

4 *Mantenhás para quem luta!* Evoking the liberation struggle in postcolonial Guinea-Bissau

Inês Nascimento Rodrigues

Introduction

The attack on the Portuguese barracks in Tite on 23 January 1963 – celebrated as the “Day of Liberation Struggle Combatants” – symbolically marks the start of the liberation war launched by the PAIGC in Guinea. The armed conflict, which lasted for roughly 11 years, presents a number of specific features which Leopoldo Amado considers relevant when reflecting on the memory of the liberation struggle and examining the ways in which it was projected during the course of the post-colonial development of the country.¹ It was a war fought jointly for the liberation of two territories, Guinea and Cape Verde, in which the PAIGC was able to gain military control over vast regions of Guinea (with the exception of the cities). It was a war which, in the liberated zones, established political, social, educational, and economic conditions that anticipated the structures and priorities envisaged by the movement for the construction of the future independent state. It was a war conceived and planned not only in military terms, but with significant political and diplomatic elements that gained widespread international recognition. It was a war which led to the unilateral proclamation of the independence of Guinea-Bissau in 1973, paving the way for the “Carnation Revolution” in Portugal, and the independence and decolonisation processes in Cape Verde, S. Tomé and Príncipe, Angola, and Mozambique.

In Guinea, as in other countries that experienced armed struggles, the violence of the war, together with other forms of colonial violence, became a constituent part of the new nation, structuring the social life of the population and determining postcolonial memorialisation processes. Firstly, this was because the independent Guinean state was built in the aftermath of the conflict, based on a militarised approach that included the complex dynamics of demobilisation and social reintegration. Secondly, power was distributed unequally in the immediate post-independence period, in part reproducing the hierarchies inherited from colonialism.² Unlike the Cape Verdeans who took part in the war, the majority of whom possessed formal educational capital, most of the Guinean combatants were peasants from rural areas. This led to tensions and differentiations in status during the struggle – the former mainly held positions of leadership, while the latter, many of whom were of Balanta ethnic origin, fought in the front line.³ In the immediate

post-independence period, these categorisations were reflected in access to positions of power and public administration: within the framework of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde binational unity advocated by the PAIGC, most of these positions were occupied by Cape Verdeans and by Guineans from urban areas.⁴

According to Leopoldo Amado, the struggle would therefore create forms of violence that would take root as a “negative legacy”.⁵ The “negative legacies” of the struggle would reappear cyclically during the post-colonial path of the country: in certain continuing tensions between the Cape Verdeans and the Guineans, in intensifying ethnic resentments, and in the power struggles between João Bernardo “Nino” Vieira and Luís Cabral which would culminate in a coup d’état led by the former on 14 November 1980. After this, the boundary between the politicians and the military became increasingly blurred, reflecting the definitive militarisation of power in Guinea.⁶ It was followed by a series of other coups and by a period of armed conflict in 1998–1999 which, among other reasons, was caused by discontent on the part of some sectors of former combatants.⁷ This chapter identifies the ways in which the idea of the liberation struggle has become an operative concept, weaving renewed networks of meaning around these and other moments in the country’s post-colonial journey. Although Guinea-Bissau is still haunted by certain spectres from the war, the chapter argues that the liberation struggle essentially refers to a space and time of promises to be redeemed, and remains a relevant mnemonic subject mobilised in various historical contexts for different political purposes.⁸ It, therefore, aims to demonstrate how the struggle has been established as a memorial symbol that has a critical, strategic, and/or redemptive function.

After independence: a nation forged in the struggle or the struggle as a lesson in history

On 24 September 1973, the independence of Guinea-Bissau was unilaterally declared in Madina do Boé, a liberated zone in the east of the territory. The Constitution of the Republic was approved at this first meeting of the National People’s Assembly and Luís Cabral, the brother of Amílcar Cabral – who had been assassinated a few months earlier in January 1973, in circumstances that have never been entirely ascertained – was elected President of the Council of State. This historic moment, which represented the culmination of a long and effective struggle for liberation led by the PAIGC, would have a profound impact, not only in proclaiming the de facto existence of the new African country, but also because of the decisive role it would play in the 25 April 1974 revolution in Portugal and in defining the processes of Portuguese decolonisation that would follow. The Portuguese authorities, however, did not recognise Guinea-Bissau as an independent country until one year later, when the Algiers Agreement, which also acknowledged the right to self-determination of Cape Verde, was signed by both the Portuguese government and the PAIGC on 10 September 1974. In the months which followed, thousands of Portuguese soldiers left Bissau and some of the most distinguished Cape Verdean PAIGC combatants returned to the archipelago, which was proclaimed independent on 5 July 1975.

As a result of the high expectations for Guinea-Bissau, considerable attention was devoted to the small territory in West Africa where the PAIGC had been engaged in what was regarded as an exemplary liberation struggle, which gained a wide range of international recognition, support, and prestige (see [Chapter 10](#) of this book). Many expected that, like the struggle from which it had emerged, this independent nation state would serve as a model for success that could be replicated or followed. Although, for various reasons, this has not been the case, the struggle as a historical lesson – and mission – became central to defining the identity of the country from the very first years of independence. Some of the experiences of the liberation struggle would therefore find expression in the early years of post-colonial life in Guinea-Bissau, including the proclaimed – and never completely consensual – objective envisaged by Amílcar Cabral of gradually moving towards the founding of a binational state together with the archipelago of Cape Verde, based on their shared history of violence.⁹

While the struggle, as a mnemonic subject, now allowed for other ways of reading a past of resistance and oppression, it also became established as a mechanism for constructing the present and the future. In the post-independence period – within the context of a weak economy (exacerbated by global crises and recessions), the destruction of infrastructures and means of production in the areas worst affected by the war, illiteracy and a shortage of basic foodstuffs between 1977 and 1980 caused by a lengthy drought – the state embarked on an agenda that focussed on development, opting for a centralised economy and a single-party system known as “revolutionary national democracy”.

It was no longer a struggle for liberation but rather a much broader struggle for which the former, the inaugural movement, served as a metaphor: for strengthening the economy, eliminating rural-urban inequalities, developing sustainable agriculture, assisting with the reintegration of former combatants, promoting political and cultural affirmation to achieve literacy for the populations, reinforcing international solidarity, and fostering national unity. The role of this unprecedented struggle against Portuguese colonialism was mobilised as a historic lesson that had to be continued in the fight against the legacies of colonialism. This was explicitly stated at the opening session of the National Assembly in Bissau in April 1975, when Aristides Pereira – the Secretary General of the PAIGC, who would become the first president of the Republic of Cape Verde a few months later – announced that the revolution was in progress, the struggle would continue and it would be “possibly more arduous, more complex and more difficult than during the harsh years of war”.¹⁰ A similar comparison was established by Luís Cabral who, on the same occasion, affirmed that “the glory of the combatants” had emerged “on the battlefields, in the prisons of the colonialists or, nowadays, in the struggle for the independence of Cape Verde and in the national reconstruction of Guinea”.¹¹ Moreover, on 24 September of that year, during the celebrations for the second anniversary of the proclamation of the state of Guinea-Bissau, he declared that the combatants of the Armed Forces were “soldiers in the battle for National Reconstruction”.¹² In May 1979, an article in the *Nô Pintcha* state-owned newspaper also made the same point when, referring to a recently opened tailoring cooperative for

freedom fighters, it observed: “Yesterday with rifles, today at the sewing machine: the same struggle for a better Homeland”.¹³

Several of the innovative experiments that had been conducted in the liberated zones, as well as the semantics of the struggle, now emerged, in part, as models for social, political, and cultural organisation, defining the state and its institutions as they were to be built. This was developed in ideological and discursive terms, but also in areas such as justice (with a particular focus on the question of popular participation and the creation of village peoples’ courts), education (involving literacy campaigns, projects for popular education, reforms to education, provisions for technical training, and the building of schools) and healthcare (expanding the healthcare network and including community development projects).¹⁴ It also materialised in other fields: in the preparation of special legislation for populations from the former liberated zones, the creation of cooperatives and state-run companies and the democratisation of culture through radio, music, and cinema.¹⁵

To a large extent, a similar process was also taking place within the hierarchies inherited from the struggle. In fact, participation in the liberation struggle had produced a certain political legitimacy and symbolic recognition, which was extended to the movement that had led the struggle. Praised for their sacrifice, courage, and self-denial in taking part in the war that liberated the country, the most distinguished PAIGC combatants were seen as heroic figures who now had the political legitimacy to lead the country. Over half of the senior military cadres within the party would therefore occupy positions of great responsibility within the state hierarchy after independence (at the top of the PAIGC leadership and including most of the cabinet ministers).¹⁶ Through several actions, the ruling party incorporated the teachings, martyrs, and heroes of the struggle into the Guinean festive calendar and the everyday lives of the population. Amílcar Cabral, proclaimed the “Founder of Nationality”, was the greatest national figure: episodes from his life and certain ideas and extracts from his works were regularly quoted in the state newspaper *Nô Pintcha* or invoked by party organisations. In addition, 20 January and 12 September – the dates of his death and birth, respectively – became National Heroes’ Day and Nationality Day. The figure and memory of Cabral were a constant reference in literature, music, and film, from the songs of José Carlos Schwarz and Cobiana Djazz to Super Mama Djombo, the films of Flora Gomes and the poetry of Tony Tcheka.¹⁷

In 1976, his image featured in the recently designed Guinea-Bissau *peso* banknotes and, in an emotional ceremony held on 2 September of the same year, his mortal remains were transferred from Conakry to Bissau and laid to rest in a mausoleum designed especially for this purpose at Fortaleza de Amura, the headquarters of the Guinean Armed Forces, which was transformed into a kind of national pantheon, a space for preserving memories and paying tribute.¹⁸ In 1979, the bodies of Domingos Ramos, Osvaldo Vieira and Pansau na Isna (the first two, who were killed in 1966 and 1974, important leaders in the PAIGC and the third a Balanta combatant who had played a key role in the battle of the island of Como) were also laid to rest there.¹⁹ The main squares and streets in the Guinean capital had already displayed their names since January 1975 when, in a rally held on

20 January – National Heroes’ Day – it was decided to replace colonial toponyms in the city of Bissau with names associated with the chronology and heroes of the liberation struggle.²⁰

In the creation of the independent nation, the highest expression of national heroism was reserved for those who made the greatest sacrifice, namely by giving their lives. This included Amílcar Cabral and his comrades who died in battle, but also those who had come before them: the martyrs of the Pidjiguiti massacre, considered one of the landmarks in the strategic reorientation of the struggle. A key symbol of the prolonged resistance mounted by the Guinean people against colonialism, the massacre was a reminder of the brutal repression used by the colonial authorities to end a strike for better pay organised by stevedores at the Pidjiguiti docks, on 3 August 1959, resulting in 50 deaths and dozens of wounded. The incident had led the PAIGC to proclaim that it was necessary to proceed by means of armed struggle, thus setting a new path for the movement.²¹

The PAIGC leadership announced that 3 August would be known as the “Day of the Martyrs to Colonialism” and celebrated as a national holiday in Guinea. Those killed in Pidjiguiti were transformed into role models for the nation and their lessons in courage and sacrifice were meant to offer guidance for the Guinean people in this new phase.²² There was therefore an element of gratitude and indebtedness expressed in evocations of the massacre. Silvia Roque, in an analysis of the memorialisation of this event over time, demonstrates how, after independence, Pidjiguiti would be mobilised as one of the main symbols of the independent state, inextricably linked to the Party and the need to maintain national unity.²³ Between 1975 and 1980, the 3rd of August became associated with the celebration of independence as “the restoration of justice that honours the martyrs of colonialism, placing great emphasis on the victims of the massacre”.²⁴ However, this would change after 1980, as the next section will reveal. Although Pidjiguiti remains an important moment in the life of the nation, another historical reference from the struggle would be mobilised in this new political phase in the country.

After the 1980 coup d’état: a nation betrayed or the struggle as a means of legitimation

On 14 November 1980, a coup d’état in Guinea led by the then prime minister João Bernardo “Nino” Vieira, one of the most important commanders of the PAIGC and the first president of the National Assembly, would put an end to the project for binational unity with Cape Verde. In the immediate aftermath of the coup, Luís Cabral was deposed as president of the Republic and arrested, together with several other party leaders. Although there were no widespread confrontations, three deaths were recorded during the events (one of which was accidental, according to a report produced by a delegation from the Amílcar Cabral Information and Documentation Centre – CIDAC sent from Lisbon to Bissau).²⁵ The Guinean state was then taken over by a recently formed Council of the Revolution, headed by Nino Vieira. Initially, Nino Vieira, speaking on the radio, stated that the purpose of the coup, the self-designated “Readjustment Movement”, was to expel “the colonists”

from Guinea-Bissau, referring to the Cape Verdeans who remained there. In a second phase, he affirmed the intention to continue the political line established by Cabral and by the party, stressing the need to revitalise unity, but on equal terms for both parties.²⁶

As explained by Nino Vieira in a speech at the end of 1980, the reasons cited for the military coup included the following: recovering the values and objectives of the struggle mapped out by Amílcar Cabral; putting an end to the anti-democratic stance of Luís Cabral and the economic options chosen by the head of state which, by neglecting investment in agriculture, were leading the country into a catastrophic situation; responding to the desperate circumstances in which many former combatants found themselves and to the growing discontent within the FARP; providing for the needs of the population, afflicted by famine; restoring the dignity of the people by ending the inequality that was considered to exist between Guineans and Cape Verdeans; denouncing the execution of hundreds of Guineans who had joined the African commandos – an elite unit in the Portuguese colonial army – or who were the political enemies of Luís Cabral; fighting the asymmetry between Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau, considered evident in the discrepancies in the constitutions of the two countries which had been approved a few days earlier.²⁷ In this regard, the absence in the Guinean Constitution of any explicit reference to the fact that the president had to be a Guinean citizen was a relevant point, in addition to the concentration of power in the head of state, with the consequent undermining of the prime minister's functions, and the sanctioning of the death penalty.²⁸

In Cape Verde, the ruling authorities held an emergency meeting the day after the coup and were quick to condemn what had happened. The November editions of the *Voz di Povo* were almost entirely dedicated to the events and the reactions of the main leaders, who denied the accusations against the Cape Verdeans made by the Council of the Revolution, which were seen as revealing a certain anti-Cape Verde attitude present in Bissau.²⁹ Throughout this month and the next, Aristides Pereira and Nino Vieira exchanged messages and sent envoys until communication was cut on 16 December 1980, when the Cape Verdean head of state and Secretary General of the party wrote to Nino Vieira to disassociate the Cape Verdean wing from what was happening in Guinea, stressing the negative consequences for the project of unity and the survival of the PAIGC.³⁰ The final break came at a meeting of the Cape Verde National Commission held on 20 January 1981, the anniversary of the death of Cabral, when the formation of the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV) was officially announced. On this occasion, Aristides Pereira stated that the coup against the state of Guinea also constituted a coup against the Party and that the “painful experience of 14 November” was proof that the “principle of unity, one of the founding principles of the party as a binational organisation, had been rejected”.³¹

From 1985 onwards, the break with unity and establishment of the PAICV allowed for a gradual introduction of political, social, and memorial changes in Cape Verde, which intensified in the 1990s after the defeat of the party in the first multiparty elections, resulting in a mnemonic transition with anticolonial characteristics which is discussed in [Chapter 6](#) of this book. In Guinea-Bissau, however, the

situation was different. After 14 November, drawing on notions of betrayal and deviation from Cabral's ideas and guidelines, the evocation of the struggle intensified as a means of politically legitimising the Council of the Revolution, whose members included several individuals from the deposed government. The front-page headline of the first edition of *Nô Pintcha* to be published after the events read: "14 November 1980: End of injustices and corruption, return to Cabral's line".³² This edition, dedicated almost entirely to the events of 14 November, explained the reasons for resorting to the use of arms, presented a series of statements from Guineans who supported the action, reported on the existence of mass graves allegedly containing the corpses of opponents of Luís Cabral (accompanied by photographs) and published excerpts from Nino Vieira's speech to the population in which he affirmed that this was a revolution that would honour the national heroes and would be "faithful to the sacrifice and the blood" they had shed. On this occasion, Vieira also mentioned the "prevailing climate of oppression and mistrust" during Luís Cabral's presidency and referred to money invested in industrialisation projects by the former head of state which had failed to take the economic reality of Guinea into account and had, in his opinion, contributed to worsening the living conditions of the people and the former combatants.³³ He reaffirmed that "the Homeland of Cabral would finally be built", since the 14 November coup, which had received ample popular support, would enable the necessary readjustments to be made.³⁴

In July of the following year, Decision no. 16/81 of 20 July established a public holiday to celebrate the 14 November 1980 "Readjustment Movement" Day, indicating the intended importance of the date by including it in the national calendar. Between 8 and 14 November 1981, selecting the period in which the anniversary of the "Readjustment Movement" would be celebrated, the 1st. Extraordinary Congress of the PAIGC was held, at which Nino Vieira was elected Secretary General of the Party.³⁵ At the time, recalling the grammar of the struggle, the congress was called the "second Cassacá", thus creating a symbolic equivalence between the events of 14 November and the historic meeting of cadres in February 1964 in the early days of the armed struggle, which became the 1st. Congress of the PAIGC and provided the inspiration for the liberation movement to take a new path.

The 1964 Congress of Cassacá had represented a turning point in PAIGC politics. Reflecting on the movement's strategy up to then, Amílcar Cabral had identified three key problems which he considered to be the result of inadequacies in the way in which the struggle had been conducted: a tendency towards militarism, the ethnic localism and a third issue associated with cultural matters.³⁶ According to Patrick Chabal, the militarism referred to reports of abuses of power targeted at populations in areas where PAIGC guerrilla groups had had significant military success and some had established themselves as kinds of local chieftains. The ethnic questions concerned the PAIGC's failure to develop more solid links with the Fula and other Muslim ethnic groups, among other problems. The third issue was related to traditional religious and cultural practices – such as some animist beliefs – which at certain times hindered the efforts of the struggle.³⁷ The Congress of Cassacá, which was convened to deal with these problems, would lead to a restructuring of the struggle, curbing the militarist approach by "making the

military wing subordinate to the political leadership” of the PAIGC.³⁸ The direct results included the transfer of power to local bodies and the introduction of special coordinating committees, the creation of the *Armazéns do Povo* (People’s Stores) and schools, and the founding of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of the People.

Cassacá, one of the most significant and successful moments in the realignment of a PAIGC facing difficulties, became a mnemonic device strategically mobilised in the wake of 14 November 1980. It is the lesson that encapsulates and rounds off the process for legitimising the Readjustment Movement. Just as Cassacá had made the first adjustment in the face of deviations from the struggle, the 14th of November would produce a second adjustment to “save the PAIGC” from ruin. This was actually stated in 1982:

Cassacá emerged and its voice endured. Nevertheless, another ‘Cassacá’ was recently celebrated (...). The path followed by the Party after independence had perhaps strayed from the sacred line once more. The lesson of Cassacá has been learnt. (...). From one Cassacá to another, we are consolidating the irreversible victories won, from one sunrise to the next, by our valiant people, to make the Party even more our Party. Because Cassacá is a lesson never to be forgotten.³⁹

However, Nino Vieira was unable to put an end to the discontent felt by the people and the former combatants. In fact, several individuals were accused of conspiracy, imprisoned and, in some cases, executed, creating growing tensions in the country.⁴⁰ In November 1985, following a political crisis which led to the imprisonment of Paulo Correia – the Minister for Justice at the time – and Viriato Pã (the former Attorney General of the Republic), in addition to around 50 other people, accused of planning a coup d’état to overthrow Nino Vieira, the analogy between 14 November and the Congress of Cassacá intensified. Comparisons were made between the same evils and therefore the justification for resorting to a similar solution. In a special edition of *Nó Pintcha* dedicated to the occasion, the front-page headline read: “5th anniversary of the heroic 14 November. Cassacá repeated in Bissau to save the party of Cabral”.⁴¹

According to Lars Rudebeck, the 1980 coup was a manifestation of the structural crisis which the country had been facing since the first years of independence, a crisis characterised by the growing political and economic disparity between the ruling elite and the peasant farmers.⁴² Although Nino Vieira claimed to have returned to the ideas of Cabral and promised policies with a greater focus on rural issues, as well as a more open political environment, the changes were limited and the coup ended up delivering exactly the opposite of Cassacá, initially sanctioning the victory of the military wing over the politicians.⁴³ Koudawo, therefore, considers that “developments following the 14 November coup d’état show the disintegration of the legacy from the period of the liberation struggle”.⁴⁴ In the midst of recurring political instability, the World Bank and IMF structural adjustment programme launched in 1987, and regional disputes with Senegal and Guinea-Conakry, the coup was responsible for the increasing assertion of power by Nino

Vieira, who drew on the support of the party – having become its leading figure – to institute what Raúl Fernandes calls “presidential Bonapartism”.⁴⁵ The ongoing political and socioeconomic crises would culminate in the 1998–1999 civil war in Bissau, which ended with the overthrow of Nino Vieira, who was granted political asylum in Portugal.⁴⁶ Despite the deterioration in the living conditions of the Guinean people under these circumstances, a grassroots base still resists and deploys the past of the liberation war as a symbolic reference.

The struggle today: time for disputes, space for promises

Following the economic and political transitions that led to the first multiparty elections in 1994 (in which Nino Vieira triumphed), the structural adjustment programme in 1987 which installed a robust neoliberal policy in the country, the 1998–1999 civil war, the lack of opportunities, and the social discontent generated by ongoing cycles of political and economic instability, the struggle – and in particular the figure of Amílcar Cabral – remains a significant presence, mobilised above all within the civil youth movements that emerged in the 1990s and were consolidated in the 2000s, as Miguel de Barros and Redy Wilson Lima have shown in the case of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde.⁴⁷ According to these authors, the recovery of the legacies of the liberation struggle which led to independence constituted “a new expression of African awakening”.⁴⁸ Christoph Kohl and Anita Schroven believe that, in the case of the Guinean people, Cabral is nowadays considered a martyr, personifying qualities that appear to be similar to those of a prophet.⁴⁹ This movement is active in the field of music, among other domains, particularly in rap and hip-hop. In these representations, Cabral is revived as a “messenger of truth” and recalled as a figure for criticising present-day political powers and politicians, who are accused of forgetting his teachings and distorting the aspirations of the people.⁵⁰ The same is happening with urban art. In a contemporary appropriation of the legacies of the struggle, which is paralleled in Cape Verde, as discussed in [Chapter 6](#), murals have been appearing in the main streets of Bissau since 2020, paying homage to some of the leading PAIGC combatants who died in the struggle or shortly after independence and are considered national heroes, including Titina Silá, Pansau Na Isna, Domingos Ramos, Francisco Mendes (Tchico Té), José Carlos Schwarz and, naturally, Amílcar Cabral.⁵¹

The political disputes that occasionally flare up in Guinea and in which the memory of the struggle plays a central role – the argument over who Cabral belongs to; the transfer of the mortal remains of Nino Vieira, assassinated in 2009, from the municipal cemetery in Bissau to Amura where, in addition to the national heroes, some former presidents of the republic are also buried; the title of “Hero of the Armed Struggle for National Liberation” also bestowed on Vieira; or even the emergence of the “Nino ka muri” movement (echoing the famous slogan “Cabral ka muri”/Cabral is not dead) – pose no threat to the legacy of the struggle. On the contrary, these manifestations demonstrate how this past remains an important discursive actor that has been mobilised from 1973 to the present day to invoke both the disappointments and failures of the post-colonial trajectory of the nation,

at least at the hands of the political powers who led the country during the post-independence period, and also as a means of resistance and emancipatory reinvention, transporting the legacies of the struggle into the times and challenges of the present. In Guinea-Bissau, the memory of a successful liberation war and of its leader are redemptive elements that are revived to project the unfulfilled hopes of a more just future.

Notes

- 1 Leopoldo Amado, “Guiné-Bissau: 30 Anos de Independência,” *Africana Studia* 8 (2005): 109–35. The author wishes to thank Sumaila Jaló for his careful reading of this text.
- 2 Sílvia Roque, *Pós-Guerra? Percursos de violência nas margens das Relações Internacionais* (Coimbra: Almedina, 2016), 266.
- 3 The ethnic dimensions were strategically mobilised by both the colonial army and the liberation movement: for example, the colonial powers sought to establish alliances with the Fula and the PAIGC mainly mobilised the rural Balanta population, who were among those most affected by colonial violence, for war. Cf. Marina Padrão Temudo, “From ‘People’s Struggle’ to ‘this war today’: Entanglements of peace and conflict in Guinea-Bissau,” *Africa* 78, no. 2 (2008): 245–63; Joshua Forrest, *Lineages of State Fragility: Rural Society in Guinea-Bissau* (Athens: Ohio University Press 2009); Marina Padrão Temudo, “From the margins of the State to the presidential palace: the Balanta case in Guinea-Bissau,” *African Studies Review* 52, no. 2 (2009): 47–67.
- 4 Joshua Forrest, “Guinea-Bissau since Independence: A Decade of Domestic Power Struggles,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 25, no. 1 (1987): 96, and Roque, *Pós-Guerra?* 271.
- 5 Amado, “Guiné-Bissau,” 121.
- 6 Forrest, “Guinea-Bissau Since Independence,” 105, and Roque, *Pós-Guerra?* 262.
- 7 Roque, *Pós-Guerra?* 281.
- 8 The notion of the “mnemonic subject” is used here in a sense very close to the meaning attributed by Miguel Cardina and Inês Nascimento Rodrigues to the concept of the “mnemonic device”, that is, as “the constellation of representations that radiate from a particular historical past and the way in which the device lends itself to appropriations and disputes that transform it into a decisive – and fluctuating – political agent”. Cf. Miguel Cardina and Inês Nascimento Rodrigues, *Remembering the Liberation Struggles. A Mnemohistory of Cape Verde* (New York and London: Routledge, 2022), 6.
- 9 Guinea-Cape Verde unity had been a controversial subject since the beginning of the struggle. Julião Soares Sousa notes that the majority of the liberation movements, particularly in Guinea, were opposed to unity. In Senegal, more than a dozen movements formed by Guineans who had emigrated there were only in favour of independence for Guinea (including the Union of the Peoples of Guinea – UPG, the Popular Union for the Liberation of Guinea – UPLG, and the National Front for the Liberation of Guinea – FNLG). In addition, three Cape Verdean movements, also in Dakar, were opposed to the idea of unity advocated by Cabral: the Cape Verdean Democratic Union (UDC), the Movement for the Liberation of the Cape Verde Islands (MLICV) and the Union of the People of the Cape Verde Islands (UPICV). Cf. Julião Soares *Amílcar Cabral. Vida e morte de um revolucionário africano* (Lisboa: Vega, 2011), 252–4.
- 10 “Aristides Pereira na abertura da Assembleia Nacional. A nossa revolução está em marcha e a luta continua,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 15, April 29, 1975.
- 11 “O discurso de Luís Cabral. Sete meses da batalha pela reconstrução nacional,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 15, April 29, 1975.
- 12 “Os combatentes das nossas Forças Armadas são soldados na batalha da Reconstrução Nacional,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 78, September 27, 1975.

- 13 “Alfaiataria dos Combatentes da Liberdade da Pátria. Ontem com a espingarda, hoje na máquina de costura, a mesma luta por uma Pátria melhor,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 585, May 10, 1979.
- 14 See, among others, Lars Rudebeck, *Guinea-Bissau – A Study of Political Mobilisation* (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1974); Patrick Chabal and Toby Green, eds., *Guinea-Bissau: Micro-State to ‘Narco-State’* (London: C. Hurst & Company, 2016); Ângela Benoliel Coutinho, *Os Dirigentes do PAIGC. Da fundação à ruptura, 1956–1980* (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2017); Sónia Vaz Borges, *Militant Education, Liberation Struggle, Consciousness. The PAIGC Education in Guinea Bissau* (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2019), and Sumaila Jaló, “Ideologias Educativas na Guiné(-Bissau) – 1954–1986” (Master’s diss., U. Porto, 2020).
- 15 Cf. The proposal for linking popular culture and political and economic liberation presented at the III Congress of the PAIGC (1977) and mentioned by Mário Pinto de Andrade, Minister for Culture until 1980, in “Democratização da Cultura – Mário de Andrade,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 480, June 24, 1978.
- 16 Coutinho, *Os Dirigentes do PAIGC*, 122–4. See also: Carlos Cardoso, *A Formação da Elite Política na Guiné-Bissau* (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos Africanos, 2002), 19.
- 17 See Moema Parente Augel, *Ora di kanta tchiga. José Carlos Schwarz e o Cobiána Djazz* (Bissau: INEP, 1998); Moema Parente Augel, “Vozes que não se calaram. Heroização, ufanismo e guineidade,” *Scripta* 14, no. 27 (2010): 13–27; Erica Cristina Bispo, “Cabral vive: A permanência do discurso de Amílcar Cabral na literatura da Guiné-Bissau,” *Sintidus* 3 (2020): 33–51; Catarina Laranjeiro, *Dos sonhos e das imagens. A guerra de libertação na Guiné-Bissau* (Lisboa: Outro modo, 2021), and Sílvia Roque, “Mulheres, nação e lutas no cinema anti/pós-colonial da Guiné-Bissau,” *Revista De Comunicação E Linguagens* 54 (2021): 276–95.
- 18 “Amílcar Cabral na nossa terra livre” and “Homenagem nacional ao fundador e militante número um do PAIGC,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 221, September 2, 1976.
- 19 Francisco Mendes (“Chico Té”) was also laid to rest in Amura, as one of the leaders of the PAIGC during the struggle and Prime Minister of Guinea-Bissau between 1973 and 1978, the year in which he died in a car accident. A tombstone was placed there in honour of Ernestina “Titina” Silá, a leading combatant killed in a Portuguese ambush while on her way to Cabral’s funeral in 1973. Cf. “Domingos Ramos, Pansau e Osvaldo ao lado de Cabral e Chico Té,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 617, August 9, 1979.
- 20 Imperial Square was changed to National Heroes Square, Republic Avenue to Amílcar Cabral Avenue, Nuno Tristão Square to Martyrs of Colonialism Square, Lusíadas Square to Titina Silá Square, Av. Américo Tomás to Av. Pansau na Isna, Av. Agostinho Coelho to Av. 3 August and Av. Carvalho Viegas to Av. Domingos Ramos, among many other changes. Cf. *Aviso de 25 de janeiro de 1975*, approved on 21 January.
- 21 As Cabral described it, in a text republished in the newspaper *Nô Pintcha*: “O massacre de Pidjiguiti e o novo caminho da luta,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 210, August 7, 1976. On the meanings of Pidjiguiti, see: Leopoldo Amado, “Simbólica de Pindjiguiti na óptica libertária da Guiné-Bissau,” *Guineidade*, February 21, 2006, <https://guineidade.blogs.sapo.pt/15548.html> and Sílvia Roque, “3 de agosto de 1959, Massacre de Pindjiguiti, Bissau,” *Esquerda.net*, August 3, 2021, <https://www.esquerda.net/dossier/3-de-agosto-de-1959-massacre-de-pindjiguiti-bissau/63784>.
- 22 Cf. “O povo homenageou os mártires do Pidjiguiti,” “Aristides Pereira: A força está do nosso lado,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 57, August 5, 1975. See also “3 de agosto de 1959 – 3 de agosto de 1976: 17 anos depois, o nosso Povo prepara-se para evocar, pela segunda vez após a libertação completa, o aniversário do massacre de Pidjiguiti, um dos crimes mais abomináveis praticados pelos colonialistas da nossa terra,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 208, August 3, 1976, and “Comité 3 de agosto. Luiz Cabral evoca o Pidjiguiti,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 209, August 5, 1976.
- 23 Roque, “3 de agosto,” *Esquerda.net*.

- 24 Roque, “3 de agosto,” *Esquerda.net*.
- 25 Cf. *Relatório sobre a situação atual na Guiné-Bissau* (Lisbon: CIDAC, 1980), 10, written by Luís Moita and Carolina Quina after a stay in Bissau, with the agreement of the Council of the Revolution, and in Praia, in Cape Verde, where they met several PAIGC leaders. After publishing the report, the CIDAC decided to resume their cooperation with Guinea-Bissau, which had been suspended since 14 November, while also calling for the release of political prisoners.
- 26 Cf. “Golpe de Estado é contrário aos princípios do partido,” *Voz di Povo*, no. 251, January 17, 1981, and José Vicente Lopes, *Cabo Verde. Os Bastidores da Independência* (Praia: Spleen, 2013), 606.
- 27 João Bernardo Nino Vieira, ‘*Vamos construir a Pátria de Cabral*’. – *Discurso do fim do ano proferido pelo Presidente do Conselho da Revolução Comandante João Bernardo Vieira* (Bissau: Edições Nô Pintcha, 1980–1981).
- 28 Moita and Quina, *Relatório*, 3–4, and Fafali Koudawo, *Cabo Verde e Guiné-Bissau. Da democracia revolucionária à democracia liberal* (Bissau: INEP, 2001). See also Álvaro Nóbrega, *A luta pelo poder na Guiné-Bissau* (Lisbon: ISCSP-UTL, 2003).
- 29 See, for example, “O Secretário-Geral do PAIGC falou à Nação sobre os acontecimentos de Bissau. Golpe aventureiro trai ‘princípios’ e compromete uma luta de dignidade,” “A história do golpe,” “O golpe é uma aventura de graves consequências” and “A verdade por si só é revolucionária,” *Voz di Povo*, no. 244, November 19, 1980; “Assumir a história da luta, aprendê-la com objetividade e no seu verdadeiro contexto” – afirmou Pedro Pires no ‘meeting’ da Assomada,” “Guiné-Bissau. Responsabilidade histórica ou rutura com a Luta,” *Voz di Povo*, no. 245, November 29, 1980.
- 30 Lopes, *Cabo Verde*, 588–9.
- 31 PAICV, *I Congresso do PAICV* (Praia: Grafedito, 1981), 41–45.
- 32 *Nô Pintcha*, no. 753, November 24, 1980.
- 33 “14 de novembro – o fim da injustiça,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 754, November 29, 1980. According to Ângela Benoliel Coutinho, priority was given to the processing industries: 18 new production units were created during the period after independence up to 1979. Coutinho, *Os Dirigentes do PAIGC*, 201. Some of the options included in the economic and development plans, considered inappropriate for needs of the country and its populations, as well as the state elite’s monopoly over resources, would contribute to the crisis of legitimacy in Guinea. See Rosemary E. Galli, “The Political Economy of Guinea-Bissau: Second Thoughts,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 59, no. 3 (1989): 371–80, and Wilson Trajano Filho, “O projeto nacional na Guiné-Bissau: uma avaliação,” *Estudos Ibero-Americanos* 42, no. 3 (2016): 925.
- 34 Front page: “Mensagem do comandante Nino Vieira. Vamos construir a Pátria de Cabral,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 759, December 31, 1980.
- 35 “Congresso Extraordinário. Nino Vieira eleito Secretário-Geral do PAIGC,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 831, November 14, 1981.
- 36 “Fizemos o Congresso de Cassacá para pormos o partido no caminho certo,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 137, February 17, 1976.
- 37 Patrick Chabal, *Amilcar Cabral. Revolutionary Leadership and People’s War* (Trenton/Asmara: Africa World Press, 2003), 77–81.
- 38 Koudawo, *Cabo Verde e Guiné-Bissau*, 202. See also Mustafah Dhada, *Warriors at Work: How Guinea Was Really Set Free* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1993).
- 39 “Cassacá: Uma lição a não esquecer,” *Nô Pintcha*, no. 855, February 13, 1982.
- 40 Temudo, “From ‘People’s Struggle,’” 248.
- 41 *Nô Pintcha*, no. 1190, November 14, 1985.
- 42 Lars Rudebeck, “Kandjadja, Guinea-Bissau 1976–1986: Observations on the Political Economy of an African Village,” *Review of African Political Economy* 15, no. 41 (1988): 22.
- 43 Koudawo, *Guiné-Bissau e Cabo Verde*, 202–3.

- 44 Koudawo, *Guiné-Bissau e Cabo Verde*, 132, and Trajano Filho, “O projeto,” 926. See also Carlos Lopes, *A transição histórica na Guiné-Bissau: do movimento de libertação nacional ao Estado* (Bissau: INEP, 1987).
- 45 Raúl Fernandes, “Processo democrático na Guiné-Bissau,” *Soronda* 17 (1994); Koudawo, *Guiné-Bissau e Cabo Verde*, 133, and Cardoso, *A Formação da Elite*, 20.
- 46 The second multiparty elections were then held in the country and were won by Kumba Yalá for the Party for Social Renewal, thus ending over 20 years of PAIGC political hegemony. Nino Vieira would return to Guinea-Bissau in 2005, when he stood as a candidate in the presidential elections and was re-elected. He was assassinated while in office, in 2009.
- 47 Miguel de Barros and Redy Wilson Lima, “RAPensando novos mapeamentos culturais e territórios de emancipação cívica na Guiné-Bissau e em Cabo Verde,” *Mundo Crítico* 6 (2021): 82–101.
- 48 Barros and Lima, *RAPensando*, 90.
- 49 Christoph Kohl and Anita Schroven, “Suffering for the Nation: Bottom-up and Top-down Conceptualisations of the Nation in Guinea and Guinea-Bissau,” *Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology Working Papers* 152 (2014): 16.
- 50 Miguel de Barros and Redy Wilson Lima, “Rap Kriol(u): o pan-africanismo de Cabral na música de intervenção juvenil na Guiné-Bissau e em Cabo Verde,” *Realis – Revista de Estudos Antiutilitaristas e Pós-Coloniais* 2, no. 2 (2012): 99–101.
- 51 Barros and Lima, *RAPensando*, 94. See “A história e a arte de mãos dadas,” *Na nô mon*, January 4, 2021, <https://nanomon.org/noticias/historia-e-arte-de-maos-dadas>. On the PAIGC liberation heroes, see Ângela Benoliel Coutinho, “Imaginando o Combatente Ideal do PAIGC. A construção dos heróis nacionais na imprensa pós-independência na Guiné-Bissau e em Cabo Verde,” in *Comunidades imaginadas: nações e nacionalismos em África*, eds. Luís Reis Torgal, Fernando Tavares Pimenta, and Julião Soares Sousa (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2008), 173–80. On the role of women in the Guinean liberation struggle, see among others: Stephanie Urdang, “Fighting Two Colonialisms: The Women’s Struggle in Guinea-Bissau,” *African Studies Review* 18, no. 3 (1975): 29–34; Stephanie Urdang, *Fighting Two Colonialisms: Women in Guinea-Bissau* (New York: Monthly Press Review, 1979); Patrícia Godinho Gomes, “Amílcar Cabral and Guinean Women in the fight for emancipation,” in *Claim No Easy Victories. The Legacy of Amílcar Cabral*, eds. Firoze Manji and Bill Fletcher Jr. (Dakar: Codesria/Daraja Press, 2013), 279–94; Aliou Ly, “Promise and Betrayal: Women Fighters and National Liberation in Guinea Bissau,” in *Pan-Africanism and Feminism*, eds. Amina Mama and Hakima Abbas (Cape Town: African Gender Institute, 2014), 24–42; Odete Semedo, *Carmen Maria de Araújo Pereira. Os meus três amores* (Bissau: INEP, 2016); Inês Galvão and Catarina Laranjeiro, “Gender Struggle in Guinea-Bissau: Women’s Participation on and off the Liberation Record,” in *Resistance and Colonialism. Insurgent Peoples in World History*, eds. Nuno Domingos, Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo, and Ricardo Roque (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2019), 85–122.

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Legislation

- Aviso de 25 de janeiro de 1975.*
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