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*Historical Trajectories of the Third
Portuguese Empire: Re-examining the
Dynamics of Imperial Rule and
Colonial Societies (1900-1975)*

Special Theme Issue

Editors: Cláudia Castelo, Philip J. Havik,
and Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo

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SPECIAL THEME ISSUE

HISTORICAL TRAJECTORIES OF THE THIRD
PORTUGUESE EMPIRE: RE-EXAMINING THE
DYNAMICS OF IMPERIAL RULE AND
COLONIAL SOCIETIES (1900-1975)



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Decolonisation, Improvised: A Social History of the Transfer of Power in Cabo Verde, 1974–1976¹

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Introduction

Cabo Verde is an astonishing case for the interpretation of decolonization—and, certainly, a pioneer case to come to a new, social history of decolonization “on the ground”. Such a new perspective means, in my view, that, first of all, the analysis cannot stop at the moment of independence (a trivial thought, perhaps, but yet the huge majority of studies on African, including Lusophone African societies, takes this rupture for granted in terms of periods of analysis). Second, we need to address the experiences of populations on the regional and local level with the end of colonialism.² Third, the creation of the new states meant the transition from a late colonial to a new, independent administration. It is perhaps necessary to insist that the activities of state bureaucracy with their aseptic jargon are not the main issue in that regard—although they are of interest when it comes to studying the modalities of the public sector after the independences. But the establishment of the new, postcolonial regime by the Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e do Cabo Verde (PAIGC), the rebel movement that had been victorious on Guinean soil, and of which

¹Research for this article has been supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation through the SNSF Research Professors programme (n° 157443).

²Current trends seem to indicate rather a prominence (or dominance) of cultural historical approaches towards decolonization, see, e. g., Ruth Craggs and Claire Wintle, “Introduction: Reframing Cultures of Decolonization,” in Ruth Craggs and Claire Wintle, eds., *Cultures of Decolonisation: Transnational Productions and Practices, 1945–70* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016): 1–26. The history of decolonization as social history has not found much progress after Frederick Cooper’s conceptual work in 2008, and it was probably much too optimistic, at that moment, to claim “that the recent African past – spanning the last years of colonial rule and the years of independence – is becoming a focus of historical inquiry,” see Frederick Cooper, “Possibility and Constraint: African Independence in Historical Perspective,” *Journal of African History* 49 (1) (2008): 167.



a number of leaders associated with Aristides Pereira and Pedro Pires took the reins of the new state in the archipelago, also led to the creation of new networks of influence and power.³ The role of the new services of internal administration, led by Carlos W. Veiga, and its delegates in the various islands, is elementary in this respect: the agents of this directorate built a system of control, but, frequently, their work was paralleled by the newly created sections of the ruling party in the archipelago.⁴ Their interactions with locals are part of the social history of decolonization.

The economic perspectives of the new state seemed to point to a smooth development process. Even during the early existence of the postcolonial state (and with its unclear future, as a federation with Guinea-Bissau remained on the agenda as a mere project), Cabo Verde quickly became a darling of aid donors.⁵ This was important given the background of nearly permanent drought in the islands, conditions that had become even more endemic from the late 1960s onwards. The social effects of the aid received were quite impressive in terms of changes in individual consumption patterns: thus, to give just one example, the access of the islanders to new food varieties and a more diversified and balanced diet was a direct product of the availability of imported foodstuffs, especially vegetables.⁶ From the mid-

³The classical (optimistic) account of the transition of Cabo Verde, from an activist's perspective and without much scientific analysis, is Basil Davidson, *The Fortunate Isles: A Study in African Transformation* (Trenton/NJ: Africa World Press, 1982).

⁴These processes still lack much analysis; indeed, for West Africa little has been done since publication of the classical studies by political scientists, see Aristide Zolberg, *Creating Political Order: The Party-states of West Africa* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1966), and Aristide Zolberg, *One-Party Government in the Ivory Coast* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 149-215. There are some exceptions for other parts of sub-Saharan Africa, but not many – Zambia might be one of the exceptional cases, see Miles Larmer, *Rethinking African Politics: A History of Opposition in Zambia* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2011).

⁵The practical effects and experiences of donor aid in the postcolonial African societies have equally not been a subject of historical research. First reflections on the long-term perspective have been made in Bronwen Everill and Josiah Kaplan, "Introduction: Enduring Humanitarianisms in Africa," in Bronwen Everill and Josiah Kaplan, eds., *The History and Practice of Humanitarian Intervention and Aid in Africa* (Basingstoke and New York: PalgraveMacmillan, 2013), 1-22.

⁶Arquivo do Ministério do Desenvolvimento Rural, Praia, Cabo Verde (AMDRCV), Dossier "Cooperação Portugal," Miguel António Lima, Director-General of Agriculture at the Ministry of Rural Development, *Alguns termos de referência para o desenvolvimento da horticultura nacional* (without number), 20 July 1979, 1-2.

1970s onwards, massive aid investment also became accessible. To give one example, the district administration of São Vicente—with the important urban centre of Mindelo—counted, already in 1976, on considerable sums of aid of ‘the Swedes’ for its local infrastructure initiatives.⁷ Scandinavian and Dutch funding, among others, appeared to offer a reliable source of support. Few other independent African societies had such advantageous conditions in the first years after their respective decolonisations. Little has been written about the details of the social and economic transition in Cabo Verde—but it has appeared as a kind of success story, mostly devoid of a serious analysis of the complexities of the historical process.⁸ These complexities need to become the object of fresh interpretations.

My study engages with two essential steps of the transition. The first concerns the complications of political mobilization and the potentials of nationalist support in the future capital of the state, Praia, in the first months after the fall of the Portuguese authoritarian regime in the colonial metropole; the other urban centre, Mindelo, is another theatre of such changes.⁹ This interpretation profits from an unexplored source: the reports, and collected testimony, by a Portuguese administrator sent by the Spínola government in Lisbon, which can be analysed as a major source on the transition period in spite of the racist biases of this official.

The second set of questions has to do with the many conflicts existing from the start around the transfer of the institutions. In 1975 and 1976, rural mobilization and the occupation of urban territory; complex discussions and massive conflicts concerning the creation of infrastructure; and the divergent interests of the different new administrative units come to the fore. Access to local, postcolonial archives in Cabo Verde allows for telling a more

⁷Arquivo da Câmara Municipal de São Vicente (ACMSV), Diversos – 1975/76, Daniel Henrique Cardoso Mendes, Delegate of Internal Administration in São Vicente, to National Internal Administration of Cabo Verde (n° 772/20.09/76), 10 Dec. 1976, I.

⁸Elisa Silva Andrade, *Les îles du Cap-Vert de la “Découverte” à l’Indépendance Nationale (1460–1975)* (Paris: Harmattan, 1996), 276–284; Elisa Silva Andrade, “Cape Verde,” in Patrick Chabal, ed., *A History of Postcolonial Lusophone Africa* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002): 264–290, 265–272. On the context of Swedish support for the PAIGC, see also Tor Sellström, *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2000), II (*Solidarity and Assistance 1970–1994*), 59–72.

⁹This process comes along as much too straightforward in the principal overview of José Vicente Lopes, *Cabo Verde: os bastidores da independência* (Praia: Spleen, 2002).

differentiated story. This article thereby intends to offer a social history of decolonization.

Studying decolonization: Lusophone exception or general lack of research progress?

The decolonization of the Portuguese territories in the African continent is an unusual story when compared to the decolonization experience of most parts of sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁰ The process was characterized by wars of liberation against an authoritarian regime in the metropole, which managed over more than a decade to organize a vigorous defense of two of the three territories in question. Moreover, the leadership of a part of the rebel movements was very well interconnected. The leaders of the parties and armed movements regarded as left-wing—the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA), the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO), and the PAIGC—frequently had a common background of radicalisation, in many cases during their presence as students in Portugal that were discriminated on racial grounds. In Cabo Verde, only a small part of the urban elite stood in contact with these networks during the years of the Portuguese authoritarian “New State” or *Estado Novo*.¹¹ However, the fact that a number of Cape Verdeans belonged to the leading circles of the PAIGC and participated in these leading positions during the successful struggle in Guinean territory, was of principal importance for the end of colonialism in the archipelago.¹² Even so, Ângela Countinho’s impressive PhD thesis—which still awaits publication as a book—shows that it would be erroneous to regard the party and guerrilla movement in Guinea-Bissau pre-1974 as a Cape Verdean-dominated movement.¹³ But at the same time, the success on the mainland gave the PAIGC a reputation as a liberation

¹⁰See the overview in Martin Thomas, *Fight or Flight: Britain, France, and Their Roads from Empire* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 208-262.

¹¹Dalila Cabrita Mateus, *A luta pela independência: A formação das elites fundadoras da FRELIMO, MPLA e PAIGC* (Mem Martins: Inquérito, 1999), 153-168.

¹²On the creation of the PAIGC and its roots in political events in Guinea-Bissau, see António E. Duarte Silva, “Guiné-Bissau: a causa do nacionalismo e a fundação do PAIGC,” *Cadernos de Estudos Africanos* 9-10 (2006), consulted on 22 February 2016 (URL: <http://cea.revues.org/1236>; DOI: 10.4000/cea.1236).

¹³Ângela S. Benoliel Coutinho, “Les dirigeants du PAIGC, parti africain pour l’indépendance de la Guinée-Bissau et du Cap-Vert: des origines à la scission: étude de parcours individuels, de stratégies familiales et d’idéologies,” PhD Thesis (Université Paris I, 2005).

movement that would obviously carefully prepare its ground for its activities in Cape Verde.

The analysis of these decolonization processes has been astonishingly superficial. Partly, this may be due to the activities of a first generation of historians of those processes, as many of the scholars in question were sympathizers and supporters of the liberation movements. Afterwards, little further progress has been made from the 1980s onwards. Although a number of important archives, initially in Portugal and later in the former colonies, have subsequently become available after 2000, this has not led to new analyses of the process. The fact that the overview of Norrie MacQueen—who in the end is a political scientist and not a historian—still counts as the principal study of Portuguese decolonization, speaks for itself.¹⁴ The experience of the war situation from various perspectives and concerning various types of agencies and groups of actors, has not really been interpreted.¹⁵ A recent attempt by Pamila Gupta to approach the experience of Portuguese decolonization, for example in Mozambique, is exemplary for the few existing attempts by favouring unsystematic interpretation without social historical context, through visual and oral accounts, over the systematic study of social processes.¹⁶ I am not saying here that such approaches—“ethnographic but ... attuned to history” as Gupta claims—are irrelevant. However, they only make wider analytic sense if based on the historical study of social processes.

However, this problem goes beyond the study of the officially Lusophone societies in sub-Saharan Africa. Certainly, the conditions of the “Lusophone

¹⁴Norrie MacQueen, *The Decolonization of Portuguese Africa: Metropolitan Revolution and the Dissolution of Empire* (London and New York: Longman, 1997).

¹⁵Only some issues of the war years have been studied so far. Road connections and the social history of Angola are analysed in Inge Brinkman, “Routes and the War for Independence in Northern Angola (1961–1974),” *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 40 (2) (2006): 205–234; the studies of Allen Isaacman, including the last on the history of the Cabora Bassa Dam in Mozambique, can be read in a similar way, see Allen F. Isaacman and Barbara S. Isaacman, *Dams, Displacement, and the Delusion of Development: Cabora Bassa and Its Legacies in Mozambique, 1965–2007* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2013), 95–121, 135–146. We can find a more profound interpretation of the guerrilla in Guinea-Bissau in the older study of Mustafah Dhada, *Warriors at Work: How Guinea was Really set Free* (Niwot/CO: University Press of Colorado, 1993).

¹⁶Pamila Gupta, “Decolonization and (Dis)Possession in Lusophone Africa,” in Darshan Vigneswaran and Joel Quirk, eds., *Mobility Makes States: Migration and Power in Africa* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 169–193, esp. 173–176.

countries” have provoked a particular type of politicization of the decolonization issue, in which the interest of scholars seems to have remained centered on specific deeds of the leaders of anticolonial movements and on some spectacular massacres.¹⁷ But the absence of a social history of populations during the decolonization years is a general phenomenon for a large number of African states and societies.¹⁸ This is likely to have to do with research priorities on the one hand, and with a problematic approach to available sources on the other. One principal if surprising problem of current research activities is the lack of engagement with postcolonial archival documentation—and even with late colonial archival resources. In some cases, this is a simple consequence of the fact that documents produced by the administrations of the independent states seem to be unavailable. However, in many circumstances, historians give too much credence to information pointing to the eventual destruction of entire archival holdings. This information frequently has little to do with the facts. Therefore, it has to be said that a recent special dossier in the journal *History in Africa*, comes to a surprisingly negative picture concerning the access to archives. This picture is erroneous in many cases.¹⁹ In a number of West African countries—I might just cite Benin, Togo, Ghana, Senegal, or Burkina Faso—greater progress could be made with regard to postcolonial archival holdings; a more

¹⁷See the excellent (if classical) Michel Cahen, “The Mueda Case and Maconde Political Ethnicity: Some Notes on a Work in Progress,” *Africana Studia* 2 (1999): 29-46.

¹⁸One of the few exceptions is Kate Skinner, “Who Knew the Minds of the People? Specialist Knowledge and Developmentalist Authoritarianism in Postcolonial Ghana,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 39 (2) (2011): 297-323.

¹⁹Within the dossier, see the exemplary article of Florence Bernault, “Suitcases and the Poetics of Oddities: Writing History from Disorderly Archives,” *History in Africa* 42 (2015): 269-277. Only the article by John Straussberger – which discusses the potentials of a provincial archive in Guinea-Conakry – points into a different direction, see John Straussberger, “Fractures and Fragments: Finding Postcolonial Histories of Guinea in Local Archives,” *History in Africa* 42 (2015): 299-307. A prognosis of the problem of postcolonial archives – an unsurprising problem – was already expressed by Stephen Ellis: “Bluntly stated, it is unlikely that historians seeking to write the history of Africa since independence will enjoy the same quality of documents as their colleagues studying the colonial period” (Stephen Ellis, “Writing Histories of Contemporary Africa,” *Journal of African History* 43 (1) (2002): 1-26, 12-13 (see the quote on page 12)). And Ellis is right – but this does not mean that the historians will not find *any* documents! There are quite a lot in many cases.

concentrated effort towards undertaking and including archival research would indeed be helpful.

In the case of Cabo Verde, the potential for research progress is impressive. The Library and Archives of the Presidency in Praia are currently carrying out a project of classification of the archives of the president's office and of some ministries; this will in the future become a new important place of historical sources.²⁰ The National Archives of Cabo Verde have a number of projects to digitalise the archival documentation of town halls in the different islands, although little has come out of these attempts. The PAICV may in the future offer access to its own archives, which were during some time said to have been destroyed during the fall of the one-party regime in 1991.²¹ In some of the town halls the access to the municipal archives might be possible in the future (and especially if there is finally some interest of historians in their holdings), but in most cases this is not yet the case.

Elsewhere, access to postcolonial archives is already possible (if difficult), and my study is based on the interpretation of a number of unexplored archives. The archives of the Ministry of Rural Development, in Achada São Filipe, are important for the study of the local experience of decolonization in Praia and in the island of Santiago; similarly, the municipal archives of São Vicente are essential for an understanding of the local transition of power. These new sources allow for a dense history of both social and sociopolitical transitions.

Uneasy transition: the creation of a PAIGC platform in Praia and Mindelo

In many accounts, the situation of nationalist mobilization in Cabo Verde after 25 April 1974 tends to be presented as a straightforward story.²² This comes in part from the fact that the relatively few existing interpretations are mainly based on the narrated versions of leading politicians, such as the long-term Cape Verdean president, Aristides Pereira.²³ However, we find a

²⁰Conversation with Any Cardoso, director of the Library of the Presidential Palace, Praia, 11 January 2016.

²¹Conversation with the Administrative Secretary of the PAICV in Praia, PAICV Party Building, 11 January 2016.

²²An example of this approach is Leila Leite Hernandez, *Os filhos da terra do sol: a formação do estado-nação em Cabo Verde* (São Paulo: Solo Negro, 2002), 187-201.

²³Aristides Pereira, *O meu testemunho: uma luta, um partido, dois países* (Lisbon: Notícias, 2003); Jorge Querido, *Cabo Verde: Subsídios para a história da nossa luta de libertação* (Lisbon:

number of indications suggesting that the PAIGC, as the successful force of the struggle in Guinea-Bissau, where it was on the verge of victory already before the downfall of the authoritarian regime in Lisbon, was unprepared to quickly play a role in the archipelago. Only thanks to a number of supporters under the denomination of Frente Ampla Anticolonial, the presence of the PAIGC finally became dominant in Praia and Mindelo alike—although this was a gradual process, over a number of months, and in which the question of the support base remains complex.²⁴ In much of the existing literature, the December 1974 treaty is taken as evidence that Portuguese officials were so impressed by the party's dominance in the islands that they decided for a rapid transition of power. The remaining observations made by the few more analytical studies are then mainly interested in the unsuccessful steps towards creation of a union between Guinea-Bissau and Cabo Verde, which finally failed with the Guinean coup d'état in 1980. Cultural manifestations and sports events indicated a change towards the development of a Cape Verdean national identity, which was formed in the end without any link with Guinea.²⁵

How convincing is this description of the local support bases for 1974? Obviously, the initial absence of a more clearly visible rebel movement in the islands had to do with two factors: the activity of a (slightly over-nervous) political police responding to any social movement with repression; and the commitment of a Cape Verdean elite—both in the archipelago and in other Portuguese colonies—which, in spite of experiences of racist discrimination, did not sympathise with the liberation movements.²⁶ The Portuguese Polícia Internacional e da Defesa do Estado (the political police: PIDE), converted into Directorate-General of Security Issues (Direcção-Geral

Vega, 1988).

²⁴Antero da Conceição Monteiro Fernandes, "Guiné – Bissau e Cabo Verde: Da Unidade à Separação," unpublished MA thesis, University of Porto, 2007, 34-35.

²⁵Víctor Andrade de Melo and Rafael Fortes, "Identidade em transição: Cabo Verde e a taça Amílcar Cabral," *Afro-Ásia* 50 (2014): 11-44, 14.

²⁶Alexander Keesee, "Imperial Actors? Cape Verdean Mentality in the Portuguese Empire under the *Estado Novo*, 1926-1974," in Eric Morier-Genoud and Michel Cahen, eds., *Imperial Migrations: Colonial Communities and Diaspora in the Portuguese World* (Basingstoke and New York: PalgraveMacmillan, 2012): 129-148; a different picture, insisting on the role of the various resistance groups, dominates in José Augusto Pereira, *O PAIGC perante o dilema Cabo-Verdiano [1959-1974]* (Lisbon: Casa da Comunicação, 2015), 140-147.

de Segurança: DGS), was rigorous in crushing, for example, a group of workers in Ribeira Grande, in Santo Antão, who were suspected to be communists and PAIGC supporters.²⁷ Jorge Querido, a key PAIGC middleman in both São Vicente and Praia, was efficiently neutralized during that and other occasions.²⁸ Moreover, police repression included pressures of PIDE agents against the families of suspicious Cape Verdean students in the metropole: the future director of the agricultural services of independent Cabo Verde, Horácio Constantino da Silva Soares, was part of a first generation of Cape Verdean students whose parents experienced such pressure.²⁹ This method was increasingly used in the 1960s and early 1970s.

The influence of a number of Cape Verdean administrators belonging to the elite was also instrumental in calming the spirits during the last years of colonial rule. While some of these members of the administrative core group had shown signs of opposition to the violence inherent in Portuguese colonial rule, most did not break with the colonial regime before the Carnation Revolution. The large majority of these officials fled from the archipelago in summer 1974, preferring a Lisbon exile to the struggle with the nationalist movement and especially the PAIGC, which they regarded as led by radicals.³⁰

In July 1974, Policarpo de Sousa Santos visited Cabo Verde as a special envoy of the revolutionary government. Sousa Santos is a complex witness, but highly interesting; his testimony is unique and can in my view be used for an analysis of the social forces in the months after 25 April. As an inspector and as acting administrator of Praia during the worst ravages of the

²⁷Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon, Portugal (ANTT), PIDE/DGS, Del. CV Praia, 124/SR, NP 5409, Sub-inspector of the PIDE in Praia to Inspector of the Delegation of Cabo Verde, *Agitação de trabalhadores no concelho da Ribeira Grande – Santo Antão* (n° 8/I-S.R.), 11 Feb. 1969, 10.

²⁸ANTT, PIDE/DGS Del. CV Praia, 124/SR, NP 5409, José Vasco Meireles, Director of the Sub-Delegation of the PIDE in Praia, to Director-Geral of the PIDE, *Averiguações em Santo Antão relacionadas com a agitação dos trabalhadores em Fevereiro último*. (n° 64/S.R.), 22 May 1969, p. 4. On the broader role of Querido, see also Pereira, *PAIGC*, 129.

²⁹Arquivo Histórico Nacional de Cabo Verde, Praia, Cabo Verde (AHNCV), RPSAC, SC:A\SR:R\ Cx217, Tadeu do Carmo Monteiro, Administrator of District of São Nicolau, Commissioner of Post of Q.A., to Director of the Provincial Department of the Services of Civil Administration (n° 453/957/Jba), 14 Aug. 1957.

³⁰Luís Batalha, *The Cape Verdean Diaspora in Portugal: Colonial Subjects in a Postcolonial World* (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2004), 88-94.

1948 famine, this official had close contacts with the older generation of Cape Verdean officials; his vocal criticism of the colonial policy in the archipelago earned him a downturn in his career.³¹ As labour inspector in Mozambique in the 1960s, Sousa Santos remained a liberal; even so, he was loyal to the authoritarian regime. After the downfall of the Portuguese *Estado Novo*, this envoy opined that the cities of the archipelago were now dominated by a small minority of ‘racist’ radicals.³² His discussion was a mixture of wishful thinking and attentive empirical observation:

From here started in Santiago, and in particular in the city of Praia, half a dozen of individuals, to which just the *infamous colonialist regime*, the one that had endured for five hundred years in the archipelago, gave the chance—thanks to direct and indirect support of the Government, thanks to study grants and exceptions from inscription fees, university subsidies and other forms of support in the Metropole—to obtain a higher education diploma; this half a dozen of individuals, of which some are installed in the structures of official administration, this group of individuals started under the atmosphere of freedom instituted by the movement of 25 April, to disarticulate the structures of administrative organization themselves, by uncontrolled propaganda, by the activity of pamphleteers who do not refrain to use the meanest forms of personal attacks or of systematic defamation, of forthright offence against the institutions and the services of the State, arriving as it is publicly known to bring forth insults against the entities and functions in immediate relationship with the most representative levels of the sphere of government.³³

Certainly, the envoy of the revolutionary government underestimated the support base of the Frente Ampla, the nationalist group around Querido, Centeno, Rodrigues, Felisberto Vieira Lopes and David Hopffer Almeida.³⁴ The events of the Summer of 1974—and especially the commemor-

³¹Alexander Keese, “Managing the Prospect of Famine: Cape Verdean Officials, Subsistence Emergencies, and the Change of Elite Attitudes during Portugal’s Late Colonial Phase, 1939–1961,” *Itinerario* 35 (2) (2012): 48–69.

³²Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Lisbon, Portugal (AHU), Espólio particular António Policarpo de Sousa Santos, Cx. I, Relatório sobre a viagem de serviço a Cabo Verde, Policarpo de Sousa Santos, *Cabo Verde e a auto-determinação* (without number), without date [probably July 1974], 2–3.

³³AHU, Espólio particular António Policarpo de Sousa Santos, Cx. I, Relatório sobre a viagem de serviço a Cabo Verde, Policarpo de Sousa Santos, *Cabo Verde e a auto-determinação* (without number), without date [probably July 1974], 3.

³⁴AHU, Espólio particular António Policarpo de Sousa Santos, Cx. I, Relatório sobre a viagem de serviço a Cabo Verde, Policarpo de Santos Sousa, *Viagem ao Arquipélago de Cabo*

ation of the Pidjiguiti incident (which had taken place in Bissau in 1959)—demonstrated that in the urban centres at least (if not in some of the rural districts of Santiago, where the residents were initially hostile against the movement), different groups were eager to be mobilized in solidarity with the Guinean activities. A principal observation of Sousa Santos was nevertheless accurate: the sympathizers of the PAIGC had been lucky to get control of the newspaper “Arquipélago” and of the Radio Clube de Cabo Verde, and they profited immensely by using the radio station to diffuse the programme “Grito de Cabo Verde” (“Cry from Cabo Verde”).³⁵ This particular constellation reversed the initial relative weakness of the PAIGC supporters in Praia: the attacks against some individuals working for the administration, the burning of a number of cars and residences on 30 April and 1 May 1974, were first signals of this development.³⁶ Moreover, the activists of the PAIGC started to insist, especially, on the necessity of an agrarian reform that would benefit smallholders. In Santiago, this discourse allowed the party gaining some ground in the rural districts.³⁷

In São Vicente, it is even more complicated to measure the strength of the PAIGC by the Summer of 1974. Some of the most engaged activists of those months, such as Amiro Faria—technician working for the town hall in Mindelo—Júlio Vera-Cruz, the engineer Tito Lívio or António Augusto Costa—were able to profit from the sympathy of a part of the armed forces for the liberation movement, to strengthen an unstable position, converting poetry sessions into political meetings. In those months, control over the

Verde, em comissão eventual de serviço, determinada por despacho de S.Exa. o Secretário de Estado de Administração, em plena concordância com S.Exa. o Ministro de Coordenação Interterritorial: (without number), 30 July 1974, 5.

³⁵AHU, Espólio particular António Policarpo de Sousa Santos, Cx. 1, Relatório sobre a viagem de serviço a Cabo Verde, Policarpo de Sousa Santos, *Cabo Verde e a auto-determinação* (without number), without date [probably July 1974], 2-3.

³⁶AHU, Espólio particular António Policarpo de Sousa Santos, Cx. 1, Relatório sobre a viagem de serviço a Cabo Verde, *Apontamentos: Momento político após o “25 de Abril”* (without number), without date, 1.

³⁷AHU, Espólio particular António Policarpo de Sousa Santos, Cx. 1, Relatório sobre a viagem de serviço a Cabo Verde, *Projecto de uma Mensagem a enviar ao Presidente da República e à Junta da Salvação Nacional apresentada pelo Eng.º Duarte Fonseca depois de Contactos com Elementos representativos de diversas Correntes de Opinião, e que será sujeita à Discussão na Reunião pública que se realiza no Dia 27 de Maio pelas 18 Horas na Sala de Conferências do Centro de Estudos, na Cidade da Praia. [...] (without number), without date, 3.*

newspaper “Alerta” (the former “Arquipélago”) and of the radio was instrumental to get the upper hand against the group organized within the União Democrática de Cabo Verde (UDC), the latter advocating independence but refusing any union with the Guineans on the mainland. Pamphlets distributed by the UDC are of course biased, and it is difficult to judge (and slightly doubtful) if this movement initially had a possibility to compete with the PAIGC in São Vicente. But they offer some interesting insights. Apparently, the PAIGC had a strong base of recruitment amongst former prisoners of the political police (the PIDE/DGS), and success amongst the students of the *Liceu* (the secondary school) and the Technical School. However, a part of Mindelo’s elite was scandalised by the pro-Guinean opinions of the movement: UDC leaders accused the pharmacist Issura Tavares Cardoso, a well-known PAIGC militant, to incite the women of the city to take up Guinean manners, described in quite a racist way: ‘she even got to the point to invite the women of our land to wear clothes like the black women of Guinea, eat with their fingers, and other kinds of madness’.³⁸

Other informants insisted on the lack of politicization within the Cape Verdean population after 25 April; a common claim was that the PAIGC, after its first appearance in the archipelago, had an initial support base amongst the young urban populations, and especially the many inhabitants of rural areas who hurried to migrate into Praia and São Vicente in the first two months after the fall of the *Estado Novo*. However, the aggressive rhetoric of some of the party’s leaders disillusioned a number of its followers, especially in Praia, and that in spite of the PAIGC’s dominance of the press. The elites of Mindelo organized within the UDC could, however, get few advances out of those conditions—they seemed too strongly associated with an urban world to become popular with the many recent migrants struggling for parcels of land in the city’s outskirts.³⁹ Doubtlessly, Aristides Pereira and the PAIGC managed to monopolise the negotiations with the Portuguese

³⁸AHU, Espólio particular António Policarpo de Sousa Santos, Cx. I, Relatório sobre a viagem de serviço a Cabo Verde, Dr. João Baptista Monteiro, President of the UDC; Dr. Jorge Luís Guedes de Andrade de Almeida da Fonseca, Vice-President, and other chairmen of the UDC, *Apointamento* (without number), without date.

³⁹AHU, Espólio particular António Policarpo de Sousa Santos, Cx. I, Relatório sobre a viagem de serviço a Cabo Verde, *Cabo Verde* (without number), without date, 1-2.

transition government—this gave a clear advantage to the party.⁴⁰ At the same time, however, the questions of absent landowners and of a rural reorganization, were very clearly at the heart of the demands, already weeks after the 25 April. The political mobilization of the PAIGC profited from these conditions.⁴¹

Do we thus need to describe the interpretations of Policarpo de Sousa Santos and his Cape Verdean informants, collected between April and early August 1974, as a kind of simple wishful thinking? Certainly, the group led by Vicente, Vieira Lopes, Hopffer Almeida, Querido, Rodrigues, and Centeno had a real influence—and not only a talent to “recruit real kids, drugging them to provoke riots,” as Policarpo claimed.⁴² But the support base was more volatile than it seemed from outside, at least in Sal, but also in parts of Santiago and in Mindelo.⁴³ And in Fogo, which would later become a principal stronghold of PAIGC political action, the urban population of Mosteiros and São Filipe forced in June 1974 the emissaries of the party to return immediately on the next plane, in spite of the more ambivalent position of the Cape Verdean administrator, Napoleão de Azevedo.⁴⁴ The trump

⁴⁰AHU, Espólio particular António Policarpo de Sousa Santos, Cx. I, Relatório sobre a viagem de serviço a Cabo Verde, *Projecto de uma Mensagem a enviar ao Presidente da República e à Junta da Salvação Nacional apresentada pelo Eng.º. Duarte Fonseca depois de Contactos com Elementos representativos de diversas Correntes de Opinião, e que será sujeita à Discussão na Reunião pública que se realiza no Dia 27 de Maio pelas 18 Horas na Sala de Conferências do Centro de Estudos, na Cidade da Praia. Esta Reunião continua e completa a Reunião pública realizada na Sala do Rádio Clube da Praia no Dia 24 das 21 às 24 Horas, em que foram largamente debatidos Problemas relativos ao actual Momento político, num Ambiente de Ordem e com prestigiante Elevação. – Mensagem da População e Forças Vivas da Cidade da Praia a Sua Presidente da República e Junta de Salvação Nacional – Lisboa* (without number), without date, 1-3.

⁴¹AHU, Espólio particular António Policarpo de Sousa Santos, Cx. I, Relatório sobre a viagem de serviço a Cabo Verde, *Projecto de uma Mensagem a enviar ao Presidente da República*, 4.

⁴²AHU, Espólio particular António Policarpo de Sousa Santos, Cx. I, Relatório sobre a viagem de serviço a Cabo Verde, Policarpo de Santos Sousa, *Viagem ao Arquipélago de Cabo Verde, em comissão eventual de serviço, determinada por despacho de S.Exa. o Secretário de Estado de Administração, em plena concordância com S.Exa. o Ministro de Coordenação Interterritorial*: (without number), 30 July 1974, 5.

⁴³AHU, Espólio particular António Policarpo de Sousa Santos, Cx. I, Relatório sobre a viagem de serviço a Cabo Verde, *Policarpo de Santos Sousa, Viagem ao Arquipélago de Cabo Verde*, 3 (Sal), 9 (Santiago), 13 (São Vicente).

⁴⁴AHU, Espólio particular António Policarpo de Sousa Santos, Cx. I, Relatório sobre a viagem de serviço a Cabo Verde, *Policarpo de Santos Sousa, Viagem ao Arquipélago de Cabo Ver-*

card of PAIGC mobilization remained the insecurity of the administration, which subsidized the control of Cape Verdean media that were turned against the Portuguese presence and thus permitted the strategic takeover of key media organs by PAIGC activists. The other key advantage was the control over both the marginalized inhabitants of the poor urban suburbs, and, especially, over the migrants who flocked into Mindelo and Praia from the rural areas.⁴⁵ The latter process was particularly beneficial to the success of the party, but it also created expectations that would condition the social experiences of the years 1975—before and after independence—and 1976.

Taking over the nation: collective endeavours and the integration of the militants in Santiago and São Vicente

The collapse of the repressive system of Portuguese colonialism in the aftermath of the Carnation Revolution did not only lead to a reordering of local political activity, which in a complex process allowed for the installation of PAIGC members in key positions. It also had an immediate social impact. During the first months after April 1974, in the urban areas and adjacent zones, land was occupied, and new problems of maintenance of the infrastructure and of access to drinking water appeared. In rural districts, local populations attempted to improve their material situation, while the question of land distribution immediately turned out to be an issue.

The PAIGC became entrenched in the various islands from the second half of 1974, through the creation of party units in all the rural and urban constituencies. The image of former participation in the successful guerrilla war helped to claim a role locally.⁴⁶ Party structures constituted a principal filter of requests and demands of local populations. However, at the same time, the PAIGC leadership around Aristides Pereira needed a strong intern-

de, 10.

⁴⁵AHU, Espólio particular António Policarpo de Sousa Santos, Cx. I, Relatório sobre a viagem de serviço a Cabo Verde, *Policarpo de Santos Sousa, Viagem ao Arquipélago de Cabo Verde*, 7.

⁴⁶Once again, Ângela Coutinho is the only scholar who offers an analytical discussion of how the myth of the guerrilla struggle was used to justify the PAIGC's newly-won dominance in the archipelago, see Ângela S. Benoliel Coutinho, "Imaginando o combatente ideal do PAIGC: a construção dos heróis nacionais na imprensa do pós-independência na Guiné-Bissau e em Cabo Verde," in Luís Reis Torgal, Fernando Tavares Pimenta, and Julião Soares Sousa, eds., *Comunidades imaginadas: Nação e nacionalismos em África* (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2008), 173-180.

al organism of local administration, once their takeover of power had been negotiated with the Portuguese government. This organism, the Directorate of International Administration (Direcção de Administração Interna: DAI), led by Carlos W. Veiga, was essential in organizing the transition.⁴⁷

The DAI faced a number of challenges from its inception onwards. The agents of its delegation in Praia, which became the institutional instrument of keeping order in the urban areas, were unhappy about the original administrative structure of the independent state, where the functions of local officials (*regedores* and *cabos-chefes*) were suspected to continue according to the old, colonial structures. These were quickly removed after July 1975—but their removal created chaotic conditions.⁴⁸ Minor services of the earlier intermediaries, including the important registration of immigrants' entitlements, could immediately be taken over by the Internal Administration agents.⁴⁹ But other practices became chaotic during a phase, with the different agents providing tasks on one island and refusing them on others.⁵⁰ Another sector where the internal administration department did not manage to impose its objectives was at the level of the markets. In spite of initially clear price regulations for foodstuffs, introduced shortly before independence, the control measures continued to be inefficient.⁵¹ The subsequent problems were accompanied by a more general precariousness of state budgets: by October 1976 it became clear that initially stipulated salaries for state officials could not be paid in their entirety, or at least only with enormous delays.⁵² Equally difficult was the situation of the health and social services. Although the National Directorate of Social Affairs was in

⁴⁷See the polemic Humberto Cardoso, *O partido único em Cabo Verde: um assalto à esperança* (Praia: Imprensa Nacional de Cabo Verde, 1993).

⁴⁸AHNCV, ACP (B1), SC:A\SR:E\Cx018, 137, Acting Delegate of Internal Administration (Administrative Secretary) to National Board of the PAIGC in Cabo Verde (n° 647/57/75), 30 Dec. 1975.

⁴⁹ACMSV, Diversos – 1975/76, Daniel Cardoso Henrique Mendes, Delegate of Internal Administration in Mindelo, to Carlos Veiga, National Director of Internal Administration (n° 823/20.09/76), 30 Nov. 1976, 1.

⁵⁰ACMSV, Diversos – 1975/76, João de Deus Maximiano for Veiga, to Daniel Henrique Cardoso (n° 4449/Proc.20.09.CG/76), 21 Dec. 1976.

⁵¹ACMSV, Diversos – 1975/76, Octávio Miranda Lima, Controller at the Agricultural Goods Market, to Administrative Secretary of São Vicente (without number), 19 Oct. 1976, 2.

charge of distributing free food and medication, the service did not really work. The shortcomings were massive in the island of São Vicente. The directorate did not receive the expected stocks of food, and did not cooperate with the DAI. The reports of the internal administration department illustrate widespread despair about these malfunctions.⁵³ Earlier attempts at tighter control of the intermediaries in those channels—the public enterprise responsible for food distribution, the EMPA—by the Ministry of the Economy had obviously failed.⁵⁴

In the agglomerations of the principal urban centres—Praia and Mindelo—the social situation complicated itself through a massive influx of migrants in the months after 25 April 1974. Certainly, such migration into the urban zones had already been the case during the hunger crises of the 1940s. However, these earlier migrants had had a difficult life: they had been harassed by the colonial administration, including the local authorities.⁵⁵ The absence of such repression led to a number of sanitary and social problems. Especially, in 1975 and 1976, many of the town quarters, which had been subject to massive immigration, presented problems of access to drinking water. Fonte Inês in Mindelo was an especially dramatic example: this neighbourhood was characterized by an omnipresence of litter and stagnant water, all of which being due to the many new sheds, built in its vicinity.⁵⁶ Even in more central town quarters, the occupation of land and the problems of litter services were ubiquitous.⁵⁷

⁵²ACMSV, Diversos – 1975/76, Daniel Henrique Cardoso Mendes, Delegate of Internal Administration, to Carlos Veiga, National Director of Internal Administration (n° 541/20.09/76), 13 Oct. 1976.

⁵³ACMSV, Diversos – 1975/76, Manuel Faustino, Minister of Health and Social Assistance, to National Director of Internal Administration (n° 1447/SAS - cópia), 11 Oct. 1976, 1-2.

⁵⁴ACMSV, Diversos – 1975/76, Monteiro Pereira, Director of Regional Delegation of Empresa Pública de Abastecimento in São Vicente, to Delegation of Internal Administration, em SV (n° 831), 11 Sep. 1976.

⁵⁵Keese, “Managing”; the same conditions are discussed in António Carreira, *Cabo Verde (Aspectos sociais. secas e fomes do século XX)*, 2nd ed. (Lisbon: Ulmeiro, 1984 [1977]), III-II3. Carreira presents Policarpo de Sousa Santos as retired inspector (in 1948!), which is incorrect.

⁵⁶ACMSV, Diversos – 1975/76, Jacinto António Andrade, Secretary of PAIGC Committee of the Quarter of Fonte Inês, *Sector Centro – Comité de Bairro de Fonte Inês – Relatório* (without number), 11 Oct. 1976.

Carlos Veiga's internal administration service promised quick remedies for these dramatic social problems. The various technical services of the different ministries were supposed to be at the service of the DAI in these regards. Yet in November 1976, commenting on the proceedings of development issues, the internal administration agent in Mindelo admitted that the weak engagement of the specialized technical services led to slow progress.⁵⁸ I will have a look at internal conflicts and misunderstandings that explain the local malfunctions in the final section of this article.

The logics and problems of the transition in the countryside were different. Generally, in the rural areas, especially of Santiago Island, the receptivity of former agricultural workers to the new government was initially high when it came to voluntary participation in new infrastructure projects after 1974. In the early months after 25 April 1974, most of the enthusiasm seems to have been genuine, although it sometimes faded away relatively quickly. The voluntary works included a number of sizeable projects: a good example for that is the creation of road infrastructure in the São Domingos region of the island. The initiatives were slowed down by an absence of workers' material, as neither the Department of Public Works nor that of Agriculture had any equipment available.⁵⁹ In some communities in the vicinity of São Domingos, like Dacabalaio, the lack of any usable road network motivated the residents to engage in the construction of a five-kilometre path to the neighbouring village of Rui Vaz: however, they complained to the urban administration of Praia about the lack of support. The case of Dacabalaio seems to be representative for the problems that rural populations experienced between 1974 and 1976: between four groups of actors, i.e. initially enthusiastic villagers, rural party committees, the Directorate of Internal Administration, and the specialized services of ministries, the cooperation was extremely fragile.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ACMSV, Diversos – 1975/76, Alexandre de Brito to Delegation of Internal Administration in São Vicente (without number), 10 Aug. 1976.

⁵⁸ACMSV, Diversos – 1975/76, Daniel Henrique Cardoso Mendes, Delegado AI/SV, {*Sessão de 24/Nov./976*} – *Proposta: “Plano de Desenvolvimento Regional”* (without number), 22 Nov. 1976, 1-2.

⁵⁹AMDRCV, Dossier “B.I.F.A. À Direcção Regional do P.A.I.G.C. 1975,” José Tomás Veiga, National Committee in Cabo Verde of the PAIGC, to National Director of Agriculture, Forests and Livestock (without number), 18 May 1976.

One of the principal worries of the recently installed party structures and their leaders was that the public sector employees of the former colonial administration, now in retreat, could sabotage the new tasks. The handing over of documents in the last months before independence was sometimes slow; and the alleged misdeeds of the former administration including its Cape Verdean personnel constituted a welcome scapegoat for any delays in development work. But there is little evidence for any strategy of Portuguese administrators, or of Cape Verdean officials of the late colonial phase, to undermine the activities of the future new administration. Rather, the Portuguese officials still on the ground had lost touch with a number of planned projects in infrastructure maintenance and rural and urban politics in particular; and the local leaders of the PAIGC were very eager to show their followers a successful start, but had no real plan for new local projects. The occupation of the land of the agricultural concessions of Boa Entrada, Chã-de-Tanque, Picos, Mato Gege and Montanha by former sharecroppers was a typical case in that regard: PAIGC leaders wanted to satisfy the rural ‘underclass’, but, at the same time, they wanted to know more about the eventual plans the colonial power could have had for these lands. The result of these conflicting strategies was nervous accusations against the Portuguese administration for not disclosing their information on time.⁶¹ It is obvious that by early 1975 at least, such accusations had in fact little foundation. Instead, a number of local tensions and conflicts were due to the double structure of the new, independent administration.

The limits of prosperity: internal administration versus party rule in independent Cabo Verde

In terms of social life in the capital and its agglomeration, the new generation of officials in the government services became quickly alarmed of social and ecological conditions. Only five days after independence, the

⁶⁰AHNCV, ACP (B1), SC:A\SR:E\Cxo18, Augusto Barros, Inocêncio Barros, João Dias, to Committee of the Urban Administration of Praia (without number, resent by José do Rosário Cardoso, Delegate of Internal Administration, to National Director of Public Works, as n° 622 on 24 December 1975), 19 Dec. 1975.

⁶¹AMDRCV, Dossier “B.I.F.A. À Direcção Regional do P.A.I.G.C. 1975,” Sérgio Centeio for National Committee of Cabo Verde of the PAIGC, to António Simas de Oliveira Vera Cruz, Director of the Technical Brigade of Agricultural Development (without number), 13 June 1975.

director of the Department of Agriculture warned the leaders of the PAIGC that without a speedy “mentalisation” of the populations of the new obligations that independence brought them, disaster was lurking on the horizon.⁶² And in late July 1975, Horácio Constantino da Silva Soares, the same director, painted a dark picture of the hygienic situation in Praia and of the carelessness of the Cape Verdean citizens with regard to local resources. He called upon the party structures to react:

Comrades,

A number of our compatriots have complained with our services related to the agriculture of this country, concerning the damages caused to agriculture by animals left running around free, normally after nightfall.

We count on the cooperation of our comrades, principally via the local committees, in the sense of explaining to the rural populations that they should renounce at leaving animals roaming free, especially in the zones of agriculture, and that they should spare the few trees that still vegetate in our land.⁶³

The cutting down of trees, illegally, sometimes under false pretenses to mislead the local authorities, also became a common phenomenon in urban zones. In the case of Mindelo, the workers of public cleaning services regularly engaged in such activities, especially during weekends when the employees of the forestry services in the island were not at work.⁶⁴ The problem of ‘deforestation’—given the lack of trees in most of the drier islands—was an immense problem.

In summer 1976, officials at the Department of Agriculture were exasperated about a third issue. The perspective of the team in charge was that the PAIGC party structures entirely failed to adequately support the battle against locust plagues. In the preceding year, remaining funds still organized by the late colonial government had been generous enough to finance meas-

⁶²AMDRCV, Dossier “B.I.F.A. À Direcção Regional do P.A.I.G.C. 1975,” Horácio Constantino da Silva Soares, National Director of Agriculture, to the National Board of the PAIGC (n° 316), 10 July 1975.

⁶³AMDRCV, Dossier “B.I.F.A. À Direcção Regional do P.A.I.G.C. 1975,” Horácio Constantino da Silva Soares, National Director of Agriculture, to the National Board of the PAIGC (n° 345), 23 July 1975.

⁶⁴ACMSV, Diversos – 1975/76, Vicente Manuel Gomes, Employee of Forestry and Garden Services, to Administrative Secretariat of the District of São Vicente (without number), without date (22 Nov. 1976).

ures and personnel to destroy locusts—in 1976, given the absence of any budget, the success of the measure seemed to depend upon a massive affluence of volunteers. Within the department, the party was indirectly accused to invest only in publicity measures, and much less in the long-term well-being of the country's agriculture.⁶⁵ At an early moment, those officials insisted on the necessity of specialized services instead of basic democracy and the fulfillment of wishes expressed by rural inhabitants or those of the poor suburbs of the cities.

In turn, various local party units, and partly also the National Committee of the PAIGC, accused the “bureaucrats” to abandon the militants. The arguments were often the same: in the case of the agricultural propriety Nicolau Gomes, in Chã de Tanque in Santiago's Santa Catarina District, former agricultural workers had occupied the lands. The PAIGC section of the district pressured them into forming a cooperative and into investing voluntary work into canal-building and other infrastructure measures. This was refused, but instead of trying to seek a consensus with the local inhabitants, the Department of Agriculture was blamed for the lack of progress of that project.⁶⁶ In the urban agglomeration of Praia, the disorganized expansion of settlements led to the above-mentioned serious problems of access to drinking water; in the quarter of Achada Grande de Trás, the party structures accused the new administration—in this case the Department of Water—to have failed in its tasks.⁶⁷ All in all, the end of the transition period offers insights into mounting social conflicts within the new Cape Verdean state. Especially, the double process of creating party structures and of taking over the executive apparatus had created two different nodes of decision. Rural inhabitants and migrants from the rural zones addressed both—with complex consequences.

⁶⁵AMDRCV, Dossier “B.I.F.A. À Direcção Regional do P.A.I.G.C. 1975,” Horácio Constantino da Silva Soares, National Director of Agriculture, to the National Board of the PAIGC, - *Combate ao gafanhoto*.- (n° 754), 9 July 1976, 1-2.

⁶⁶AMDRCV, Dossier “B.I.F.A. À Direcção Regional do P.A.I.G.C. 1975,” José Luís Lopes Fernandes, for the Board of the PAIGC, to the Ministry of Agriculture and Water (n° DNP/104/76), 2 Feb. 1976.

⁶⁷AHNCV, ACP (B1), SC:A\SR:E\Cx018, 137, President of the Administrative Committee of the District of Praia, to National Director of the Department of Water (without number), 18 Nov. 1975.

Conclusions

The establishment of an independent state and its institutions in Cabo Verde was a complex process, and one that had deep effects on individuals living in the archipelago. Formerly unknown *archival* source material, while it is often challenging to track down, is indispensable for an interpretation of social processes related to the transition. Of course, the search and analysis of this material will remain an uneven process—some ministries, administrative services, municipalities will eventually provide access in the coming decades, whilst others will not. However, this is the most common situation for any historian interested in working with new archival data. Does this situation justify a continued disinterest in (late colonial and postcolonial) archival holdings, in Cabo Verde and elsewhere in West Africa? This is definitely not the case; quite on the contrary, we are in urgent need of interpretations of this empirical data that can subsequently (and only then) be complemented and challenged by other sources, such as interviews and an interpretation of the postcolonial Cape Verdean media.

A first such approach—still based on a limited (but formerly unused) selection of sources from Santiago and São Vicente—leads to a number of conclusions concerning the social history of the decolonization process in Cabo Verde, from the fall of the authoritarian regime in Portugal in April 1974 to the very practical struggles and social issues that the independent Cape Verdean administration faced by the end of 1976.

First of all, the transition period in Praia and Mindelo was characterized by a number of complexities. The victory of the PAIGC in the archipelago was not as straightforward as has been indicated in a literature that, to the current day, could probably not count as analytic. The activists in the urban centres had the advantage of obtaining early control of both key media outlets such as the radio and of an important newspaper. However, the principal group of supporters of the PAIGC in Cabo Verde, were landless rural populations and poor migrants in the urban centres, both of which had started to challenge administrative control and regulations after 25 April 1974. These individuals were essential for the takeover of power by the party—but they had massive expectations in terms of social improvements.

Second, in the years 1975 and 1976, the massive influx of rural populations in the two principal Cape Verdean cities provoked considerable social problems in the overcrowded poor suburbs. Lack of access to drinking wa-

ter, deforestation of the remaining reserves of trees, difficulties in terms of sanitation due to a collapse of the litter service, were all consequences of these problems. The independent Cape Verdean government made an attempt at organizing an internal administration directorate that, together with the technical services of the ministries, was supposed to improve these conditions. However, during the first eighteen months after independence these improvements did not materialize. In the rural zones, the replacement of the old auxiliaries of the colonial regime came in a very rash manner—the new structures were partly unable to respond to the demands of the inhabitants of villages in Santiago and São Vicente in particular.

Third, the new administrative services frequently clashed with the mobilization of the Cape Verdean population within party structures. The PAIGC leadership tried, during the months shortly before and after independence, to satisfy principal requests by some of the party sections, especially when those came from the initial party strongholds in the poorer migrant neighbourhoods of Praia and Mindelo. The internal administration services accused these sections to put their opportunistic goals higher than the wider interest of the new nation. This created a social conflict that would be intensified at the end of the decade, when the split between Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau complicated the picture even further.

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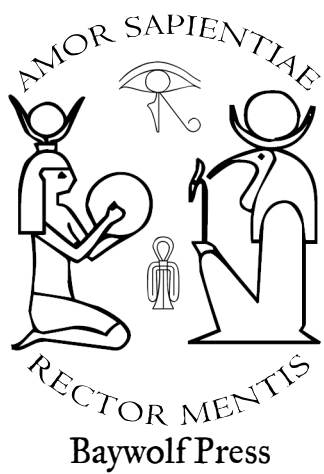
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