélio Michiles's *O Cineasta da Selva* (Versátil Home Vídeo DVD, 2009, 00:02:40-00:03:32), consisting of a few shots of the children playing on the Portuguese beach followed by Silvino Santos's 'dream' about working for 'California's big studios.' Unlike the 2015 DVD version (which matches, at least in this part, the version I watched at the Brazilian Cinematheque), Michiles added images to illustrate the original intertitles – an aerial shot of a studio complex and very brief frames of two 'renowned artists' (Douglas Fairbanks in *Robin Hood* and Lon Chaney in *The Road to Mandalay*) and three 'radiant stars' (Jaqueline Logan and two other actresses I could not identify).
 69. See VHS cassette VV00660M (01:08:13–01:18:35). It is this ten-minute version (which includes frames of an American film) that Costa describes in her dissertation (1988, 267).
 70. Like many emigrants, Zecharias Ventura turned to his countryman J.G. Araújo for assistance when he decided to emigrate to Brazil. His name emerged in Maria Teresa's interview as an example of lifelong loyalty to his grandfather.
 71. The original reads: 'uma desterrada que tem resistido ao clima da Europa'.
 72. The places Santos mentions in his memoir (La Chorrera, El-Encanto, Entre Ríos, etc.), where PAC operated, are today part of Colombia. They feature in the Putumayo map that Taussig includes in his book (1987: xi). In Santos's time, this was territory disputed by Colombia and Peru.
 73. A recent example was the exhibition of Santos's photographic work held in the city of Guimarães, in Portugal, in 2012, as part of the Guimarães European Capital of Culture. Drawn from the Silvino Santos Collection of the Amazon Image and Sound Museum (Coleção Silvino Santos do Museu de Imagem e do Som do Amazonas), the pictures were reproduced in a catalogue (Brito 2012) and a coffee table book (Macedo 2014), both published with municipal support. Several of the photographs that Santos took in the Putumayo also

illustrate the far more critical book edited by Peruvian anthropologist Alberto Chirif and literary scholar Manuel Cornejo Chaparro (2009).

74. The original reads: 'A caravana que foi investigar as atrocidades que os brancos faziam aos índios chegaram à conclusão que eram intrigas políticas de um tal Alcorta, contratado pelo governo da Colômbia. Fui diversas vezes aos índios e não vi nada disso, os índios traziam borracha em troca de ferramentas, missangas e um número de coisas, que vinham pelo navio Liberal, que vinha até a La Chorrera e El-Encanto. Os índios é quem carregavam e descarregavam o navio, todos satisfeitos, chamavam o navio deles, quando não queriam, deixavam de trabalhar. Os índios já civilizados, que chamavam de muchachos, preparavam na maloca, perto do barracão central, em caldeirões, comida para todos, mas sem sal. O que os índios apreciavam era sardinha em lata; faziam aqueles caldeirões de arroz com muitas latas de sardinha; aquilo era uma festa para eles. Também as índias e curumins [nota: rapazes jovens serviçais] acompanhavam os maridos. Quando o navio voltava iam todos para as suas malocas para voltar um mês depois com produtos; os índios que moravam na margem do rio e mesmo os mais centrais, o navio os levava e ia deixando nos portos. Para eles, era uma festa. Os tuxauas de cada tribo faziam o seu pedido separado, redes e muitas outras coisas, que vinham na viagem seguinte; vinham enormes quantidades de redes que eram distribuídas pelos índios conforme o produto que traziam. Havia diversas tribus [sic] de índios, a maior era dos Huitotos, mais calmos; depois, os Ocainas, Andokes, índios altos e fortes, guerreiros; os Oregones e os Bóras, também valentes, num total de 50.000 (cincoenta) mil índios.'
75. The original reads: 'Passamos dias muitos agradáveis a bordo do Liberal e dois meses de luademel, com açúcar, no meio dos índios. Foi uma Maravilha.'
76. In the original: 'Creio que hoje já não se reúnem tantos índios assim.'
77. In the original: 'Alli nunca faltou caça nem caçadores'.
78. In the original: 'saboroso filme de família dos Araújo.'
79. In the original: 'um material delicioso.'
80. The intertitles that frame the Rio Madeira sequence include other words from this semantic field, such as delicious, tasted, appetite, gluttonous (*apetitosos, saboreou, appetite, gulosos*). Together, they also bring to mind the topic of cannibalism and its links (figurative and real) with colonialism, a theme lengthily explored in anthropology (e.g., Taussig 1987, 104–121; Pina-Cabral 2001), which I have not been able to develop here.

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