

Introduction

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This book analyses the many disputes surrounding the memory of an important historical event: the colonial wars and the liberation struggles that brought an end to the Portuguese empire in Africa and, in the first half of the 1970s, led to the emergence of five new nations: Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde and São Tomé e Príncipe. The conflict that started in 1961 in Angola and later extended to Guinea and Mozambique lasted 13 long years and is central to the remarkable political rupture which took place in Portugal. On 25 April 1974, the old *Estado Novo* regime was overthrown by a successful coup led by middle-ranking officers who refused to continue a war that was, in political terms, already lost, thus paving the way for democracy, and creating the conditions for the end of the long imperial cycle. On African soil, the struggle for independence was embedded in an international context defined by decolonisation processes in the South and the emergence of new movements that viewed the armed struggle as a means to achieving national independence. Even Cape Verde and São Tomé e Príncipe, which had not experienced armed struggles within their territories, would gain independence by sharing the same anticolonial grammar.

This volume aims to explore the reverberations of this past in the successive presents. It traces a mnemohistory of the colonial wars and the liberation struggles, examining and the role played by social, political, cultural and economic forces in the diachronic modelling of the past. While analysing the discursive and symbolic production of these historical representations in each national context, it also presents intersecting and comparative approaches which have the potential to reveal surprising similarities, drawing parallels and proposing dialogues for a shared history which, more than sixty years later, is still alive.

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Memory has become a hot topic in the social sciences and humanities. Having acquired academic status, particularly from the final decades of the twentieth century onwards, it is nowadays the driving force behind a prolific (trans)disciplinary field of research known as *memory studies*. An increasingly dense conceptual network has made it possible to consider memory – that is, the individual and collective

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processes of bringing the past into the present – in terms of its relationship to the social, the political and the cultural. Rather than serving as a mirror that reflects the past which institutions, collectives and individuals preserve and can accurately transmit or pass on, memory has been conceptualised as a social process shaped by cultural structures, ideological beliefs, markers of class, race or gender, strategic interests, life experiences and the prevailing models for historiographical research and its dissemination.

The emergence of memory studies has been closely linked to the theme of violence. As Ann Rigney observes, “there has been a close historical relationship between the emergence of the field and the atrocities that have marked recent history”, and an area of research was therefore constructed which “gravitated towards violence and its collective legacies”.¹ Hence, the main paradigm, particularly in its more markedly culturalist forms, would be constructed via a focus on the concept of trauma within an analytical framework that was based on the historical experience of the Holocaust – albeit belatedly, many years after the Second World War had ended.² Consequently, it would establish what has been defined as a “cosmopolitan mode of remembering” based, particularly from the 1980s onwards, on the convergence between the “consciousness of coming to terms with the violent past of the authoritarian regimes” and the transnational memory of the Holocaust.³

This framework is not entirely unrelated to the universalisation of human rights, which Samuel Moyn has described as the “last utopia”, precisely because it coincides with the decline of major transformative projects such as socialism and Third-Worldism, and because it aspires to an ideal of harmonious coexistence that has yet to be realised. The emergence of “human rights” as a globalised paradigm – based on the potential and limits of the Enlightenment and so often mobilised to legitimise wars, occupations and geopolitical disputes – is inseparable from the centrality which the notion of the “victim” would increasingly acquire, very often through the memory of the Holocaust.⁴

In Enzo Traverso’s analysis, the figure of the “victim” is associated with the erosion of the memory of revolutions, antifascism or anticolonialism.⁵ If this is true, it is not inevitable that invoking idea of the “victim”, in its many forms and contexts, always emerges as a counterpoint to notions of resistance or political engagement, leading to a depoliticisation of social processes and historical actors. In fact, the strategic use of the notion of “victim” – or the related notion of “human rights” – has also fuelled struggles for historical justice for individuals and groups targeted by violence, very often by resorting to a grammar of consensus and drawing on emotions such as empathy or suffering, of which the Latin American cases are the best-known examples.⁶

Moreover, the prevailing paradigm of trauma and violence within the field of memory studies has tended to erase theoretical reflections on experiences of struggle, exaltation and hope. Similarly, analyses that show how celebration and sacrifice, abnegation and hedonism may emerge as intertwined have been relegated to the margins, as Kristin Ross demonstrates in her study on the memory of May 68. In a critical reading of the dominant representations of the memory of the events, which featured mainly in the 1980s and 1990s, and were largely marked by regrets

about a political involvement seen as puerile or proto-totalitarian, Ross argues that in many cases “individuality was completed and not submerged by collectivity”, providing accounts of experiences that were simultaneously “serious and happy”.⁷ In the same vein, Ann Rigney has recently proposed opening up space in the field of memory studies for consideration of experiences and representations of fulfilment, joy and happiness, specifically in the context of exploring the nexus between memory and activism.⁸ To a certain extent, as can be seen in this book, remembering the colonial war and the liberation struggles requires us to engage in a similar exercise, creating a dialogue between the disruptive elements of violence and the evocations of hope and liberation which, particularly on the African side, converge and intersect in different historical times.

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It is important to provide a brief outline of the nature of the colonial war and the liberation struggles and their impact on the “metropole”, as it was known at the time and the colonised territories. The conflict emerged within the context of a broad-based and diverse movement for decolonisation that had erupted during the post-Second World War period. The Portuguese *Estado Novo* regime had been attempting, with little success, to resist the “winds of change” that had been blowing since then – with the Bandung Conference (1955), which gave voice to Afro-Asian proposals and expectations of independence, representing an important milestone – and would eventually lead to a conflict on several fronts in Africa: first in Angola (1961), and afterwards in Guinea (1963) and Mozambique (1964).

Although there were only four independent states in the African continent at the end of the Second World War – one of which was South Africa, at the time governed by a regime based on strict racial segregation – between 1956 and 1962, more than 30 territories became independent states. Counter to this trend, Portugal was refusing to engage in negotiations with the liberation movements that could have paved the way for the transfer of powers and prevented the war. At the same time, it had maintained the system of forced labour in the colonies – although this had been abolished on paper at the beginning of the 1960s, it still existed in practice⁹ – and had adopted the Lusotropicalist theories of the Brazilian Gilberto Freyre, which envisaged Portuguese colonialism as benign and open to diversity.¹⁰ Hence, a representation of a kind of “non-colonial colonialism” was disseminated and enshrined in the constitutional review of 1951. By replacing the word “colonies” with the term “overseas provinces”, the review helped construct the myth of a great multiracial and pluricontinental Portugal, while also seeking to defend Portugal in international arenas where its colonial presence was increasingly being challenged.

In fact, these strategies failed in containing the momentum of the pro-independence forces. In February 1961, armed groups launched a few actions in Luanda (Angola), including an attack on the *Casa de Reclusão Militar*, where several political prisoners were being held. The following month, the UPA (United Peoples of Angola) organised a revolt in the fazendas in the north of the country,

resulting in the deaths of thousands of settlers and black labourers and equally ferocious reprisals. In Portugal, images of the violent events caused widespread concern, intensified by the press, which was subject to censorship at the time.

In April 1961, advocating a negotiated solution for the colonies, the Minister for Defence, Júlio Botelho Moniz, became involved in a failed coup to depose António de Oliveira Salazar, the Portuguese dictator who had been in power for almost three decades. Following this, Salazar delivered a famous public speech which was broadcast on radio and television, ordering the immediate dispatch of troops to subdue the revolt in Angola. In the territory, the MPLA (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola), UPA/FNLA (which became the National Front for the Liberation of Angola in 1962) and UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) – a movement that emerged after a split in the FNLA leadership and would first take up arms on 25 December 1966, having for a certain period of time agreed to collaborate with the Portuguese – would draw up different plans and also fight among themselves. In Guinea, the PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde), committed to independence for both Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, led the fight against Portuguese colonialism. By the end of the 1960s, the PAIGC controlled more than half of Guinea and on 24 September 1973 – a few months after its leader, Amílcar Cabral, had been assassinated – it unilaterally proclaimed the independence of the territory. In Mozambique, the armed struggle would essentially be led by the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), which had been founded in 1962 and took up arms two years later.

It is important to clarify the still widespread notion of the isolation of Portugal at the time. This view is not unrelated to the image cultivated by the regime – Salazar and his rhetoric of standing “proudly alone”, announcing what would be, in his view, a hard but virtuous path – and the discourse of the opposition, committed to showing the backwardness and archaic nature of the *Estado Novo*. While it is true that part of the world had been endeavouring to support the liberation movements and Portugal had been condemned several times in international forums, countries such as France, Italy, England, the United States of America and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), within the framework of NATO, would provide military support for the war effort, sometimes discreetly or secretly.¹¹

Taking place thousands of kilometres away from the “metropole”, this war on three fronts required substantial financial resources – 40% of the General State Budget by the end of the conflict – and was pursued on a social scale that can be grasped simply by reference to certain statistics. Except for Israel, Portugal was the Western country with the greatest number of men in arms. In Africa, it deployed an army five times greater, proportionally, than the one used during the same period by the United States of America in Vietnam.¹² Out of a population of around nine million, approximately 800,000 young men were sent to Africa and forced to fight far away from their communities by the Portuguese state. In addition, the records show that over 200,000 failed to enrol for military service – in other words, around 20% of the young men called up for medical inspections in what was known as the metropole at the time, most of whom had fled in secret to central Europe – and

there were around 9,000 deserters and an estimated 10,000–20,000 draft evaders.¹³ The official figures also indicate approximately 10,000 deaths, 30,000 wounded and over 100,00 cases of post-traumatic stress disorder, on the Portuguese side alone.¹⁴

To these numbers should be added the more than 500,000 Africans who were recruited into the Portuguese army, in a process that intensified as the war progressed: in the 1970s, taking the three theatres of war into consideration, local recruitment accounted for over 40% of the total number of regular troops, and in Mozambique, it would represent more than half from 1971 onwards.¹⁵ This very significant number of Africans would meet different fates in the post-independence period: in Guinea-Bissau, hundreds were killed or fled the country; in Mozambique, they were subjected to a process of exposure and self-criticism in the late 1970s and early 1980s, prior to being admitted to the national army; in Angola they faced repression, some joining the ranks of the Angolan movements that were at war during the post-independence period.¹⁶

It is difficult to find complete and reliable data for casualties among the civilian populations and the African guerrillas.¹⁷ In Angola, Mozambique and Guinea the fighting not only involved the two warring sides, but also the local populations, whose mobilisation and control were part of the dynamics of war. The liberation movements endeavoured to gain the support of the populations and, particularly but not exclusively in the case of the PAIGC, managed to establish “liberated zones” covering a significant part of the territory, which emerged as a kind of “embryonic state”, organised on communitarian lines. At the same time, the Portuguese Armed Forces were developing a policy of relocation in village settlements run by the army, with the aim of controlling local populations, and a psychological action strategy designed to spread disinformation and garner local support by means of aid programmes for education, health, economy and infrastructures.

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Portugal would see its colonial empire – and the dictatorial political regime – collapse as a consequence of the war. While other European colonial powers such as Britain, France, Holland and Belgium were dealing with their various decolonisation processes, Portugal was still forcing thousands of young Portuguese and African men into a protracted conflict. On 25 April 1974, a military coup led by middle-ranking officers from the armed forces deposed Marcelo Caetano – who had replaced António de Oliveira Salazar as head of the country in September 1968 – and overthrew the *Estado Novo* dictatorship which had been in power since the early 1930s. Between 1974 and 1975, the country lived through a revolutionary period that would have a powerful impact on Portuguese society. In the months immediately after the “Carnation Revolution”, the liberation movements would only accept a ceasefire when independence had been recognised. In July 1974, the law recognising the colonised peoples’ right to independence was passed, paving the way for procedures for the transfer of power. Between August 1974 and January 1975, formal agreements on independence were signed.

In Portugal, the memory of the colonial war resisted affirmation in the public arena, particularly its violent dimension and the articulation of the conflict with the colonial order. After the revolutionary period, in which the desire to forget imperial history was combined with denunciations of colonial violence, from the mid-1970s onwards the war gradually became a memory that was difficult to discuss in the public domain. This situation has changed in recent years, although the evident “colonial aphasia”¹⁸ that permeates the public memory has still not been exorcised, as [Chapter 1](#) of this book demonstrates. The recent proliferation of monuments to the colonial war is also an indication of this, several reviving themes associated with the “Discoveries” or the Portuguese maritime and colonial past, while also performing the role of remembering the Portuguese who died in the conflict ([Chapter 5](#)), or (re)creating online communities for sharing and circulating representations of the war which also tend to reinforce a certain dominant memory, centred on the life experiences of former combatants ([Chapter 7](#)).¹⁹

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After the war ended and the new African countries were declared independent, they had to deal with several economic, cultural and social legacies in societies deeply scarred by discriminatory ideologies in which race had been a determining factor in defining the rights and obligations of citizenship – or rather, in denying them to the vast majority of the population. The Mozambican historian João Paulo Borges Coelho has also highlighted the impact of the “potential for violence” generated by the militarisation of the colonial areas during the war, creating what he terms a “violent post-colonial order”.²⁰ Although this is by no means the only explanation, it helps in understanding the history of the conflicts in some of these countries in the post-independence period – including the so-called “civil wars” in Angola (1975–2002) and Mozambique (1977–1992) and the various coups and similar incidents in Guinea-Bissau.

In general terms, the impact of colonial rule was evident in the demarcation of geographical borders, the lasting effects of a type of society designed to exploit and marginalise based on “race”, the erasure of indigenous structures for organisation and knowledge, and the repeated lack of economic, social and cultural investment available to the majority of the population. Moreover, in addition to being responsible for a considerable amount of weapons circulating within the country, the war also caused huge population displacements and internal migration flows which left the new countries facing the challenge of accommodating very large numbers of displaced people and refugees.²¹ Thus, with regard to their colonial pasts, the historical burden which the former colonised territories bear has had a significant influence, although this is frequently downplayed in analyses and public perceptions of the contemporary dynamics of these regions.

The liberation struggle would have an important role to play in the various African countries – despite the significant differences between them – conferring additional legitimacy on the independence movements and rapidly becoming the driving force behind the construction of the new states and their leaders. It was the founding moment of the *struggle*, celebrated as the epicentre of the emerging

national projects that made it possible to imagine new beginnings and define new utopias, hopes, values, forms of social organisation, geostrategic alliances and power structures.

A luta continua (“the struggle continues”), the slogan used in the context of the new independent nations – particularly by FRELIMO, but also by the PAIGC and MPLA – endorsed the decolonising mission of the struggle, which would not end with the political declarations of independence. In fact, it would shape a plan that went beyond the mere transfer of power, presenting itself as an act of liberation that challenged the political, economic and cultural constraints imposed by colonialism. Hence, the *struggle* enabled independence, while also drawing up a framework of possibilities within which it would be envisioned and fulfilled. Moreover, this memory-symbol became an active mnemonic agent in the political dynamics of the post-independence period, ratifying the new powers and establishing a “multidirectional” mnemonic interplay – to draw on the concept developed by Michael Rothberg²² – between the present of the struggle and independence and the broader past of oppression, resistance and suffering produced by colonialism.

The *continuity* of the struggle therefore established a decolonising momentum that did not end when the new flag was raised for the first time. In fact, political self-determination was only the first step, after which the *struggle* would unfold with increased strength. Hence it emerged both as a founding event and a mnemonic agent with multiple refractions in the successive presents, influencing political options, international alliances, the moral and political endorsement of the new leaders, socioeconomic dynamics and experimentation, the hopes projected in the present and the interpretations of a recent colonial past, whose rejection would be the driving force behind the future that was to be built.

In the case of Mozambique, João Paulo Borges Coelho refers to the existence of a “liberation script” in which the modern anticolonial struggle coincided both with the history of FRELIMO and with the construction of a “strategic discourse situated at the intersection between power relations and knowledge-based relations”, which constituted the very basis of its political authority.²³ This rigid memory framework became dominant over the decades, although it coexisted with “rarely shared memories” originating in social and political groups or life experiences that were difficult to accommodate within the narrative produced through the states (see [Chapters 3, 9 and 12](#)).

There are some differences in the case of Angola, firstly due to the presence of the FNLA and UNITA as alternative movements in conflict with the MPLA, which resulted in “gradations of memory”, although they were unable to challenge the official memory which the MPLA had constructed and spread via the state and the party.²⁴ To paraphrase Christine Messiant, in Angola this had generated what may be described as the “unpredictability of the past”.²⁵ This peculiarity would define an approach that makes the role of the MPLA unique – in terms of its “precocity” in the struggle, the events it set in motion, and its leaders and heroes – within the anticolonial movement and the building of the independent Angola. This approach is gradually being diversified by recent trends in historiography and memory studies and new political events, as explained in [Chapters 2 and 7](#) of this book.

In Guinea, the image of a successful struggle was affirmed internationally and was particularly well established in various Western chancelleries and international institutions, especially during the 1970s, as demonstrated in [Chapters 4 and 10](#). The 1980 coup d'état in which Nino Vieira deposed Luís Cabral put an end to Guinean and Cape Verdean unity, which had been based on the idea of an intertwined history involving two states and the same ruling party. Troubled political times followed, involving foreign interventions, ethnic and political tensions, several military coups or attempted coups, and a civil war (1998–1999), which further undermined the already frail state.²⁶

The situations in Cape Verde and São Tomé e Príncipe have specific characteristics, which are identified in [Chapter 11](#). On the one hand, their histories were interlinked with the trade in enslaved people, the economic exploitation of plantations (São Tomé) or endemic famines (Cape Verde). At the same time, the elites from both archipelagos had access to education and the populations were not legally subject to the *Estatuto do Indigenato* (Indigenous Statutes). Moreover, when they gained independence from Portuguese rule, this had not been achieved by means of armed struggle in either of the archipelagos. However, this does not mean that there had been no resistance to anticolonialism. In fact, the MLSTP (Movement for the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe) and the PAIGC, the movement which fought for the joint liberation of Guinea and Cape Verde, had intervened clandestinely and through the diaspora and generically shared the same anticolonial perspectives as FRELIMO and the MPLA.²⁷

In both countries significant nuances were added to ways of remembering the struggle in the early 1990s, when the parties that had inherited the legacy of the struggle were defeated in the first multiparty elections in both archipelagos. In a joint study with Inês Nascimento Rodrigues, we have developed the notion of “mnemonic device” to define the role of the liberation struggle in Cape Verde, understood as the signifier from which disputed symbols, meanings and uses stem. Given the particular history of the archipelago, the memory of the struggle has become a key political agent, expressed in narratives, memoryscapes, myths, commemorative practices, symbologies, power relations and moral hierarchies, both activated and celebrated but also, in more recent decades, reinterpreted and challenged, paradoxically revealing the fact that it is inescapable in any public debate on the past.²⁸

Despite significant differences in the various national contexts, a historical-memorial framework was, to a greater or lesser extent, established, deeply embedded in the political hegemonies emerging in the post-independence period and, in general, adopting a common set of themes. Firstly, there was the visibility of the “founding massacres”. Seen as the ground zero of the resistance, they also rank highly as the birth certificate of the nation, insofar as they defined the struggle as inevitable. I am referring here to the following: the Batepá massacre in São Tomé e Príncipe on 3 February 1953; the repression of the strike by seamen and stevedores working for the Casa Gouveia at the Port of Bissau Pidjiguiti docks in Guinea, on 3 August 1959; the Mueda massacre in northern Mozambique, in June 1960; the revolt and repression of agricultural workers in the Baixa de Cassange

cotton plantations in Angola, in January 1961. Despite the many differences concerning the reasons and the processes, all these events became important within the framework of the anticolonial struggle and, above all, in the choreography of memorialising the new nations, as clear examples of colonial violence, the justness of the fight against colonialism and the need to progress to new levels of resistance.

Secondly, there was the definition of the archetypal figures of liberation, which tended to focus on the “guerrilla” and marginalise life experiences associated with the clandestine struggle, logistical support for anticolonial resistance or political prisoners. On the basis of the symbolic capital and social recognition generated by the struggle, the combatants from the liberation movements generally functioned as the repository for the political legitimacy of the independent countries, many becoming part of the leadership of the new states. Hence, the figure of the combatant became a key national figure in the building of the nation, albeit subject to hierarchies of values, fluctuations and specific mnemonic flows. Finally, there was the focus on movements bearing the ideology of national liberation, as the driving force for the society to come.

It is also true, as observed elsewhere, that the forms of representing this past struggle have not been unaffected by the major changes taking place in the world due to the hegemony of neoliberalism from the 1980s onwards, foreign interventions by the IMF in Africa as part of so-called “structural adjustment”, the shrinking of the state and the increasing role of the NGOs, as well as the growing disillusionment with important sections of the elites associated with the experience of liberation.²⁹ In that way, prominent figures from the struggle or the actual imaginary of the fight for freedom acquired new symbolic functions, not only in terms of the historical-memorial context associated with the liberation struggle and the recognition given to its protagonists, but also their mobilisation in the present day for the purposes of political argument.

Mary Ann Pitcher, for example, in a study published in 2006, noted how FRELIMO, from the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, had to reframe the discourse on its past in order to respond to the need to adapt to the new international context (the fall of the Berlin Wall, deregulation, structural adjustment, privatisations), as well as the national context (the 1992 agreements, the multiparty system and the need to recognise RENAMO as a political actor). Consequently, while the FRELIMO leadership was, at the time, tending to separate the memory of the liberation struggle from the memory of the socialist struggle, the popular sectors – namely urban workers in Maputo who for two decades had been educated and informed about the importance of their participation in the revolutionary project – were strategically using the memory of the struggle to criticise concessions to neoliberalism, reviving the vocabulary of the independence project to demand better working conditions.³⁰

The case of Amílcar Cabral is the most striking example of this, due to the international recognition the revolutionary leader had gained. Killed on 20 January 1973, before independence, Cabral would acquire the status of “national hero” in Guinea and Cape Verde. While there was certainly not always a consensus surrounding the figure of Cabral in the two countries, particularly in Cape Verde and

specifically following the “mnemonic transition” in the 1990s which involved a certain “de-Africanisation”³¹ and “de-Cabralisation” of national symbols (see [Chapter 6](#)), nevertheless his political, diplomatic and theoretical skills made him an important international reference, not only in the history of the anticolonial struggles, but also in the contemporary postcolonial theory itself. These factors are frequently cited in both countries, above all in urban intellectual circles and among the politicised sectors of young people, as a source of pride and as a critique of the betrayal of the emancipatory ideal by the ruling elite.³² Cabral is thus transformed into a kind of spectre who laid the foundations for the promise of liberation, which the countries had not been capable of effectively achieving, as noted in [Chapters 4, 6, 10 and 11](#).

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This book aims to explore the memory of the war and the struggle, demonstrating how echoes of both are formed and expressed, but also how they can be brought together in a dialogue, building on their differences and asymmetries. This volume presents some of the results of the research carried out as part of the CROME project (*Crossed Memories, Politics of Silence: The Colonial-Liberation Wars in Post-colonial Times*), funded by the European Research Council and developed between 2017 and 2023 at the Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra. The 12 chapters it contains may be read separately but are part of a common analysis that has been collectively elaborated and conceptualised.

We take as our starting point two challenges, which are both epistemological and political. Firstly, the aim here is to consider the war and the struggle as “mnemonic signifiers”, from a diachronic and comparative perspective, while acknowledging that they are different in nature. From the outset, it is important to note that “colonial war” and “liberation struggles” are configured as two “mnemonic signifiers” which do not always coincide.³³ In fact, “war” refers to the conflict between the Portuguese state and the liberation movements, while “struggle” is the expression of other types of resistance which include much broader narratives on the processes of constructing colonial difference, micro and macro forms of violence, ways of contesting the Portuguese presence and ways of constructing identities and loyalties that are not always unambiguous. Taking the memory of the anticolonial struggles and setting it in dialogue with memories of the colonial war not only involves making the war visible as war, but also the colonial context which shaped it.

The second challenge concerns the intersection of memories, which involves three types of cross-referencing: firstly, the intersection of different historical times (“today’s memory of the war is not yesterday’s memory”); secondly, the intersection between what Henry Rousso calls “vehicles for memory”³⁴ – in other words, ceremonies and monuments, social and political groups, cultural works, etc. – in order to identify convergences or differences in the various ways of transmitting the past; thirdly, the intersection between different countries and national histories, whose power to express the past has been instrumental in defining systems and frameworks for memory. Although the comparative approach has been productive,

the way in which national overdetermination endures in the remembrance of this shared past is evident throughout this book. Hence, debates on the war and the struggle in the different countries are neither mimetic nor parallel but refer to the specific conditions in each country and the impact which the war had on each of them, crucially giving rise to disputes over internal legitimacy in each case. The book also reflects on this.

Notes

- 1 Ann Rigney, “Remembering Hope: Transnational Activism Beyond the Traumatic”, *Memory Studies* 11, no. 3 (2018): 368–80.
- 2 Aleida Assmann, “The Holocaust – A Global Memory? Extensions and Limits of a New Memory Community”, in *Memory in a Global Age*, eds. Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 97–117.
- 3 Anna Cento Bull and Hans Lauge Hansen, “On Agonistic Memory”, *Memory Studies* 9, no. 4 (2016): 390–404.
- 4 Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2010).
- 5 Enzo Traverso, *Left-Wing Melancholia. Marxism, History, and Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 5–11.
- 6 A vast amount of academic work has been produced on these questions, which cannot be listed in detail here. One of the latest studies by Elizabeth Jelin, published in Argentina in 2017 and translated into English in 2021, provides a critical overview of these processes: Elizabeth Jelin, *The Struggle for the Past. How We Construct Social Memories* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2021). In addition, there is a need to complexify the analysis of “difficult pasts” beyond the victim and perpetrator binomial. In a thought-provoking recent book, Michael Rothberg develops the notion of the “implicated subject”: “Implicated subjects occupy positions aligned with power and privilege without being themselves direct agents of harm; they contribute to, inhabit, inherit or benefit from regimes of domination but do not originate or control such regimes. An implicated subject is neither a victim nor a perpetrator, but rather a participant in histories and social formations that generate the positions of victim and perpetrator, and yet in which most people do not occupy such clear-cut roles”. Michael Rothberg, *The Implicated Subject. Beyond Victims and Perpetrators* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019), 1.
- 7 Kristin Ross, *May '68 and its Afterlives* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2002), 99–100.
- 8 Rigney, “Remembering Hope”, 368–80.
- 9 At the end of the nineteenth century, when intermittent lengthy “pacification campaigns” were mounted and met with resistance from the colonised peoples, an ideological apparatus was constructed to define the legal status of forced labour as a central pillar in the development of the colonial economy and the “civilising mission” in which the Portuguese, like other colonial powers, had invested, drawing on the Eurocentric vision which prevailed at the time. Hence the Indigenous Labour Codes (introduced in 1878) and the Indigenous Statutes (from 1926 onwards) became legal-political structures for a colonial regime based on racial discrimination against black and indigenous subjects who, due to their alleged inferior social status, needed to be submitted to a civilising process and could therefore be obliged to supply forced labour for public or private purposes, in public works, transport, cleaning or as labourers in private enterprises, including the cotton, cocoa and coffee trade. This system had a dual purpose, serving as a key element in the colonial economy and as affirmation of Portugal’s status as a colonial power among the imperial nations, and became a controversial issue for organisations such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) particularly from the 1940s

- onwards. See, for example: Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo, *The 'Civilising Mission' of Portuguese Colonialism, 1870–1930* (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015) and José Pedro Monteiro, *The Internationalisation of the 'Native Labour' Question in Portuguese Late Colonialism, 1945–1962* (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2022).
- 10 On the adoption of Lusotropicalism, see, among others: Cláudia Castelo, *O modo português de estar no mundo. O luso-tropicalismo e a ideologia colonial portuguesa (1933–1961)* (Porto: Afrontamento, 1999); Marcos Cardão, “Allegories of Exceptionalism: Lusotropicalism in Mass culture (1960–74)”, *Portuguese Journal of Social Science* 14, no. 3 (2015): 257–73; Michel Cahen and Patrícia Ferraz de Matos, eds., “New Perspectives on Luso-Tropicalism, Novas Perspetivas sobre o Luso-tropicalismo”, *Portuguese Studies Review* 26, no. 1 (2018).
 - 11 See, for instance, Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and António Costa Pinto, eds., *Portugal e o fim do Colonialismo. Dimensões internacionais* (Lisboa: Edições 70, 2014).
 - 12 John P. Cann, *Counterinsurgency in Africa. The Portuguese Way of War, 1961–1974* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1997), 106.
 - 13 Miguel Cardina and Susana Martins, “Evading the War. Deserters and Draft Evaders of the Portuguese Army during the Colonial War”, *E-Journal of Portuguese History* 17/2 (2019): 27–47.
 - 14 Pedro Marquês de Sousa, *Os números da guerra de África* (Lisboa: Guerra e Paz, 2021).
 - 15 Carlos de Matos Gomes, “A africanização na guerra colonial e as suas sequelas. Tropas locais – os vilões nos ventos da História”, in *As Guerras de Libertação e os Sonhos Coloniais. Alianças secretas, mapas imaginados*, eds. Maria Paula Meneses and Bruno Sena Martins (Coimbra: Almedina, 2013), 123–41.
 - 16 On Angola, see: Pedro Aires Oliveira, “Saved by the Civil War: African ‘Loyalists’ in the Portuguese Armed Forces and Angola’s Transition to Independence”, *The International History Review* 39, no. 1 (2017): 126–42. On Mozambique, see: Maria Paula Meneses, “Hidden Processes of Reconciliation in Mozambique: The Entangled Histories of Truth-seeking Meetings Held between 1975 and 1982”, *Africa Development* 41, no. 4 (2016): 153–80; and Natália Bueno, “Different Mechanisms, Same Result: Remembering the Liberation War in Mozambique”, *Memory Studies* 14, no. 5 (2021). On Guinea, see: Sofia da Palma Rodrigues, “Por ti, Portugal, eu juro!” Memórias e testemunhos dos comandos africanos da Guiné (1971–1974)” (PhD dissertation, Faculdade de Economia da Universidade de Coimbra/Centro de Estudos Sociais, 2022). Later, some of these combatants would seek symbolic recognition and financial support from Portugal. According to research by Fátima da Cruz Rodrigues, they came from sectors of society who were mainly critical of the position adopted by the Portuguese state, accusing it of abandoning them and giving up on the understanding of the war and of colonial Portugal as a pluricontinental nation and meeting point where Europeans and Africans lived together. See: Fátima da Cruz Rodrigues, “Antigos Combatentes Africanos das Forças Armadas Portuguesas. A Guerra Colonial como Território de (Re)conciliação” (PhD dissertation, Faculdade de Economia da Universidade de Coimbra/Centro de Estudos Sociais, 2012).
 - 17 Pedro Marquês de Sousa estimated that there were around 30,000 deaths among the guerrillas and the population who supported them, although these figures, based solely on reports produced by the Portuguese army, should be treated with caution. Sousa, *Os números*, 164.
 - 18 Ann Laura Stoler, “Colonial Aphasia: Race and Disabled Histories in France”, *Public Culture* 23, no. 1 (2011): 121–156.
 - 19 On the representations of the liberation struggles in Portuguese school textbooks, see: Marta Araújo, “Adicionar sem agitar: narrativas sobre as lutas de libertação nacional africanas em Portugal nos 40 anos das independências”, *Revista Desafios* 3 (2016): 33–56.
 - 20 Coelho, João Paulo Borges, “Da violência colonial ordenada à ordem pós-colonial violenta. Sobre um legado das guerras coloniais nas ex-colónias portuguesas”, *Lusotopie* 10 (2003): 175–93.

- 21 Patrick Chabal et al., *A History of Postcolonial Lusophone Africa* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2002), 30–50.
- 22 Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*.
- 23 João Paulo Borges Coelho, “Politics and Contemporary History in Mozambique: A Set of Epistemological Notes”, *Kronos* 39 (2013): 20–31.
- 24 Vasco Martins, “Hegemony, Resistance and Gradations of Memory: Of Remembering Angola’s Liberation Struggle”, *History and Memory* 33, no. 2 (2021): 80.
- 25 Christine Messiant, “‘Chez nous, même le passé est imprévisible’: l’expérience d’une recherche sur le nationalisme angolais”, *Lusotopie* 5 (1998): 157–97.
- 26 Leopoldo Amado, “Guiné-Bissau, 30 anos de independência”, *Africana Studia* 8 (2005): 109–35; Sílvia Roque, *Pós-guerra? Percursos de violência nas margens das Relações Internacionais* (Coimbra: Almedina, 2016).
- 27 These connections emerged even before the armed struggle began. Many of the leaders knew each other and were trained in the same places, such as the *Casa dos Estudantes do Império*. Following some previous organisational initiatives, in April 1961 the CONCP (Conference of Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies) was founded at a meeting held in Casablanca, comprising African organisations engaged in contesting Portuguese colonialism and representatives from movements in Goa, a region that would be annexed by the Indian Union a few months later. In 1979, the so-called “Group of Five”, known as the Portuguese-speaking African countries (PALOP), emerged to replace the CONCP in its mission to foster cooperation between Angola, Mozambique, Guinea, Cape Verde, and São Tomé e Príncipe.
- 28 Miguel Cardina and Inês Nascimento Rodrigues, *Remembering the Liberation Struggles in Cape Verde. A mnemohistory* (London and New York: Routledge, 2022).
- 29 See “Introdução: Do Império Colonial às Lutas de Libertação: memórias cruzadas da guerra”, in *As Voltas do Passado. A guerra colonial e as lutas de libertação*, eds. Miguel Cardina and Bruno Sena Martins (Lisboa: Tinta-da-China, 2018), 9–18.
- 30 Mary Ann Pitcher, “Forgetting from Above and Memory from Below: Strategies of Legitimation and Struggle in Postsocialist Mozambique”, *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 76, no. 1 (2006): 88–112.
- 31 See: Márcia Rego, *The Dialogic Nation of Cape Verde. Slavery, Language and Ideology* (New York and London: Lexington Books, 2015), 77.
- 32 This is evident, for example, in rap music. On rap and Cabral in Guinea and Cape Verde, see: Miguel de Barros and Redy Wilson Lima, “RAP KRIOL(U): The Pan-Africanism of Cabral in the Music of Youth”, in *Claim no Easy Victories: The Legacy of Amílcar Cabral*, eds. Firoze Manji and Bill Fletcher Jr. (Dakar: CODESRIA and Daraja Press, 2013), 387–404. Samora Machel, the Mozambican president who died in a suspicious plane crash in October 1986, was also the subject of appropriations. See: Janne Rantala, “‘Hidrunisa Samora’: Invocations of a Dead Political Leader in Maputo Rap”, *Journal of Southern African Studies* 42, no. 6 (2016): 1–17.
- 33 On the notion of the “mnemonic signifier” see: Gregor Feindt, Félix Krawatzek, Daniela Mehler, Friedemann Pestel and Rieke Trimçev, “Entangled Memory: Toward a Third Wave in Memory Studies”, *History and Theory* 53 (2004): 24–44.
- 34 Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome. History and Memory in France Since 1944* (London: Harvard University Press, 1991), 219.

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