

THE PARTICIPATION OF CAPE VERDEAN WOMEN IN THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT OF CAPE VERDE AND GUINEA-BISSAU, 1956- 1974:

THE PIONEERS

Ângela Sofia Benoliel Coutinho¹

INTRODUCTION

1. CITIZENSHIP AND EVERYDAY LIFE OF WOMEN

2. WOMEN IN THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE

3. INVISIBLE WOMEN

CONCLUSION

SOURCES/INTERVIEWS

BIBLIOGRAPHY

¹ Ângela Sofia Benoliel Coutinho (benosofia@hotmail.com) is a researcher at the IPRI/Lisbon University of Lisbon and at the CEIS20 – Coimbra University.

INTRODUCTION

An elected Constitutional National Assembly declared independence of the archipelago of Cape Verde from Portugal on 5 July 1975.² From 1460, Cape Verde had first been a Portuguese colony and later an overseas province, so liberation from colonial rule was the top priority for political party PAIGC (Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde). The party was officially founded in Bissau in 1956 by Cape Verdeans and Guineans under the leadership of Amílcar Cabral who was shot by Inocêncio Kani, a PAIGC naval commander, and other militants according to Cabral's wife, in front of the party's offices in Conakry on 20 January 1973. In an article published in 1975, investigative journalist Bruno Crimi, stated that the assassination was an attempt by the Portuguese secret police, the PIDE-DGS, to neutralize the PAIGC leadership, prevent the declaration of independence by Guinea Bissau and to counter mounting pressure for decolonisation elsewhere in Africa (Chabal 2003)³. PAIGC became the governing party of both countries after independence until it split in 1980 following a coup d'état in Guinea-Bissau. Both the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau and PAICV in Cape Verde underwent changes in the 1990s and embraced multiparty democracy. Despite the ideological framework, as well as aspects pertaining to the party's organizational structure, the PAIGC was never declared a Marxist-Leninist party as was the case with MPLA and FRELIMO. After independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, it was proclaimed a "liberation movement in power" and, according to Patrick Chabal, more inclined towards a form of "indigenous socialism" (Chabal 2003)⁴.

² At the time 200 000 people lived on the archipelago of Cape Verde.

³ In several testimonies published in 1998, Cape Verdean leaders and militants who were in Conakry that day stated that besides the assassination of their leader, there was an ethnic coup considering that all the Cape Verdean and Guinean mestizo were arrested and later freed by the Guinea-Conakry authorities (Pereira, 2003). In posthumous publications, Luís Cabral offered a different interpretation of the events stating that the majority of those physically involved in Cabral's murder were individuals that had been accused, judged and condemned by the party's judicial structures either for treason or corruption, and that they felt that the majority of the population no longer respected or accepted them. Furthermore, as far as those morally responsible for the crime, he reveals that details of the interrogations carried out, either by the Guinea-Conakry authorities or the newly founded International Enquiry Committee, were never made available to the PAIGC or to the new country's authorities, after independence (Coutinho, 2014). After more than 40 years, its moral authors are still unknown. In recent years some new evidence came to light in Portugal. The most important being revealed in a book published in 2012 that confirms the existence of another political police, acting alongside the PIDE since 1966, as a supposed press agency called Aginter Press. One of its main objective was to put Amílcar Cabral apart from the PAIGC leadership (Jesus, 2012). The only documented evidence available is from the PIDE/DGS, produced about one year before he was murdered in which it explicitly describes a plan to shoot Amílcar Cabral.

⁴ In the particular case of Cape Verde, the ideological struggles between its militants culminated in crisis in 1979 leading to the so-called "Trotskyist" or "Maoist" members leaving the party and causing the resignation of some government members. As far as political decisions were concerned, during the one-party regime and the Cold War, the country proclaimed itself neutral and no air base was allowed in its territory. A trait of the PAIGC/PAICV government practice during that period was the use of pragmatism in defense of Cape Verde's interests. A highly contested decision was the permission granted to South Africa to use Sal International Airport as a stopover for its planes during the apartheid era. This was justified as it was an important source

Popular support for independence is a controversial issue, as Cape Verdeans were accustomed to living under a dictatorship since 1933 where freedom of speech was prohibited. Besides censorship, political parties, public gatherings and meetings were all forbidden and, without legal recourse, activists faced arrest, torture and death at the hands of state police, namely, the political police PIDE (International Police of Defense of the State). Unions were controlled by the regime, strikes were forbidden and anyone who signed a petition would become a PIDE target.

Further investigation into the clandestine operations of the PAIGC since the 1950's is still needed. It is known, however, that Cape Verdean militants were arrested and sent to concentration camps, some of the most well-known of these being Fernando Fortes, Lineu Miranda, Jaime Schofield, Fernando dos Reis Tavares, Luís Fonseca and Pedro Martins. Portuguese police records show that very often the Cape Verdeans in general were considered to be "against the Portuguese presence in the archipelago". The same holds for the high colonial administration servants' reports as well as the Foreign Office reports⁵.

Rejecting Portuguese dictatorship, an open public show of support for independence followed a military coup on 25 April 1974. Until 5 July 1975 (over a year), the population of the archipelago experienced public protests, meetings, strikes and even riots. On 30 June 1975, the day of the election of a Constitutional National Assembly, of the 88,3% Cape Verdean voters, 92% opted to support the PAIGC⁶.

The struggle by PAIGC's militants to obtain political independence for Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde was a long and complex one. In 1960, after the founding of the party's headquarters in Conakry, intense diplomatic activity took place under the party's direction with initial support for the movement coming from African countries, namely, the Republic of Guinea and Senegal. Subsequently, there was support from China, many other former socialist bloc countries, and finally from the Scandinavian states, most notably, Sweden.

The armed rebellion began in 1963 in the south of Guinea-Bissau. In 1968/69 the PAIGC claimed to dominate about two thirds of the territory. Meanwhile, invasion of the archipelago of Cape Verde by Cape Verdean forces was planned with the support of Cuba, but this plan was cancelled after the murder of Che Guevara in Bolivia. The invasion was shelved by the Cuban authorities because of the persistent droughts and associated famine in the archipelago that intensified in the 1960's⁷, according to Luís Cabral. At the time, Cabral was a member of the Permanent Secretariat of the PAIGC. In his last published interviews, Aristides Pereira, the first President of Cape Verde and secretary-

of revenue for the archipelago. At the same time, Cuban planes filled with troops en route to Angola were also allowed to use the same airport.

⁵ Keese, Alexander, *Living with Ambiguity – Integrating an African Elite in French and Portuguese Africa, 1930 – 61*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2007, p. 170

⁶ Benoliel Coutinho, Ângela Sofia, "Cabo Verde", in Rezola, Maria Inácia, Santos, Paula Borges, Reis, António, *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, Porto, Figueirinhas, 2016

⁷ Benoliel Coutinho, Ângela Sofia (org.), *Luís Cabral Memórias e Discursos*, Praia, Fundação Amílcar Cabral, 2014, p. 108

general assistant of the party, said that the plan would have failed given the prevailing political situation, certainly referring to the presence and activities of the PIDE, its covert dismantling of some of the cells and the detention of militants in concentration camps⁸.

New social structures were created in territories dominated by the PAIGC, called the “liberated areas”. From 1964, after the first party congress in Cassacá, the PAIGC proceeded to a real socio-political revolution by politically and administratively reorganising these territories, as well as establishing a juridical, infrastructural, educational and economic system that made the party appear prestigious at international level. Within these political structures, two in every five members of the village committees had to be women.

The most enduring operations were those carried out in secret. The official party founders were themselves involved in covert activities between 1956 and 1960. Several militants and nationalists also faced the harsh political police of the far-right Estado Novo regime in Portugal, the PIDE/DGS. An unknown number of people, militants included, were arrested, tortured and killed, while many more participated in covert operations at different levels of engagement, not only in Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau, but in Portugal and Angola. Beyond the frontiers of the former Portuguese colonial empire, there were clandestine operations in several countries in which Cape Verdean communities settled, namely, Senegal, Ivory Coast, France, Netherlands and the United States of America.

1. CITIZENSHIP AND EVERYDAY LIFE OF WOMEN

Since the end of the nineteenth century, differences between the rights of those considered Portuguese, but born in the colonies or overseas provinces and Portuguese citizens born in Europe, have systematically been denounced by the elites of the colonies. In Cape Verde, these discriminatory rules and policies apply particularly to sugar producers, civil servants and military personnel all belonging to a colonial elite of mestizo families with Portuguese and black African origins, and, in some cases, from other western European or Jewish Moroccan families. The last racist discriminatory law regarding Portuguese born in the colonies was approved by the Estado Novo regime in 1949 after the end of World War II⁹. In 1945, a constitutional revision in Portugal formally decreed that those born in the archipelago were to be granted Portuguese nationality¹⁰.

It is pertinent to note that the majority of these so-called Portuguese citizens were not granted the right to vote. Universal suffrage only happened post 1974 when the dictatorial regime was deposed. In fact, in 1945 it was determined that the only Portuguese citizens

⁸ Pereira, Aristides, *O meu testemunho – uma luta, um partido, dois países – versão documentada*, Lisboa, Notícias, 2003, p. 166

⁹ Nobre de Oliveira, *A Imprensa em Cabo Verde de 1870 a 1975*, Macau, Fundação de Macau, 1998, p. 502

¹⁰ Benoliel Coutinho, 2016, *idem, ibidem*

with the right to vote were men who had come of age, had been emancipated, who were able to read and write or who paid a certain amount of taxes¹¹.

Despite the fact that since 1874 Cape Verde had an important source of revenue in the form of Telegraph taxes, it was impossible to obtain the necessary funds to keep the Porto Grande of the St. Vincent Island competitive. By the end of the nineteenth century, it had become the 4th largest port in the world and the most important for the British Empire in the mid-Atlantic. The Cape Verdeans believed it could be an important generator of revenue and jobs. Instead, investments were made by France and Spain in infrastructure in neighbouring ports of Dakar and Las Palmas, and by the 1920's, the Porto Grande had lost its competitiveness¹². In fact, as a colony, Cape Verde's Telegraph taxes were always entirely retained by the metropole and furthermore the colony could not directly benefit from investments by central government. But whenever a drought started, the government of the colony loaned funds from the metropole and had to pay interest in order to acquire basic commodities. At the same time, the colonial authorities promoted emigration to the São Tomé and Príncipe archipelago where workers were needed for the lucrative cocoa and coffee plantations. Administrative obstacles were created hampering emigration to the United States of America, the preferred destination¹³.

The last great famine occurred in the 1940's and António Carreira estimates that between 1941 and 1943 about 40% of the population died¹⁴. With a very high unemployment rate and the great difficulty emigrating to the United States, many Cape Verdeans decided to accept the contract to live and work in St. Tomé and Príncipe to escape famine. Many authors consider that the work and living conditions they experienced were similar to slavery. Carreira points out that until 1946, Cape Verdean workers earned less than Mozambican and Angolan workers, despite the fact that the latter were considered an "indigenous" labour force¹⁵.

António Carreira estimates that throughout the 20th century, until 1970, 74 000 Cape Verdeans emigrated to St. Tomé and Príncipe considering that in 1970 there were around 200 000 inhabitants on the islands¹⁶. Regarding the status of women, according to Portuguese law, until 1967 Portuguese women were not considered citizens, being subservient to the male heads of their households. If they were married, they were not allowed to mortgage, buy or sell property or goods or acquire bonds without their husbands' consent. They could neither publish any written texts nor present themselves in a court of law without their husbands' authority¹⁷. Many professional careers were forbidden for women and only in very specific and rare situations could they vote. A new

¹¹ Pimentel, Irene Flunser, *A cada um o seu lugar – a política feminina do Estado Novo*, s.l., Círculo de Leitores/ Temas e Debates, 2011, p. 40

¹² Benoliel Coutinho, 2016, *idem*, *ibidem*

¹³ Benoliel Coutinho, 2016, *idem*, *ibidem*

¹⁴ Carreira, António, *Cabo Verde (Aspectos sociais. Secas e fomes do século XX)*, Lisboa, Ulmeiro, 1977

¹⁵ Carreira, António, *Migrações na Ilhas de Cabo Verde, Praia, Instituto Caboverdeano do livro*, 1983, p. 153

¹⁶ Carreira, António, *Migrações na Ilhas de Cabo Verde, Praia, Instituto Caboverdeano do livro*, 1983

¹⁷ Pimentel, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45

civil code was approved in 1967 with few changes¹⁸. Divorce was forbidden for Catholic couples and for the ones who did not marry in a Catholic church, civil marriage allowed women to ask for a divorce only in the following situations: public scandal or adultery on the part of a husband; the husband living with another woman; being abandoned by a husband; the husband convicted of a crime; repeated physical abuse and serious injuries inflicted by the husband; desertion by the husband in excess of 10 years and finally, the husband being declared insane¹⁹.

Despite the fact that Portuguese nationality was formally conceded to the natives of Cape Verde in 1945, Portuguese citizenship was not really recognized. In fact, the most privileged ones, even of Portuguese descent, did not have the same rights as those born in Europe. Discriminatory laws based on place of birth always applied during the colonial period in the 20th century. Even European-born Portuguese had few civil rights because they lived under a dictatorship from 1933. Many of them could not vote, including almost all the women.

The citizenship issue had little impact on the most vulnerable, or vast majority, of Cape Verdeans as they faced more pressing basic human rights issues: several times they were condemned to death by starvation, some had the alternative to leave for the plantations of St. Tomé and Príncipe, where they lived, worked, and often died in conditions similar to slavery. Others managed to flee illegally to other countries - many Cape Verdean women left the islands this way. Whenever drought occurred thousands starved with small children being the first to perish.

Patrícia Godinho Gomes states clearly that during Portuguese colonial rule, Guinean women had no political rights whatsoever and no influence on public affairs²⁰. So too for the majority of Guinean men. Legally considered as an "overseas province" from 1951, like the Portuguese colony of Guinea, Cape Verde and all the other territories under Portuguese rule had no Parliament²¹. A Governor was nominated in Lisbon by the central government and from 1933, with the establishment of a far-right dictatorship in Portugal, also approved all budgets for the colonies. Until 1961 almost all those in Guinea-Bissau were legally considered as "indigenous" without citizenship rights, so they were obliged to pay taxes, as well as do forced labour - amongst some of the impositions by the colonial power.

According to Patrícia Godinho Gomes:

Women were, so, doubly submitted, either by the colonizer or by their culture itself; on one hand they didn't have any political rights amongst those that were

¹⁸ Pimentel, op. cit., p. 49

¹⁹ Pimentel, idem, ibidem

²⁰ Godinho Gomes, 2004, p. 193

²¹ The archipelago of S. Tomé and Príncipe, Angola, Mozambique, East-Timor, in Indonesia, Goa, in India, and Macau, in China.

recognised to Portuguese citizens, and on the other, they lived in a traditional society where their condition was one of total inequality in what regards men²².

The author also briefly points out the several situations under which Guinean women lived during the colonial period, according to the diverse cultures that existed in Guinean society:

“(…) the region that today corresponds geographically to the Republic of Guiné-Bissau was, in the pre-colonial era, politically organized in kingdoms (that constituted independent nations) and populated by diverse sociolinguistic groups such as the Felupes, the Banhuns, the Cassangas, the Balantas, the Bijagos, the Nalus and the Brames – that embrace today’s Brâmes, Pepel and Manjaco – besides Fulas and Mandingas, who would later arrive in this area through migrations. In this complex frame, women had a status that varied in accordance with the social organization that they belonged (more or less stratified societies) and that determined their role in the family, the economy and in the exercise of sociopolitical authority²³.”

Despite the limitations of censorship, Cape Verdean writers from the 1930’s onwards thoroughly described the misery of the population of the islands either in romance novels or through poetry and, in many cases, women were the main subjects facing particularly hard decisions such as emigration or prostitution. The private press on the islands has always rejected as hearsay the harsh living conditions experienced by the bulk of the population. Despite the lack of specific published studies on the living conditions of women in Cape Verde during the colonial period, it is possible to draw a general conclusion by consulting available statistic data. At the time of Independence, four-fifths of the population were dedicated to agriculture, considered technically rudimentary. From the 1960’s the country faced severe drought, so in 1975, the general unemployment rate was 50% of the active population. Fishing was considered artisanal and there was little industrial production. The population of the islands depended largely on the importation of basic commodities to survive. In 1975, the annual PIB per capita income for its 200 000 inhabitants was 190 US\$ - an average daily per capita income of 0.2 US\$.²⁴

Post-independence in 1975, the country had two hospitals, one in each town; two health centres; and 15 clinics. There were 12 national doctors and 128 nurses. Eleven percent of the houses had potable water and 25% of the population had access to a sewerage system. There was a high prevalence of contagious diseases and mother and child mortality rates were exceptionally high. Seventy percent of adults were illiterate, with a higher percentage in rural areas. The country inherited two courts and seven lawyers²⁵. For a number of reasons, the very harsh living conditions and misery had the greatest

²² Godinho Gomes, idem, *ibidem*: “La donna era, quindi, doppiamente sottomessa, sia dal colonizzatore sia dalla sua stessa cultura; da un lato essa non godeva dei diritti politici che spettavano ai cittadini portoghesi e dall’altro viveva in una società tradizionale dove la sua condizione era di totale disuguaglianza rispetto all’uomo.” (my translation to English)

²³ Godinho Gomes, 2013, p. 282

²⁴ Benoliel Coutinho, 2016, idem, *ibidem*

²⁵ Benoliel Coutinho, 2016, idem, *ibidem*

impact on women, as is still the case today. Women by and large bear the brunt of family responsibility and the expense of caring for their children. Marriage is not commonplace in Cape Verdean society and is generally only popular among middle class or more privileged families. António Correia e Silva identifies a persistent trait of the average Cape Verdean family as the “instability on the relationship between the progenitors and a deep deficit of the male role as a purveyor father.”²⁶

2. WOMEN IN THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE

With the armed struggle in Guinea-Bissau involving the entire population of the former Portuguese colony, the participation of Guinean women prevailed throughout the process. The contribution by Cape Verdean women has gone largely unnoticed with only two or three names of any prominence widely known, namely, Maria da Luz, Lilica Boal, a history teacher who directed the Escola-Piloto, an experimental school with the highest level of education created by the PAIGC in Conakry; Dulce Almada, who represented the party and openly denounced colonialism at the General Assembly of the United Nations in Rabat in 1962, and Josefina Chantre who joined the guerilla movement in Guinea-Bissau in the 1970's and enjoys growing visibility for her contribution to the liberation struggle. Post-independence, little to no attention was paid to this aspect of the struggle for national liberation.

One of the many reasons motivating this silence could possibly be that it occurred in the independent Cape Verdean society in what Pierre Bourdieu called *déshistoricisation* – a recreation of a male dominant social structure, in this case, at symbolic level. In fact, building a memory of the national liberation movement in a certain way that ignored the presence of these women and making the diverse narratives mostly about men, symbolically supports domination whether voluntarily or not, consciously or not. This hypothesis must be further explored, and to do so, it will be crucial to identify the builders of historical memory in the Cape Verdean society.

Recently there has been a strong interest in gender issues within the Cape Verdean society prompting the publication of a growing number of academic studies. Most of them analyze the political participation of women and their nomination or election to public office after Independence (Furtado, 2009 e 2015; Coutinho, 2010; Gomes, 2011), while others relate to gender violence issues. Two other topical subjects are women in rural areas and informal traders, considering that for many years, studies have been done in various countries on Cape Verdean migrant women.

Of historical importance is the article by Iva Cabral entitled, “The Representation of Women, Married and Widows, in the Island of Santiago in the Documents of the XVI – XVIII Centuries (A Prosopography)” (2011), and the essay by António Correia e Silva “Sex,

²⁶ Correia e Silva, António Leão, “Mater Certa, Pater Incertus: Origens do Défice da Paternidade em Cabo Verde”, in *Dilemas de Poder na História de Cabo Verde*, Lisboa, Rosa de Porcelana/Autor, 2014, p. 103

Filiation and Power” in a book by the same author, *Power Dilemmas in the Cape Verde History* (2014).

Regarding the participation of Cape Verdean women in the liberation process that culminated in Independence, the first published study is an article by historian, Patrícia Godinho Gomes, entitled “Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde islands: women’s participation in the political struggle” in the book *Women and Power in the African continent* from 2004. This author has been studying the subject ever since, with the latest article published in 2016 in the book, *For Cabral, Always – Amílcar Cabral Forum 2013: communications and speeches*, and entitled “The Guinean Woman as a Subject and an Object of the Contemporary Historical Debate”. In 2011, I published the article, “Women in the ‘Shade’: the Cape Verdean and the national liberation struggle” in the book, *Women in Cape Verde – Experiences and Perspectives*, citing available historical documents for reference and mentioning the silence that surrounded this topic in the Cape Verdean society after Independence. In the book, *Women or the silences of History*, Michelle Perrot states:

“In what regards women’s history the first difficulty we have to face is the erasure of their traces, either public or private ones.”²⁷

Having studied the political paths of the national liberation movement leaders, as well as those of Cape Verdean politicians post-Independence, I admit that this is a stumbling block I faced during this research project. Until now, only one Cape Verdean woman, Paula Fortes, who joined the guerilla movement in 1970, wrote an autobiography that recounts her experiences within the national liberation movement. Her book, *My Passage*, was published in 2013 by the Amílcar Cabral Foundation in Cape Verde. Nonetheless, the presence of some of these women is revealed within narratives by men, either in their memoirs (Cabral, 1984) or in interviews, both published and unpublished (Pereira, 2012, interviews of Ângela Coutinho with Amaro da Luz, Mindelo, 2010 and Carlos Reis, Praia, 2009). In Cape Verde, several journalists have shown interest in this subject and referred to the presence of Cape Verdean women in the national liberation movement. There was also mention in two articles by Manuel Delgado, from the 1980’s (Nogueira, 2009), and the book *Cape Verde – the Sidescenes of Independence*, by José Vicente Lopes, published in 1998. Three interviews with Cape Verdean women, conducted by the historian, Leopoldo Amado, were published in a book by Aristides Pereira, as well as one in the first articles by Patrícia Godinho Gomes. Finally, in the last few years, some interviews have been broadcast by the RTC Cape Verde Television and the RTP Africa channels.

Taking all the above-mentioned elements into account, we can conclude that in Cape Verde, the active participation of 13 Cape Verdean women, or of Cape Verdean descent, in the political process that culminated in Independence has been publicly divulged, albeit quietly. These women are: Ana Maria Voss de Sá Cabral, Lucette Andrade Cabral, Carlina

²⁷ Perrot, Michelle, *Les femmes ou les silences de l’histoire*, 1998, p.9: “La difficulté de l’histoire des femmes tient d’abord à l’effacement de leurs traces, tant publiques que privées.” (my translation to English)

Pereira, Amélia Araújo, Dulce Almada Duarte, Maria da Luz (Lilica) Boal, Maria Ilídia (Tutu) Évora, Elisa Andrade, Maria Mercês Leitão da Graça, Paula Fortes, Arlinda Santos, Maria das Dores (Dory) Silveira, Adélcia Barreto Pires.

However, 57 women were identified when comparing the available interviews with the list of members of the Association of the Fighters for the Liberation of the Fatherland (Associação dos Combatentes pela Liberdade da Pátria) and the testimonies of the earlier Cape Verdean leaders of the PAIGC. Amongst them, at least eight were born in other African countries, one being from Angola (Amélia Araújo), three from Senegal (Lucette Andrade, Henriette Andrade and Diana Lima) and four from Guinea-Bissau (Irene Fortes, Ana Maria Voss de Sá, Luísa Baptista Iva Cabral).

In the many published texts and speeches by Amílcar Cabral several references are made to the presence and active participation of women in the national liberation movement led by this party. During a debate in 1969, referring to difficulties encountered by the Guinean and Cape Verdean families to accept that girls could actively participate in political activities and even that they would continue their studies, Cabral states:

I shall say the following: there was not really, from the struggle point of view, an intentional recruitment of women. (...) ²⁸

He also explains that instructions had been given to recruit compatriots, whether men or women, and points to four different situations affecting the admission of women into the liberation movement:

- 1) Some Cape Verdean women at high-school in St. Vincent²⁹ or civil servants working in one of the two towns of the archipelago, Praia and Mindelo, were in most cases motivated by their boyfriends;
- 2) Guinean girls that, once the armed conflict began, gathered in groups and joined the guerillas;
- 3) Cape Verdean women, independent or with a university degree, whose husbands did not oppose their political participation, or whose families were already engaged in the liberation movement were mobilized to work covertly or in foreign countries;
- 4) During the last years of the armed struggle, there was growing interest by Cape Verdean university students and from others living in the archipelago.³⁰

²⁸ Cabral, *Pensar para melhor agir – intervenções no Seminário de Quadros, 1969, Praia, Fundação Amílcar Cabral, 2014*, p. 395: “(...) devo dizer o seguinte: não houve verdadeiramente do ponto de vista da luta, um recrutamento intencional de mulheres. (...)” (my translation to English)

²⁹ The first public high-school in Cape Verde was established in the Island of S. Vicente in 1917. Then, a second high-school was opened in the Santiago Island, in the capital, Praia, in 1962.

³⁰ Cabral, *op. cit.*, p. 397. There were no higher studies institutions in the archipelago.

Cabral concludes: "So, the Party cannot claim proudly that it has recruited women. In most cases, they were the ones who came to the struggle, which gives much more value to the presence of women in the Party."³¹

Concerning Guinean women's participation, Patrícia Godinho Gomes says:

From 1956 -1962, the period of PAIGC underground political activity, women organised the meetings of party leaders, prepared and distributed the propaganda material, hid men who were being persecuted by the PIDE in their houses, and mostly served as the go between several party cells scattered throughout the territory, covertly taking part directly in political activity.

In 1963, when the liberation process reached the armed phase, women provided information about the movement of Portuguese troops to the guerilla units of the PAIGC. They stood side by side with men in the armed operations when the fighting intensified from 1965. In fact, in 1966, because there was a lack of men to take charge of public order issues, popular militias were created, comprising mostly groups of armed women whose main task it was to protect village populations from Portuguese army attacks while simultaneously keeping law and order.³²

In speeches made to militants and leaders within the movement, Amílcar Cabral points to several instances where men resisted participation by women. This became even more intense, although silenced, when they assumed responsibility of party structures. Cabral clearly stated that the population's liberty and sovereignty relied on direct participation by women:

There are comrades, some of them who do not want to understand that the freedom for our people also means freedom for women, the sovereignty for our people means that women should also take a part in that, (...)³³

³¹ Cabral, op. cit., p. 397: "Portanto, o Partido não pode fazer grande bazófia de que recrutou mulheres. Em geral, as mulheres é que vieram para a luta, o que dá muito mais valor à presença de mulheres no Partido." (my translation to English)

³² Godinho Gomes, 2004, p. 194: "Nella fase dell'attività politica clandestina del PAIGC., dal 1956 al 1962, le donne organizzavano le riunioni dei dirigenti del partito, preparavano e distribuivano il materiale propagandistico, nascondevano nelle loro case gli uomini politici perseguitati dalla P.I.D.E. e, soprattutto, servivano come elemento di collegamento tra le diverse cellule del partito sparse nel territorio, partecipando in modo diretto all'attività politica clandestina. Quando nel 1963 il processo di liberazione passò alla fase armata, erano le donne coloro che informavano le unità di guerriglie del PAIGC. sui movimenti delle truppe portoghesi. E furono sempre loro ad affiancare gli uomini nelle operazioni armate quando gli scontri si intensificarono, a partire del 1965. Nel 1966, infatti, per fare fronte alla mancanza di uomini in grado di occuparsi di questioni di ordine pubblico, furono create le milizie popolari, formate soprattutto da gruppi di donne armate il cui compito principale era proteggere le popolazioni dei vilaggi dagli attacchi dell'esercito portoghese e allo stesso tempo provvedere al mantenimento dell'ordine." (my translation to English)

³³ Cabral, Amílcar, PAIGC. – Unidade e Luta, Lisboa, Nova Aurora, 1974, p. 179: "Há camaradas homens, alguns, que não querem entender que a liberdade para o nosso povo quer dizer liberdade também para as mulheres, a soberania para o nosso povo quer dizer que as mulheres também devem participar nisso, (...)" (my translation to English)

We want our people to stand up, to progress, and if we wish that our people stand up, it is not only the men, because the women are also our people.³⁴

On many occasions, he criticized men's behavior, in what we may consider as the condemnation of typical male chauvinism and sexist mentality. This was the case, for example, when he accused some men of taking advantage of their positions in the party, and consequently of their power over the population, to seduce girls. These actions were regarded as detrimental to their studies and their active political participation. He repeatedly criticized polygamy and threatened men that committed sexual crimes and abuse with execution.³⁵

He also criticized the questionable behavior of some women whose attitudes fell short of being respectable.³⁶ It is important to note that Cabral introduced the debate on positive discrimination in favor of girls applying to the Escola-Piloto in Conakry, the best PAIGC school and the one with the highest level of education. He recognized that girls bore the additional burden of housework imposed by their families.³⁷

Actually, Patrícia Godinho Gomes considers that the anti-colonial movement gave rise to the feminist movement in Guinea-Bissau: "Beyond the fight against colonialism, the aims of the movement were effective emancipation, the demand for formal education and women's consciousness, in particular the ones from rural areas."³⁸ So, in 1961, the year in which many party structures were created in the Conakry headquarters, the UDEMU (Democratic Union of Women from Guinea and Cape Verde) was also created, the activities of which at international level, are largely supported by documents in the Amílcar Cabral archives. With the escalation of the armed struggle, a lack of available qualified staff probably led to its demise in 1966. In 1965, the PAIGC formally instituted gender equality, either in respect to family issues, or concerning work and public activities.³⁹ From 1966, women were integrated into the military structures, mainly the militia, referred to above, with the primary goal of protecting civil society from Portuguese army attacks. In 1970, it was decided that at least two-fifths of the village committee members were to be women, and in 1972 women were included as popular court jurors. In the Escola-Piloto

Cabral, op. cit., p. 195: "Nós queremos que o nosso povo se levante, avance; e se queremos que o nosso povo se levante, não são só os homens porque as mulheres também são o nosso povo." (my translation to English)

³⁴ Cabral, op. cit., p. 195: "Nós queremos que o nosso povo se levante, avance; e se queremos que o nosso povo se levante, não são só os homens porque as mulheres também são o nosso povo." (my translation to English)

³⁵ Cabral, op. cit., p. 180, 195, 196, 197, 198, 215, 216; Cabral, Amílcar, 2014, p. 242, 243, 249, 389, 390

³⁶ Cabral, 2014, p. 397

³⁷ Cabral, op. cit., p. 267

³⁸ Godinho Gomes, Figueiredo, 2016, p. 909: "Para além da luta contra o colonialismo, os objectivos do movimento em construção era a efectiva emancipação, a demanda por educação formal e a conscientização das mulheres, em particular as das áreas rurais." (my translation to English)

³⁹ Godinho Gomes, 2013, p. 283

gender equality was evident in management committees and student representation.⁴⁰ Referring to women's emancipation, Patrícia Godinho Gomes concludes that:

The process of female emancipation in Guinea-Bissau was unquestionably favored by the armed liberation struggle. The concern for educating women and transforming them into one of the key elements in the fight for independence was mainly due to the vision of Amílcar Cabral and the perseverance of Guinean women.⁴¹

These were the legacies left by Amílcar Cabral to women: education, political participation, and economic and cultural emancipation.⁴²

3. INVISIBLE WOMEN

In what is probably the archive that contains the greatest number of documents for consultation about the PAIGC, the Amílcar Cabral Archive at the Mário Soares Foundation in Portugal, we find information that proves the presence of some Cape Verdean women in the struggle for independence in photos, letters and minutes of meetings. We also find reference to their representation of the Party at international conferences. On the contrary, an in-depth investigation of photos published between 1969 and 1974 in the Party's journal in French entitled "PAIGC. Actualités" there is no evidence of these women. In fact, there are 19 images depicting women, 10 of which identify specific women. Carmen Pereira, a PAIGC Guinean leader appears in three photographs. In one she is posing with three women identified as being from the militias, namely, political leader and heroine from Guinea, Titina Silá; Guinean leader Francisca Pereira; Guinean nurse Joana Barbosa and the Italian activist, Marcela Glisenti.

Within this archive there is direct reference to 9 of the 57 women that constitute the group we are presently studying. All 9 women became militants within the Independence movement during the first years of activity and were not exclusively involved in underground activities in territories under Portuguese political domination. They are: Maria Dulce Almada, Maria da Luz Boal, Amélia Araújo, Lucette Andrade Cabral, Lina Tavares, Ana Maria Voss de Sá, Carlina Pereira, Maria Amália Fonseca and Henriette Andrade. Among those who joined the PAIGC and were politically active before the beginning of the armed conflict - until 1963, are: Verónica Tavares, Irene Fortes, Janine Moulin, Maria de Fátima Querido Varela Teixeira, Maria Cândida da Luz and Carmen Duarte, along with Maria Mercês Leitão da Graça, who started directing the UPICV (União dos Povos Independentes de Cabo Verde/Union of the Independent People of Cape Verde) together with her husband José André Leitão da Graça in Dakar during the same year. Two of the 16 women mentioned are deceased, namely, Carlina Fortes and Maria Amália Fonseca. To date, I have contacted 12 of the women.

⁴⁰ Godinho Gomes, *op. cit.*, p. 283, 286, 287

⁴¹ Godinho Gomes, *op. cit.*, p. 290

⁴² Godinho Gomes, *op. cit.*, p. 291

By analyzing the information obtained during interviews and archives, such as published interviews and statements, the following information is pertinent to their revolutionary journeys:

1. The women were born between 1920 and 1940;
2. Eleven were born in the Cape Verde islands while five were from other African countries. Amongst those born in the archipelago, the largest number, seven, were from the northern Barlavento islands and four from the southern Sotavento islands. Two were born in Guinea-Bissau, two in Senegal and one in Angola - all three countries having a significant number of Cape Verdean inhabitants at that time.
3. Regarding their levels of education at the time they became militants: six were university graduates, five had completed or attended high school and three had technical qualifications. No information is available on the remaining two. We can nevertheless conclude that their level of education was high or much higher on average than many Cape Verdean men engaged in the same process.
4. Half had a strong connection with the diaspora, i.e. apart from five who were born in foreign countries where there were Cape Verdean communities, three were recruited in other countries where they were living at the time - Ivory Coast (Verónica Tavares), Ghana (Lina Tavares) and France (Janine Moulin).
5. Nine of the sixteen were recruited by their husbands or boyfriends, considering that five had family members already strongly linked to the liberation movement, mostly brothers. Three joined voluntarily as their families were politically inclined while there is no information available regarding five of the women. Although the recruitment by boyfriends or husbands is important, the ones made by the original families is also noteworthy.
6. All the above-mentioned women remained married or in their relationships until the end of the political process, knowing that their partners were or would become part of the party's leadership (members of the Political Bureau/ Executive Committee of the Struggle). Five of these women have always worked with their husbands or companions. Two have since married party leaders - a significant aspect of their trajectories for 11 of the 16 women in the group.
7. Seven women worked at the Secretariat of the PAIGC in Conakry; four were appointed as directors of activities within the party, four were involved in covert operations and four were teachers; three represented the party or its organs in foreign countries and two worked in information dissemination. Until the proclamation of Independence of Guinea-Bissau in 1973, and Cape Verde in 1975, eight women carried out one type of activity listed above; four were involved in three or more different types of activities and two carried out two different types of activities.
8. At a certain stage, three of the 15 militants of the PAIGC, along with two Guinean militants were appointed to the party's Central Committee as shown in two documents (undated) in the Amílcar Cabral Archive.⁴³ These women are Maria Amália Fonseca, Lucette Andrade Cabral and Maria da Luz Boal, along with

⁴³ Amílcar Cabral Archive, Documents 07070.112.00 and 07057.013.04

Francisca Pereira and Carmen Pereira, the last one being the only woman formally elected to the Executive Committee of the Struggle, the former Political Bureau of the PAIGC.

In order to better understand the importance of the tasks they were involved in throughout the process of the struggle for political liberation of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, it is useful to take a closer look at some of their political trajectories. Despite the fact that details of covert operations are largely unknown, it was Amílcar Cabral who pointed to the role of Irene Vaz Fernandes Fortes, when he spoke to militants at a seminar about the first stage of the PAIGC's political activities:

Two or three women were connected to the Party, being the most active one in the clandestine Party in Bissau our comrade Irene Fernandes, Gil's sister, who was treasurer for a certain time.⁴⁴

Born in Guinea-Bissau in 1935, the daughter of Cape Verdeans, Irene was a primary school teacher and always accompanied her husband, PAIGC founder Fernando Fortes, even when he was arrested several times in Bissau from 1962 onwards and sent to the concentration camp of S. Nicolau in Angola where he was incarcerated from 1967 to 1971.⁴⁵

Born in Senegal in 1941, also the daughter of Cape Verdeans, and having attended the University of AOF in Dakar, Lucette Andrade married another PAIGC founder, Luís Cabral. She certainly played an important role in politicising the population living in the territories under PAIGC rule, since she was one of three responsible for the militias in the Front North. She collaborated closely with her husband, a PAIGC representative in Senegal. She assumed leadership of the Women's Organization, the UDEMU, one of only a few women integral to the Central Committee of this party.

Political education was probably the area where the influence of these women was most profound, considering that some of them were highly qualified teachers at the Escola-Piloto, in Conakry.

Founded in 1964, the Escola-Piloto opened in 1965/66 with about one hundred students. Unlike other PAIGC schools, it offered a fifth year of primary school education. In 1972, the Escola-Piloto, considered an experimental school, had seven teachers who were university graduates who worked towards fulfilling one of its main aims of preparing leaders for two independent countries. The Escola-Piloto also ran a center for the Improvement of Teachers. Apart from being an educational hub, it was a very important

⁴⁴ Cabral, *op. cit.*, p. 396 : "Ao Partido estavam ligadas 2 ou 3 mulheres, sendo a mais activa do Partido clandestino em Bissau a nossa camarada Irene Fernandes, irmã do Gil, que foi tesoureira durante certo tempo".

⁴⁵ BENOLIEL COUTINHO, Ângela Sofia, "Souvenirs du cachot: le parcours de Fernando Fortes dans la mémoire de sa veuve", in MUZART-FONSECA DOS SANTOS, Idelette, COSTA ESTEVES, José Manuel, ROLAND, Denis (org.), *Les îles du Cap Vert: langues, mémoires, histoire*, Paris, l'Harmattan, 2007.

intellectual and political center for the work the PAIGC intended to carry out.⁴⁶ In fact, the PAIGC education system, with 50 primary schools and 4 000 students, was implemented in 1964, one year after the start of the guerilla movement in Guinea-Bissau. Between 1971 and 1972 there were already 164 schools with 10 898 boys and 3 633 girls.⁴⁷

Amongst the teachers of the Escola-Piloto, were some Cape Verdean women, or of Cape Verdean descent.

Dulce Almada

Dulce Almada was born on the island of S. Nicolau in 1933 and obtained a degree in Romanic Philology from the Coimbra University in Portugal. Before joining the PAIGC she lectured Portuguese at the Caen University in France. Dulce initially worked at the CONCP⁴⁸ headquarters in Rabat, Morocco and later accompanied her husband, Abílio Duarte, who was a representative of the PAIGC in Algeria and in Cuba. She subsequently taught at the Escola-Piloto in Conakry and in 1972 at the Escola Teranga, in Ziguinchor, Senegal. Between December 1960 and December 1971, she was also one of the editors of the PAIGC's journal "Libertação", together with Amílcar Cabral, Luís Cabral and Vasco Cabral, the latter being a Guinean member of the Political Bureau of the party.

Ana Maria Voss de Sá

Ana Maria Voss de Sá, born in Guinea-Bissau in 1941 of Cape Verdean descent, was a teacher at the Escola-Piloto from 1966 after she completed her degree in Philosophy in Czechoslovakia. Whilst in Czechoslovakia, she was a member of the Section of the Students from the Party (SEP) and vice-president of the Section of the UGEAN.⁴⁹

Maria da Luz or Lilica Boal

Amongst these women, the most attached to the Escola-Piloto was certainly Maria da Luz or Lilica Boal, born on the island of Santiago in 1934, she held a degree in history and philosophy from a Portuguese university. Maria da Luz worked at the office of the PAIGC in Dakar from 1961 to 1969, namely at the Fighters Home (Lar dos Combatentes), which was created to provide care to wounded guerillas. She also worked on the PAIGC school manuals, published in Sweden, and learned the alphabetisation method of the Brazilian pedagogue, Paulo Freire. From 1969 to 1971, she was the director of the Escola-Piloto, a

⁴⁶ Benoliel Coutinho, 2014, p. 39 -41

⁴⁷ Benoliel Coutinho, op. cit., p. 38

⁴⁸ Conference of the Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies, gathering the PAIGC., MPLA and FRELIMO and other liberation movements, including some of the Portuguese colony in India, Goa.

⁴⁹ General Union of the Students from Black Africa (União Geral dos Estudantes da África Negra)

highly responsible post, considering the importance of the political and social frameworks set up by the PAIGC at this establishment. Maria da Luz Boal also assumed leadership roles within the Women's Organization of the PAIGC, the UDEMU, and was one of three Cape Verdean women integral to the party's Central Committee.

Amélia Rodrigues de Sá Sanches Araújo

Born in Angola in 1934 of a Cape Verdean father, Amélia Rodrigues de Sá Sanches Araújo completed secondary school in her home country and joined the PAIGC with her husband, José Araújo. From 1962 to 1966 she worked in the Secretariat's information section in Conakry. In 1966 she trained as a radio broadcaster in the former Soviet Union and became a producer and a speaker for the Liberation Radio (Rádio Libertação). This radio station began broadcasting in Guinea-Bissau in 1967, reaching some islands in Cape Verde, with the main objective of informing the masses about the PAIGC's projects and achievements, to spread propaganda for the movement and, in as far as the Portuguese were concerned, to dissuade participation by conscripted Portuguese soldiers. Amélia's voice was known to the Portuguese authorities and hated by some.

Maria Amália Lopes Fonseca

Within this group it is also relevant to highlight the role played by Maria Amália Lopes Fonseca, born on the island of S. Nicolau in 1928. For many years Maria Amália represented the PAIGC at the CONCP in Rabat. The following was noted by the Portuguese political police (PIDE) in 1971 concerning her activities:

(...) she has integrated the Delegation of the 2nd Conference of the OUA in Cairo, the 17th-21st July 66. (...) she was a part of the PAIGC delegation at the "World Forum for Youth and the Students", in Moscow, from the 16th to the 20th September 64.

In May 1960 she arrived in Cuba through Prague, as a delegate of the PAIGC, MPLA and FRELIMO, at the "Executive Bureau of the Organization of Solidarity of the People from Africa, Asia and Latin America – OSPAA." According to the Cuban press, Amália is a member of the Central Committee of the PAIGC and of the Permanent Secretariat of the CONCP.⁵⁰

This brief description is a testament to the high level of political responsibility assumed by Maria Amália Fonseca, not only within the PAIGC, but also in a wider political field, integrating liberation movements operating in all the Portuguese colonies in Africa at that time.

⁵⁰ "(...) fez parte da Delegação à 2ª Conferência da OUA realizada no Cairo de 17 – 21 JUL 66. (...) fez parte da delegação do PAIGC. ao 'Forum Mundial da Juventude e dos Estudantes', em Moscovo, de 16 – 20 SET 64." In ANTT- P.I.D.E./DGS Abílio Augusto Monteiro Duarte, SdIG PI 422 u.i. 5606, p. 5

Maria Mercês Leitão da Graça

Maria Mercês Leitão da Graça, was always the greatest supporter of her husband's political activities for an independent Cape Verde and simultaneously, against the PAIGC's project from 1963 to 1975.

CONCLUSION

Fifteen Cape Verdean women, or of Cape Verdean descent, that we call "the pioneers" were identified as having been engaged in the struggle for Independence led by the PAIGC. Their involvement started in the mid-1950's up until the start of the armed conflict in the territory of Guinea-Bissau in 1963. The present study includes Maria Mercês Leitão da Graça's political trajectory, who started her militant political activism at the UPICV in Dakar, Senegal alongside her husband, José André Leitão da Graça, one of the founders of the party. Many other Cape Verdean women joined the Independence movement between 1963 and 1974.

With their participation largely unnoticed within Cape Verdean society for 40 years, this study has shown that the PAIGC press has been complicit in the silence. However, by consulting party archives at the Mário Soares Foundation, there are several registers noting the participation of these women and some direct references have also been made in the speeches of the party's leader, Amílcar Cabral. One of the reasons for this invisibility could be that the PAIGC, having always presented itself internationally as a popular revolutionary movement, favoured images of Guinean peasants participating in all sorts of activities instituted by the party, rather than ones depicting people in leadership or administrative roles, whether male or female.

These 16 women whose political trajectories highlighted in this article were born between 1920 and 1940, and at the time of their political mobilisation, they possessed, on average, a much better education than the vast majority of Cape Verdeans. In fact, in 1950 only 6% of people who had a primary school education had access to high school education. It has also been established that half the women had strong connections to the Cape Verdean diaspora, almost exclusively the African one, some being born on the continent, while others were living there at the time they joined the movement.

For some, the roles of their husbands or boyfriends influenced their recruitment, while others were prompted to join because their families were already political activists.

Two thirds of these women stayed married to the same men or subsequently married men who all had Party involvement at the highest level. A reason why, if deemed a wife or widow of a certain individual the details of their roles were silenced after Independence although throughout the entire political process the majority did not work directly with their husbands or companions, and their tasks were primarily administrative work at the PAIGC headquarters in Conakry. For more than 10 years many had roles as part of the

underground network, as teachers in the Party's schools, as senior political party representatives in foreign countries or working in the media.

Maria Mercês Leitão da Graça always worked directly with her husband, and more precisely, created political contacts and promoted the party's goals. It has also been established that some of these women fulfilled highly responsible and influential roles, not only in the education and information sectors, but also in the diplomatic and political arenas. By the mid-1960's, three of these women were nominated to the Central Committee, the highest party structure.

Four women were daughters of landowners or relatively successful merchants, four were daughters of civil servants while one's father was a doctor. While most families were not wealthy, they were educated. Further study is required on the social and cultural backgrounds of the Guinean women. Guinean, Carmen Pereira, appointed to the highest party structure of the PAIGC, is the daughter of Dr. Armando Pereira, one of only a few Guinean lawyers.

So, despite a lack of specific data, we may state that women with higher education levels who, in this first phase of the liberation movement came from more privileged families, were assigned mainly administrative, teaching and information dissemination tasks by being appointed to further the party's political manifesto or as international representatives. While peasant women, with little or no formal education, were assigned other tasks, as described above by Patrícia Godinho Gomes (chapter 3).

BIOS (in first name alphabetic order)

Amélia Rodrigues de Sá Sanches Araújo

Amélia was born in Luanda, Angola in 1934. Her mother was Angolan and her father a civil servant from S.Vicente. Amélia states that she decided to join the nationalist movement of the former Portuguese colonies in 1960 when it became clear that her fiancé, José Eduardo de Figueiredo Araújo, born in Praia, Santiago in 1933 and a final year student of Law at the Lisbon University, was involved in political activities.

Amélia and Eduardo married the same year and he joined a large group of African students who left Portugal in 1961, after the beginning of the war in Angola. Amélia left earlier for Paris with their daughter Teresa who was then 3 months old.

Having firstly been militants of the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), they both joined the PAIGC in 1962. José Eduardo started working in Dakar while Amélia remained in Conakry with their daughter living with Lúcio Lara's family, one of the main leaders of the MPLA. There, she worked first at the Escola-Piloto, and then, for some years in the Information section of the Secretariat.

In 1966 she trained in broadcast radio in the former Soviet Union with other Guinean colleagues and later became a producer and Portuguese presenter for the Liberation Radio (Rádio Libertação). This radio station began broadcasting in Guinea-Bissau in 1967 and to some islands in Cape Verde. Communicating in creole, Portuguese and several Guinea-Bissau national languages, the station attempted to reach as wide an audience as possible, including Portuguese soldiers who were forced to go to war.

Ana Maria Voss de Sá Cabral

Born in Canchungo, Guinea-Bissau in 1941 of Guinean parents, Ana Maria's grandparents were from her homeland, from India, Cape Verde and Germany. Her father, Raúl de Sá, was one of the two medical doctors in Guinea-Bissau, a political activist and part of what was called the protonationalist generation of the 1910's until the 1930's. Dr Raúl de Sá was transferred to Angola and there Ana Maria attended primary school and the 1st year of high-school. In the Uíge province, Dr Raúl de Sá was involved in a dispute with the colonial authorities and was finally murdered. Following his death his wife moved to Lisbon where their children pursued their studies until the end of high-school, as this was not possible in Guinea at the time. In Lisbon, Ana Maria frequented the renowned House of the Students from the Empire (Casa dos Estudantes do Império) with her older brothers and sister, while she was still in high-school. In the interviews, she talks about the colonial violence she witnessed in Angola, particularly the way the "indigenous" workers were treated and the racial discrimination in schools. Apart from her father's attitudes and explanations of society, these injustices profoundly impacted her politically.

While married to an Angolan MPLA militant and musician, she travelled abroad with her husband in 1962 performance of the famous Angolan group Black Gold Trio/Trio Ouro Negro. In Paris, Ana Maria wrote to Amílcar Cabral asking to join the PAIGC. She was accepted and obtained a scholarship to study Philosophy in Czechoslovakia. Whilst in Czechoslovakia, she divorced her husband and became a member of the Section of the Students from the Party (SEP) and vice-president of the Section of the UGEAN (General Union of the Students from Black Africa / União Geral dos Estudantes da África Negra).

In 1966, after obtaining her degree, she moved to Conakry and became a teacher at the Escola-Piloto. The following year she married Amílcar Cabral.

Carlina Fortes Pereira

Born in 1927 in Mindelo, S. Vicente, Carlina Ferreira Fortes is the sister of one of the PAIGC's founders, Fernando Fortes.

Carlina attended high-school in her home-town and in 1959 she married Aristides Pereira of Boa Vista, a civil servant at the Post in Bissau and one of the PAIGC's founders and leaders.

In 1960, Carlina left S. Vicente with her husband's first child, Eugénio, and they lived in Conakry.

In his last published interviews, Aristides Pereira said that, in order to pay the family's living expenses as well as help finance the creation of the PAIGC's headquarters, Carlina worked as a dressmaker, while Maria Helena de Ataíde Vilhena Rodrigues Cabral, Amílcar's first wife, a Portuguese silviculturist, taught at the Conakry high-school. Their husbands were entirely dedicated to political activities. Later, Carlina worked in the accounting section of the PAIGC until the end of the liberation process.

Henriette Andrade Vieira

Born in Dakar in 1937, Henriette's father was Senegalese and the son of a Cape Verdean while her mother was from Boa Vista. She attended primary school in her home-town followed by a course in Direction Secretariat at the Modern School for Young Girls /"Collège Moderne de Jeunes Filles".

Henriette states that she met Amílcar Cabral in 1958, while married with two children and employed at Shell in Dakar. In 1961 she decided to move to Conakry, where she worked at the PAIGC's Secretariat until 1975, the year of independence of Cape Verde. Politically she worked in Gabon recruiting Cape Verdean fighters. After independence, she lived in Cape Verde with her second husband, PAIGC marine commander, Herculano Vieira from Boa Vista.

Irene Vaz Fernandes Fortes

Irene Vaz Fernandes was born in Bolama, Guinea-Bissau in 1935. Her father was from the Santiago island, in Cape Verde and emigrated to Guinea-Bissau, where he was a civil servant. Irene's mother, also born in Guinea-Bissau, was of Cape Verdean origin and grew up in the archipelago.

Irene completed her primary and secondary education in Bissau, being one of the first students of the Colégio-Liceu. She studied as a primary school teacher in Braga, Portugal and finally returned to Guinea, where she worked in Gabu and Farim.

In 1959, Irene married Fernando Ferreira Fortes, born in 1929 in S. Vicente, a civil servant at the Post, and one of the founders of the PAIGC.

Irene states that her fiancé told her about his political activities before they got married and that she agreed to collaborate. In recently published speeches, Amílcar Cabral stated that Irene was one of the first women to serve the PAIGC, being the accountant for the movement.

Fernando was appointed one of two leaders in charge of covert activities in Guinea-Bissau and responsible for organizing the escape of many young militants. However, he and Rafael Barbosa, another leader, were arrested by the PIDE/DGS in 1961.

Besides Fernando's sister, Carlina, the couple had other close relatives engaged in the independence movement. Irene's brothers, Tito Lívio and Gil had also joined the guerillas, the first being married to Carmen Pereira, who later became an important political figure in the party.

Released in 1963, Fernando resumed covert political activities along with his wife, and in 1967, without trial, he was sent to São Nicolau concentration camp in the Namib desert of Angola. The following year, Irene obtained a transfer to Luanda, where she lived for some years, supporting her husband, working and raising their two children, with some help from other nationalist friends living in Luanda.

In 1971, Fernando was released on parole but not allowed to leave Luanda. He was required to report monthly to the PIDE which, in his wife's words, deeply affected him psychologically.

After the coup d'état in Portugal on 25 April 1974, Fernando was finally released and the family returned to Guinea-Bissau.

Lina Tavares

Born in 1935 in Mindelo, Saint Vicente, Lina is the daughter of a successful small-merchant from Santiago. According to the PIDE/DGS files and according to correspondence in the Amílcar Cabral Archive, we know that in 1961 she was living in Ghana and worked in the Portuguese section of Radio Ghana. From that year, Lina became a PAIGC revolutionary. She was involved in activities such as supporting other militants, the acquisition of war material and the contact with other independent African countries such as Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

Lucette de Andrade Cabral

Lucette de Andrade was born in 1940 in Dakar, Senegal, and her parents were both Cape Verdean immigrants from Santiago. Her father was a successful wood hauler and her mother was a housewife. Lucette attended private primary school and completed her secondary education in Dakar, where she also studied at the West French Africa (AOF) University. While she was at high-school, she participated in the African youth "Âmes Vaillantes" and in many anti-colonial protests held before Senegal's independence, in 1960.

In 1958, she married Luís de Almeida Cabral, born in Bissau in 1931, of Cape Verdean descent and an accountant in Bissau. He was one of the founding members of the PAIGC

and a younger half-brother of Amílcar Cabral. Lucette moved to Bissau and, despite the fact that she knew about her husband's political activities, she states that she was not politically active until they fled to Dakar in 1960 to avoid her husband's arrest by the political police. In 1961, Lucette and Luís, with their first child, Patrick, moved to Conakry where they lived until 1966. Lucette worked in the Secretariat, she was a founding member and a director of the UDEMU, the party's women's organisation. Her work involved the preparation of young militants going abroad to pursue their studies and was also the creator of the PAIGC's ballet "Loved Homeland"/ "Pátria Amada". She represented the PAIGC in several international conferences and was a founding member of the Pan-African Women's Organization. In 1966 the family returned to Senegal, this time to Ziguinchor, and Lucette assisted her husband as the representative of the PAIGC in Senegal. She became one of three people responsible for the Militias in the Front North, a political commissioner and responsible for armament and one of only a few women integral to the Central Committee of the party.

Maria Amália Lopes Fonseca

According to the PIDE/DGS's files, Maria Amália Lopes Fonseca was born on the island of Saint Nicolau in 1928. There is no information about her father, Mateus Fonseca, but her mother, Maria Cristina Lopes da Silva belonged to the Lopes da Silva family from S. Nicolau considered by the Cape Verdean historian, João Nobre de Oliveira, as the most intellectually influential family in Cape Verde's history of the twentieth-century.

In a letter to Aristides Pereira in September 1961, the Mozambican nationalist leader, Marcelino dos Santos, mentions her as a teacher able to speak, read and write French and English besides Portuguese, and says she was living in Paris since October 1960.

It is also known that Maria Amália married the Angolan nationalist, Dr. Africano Neto.

Also according to the PIDE/DGS's files, in 1961 she attended a guerilla training course in Morocco with MPLA militants. In fact, she arrived in Rabat that year to work at the CONCP headquarters, and in 1962 she signed a letter as the Director of the Administrative Department of the Permanent Secretariat of the CONCP. For many years she represented the PAIGC at this organisation, the following having been noted by the Portuguese political police, the PIDE in 1971 concerning her activities:

(...) she has integrated the Delegation of the 2nd Conference of the OUA in Cairo, the 17th-21st July 66. (...) she was a part of the PAIGC delegation at the "World Forum for Youth and the Students", in Moscow, from the 16th to the 20th September 64.

In May 1960 she arrived in Cuba through Prague, as a delegate of the PAIGC, MPLA and FRELIMO, at the "Executive Bureau of the Organization of Solidarity of the People from Africa, Asia and Latin America – OSPAA." According to the Cuban press, Amália is a

member of the Central Committee of the PAIGC and of the Permanent Secretariat of the CONCP⁵¹.

Maria Dulce de Oliveira Almada Duarte

Born in 1933 on the island of S. Nicolau, Cape Verde as the daughter of primary school teachers, Dulce completed her primary school education in S. Nicolau and secondary school in S. Vicente. In her interviews she stated that she was acutely affected by the famine of 1940-41 that have particularly attained the islands of Fogo and S. Nicolau. In 1951, Dulce was admitted to the Coimbra University, Portugal, where she obtained a degree in Romanic Philology. There, she met other African students at the House of the Students from the Empire (Casa dos Estudantes do Império).

In 1958 she returned to Cape Verde and started teaching at the Gil Eanes high-school in Mindelo, S. Vicente. She became Abílio Monteiro Duarte's girlfriend, who was already engaged in the independence movement and says she was politically influenced and mobilized by him. Born in Praia, Santiago in 1931, Abílio was a clerk at the Overseas National Bank (Banco Nacional Ultramarino) in Bissau in the 1950's and returned to Cape Verde in 1959 to complete his secondary studies and recruit activists for the independence movement. In 1960 she left for France where she worked as a Portuguese lecturer at the University of Caen in Normandy. The following year she moved to Rabat, Morocco where she worked at the CONCP's (Conference for the Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies / Conferência das Organizações Nacionalistas das Colónias Portuguesas) headquarters. Between December 1960 and December 1971, Dulce Almada was also one of the editors of the PAIGC's journal "Libertação".

In 1962 Dulce moved to Conakry and started working at the PAIGC's Secretariat. From 1964 to 1967, she and Abílio lived in Argelia and Cuba, where he was the party representative. When they returned to Conakry, she rejoined the Secretariat and worked as a teacher at the Escola-Piloto. In 1973, she moved to Ziguinchor, Senegal to teach at the newly established Teranga School that had a similar ethos to that of the Escola-Piloto in Conakry.

Maria da Luz (Lilica) Freire de Andrade Boal

Born in Tarrafal, Santiago in 1934, Maria da Luz's family were successful merchants. After completing her primary school education, she attended high school in Mindelo, St. Vincent. In an interview, she states that there were only five girls in the last years of high school. After completing her last two years of high school in Braga, Portugal, she attended

⁵¹ "(...) fez parte da Delegação à 2ª Conferência da OUA realizada no Cairo de 17 – 21 JUL 66. (...) fez parte da delegação do PAIGC. ao 'Forum Mundial da Juventude e dos Estudantes', em Moscovo, de 16 – 20 SET 64." In ANTT- P.I.D.E./DGS Abílio Augusto Monteiro Duarte, SdIG PI 422 u.i. 5606, p. 5

the University of Coimbra and later the University of Lisbon where she studied Historical-Philosophical Sciences. In both towns she was a member of the House of the Students from the Empire (CEI) and in Coimbra she met the Angolan medical student Manuel Boal, whom she married in 1958.

Nevertheless, Maria da Luz or Lilica states that political interest started in childhood as she was familiar with a Portuguese political prisoner in the Tarrafal concentration camp.

Because her husband was a MPLA militant, they decided to join a big group of African students, mostly from Angola, that escaped from Portugal to France in 1961 en route to Ghana. After their arrival, Manuel joined the MPLA militants and guerrillas in Congo and Lilica remained in Dakar until 1969 working at the PAIGC Fighters Home (Lar dos Combatentes) created to provide care to wounded soldiers. She simultaneously attended the University of Dakar to complete her degree and obtain a scholarship; one of the ways some militants financed their stay and party work in Senegal. She also worked on the PAIGC school manuals, published in Sweden, and learned the alphabetization method of the Brazilian pedagogue, Paulo Freire.

From 1969 to 1971, she lived in Conakry, where she was the director of the Escola-Piloto. Maria da Luz Boal also assumed leadership roles within the Women's Organization of the PAIGC, the UDEMU, and was one of three Cape Verdean women integral to the party's Central Committee.

Maria das Mercês (Tchutchá) Ferreira Querido Leitão da Graça

Maria das Mercês was born in 1930 in Santa Catarina, Santiago. Her parents were big landowners and had 12 children. Maria das Mercês was the eldest daughter and completed her primary school education in Santa Catarina and took care of her younger brothers and sisters while their mother moved to Mindelo, in S. Vicente, so that the older boys could attend high school. Maria das Mercês states that her mother always encouraged her daughters to pursue their studies, which was unusual at that time. She completed two years of high school and left for Lisbon, Portugal where she studied dressmaking for three years. She became politically aware of colonial issues while living with the Graça family from Saint Tomé and Príncipe, one of the most prominent nationalist families from that archipelago.

When she returned to Cape Verde in 1954, and while on a visit to Dakar, she participated in meetings with Cape Verdean nationalist, Henry Labery. Her activities came to the attention of the Portuguese political police and she and her parents decided it was safer that she not return to the islands.

While living and working in Dakar she met Amílcar Cabral, who was a childhood acquaintance. She was not convinced by the proposed unity of Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau in an independence movement, which was an important aspect of the PAIGC's

program. Amílcar introduced her to her future husband, José André Leitão da Graça, a law student from Praia, Santiago.

From 1963 to 1974, Maria das Mercês was the main supporter of her husband's political activities as the leader of the UPICV. They initially moved to Accra where José André worked for Radio Ghana and later returned to Dakar. At a certain stage, Maria das Mercês opened a business in Praia with the support of her husband's family and lived between Praia and Dakar.

Her family was deeply entrenched in the PAIGC as her brother Jorge was a member of the Central Committee and party leader in the archipelago.

SOURCES/INTERVIEWS

Taped interviews by Ângela Coutinho with:

Dulce Almada Duarte, Praia, 3 May 1999

Ana Maria Voss de Sá Cabral, Praia, 6 May 1999

Amélia Sanches Araújo, Praia, May 1999

Irene Fortes, Amora, Portugal, 17 September 2000

Maria das Mercês Leitão da Graça, Praia, 21 November 2016

Interview of Leopoldo Amado with Amélia Sanches Araújo, at Praia, the 9th July 1998, in PEREIRA, Aristides (2003). *O meu testemunho – uma luta, um partido, dois países – versão documentada*. Lisboa, Notícias, 2003, pp. 330 – 335

Interview of Leopoldo Amado with Dulce Almada Duarte, at Praia the 12th June 2000, in PEREIRA, Aristides (2003). *O meu testemunho – uma luta, um partido, dois países – versão documentada*. Lisboa, Notícias, 2003, pp. 411 – 422

Interview of Leopoldo Amado with Maria da Luz Freire de Andrade, at Praia, the 4th September 1998, in PEREIRA, Aristides (2003). *O meu testemunho – uma luta, um partido, dois países – versão documentada*. Lisboa, Notícias, 2003, pp. 487 – 496

Interview of Leopoldo Amado with Ana Maria Cabral, at Praia, the 2nd May 2000, in PEREIRA, Aristides (2003). *O meu testemunho – uma luta, um partido, dois países – versão documentada*. Lisboa, Notícias, 2003, pp. 336 – 344

“PAIGC. Actualités”, n°s 2,4,5,9,10,11,15,6,17,18,20, 57

Program “Nha Terra Nha Cretcheu”, with Maria das Dores Silveira and Adélcia Barreto Pires in the RTP-Africa channel the 8th September 2010 e-mail to Ângela Coutinho from Lucette Andrade and Henriette Vieira, the 8th December 2015

National Archives of Portugal ANTT- P.I.D.E./DGS Abílio Augusto Monteiro Duarte, SdlG PI 422 u.i. 5606 and José André Leitão da Graça, AC DelCV Praia PI 84 u.i. 5178

Amílcar Cabral Archive in the Mário Soares Foundation, documents 04604.039.042 and 04604.023.039

BIBLIOGRAPHY

AMADO, Leopoldo, Guerra Colonial & Guerra de Libertação Nacional 1950 – 1974. O caso da Guiné-Bissau, Lisboa, IPAD, 2011

BENOLIEL COUTINHO, Ângela Sofia, Fichas “Cabo Verde”, “PAIGC.”, in Rezola, Maria Inácia, Santos, Paula Borges, Reis, António, Dicionário de História de Portugal, Porto, Figueirinhas, 2016

BENOLIEL COUTINHO, Ângela Sofia, “O processo de descolonização em Cabo Verde” in Rosas, Fernando, Machaqueiro, Mário, Oliveira, Pedro Aires, Lisboa, Nova Vega, 2015

BENOLIEL COUTINHO, Ângela Sofia (org.), Luís Cabral - Memórias e Discursos, Praia, Fundação Amílcar Cabral, 2014

BENOLIEL COUTINHO, Ângela Sofia, “Mulheres na ‘sombra’: as cabo-verdianas e a luta de libertação nacional” in As Mulheres em Cabo Verde: Experiências e Perspetivas, Praia, Uni-CV, 2012, pp. 39 - 48

BENOLIEL COUTINHO, Ângela Sofia, “Women as Ministers and the Issue of Gender Equality in the Republic of Cape Verde”, Afrika Zamani, Dakar, CODESRIA, N°s 18 – 19, 2010 – 2011, pp. 149 – 158

BENOLIEL COUTINHO, Ângela Sofia, “Souvenirs du cachot: le parcours de Fernando Fortes dans la mémoire de sa veuve”, in MUZART-FONSECA DOS SANTOS, Idelette, COSTA ESTEVES, José Manuel, ROLAND, Denis (org.), Les îles du Cap Vert: langues, mémoires, histoire, Paris, l’Harmattan, 2007

BENOLIEL COUTINHO, Ângela Sofia, Os Dirigentes do PAIGC (Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné-Bissau e de Cabo Verde), da fundação à divisão: estudo de percursos individuais, de estratégias familiares e de ideologias, Paris, Universidade de Paris I – Panthéon – Sorbonne, 2005

BOURDIEU, Pierre, La Domination Masculine, Paris, Seuil, 1998

CABRAL, Amílcar, Pensar para melhor agir – intervenções no Seminário de Quadros, 1969, Praia, Fundação Amílcar Cabral, 2014

CABRAL, Amílcar, A Prática Revolucionária – unidade e luta II, Lisboa, Seara Nova, 1977

CABRAL, Amílcar, Guiné- Bissau – Nação Africana forjada na luta, Lisboa, Nova Aurora, 1974

CABRAL, Amílcar, Alguns princípios do partido, Lisboa, Seara Nova, 1974

CABRAL, Amílcar, Textos Políticos, Porto, Afrontamento, 1974

CABRAL, Amílcar, PAIGC. – Unidade e Luta, Lisboa, Nova Aurora, 1974

CABRAL, Amílcar, Análise de alguns tipos de resistência, Lisboa, Seara Nova, 1974

CABRAL, Iva, “A Representação das Mulheres, Casadas e Viúvas, da Ilha de Santiago nos Documentos dos Séculos XVI-XVIII (Um Estudo Prosopográfico)”, in SILVA, Carmelita, FORTES, Celeste, As Mulheres em Cabo Verde – Experiências e Perspectivas, Praia, UniCV, 2011, pp. 19-37

CABRAL, Luís, Crónica da Libertação, Lisboa, o jornal, 1984

CARREIRA, António, Cabo Verde (Aspectos sociais. Secas e fomes do século XX), Lisboa, Ulmeiro, 1977

CARREIRA, António, Migrações na lhas de Cabo Verde, Praia, Instituto Caboverdeano do livro, 1983

CHABAL, Patrick, Amilcar Cabral, Revolutionary Leadership and People’s War, London 2003.

CORREIA E SILVA, António Leão, “Martírio Feminino”, in Dilemas de Poder na História de Cabo Verde, Lisboa, Rosa de Porcelana/Autor, 2014, pp. 75-78

CORREIA E SILVA, António Leão, “Mater Certa, Pater Incertus: Origens do Défice da Paternidade em Cabo Verde”, in Dilemas de Poder na História de Cabo Verde, Lisboa, Rosa de Porcelana/Autor, 2014, pp. 79-110

DHADA, Mustafah, Warriors at work - how Guinea was really set free, Niwot, University Press of Colorado, 1993

FORTES, Paula, Minha Passagem, Praia, Fundação Amílcar Cabral, 2013

FURTADO, Eurídice Monteiro, Entre os Senhores das Ilhas e as Descontentes – Identidade, Classe e Género na Estruturação do Campo Político em Cabo Verde, Praia, UniCV, 2015

FURTADO, Eurídice Monteiro, Mulheres, Democracia e Desafios Pós-Coloniais – uma análise da participação política das mulheres em Cabo Verde, Praia, UniCV, 2009

GODINHO GOMES, Patrícia, FIGUEIREDO, Ângela, “Para além dos feminismos: uma experiência comparada entre Guiné-Bissau e Brasil”, Estudos Feministas, Florianópolis, 24(3): 398, Setº/Dezº 2016

- GODINHO GOMES, Patrícia, "A Mulher Guineense como Sujeito e Objeto do Debate Histórico Contemporâneo", in *Por Cabral, Sempre – Fórum Amílcar Cabral 2013: comunicações e discursos*, Praia, Fundação Amílcar Cabral, 2016, pp. 209 – 229
- GODINHO GOMES, Patrícia, "From Theory to Practice – Amílcar Cabral and Guinean Women in the Fight for Emancipation", in MANJI, Firoze, FLETCHER Jr., Bill (eds.), *Claim no Easy Victories: the legacy of Amílcar Cabral*, Dakar, CODESRIA/Daraja Press, 2013
- GODINHO GOMES, Patrícia, *Os fundamentos de uma nova sociedade. O PAIGC. e a luta armada na Guiné-Bissau (1963 – 1973)*, Torino, Harmattan Italia, 2010
- GODINHO GOMES, Patrícia, "Guinea-Bissau e isole di Capo Verde: partecipazione femminile alla lotta politica", in CARCANGIU, B.M. (a cura di), *Donna e Potere nel continente africano*, Torino, l'Harmattan, 2004, pp. 92 – 244
- GOMES, Crispina, *Mulher e Poder – o Caso de Cabo Verde*, Praia, IBNL, 2011
- JESUS, José Duarte, *A Guerra Secreta de Salazar em África*, Lisboa, D. Quixote, 2012
- KEESE, Alexander, *Living with Ambiguity – Integrating an African Elite in French and Portuguese Africa, 1930 – 61*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2007
- LOPES, José Vicente, *Aristides Pereira – Minha Vida Nossa História*, Praia, Spleen, 2012
- LOPES, José Vicente, *Memórias e Verdades*, Praia, IIPC/ José Vicente Lopes, 2010
- LOPES, José Vicente, *Cabo Verde: os Bastidores da Independência*, Praia-Mindelo, Centro Cultural Português, 1996
- MARTINS, Pedro, *Testemunho de um combatente*, Praia-Mindelo, Instituto Camões / Centro Cultural Português, 1995
- NOBRE DE OLIVEIRA, João, *A Imprensa em Cabo Verde de 1870 a 1975*, Macau, Fundação de Macau, 1998
- NOGUEIRA, Gláucia (org.), *De Rabidantibus – Manuel Delgado Colectânea 1975 – 2006*, Praia, António Pedro da Costa Delgado, 2009
- PEREIRA, Aristides, *O meu testemunho – uma luta, um partido, dois países – versão documentada*, Lisboa, Notícias, 2003
- PEREIRA, José Augusto, *O PAIGC. perante o dilema Cabo-verdiano (1959 – 1974)*, Lisboa, Campo da Comunicação, 2015
- PERROT, Michelle, *Les Femmes ou les Siences de l'Histoire*, Paris, Flammarion, 1998
- PIMENTEL, Irene Flunser, *A cada um o seu lugar – a política feminina do Estado Novo*, s.l., Círculo de Leitores/ Temas e Debates, 2011

QUERIDO, Jorge, Cabo Verde Subsídios para a história da nossa luta de libertação, Lisboa, Vega, 1989

RUDEBECK, Lars, Guinea-Bissau – a Study of Political Mobilisation, Uppsala, Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1974

THÉBAUD, Françoise (dir.), História das Mulheres – O Século XX, Porto, Afrontamento, 1995

ROSA LUXEMBURG STIFTUNG
West Africa
Sotrac-Mermoz Villa 43 BP : 25013 | Dakar-Sénégal
Telephone : +221 33 869 75 19 | Fax: +221 33 824 19 95 | internet : www.rosalux.sn



ROSA LUXEMBURG STIFTUNG

The views and opinions expressed by the author do not necessarily represent those of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation