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The Independence of Cabo Verde: from the Diaspora to the Archipelago

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Abstract

The independence of Cabo Verde achieved on 5 July 1975 was not a straightforward process. From 1950s onwards, multiple anticolonial organizations having different ideas and interests challenged Portuguese colonial rule in the archipelago. Nonetheless, only the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde (PAIGC: Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde) was recognized as the representative of the populations and gained access to the negotiations with Portugal in 1974. This paper aims to contribute to a greater understanding of how the PAIGC became a leading organization in the negotiations for the independence of Cabo Verde, sidelining other actors with alternative views for the territory.

Keywords

Portugal – Cabo Verde – anticolonialism – PAIGC – diaspora

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Resumo

A independência de Cabo Verde alcançada a 5 de julho de 1975 não foi um processo linear. A partir da década de 1950, múltiplas organizações anticoloniais com ideias e interesses diferentes desafiaram o domínio colonial português no arquipélago. No entanto, apenas o Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde (PAIGC) foi reconhecido como representante das populações e obteve acesso às negociações com Portugal em 1974. Este artigo pretende contribuir para uma maior compreensão de como o PAIGC se tornou na única organização presente nas negociações para a independência de Cabo Verde, pondo de parte outros atores com visões alternativas para o território.

Palavras-chave

Portugal – Cabo Verde – anticolonialismo – PAIGC – diáspora

As a holder of colonized territories in Africa and Asia, Portugal ignored pleas for decolonization, facing wars in Angola in 1961, in Guinea in 1963, and in Mozambique the following year (Afonso and Gomes 2000). The 25 April 1974 coup d'état in Portugal against the *Estado Novo* (New State) regime changed the situation, accelerating the pace of Portuguese decolonization (Rosas, Machaqueiro, and Oliveira 2015). Guinea-Bissau was different from the other territories due to the unilateral proclamation by the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde (PAIGC: Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde) of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau on 24 September 1973. The Portuguese government ended up recognizing the proclamation, transferring powers to PAIGC on 10 September 1974 (Silva 2015). After several rounds of negotiations, Portugal agreed to the creation of an independent Mozambique and on 25 June 1975, the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO: Frente de Libertação de Moçambique) emerged as the legitimate government of the newly formed state (Souto 2015).

The independence of Cabo Verde proved to be more difficult and PAIGC had to overcome Portugal's hesitations regarding the fate of the colony, securing sovereignty on 5 July 1975 (Coutinho 2015). For São Tomé e Príncipe, the external pressure, namely from the United Nations (UN), was crucial in legitimizing direct negotiations between Portugal and the Movement for the Liberation of São Tomé e Princípe (MLSTP: Movimento para a Libertação de São Tomé e Princípe), with the independence being achieved on 12 July 1975 (Nascimento

2015). Concerning Angola, Portugal negotiated with the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA: Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola), the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA: Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola), and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA: União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola), but clashes among the three movements overshadowed the process. The Portuguese government withdrew its administrative and military personnel from Angola on 11 November 1975, but did not recognize any of the governments declared by the liberation movements (Gleijeses 2002). Likewise, in East Timor violence erupted among the political organizations and Indonesia invaded the territory on 7 December 1975, preventing Portugal from transferring sovereignty. The completion of the Portuguese decolonization came only after the return of Macao to the Popular Republic of China on 20 December 1999 and the independence of East Timor from Indonesian rule on 20 May 2002 (Pereira and Santos 2022).

Located 500 kilometers from the west coast of Africa, Cabo Verde was one of the main points of contention in the Portuguese decolonization. The complexities of Cabo Verde's independence somehow distinguish the territory from the other Portuguese colonies. First of all, Cabo Verde did not experience an armed struggle, with the war for independence being waged on Guinean soil (Coutinho 2015). Moreover, the main liberation movement that fought to break with the colonial regime in the islands, the PAIGC, intended to form a union with Guinea (Sousa 2016). After 25 April 1974, an intense debate on whether or not Cabo Verde should be an independent state came to the fore like in no other colony. The influence of international pressure, PAIGC maneuvers, the mobilization of the population within the archipelago and in the diaspora, and the actions of the Portuguese military, conjugated with other factors, were of principal importance to defeat Portugal's resistance to Cabo Verde's independence (Santos 2018). Notable also was the fact that the transfer of powers was not regulated, as in the cases of Guinea, Angola, and Mozambique, by an agreement with the Portuguese government but through an organic statute. Furthermore, except for São Tomé e Príncipe, Cabo Verde was the only colony to hold elections for a national assembly (Ferreira 1994).

In recent years, the struggle for independence of Cabo Verde has gained increased attention in scholarship (Barros and Santos 2020). The existing academic literature has engaged in the analysis of different aspects of the Cabo Verdean rise to statehood, focusing especially on the involvement of PAIGC and its leader Amílcar Cabral in the binational struggle for the independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde. The literature specifically discusses the trajectories of the Cabo Verdean militants – including women – within the PAIGC,

the movement initiatives to mobilize the population in the archipelago, the international dimension of its struggle, the ideas and arguments developed by Cabral to challenge colonial rule, the role of the Portuguese military during the transition to independence, and the union with Guinea-Bissau that lasted until 1980 (Coutinho 2017; Pereira[a] 2015; Santos 2017; Dhada 1995; Rabaka 2014; Pires[a] 2021; Fernandes 2007; Keese 2017; MacQueen 2005). In addition, scholarly attention has centered on the post-colonial construction of the memory of the struggle for independence and the public mobilization of Amílcar Cabral's figure in Cabo Verde (Cardina and Rodrigues 2022).

Memories of PAIGC's militants and Amílcar Cabral's close associates complement the existing publications. Luís Cabral, Aristides Pereira, Jorge Querido, Pedro Martins, Paula Fortes, Pedro Pires, and, lately, Osvaldo Lopes da Silva are among those who have produced accounts of their participation in the struggle for the independence of Cabo Verde (Cabral 1984; Pereira 2002; Querido 1988; Martins 1990; Fortes 2013; Pires[b] 2021; Silva 2021). The experiences of other PAIGC cadres have fueled the interest of journalists, namely José Vicente Lopes, resulting in books detailing how the movement defined and implemented its agenda (Lopes 2016; Lopes 2012). The release of primary sources, chiefly by the Amílcar Cabral Foundation, has also a place in the production of knowledge about the struggle for the independence of Cabo Verde, broadening the range of information available for those studying the subject.[1]

Building on the current growing literature, this paper seeks to address how Cabo Verde became independent drawing from archival materials, memories, and scholarly publications. It aims to contribute to a greater understanding of how PAIGC became a leading organization in the negotiations for the independence of the archipelago, sidelining actors with alternative views of the territory. In part one of the paper, the different experiences of resistance to Portuguese colonialism in Cabo Verde are detailed. Part two explores the anti-colonial organizations established among Cabo Verde's multiple diasporas in Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Part three engages with the struggle for independence carried out by PAIGC within the archipelago, in Guinea, and internationally. The last part deals with the period of negotiations for independence after 25 April 1974.

1 Examples of the publications released by the Amílcar Cabral Foundation are in Barros and Santos 2020, 19–20.

1 The Resistance to Portuguese Colonialism

The history of the resistance to Portugal's rule in Cabo Verde is yet to be fully understood since the subject has not found enough space in scholarship. The incomplete picture we have on the topic points out that Cabo Verde was a place of resistance and revolts (Mascarenhas 2014). Throughout the centuries, there were uprisings motivated by the struggle for power among the clergy, military, and civilian authorities, the refusal to pay taxes, the system of land distribution, the fight for the freedom of enslaved people, the discontent of exiled soldiers, and demands for better wages or the clashes between the population and Portuguese officials (Pereira[b] 2015). The rebels' discourse, besides specific demands, sometimes embraced calls for political change, either by requesting the status of adjacency, more autonomy, and even independence for the archipelago. They were fueled both by local grievances and political and institutional turmoil that occurred elsewhere, namely in Portugal (Mascarenhas 2014: 20).

An illustration of this was the wave of unrest in the early nineteenth century which some accounts consider to have been conditioned by several factors, principal among them the Liberal Revolution of 1820 in Portugal and the proclamation of Brazil's independence in 1822 (Mascarenhas 2014, Pereira[b] 2015). The Portuguese experience of liberalism ignited political unrest in Cabo Verde, with the polarization contributing to the emergence of different liberal factions. As in other Portuguese colonies, Brazilian independence created aspirations among sectors of the Cabo Verdean society, with the establishment of a pro-Brazil party aiming to separate the islands from Portugal. Scholarship assumes that the separatist movement had an effect in triggering the 1822 *Revolta dos Engenhos* (Engenhos Revolt), when the population of a rural area in Santa Catarina claimed ownership of the land based on rights alleged granted by the Portuguese liberal constitution (Lopes 2013: 36). Another reading also connects the pro-Brazil separatists with the *Revolta de Achada Falcão* (Achada Falcão Revolt) in 1841, which once again revolved around the monopoly of land and the interpretation that changes in the Portuguese constitution guaranteed tenants' rights (Mascarenhas 2014).

As the decomposition of the Portuguese liberal monarchy hastened, the rebels in Cabo Verde continued to respond to events in Portugal. The growing calls for republicanism in Portugal in the late nineteenth century found an echo in Cabo Verde, where the diffusion of the republican idea prompted demands for regime change (Mascarenhas 2014). In a revolt in Santo Antão in 1886, while refusing to pay a new property tax, the population voiced the

desire for a republican regime. The republican terminology also emerged in the revolt following a failed attempt to elect a republican candidate on the same island in the 1894 election for the Portuguese Parliament (Oliveira 1998: 164–165). Likewise, the transition to the First Republic in Portugal, with the fall of the Constitutional Monarchy in 1910, brought unrest to Cabo Verde. A combination of the disagreement over the exploitation of *purgueira* (a plant with high commercial value) and the adherence to republicanism resulted in the 1910 *Revolta de Ribeirão Manuel* (Ribeirão Manuel Revolt) (Mascarenhas 2014). In a similar way to the 1822 revolt, the idea that the new regime would bring economic transformations and equality to improve the life of the population in the archipelago contributed to the unrest.

With Portugal being able to restore control after the revolts, a variety of other forms of protest against the colonial system existed in the islands. As a territory prone to droughts, Cabo Verde experienced socioeconomic difficulties and the colonial administration's lack of resources to help the population, all of which encouraged questioning of the status quo. The discussion of Cabo Verdean problems played out in recreational and sports societies, cultural associations, trade unions, political associations, and newspapers, whose number increased in the late nineteenth century and during the Portuguese First Republic (1910–1926) (Oliveira 1998: 85). Luís Loff de Vasconcelos, Eugénio Tavares, José Lopes da Silva, Januário Leite, and Pedro Monteiro Cardoso, among others, emerged as figures embodying discourses of change. Labeled as nativists, they requested the same adjacency status as Madeira and Azores, autonomy with administrative decentralization or independence (Guimarães 2012). Nevertheless, they were unable to escape cultural attachment to Portugal and found themselves constrained by criticism from supporters of the colonial rule, disenchantment with the First Republic, an increase in repression, and a lack of international support. In a later period, they toned down the political revindications, choosing instead to champion the Cabo Verdean identity, especially its creole language (Guimarães 2017: 24–30).

As the nativists bore witness, to speak about the political projects imagined for Cabo Verde means also speaking about the ways the discourse was influenced by the appropriation, modification, and adaptation of the colonial narrative. This was all the more evident with the intellectuals gathered around the magazine *Claridade* (1936–1960). Especially in the first phase (1936–1937), *Claridade* called for the recognition of a Cabo Verdean singularity, stressing its socio-cultural elements such as language, folklore, and lifestyle (Apolinário, Silvestre, and Pires 2010). Jorge Barbosa, Baltasar Lopes da Silva, Manuel Lopes, and João Lopes, to name a few, emphasized a Cabo Verdean regional identity, crediting the Portuguese culture as the main influence in the archipelago

(Resende 2014: 190). Believing that African cultures did not have a relevant impact in Cabo Verde, the *Claridosos* found in the luso-tropicalism theorization from the Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freire's arguments to consider Cabo Verde as the example of an alleged miscegenation and cultural interpenetration prompted by Portuguese colonialism (Castelo 1999). The *Claridosos* discourse, although included references to the hardships in the islands and demands for equal rights, aimed at regionalism within the Portuguese colonial framework (Barros 2008).

How *Claridosos* imagined the political future of Cabo Verde was challenged by the appropriation, modification, and adaptation of other discourses by the Cabo Verdeans on the islands and throughout the diaspora. After World War II, the idea of Cabo Verdean regionalism in the context of Portuguese colonialism was opposed by those who proposed a new understanding of the territory's identity, focusing on its African roots (Silveira 1963). The protagonists of this emphasis on Cabo Verde's Africanity were influenced by the African countries' independence, though memories of the hardships in the islands were also an important reference point (Lopes 2012: 48–49). This generation of Cabo Verdeans engaged with many of the theoretical discourses of the moment, such as Marxism, pragmatism, historicism, Pan-Africanism, negritude, decoloniality, postcolonialism, feminism, and so on (Rabaka 2014). As students, immigrants, or public employees living in Cabo Verde and other countries, especially in Portugal, Guinea, Senegal, and the United States (US), they adopted a language of resistance to Portuguese colonialism and the idea of independence. Some of them ended up serving the struggle for independence of Cabo Verde that took place both inside and outside the archipelago.

2 The Anticolonial Organizations

The Cabo Verdean struggle for independence evolved in the context of Portuguese resistance to decolonization in the second half of the twentieth century, with the country deploying late-colonial reformism and repression to preserve the integrity of its colonial domination (Alexandre 2017). As with other Portuguese African colonies, the case to overthrow the colonial system in Cabo Verde stimulated, from the 1950s onwards, the creation of anticolonial organizations with multiple ideas and interests. For most of the organizations, we are still not sure about their foundation, composition, program, or methods, since there were efforts to obscure or omit them from the narrative, and the paper trail they produced is yet to be fully explored (Cardina and Rodrigues 2022; Barros and Santos 2020: 20–21). The following discussion highlights some

of the organizations, situating them within the variety of anticolonial thought that shaped the path for the independence of the archipelago.

The rich and complex cultural and political environment among the Cabo Verdean diaspora and the Guineans converged in the creation in Guinea of the PAIGC. The year 1956 was for a long time presented as the moment of the foundation, but scholars and writers have been signaling 1959 and 1960 as alternative dates (Sousa 2016: 198–204; Santos 2014). Initially named African Party for Independence (PAI: Partido Africano da Independência), the identity of its founding members is open to debate. The group was mostly made up of individuals with university education, technical training, and exposure to foreign, namely European and African, thought (Coutinho 2017). Amílcar Cabral, who become the secretary-general, Aristides Pereira, Elisée Turpin, Fernando Fortes, Júlio Almeida, and Luís Cabral are credited as founders. The PAIGC's first program called for the independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde, democratization and emancipation of their populations, economic development, and social progress (Sousa 2016: 262–264). Afterward, it included Amílcar Cabral's plan for a union between Guinea and Cabo Verde, inspired by the historical and cultural connections among both territories and the experiments of federation by the post-colonial African countries (Pereira[a] 2015: 107–108). Subsequent to establishing its headquarters in Guinea-Conakry, PAIGC would go on to spearhead a binational struggle and a guerrilla campaign against Portugal.

At the time of the PAIGC's founding, its militants were mostly unknown figures in a political milieu that featured many anticolonial organizations. While PAIGC combined Guinean and Cabo Verdean interests, other organizations prioritized only the fight for the independence of Cabo Verde. Senegal was an important hub for these organizations, whose militants were to be found in the Cabo Verdean emigrant community, especially in Dakar (Sousa 2016: 252–259). Although it is unclear whether its birthplace was Senegal or the United States (US), the Union of the People of the Cabo Verde Islands (UPICV: União dos Povos das Ilhas de Cabo Verde) came into existence among Cabo Verdean emigrants in 1959 (Lopes 2013; Fernandes 2007: 37). At an uncertain date, the organization underwent a refoundation and in the middle of the 1970s it became UPICV-Popular Liberation Front (UPICV-Frente de Libertação Popular) (Sousa 2016: 619). The UPICV's primary goal was the independence of Cabo Verde and in time it adopted Maoism, denouncing the US and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics's (USSR) competition for influence in the Global South.[2] In its advocacy for Cabo Verde's independence, the organization stood

2 Ephemera: Biblioteca e Arquivo de José Pacheco Pereira, União dos Povos das Ilhas de Cabo Verde, "Fia-te na pomba verás o milhafre que apanhas!"

in opposition to the PAIGC, rejecting the idea of unity between Guinea and Cabo Verde. Just as PAIGC was starting the armed struggle, the UPICV pleaded to use peaceful means and only resort to force with the support of the African countries.[3] Having faced difficulties in creating an organizational structure, until 1974 the UPICV tried to campaign for the independence of Cabo Verde through publications issued from its branches in Senegal and the US.

In addition to the UPICV, the Cabo Verdean political scene in Dakar was home to several other anticolonial organizations that surfaced throughout the 1960s. Although we still do not know its origin and actions, a so-called Movement for the Liberation of the Cabo Verde Islands (MLICV: Movimento de Libertação das Ilhas de Cabo Verde) was active in Senegal in early 1960. The organization's statute and program of May 1962 declared as its aims the liberation of Cabo Verde by all means and accorded a central role to the armed struggle.[4] Defending the inclusion of all Cabo Verdeans, MLICV committed to not espousing any ideology. For the postcolonial period, its ambition was to establish a Democratic Republic of Cabo Verde, where the bourgeoisie would be eliminated.[5] The organization also envisioned Cabo Verde's participation in African unity, a project to help tackle the problems of the continent whose institutionalization was becoming a contentious issue among African leaders. Adhering to proposals for a federation or fusion of independent states to create an African nation, the MLICV demonstrated support for Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah's notion of unity.[6]

Sometimes the anticolonial organizations established in Senegal succeeded one another, despite their different origins. The Cabo Verdean Democratic Union (UDC: União Democrática Cabo-Verdiana) was an example of this situation. The organization was likely established in the late 1950s by Cabo Verdean emigrants, and in 1962 it adopted the name of the MLICV that was being dissolved.[7] The label UDC resurfaced again in 1974, as we shall see, when following 25 April, a group of people established an organization using the same acronym in Cabo Verde (Furtado 2016: 863). Moreover, other organizations were unable to retain their membership as was the case of the Movement for the

3 Fundação Mário Soares e Maria Barroso (FMSMB), Documentação Amílcar Cabral (DAC), Documentos Originais do PAIGC, FRAIN, FLING, MPLA 1960–1961, Declaração da UPICV, 31 de julho de 1963, Pasta: 07059.025.018.

4 FMSMB, DAC, MLGCV 1960–1961, Estatutos e Programa do Movimento de Libertação das Ilhas de Cabo Verde (MLICV), 1 de maio de 1962, Pasta: 07057.015.045.

5 Idem.

6 Idem.

7 FMSMB, DAC, Correspondência 1962, Declaração da UDC, [post. 20 de maio de 1962], Pasta: 04604.039.007.

Liberation of Guinea and Cabo Verde-Dakar (MLGCV-Dakar: Movimento de Libertação da Guiné e Cabo Verde-Dakar), established no later than June 1960 (Sousa 2016: 207). Formed by Guineans and Cabo Verdeans following a suggestion of Amílcar Cabral, it had also a branch in Guinea-Conakry. MLGC-Dakar suffered from internal divisions, political and personal intrigues, and mismanagement of funds. Having accomplished little on a political level, it was dissolved in 1962 with some of its members migrating to other anticolonial formations (Sousa 2016: 242–243).

Even though Senegal had by far the largest number of anticolonial organizations, Brazil also became a site of activism challenging Portuguese colonialism in Cabo Verde. The Union of Free Cabo Verdeans of Brazil (UCVL: União dos Cabo-Verdeanos Livres do Brasil) was formed in the 1950s or early 1960s in São Paulo (Pires[a] 2021: 75). The organization is best known for its attempts to liaise, without avail, with other anticolonialists in Senegal. The failure of the UCVL was a testament to the factionalism that characterized the struggle for the independence of Cabo Verde (Sousa 2016). The anticolonial organizations operated in an environment of shifting alliances and hostility. They were divided between and among themselves. The divisions were instigated by members but also by Portugal to discredit their demands and weaken their ability to fight for independence (Santos 2017: 88–90). Factionalism left its marks in the competition for influence, acts of violence, sabotage, and attempts to play the host countries, allies, international organizations, and solidarity groups against each other.

Since factionalism did not favor the cause of independence, voices among the anticolonial organizations urged unity as indispensable to an effective fight against Portugal. The Movement for the Liberation of Guinea (MLG: Movimento de Libertação da Guiné) founded in Bissau and the PAIGC established in 1959 the Liberation Front of Guinea and Cabo Verde (FLGC: Frente de Libertação da Guiné e de Cabo Verde) (Sousa 2016: 242). Members of the bureau of Conakry of the MLGC-Dakar along with Guinean and Cabo Verdean emigrants took part in the creation, also in 1959, of the Movement for the Liberation of the Territories under Portuguese Domination (MLTDP: Movimento de Libertação dos Territórios sob Dominação Portuguesa) (Sousa 2016: 243). Failing to maintain unity in the absence of effective leadership, both organizations were short-lived, eventually being dissolved. After the MLDTP disappearance in July 1960, its members contributed to the founding of the Movement for the Liberation of Guinea and Cabo Verde (MLGCV: Movimento de Libertação da Guiné e Cabo Verde), intended to be a section of the FLGC (Sousa 2016: 246). Under the leadership of PAIGC Secretary-General, Amílcar

Cabral, the MLGCV secured the recognition of Guinea-Conaky but eventually it, too, disappeared.

Besides the examples listed above, the UDC, the MLGC-Dakar, the MLGCV, the PAIGC, and the Popular Union of Guinea (UPG: União Popular da Guiné) organized in July 1961 a conference in Dakar. In calling for the creation of an umbrella organization, dubbed the United Front for the Liberation of "Portuguese" Guinea and the Cabo Verde Islands (FUL: Frente Unida de Libertação da Guiné "Portuguesa" e das Ilhas de Cabo Verde), these organizations agreed on fighting for the immediate and total liquidation of Portuguese colonialism (Sousa 2016: 272–273). The Front adopted a charter asking for the intensification of the struggle and the use of all methods against Portugal, including violence.[8] This charter only briefly united the organizations and the major issues that led to the disbanding of the FUL were sabotage, disagreements, and lack of commitment.

In the absence of an undisputed leading anticolonial organization, impulses for unity came in addition from external pressure. Urging the formation of united fronts was central to the relations between African countries such as Algeria, Guinea-Conakry, Mali, and Senegal with those polities championing the independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde (Byrne 2016). The Organization of African Unity (OAU), through the Liberation Committee, established to coordinate the support to the colonized territories, made its assistance conditional on the creation of unified fronts (Sousa 2016: 275). It dispatched in 1963 a mission to Guinea-Conakry and Senegal to mediate between the anticolonial organizations. The mission recommended the formation of a united front for the liberation of Guinea and Cabo Verde. Moreover, it declared the united front should be created within the framework of the PAIGC, justifying the proposal with the fact that the organization had more means and was engaged in armed struggle in Guinea (Sousa 2016: 280).

The OAU recommendation signaled that PAIGC was in the ascendancy among those working in the name of Guinea and Cabo Verde. The organization benefited, in part, from the fact that most of the anticolonial camp was affected by internal divisions and a lack of leadership (Sousa 2016: 236). PAIGC brought with it a leadership centered on Amílcar Cabral and, contrarily to other organizations whose goals sometimes remained ill-defined, it had clear political objectives (Sousa 2016: 235–282). Likewise, it established itself as the leading figure by forging relations with Guinea's neighboring countries,

8 FMSMB, DAC, Carta da Frente Unida de Libertação da Guiné e Cabo Verde, 12–14 de julho 1961, Pasta: 04602.019.

Guinea-Conakry and Senegal, and pursuing international alliances. Securing patrons had implications for the political, financial, and military resources PAIGC amassed, creating a gap with the anticolonialists unable to attract the same level of support (Telepneva 2021). The methods used by the PAIGC – clandestine activities, mobilization in the diaspora, armed struggle, state-building programs, diplomacy, communications, among others – also had an impact, helping the organization to capture the "national liberation movement" title (Gomes 2008; Sousa 2016; Dhada 1993).

3 The PAIGC Struggle for Independence

In the context of a larger anti-colonial critic of Portuguese colonialism, PAIGC forged a discourse about Cabo Verde. From the perspective of the movement, Cabo Verde was distinct from Portugal in terms of identity and geography (Santos[a]: 80). As a result of the archipelago's constitutional status, the movement deployed the argument that the population had an unequal relationship with Portugal, being unable to participate in the government. The movement also emphasized the idea that the Cabo Verdeans had no rights and were under the surveillance and repression of the Portuguese army and secret police (Santos[a]: 81–82). Additionally, PAIGC depicted the hardships in the islands as a consequence of colonial domination and a reflection of Portuguese neglect of Cabo Verde's development. Regarding this last element, the organization rejected the narrative that the territory was poor, accusing Portugal of not valuing its natural resources (Santos[a]: 82–93). Using human rights language as a referent, PAIGC saw Cabo Verde as entitled to the right to self-determination, underscoring that the population wanted to freely exercise its sovereignty.

Beginning in 1959, Abílio Duarte, a PAIGC cadre, attempted to inspire anti-colonial agitation in the archipelago, but his move was cut short by Portuguese repression (Pereira[a] 2015: 140–153). In 1963, PAIGC decided to establish a presence in the islands, using clandestine militants. Carlos Lineu Miranda, Fernando dos Reis Tavares, Jorge Querido, Pedro Martins, and others had a crucial role, being active in Santiago, Santo Antão, and São Vicente (Querido 1988; Martins 1990). They targeted the rural population, public employees, merchants, service sector employees, and students. Distribution of propaganda, received by boat from abroad, organization of public meetings, and gathering of information about the situation in the territory were the main activities in which they engaged (Pereira[a] 2015: 140–177). Nevertheless, PAIGC did not succeed in its aim of creating an underground movement and a solid organization in the archipelago. Colonial repression, with the imprisonment of several

militants, communications difficulties with the movement's headquarters in Conakry, the emigration of the Cabo Verdean population from the countryside, and the geography of the territory were important obstacles to the promotion of political agitation for the cause of independence (Pereira[a] 2015).

PAIGC supplemented the clandestine activities in Cabo Verde with political mobilization among the diaspora in Africa and Europe (Sousa 2016, Pereira[a] 2015). Its cadres targeted Cabo Verdean workers and students in Senegal, Portugal, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Sweden to recruit militants, disseminate propaganda, organize political meetings, coordinate the sending of information to Cabo Verde, and work clandestinely in the archipelago (Pereira[a] 2015). The connections with the diaspora can be interpreted as an indication that, faced with constraints in the archipelago, the movement resorted to asserting Cabo Verdean sovereignty from the outside. As a culmination of this strategy, in January 1963, PAIGC started guerrilla warfare in the Guinean territory for the independence of both Guinea and Cabo Verde (Sousa 2016: 358–367). Several Cabo Verdeans went on to join the armed struggle in the ranks of the movement's armed wing, the People's Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARP: Forças Armadas Revolucionárias do Povo).

Shortly after the beginning of the military action in Guinea, PAIGC attempted to extend the armed struggle to Cabo Verde. To this end, the movement engaged in political activities in the archipelago to gain the support of the population for the war effort and recruited Cabo Verdeans from the diaspora to fight inside the territory (Pereira[a] 2015: 130–140). Inspired by Fidel Castro's crossing from Mexico to Cuba in 1956, PAIGC drew plans to disembark troops from abroad to carry guerrilla warfare in Santiago and Santo Antão. Between 1966 and 1968, 31 Cabo Verdeans received military training in Cuba and formed the Cabo Verdean Armed Forces (Pereira[a] 2015: 181–183). In 1970, the USSR offered PAIGC the use of a boat to transport and disembark men and armament in Cabo Verde (Pereira[a] 2015: 184–185). In the same year, the USSR started a two-year military training program for Cabo Verdeans who were supposed to form a PAIGC navy and disembark in the archipelago (Pereira[a] 2015: 185–186). In 1973, Cuba provided military training to two Cabo Verdean students recruited to wage guerrilla in Cabo Verde but ceased its association with the idea after the assassination of Amílcar Cabral (Pereira[a] 2015: 187). Despite the efforts and resources invested, none of the plans came to fruition mainly because the geography of Cabo Verde did not facilitate guerrilla action, nor did PAIGC win the support of Senegal and Mauritania, from where the assault to the islands could be launched (Pereira[a] 2015: 186–187).

Considering that Cabo Verde's independence was not the result of a process of armed struggle in the archipelago, the explanation for why the territory

became independent has to be found in the other methods used by PAIGC to overthrow Portuguese colonialism. Armed struggle in Guinea was only one aspect of PAIGC's struggle since the challenge to Portuguese colonialism took place on several fronts (Sousa 2016). The methods used by PAIGC also included diplomatic lobbying, echoing the National Liberation Front's (FLN: Front de Libération Nationale) diplomacy, which used international pressure to compel France to accept Algeria's independence. As with the FLN, PAIGC's diplomatic strategy entailed a recognition that it would be impossible to achieve Cabo Verde's independence only through force (Byrne 2016; Connelly 2001). To overcome its military fragilities, the movement sought the internationalization of its struggle, using a variety of diplomatic strategies directed at different targets, whether they were states, international organizations, non-state actors, or individuals.

Headquartered in Conakry, PAIGC opened bureaus, representations, and branches in other countries to defend its interests worldwide (Sousa 2016). With the support of the host countries, the movement established bureaus in Dakar and Argel (Algeria), besides making use of the bureau of the Conference of Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies (CONCP: Conferência das Organizações Nacionalistas das Colónias Portuguesas) in Rabat (Morocco) (Byrne 2016). Likewise, the movement created representations in Uppsala (Sweden) and New York (US), as well as a section in Portugal and a cell in the Netherlands (Lopes 2016). Often staffed with Cabo Verdeans, these structures were platforms for PAIGC diplomacy to build international alliances.

As part of PAIGC's wider international campaign, its cadres engaged in traveling across the globe in an attempt to win support for their struggle (Santos 2023: 27–30). One of their most important destinations was African countries, targeted from the middle of the 1950s onwards to search for political and material assistance (Sousa 2016: 463–464). The rapprochement to Africa was, in the early 1960s, paired with PAIGC's increasing turn to socialist countries to negotiate deals under which the movement received aid (Telepneva 2021). When it came to Western countries, especially the Portuguese allies in the Northern Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the movement put a great deal of effort into launching offensives to influence their public opinion. Moreover, sometimes the trips aimed at participating in conferences, which supplemented the attempts to draw international attention to Portugal's colonial rule (Sousa 2016: 327–328). In those events, in addition to raising its profile, the movement lobbied for the passage of resolutions supporting Guinea and Cabo Verde's struggle for independence and established connections with other delegations.

In its diplomatic endeavor, PAIGC took the situation of Guinea and Cabo Verde to international organizations, particularly the UN, which was in the

process of becoming an anticolonial forum (Santos 2017). The movement saw the organization as an unparalleled opportunity to reach a worldwide audience, denounce Portuguese colonialism, mobilize human rights and other rights to defend the independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde and appeal for international support (Santos[a]). The movement in addition embarked at the UN on publicizing its project for the union between Guinea and Cabo Verde, as well as on trying to build its reputation as representative of both territories. Among the international organizations, PAIGC also turned to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the African intergovernmental body given the responsibility of assisting the fight to end colonialism and racial discrimination on the continent (Dhada 1995: 29–30). PAIGC's diplomatic campaign at the OAU was very similar to the one waged at the UN, deploying the same arguments. The movement leveraged the OAU's opportunities for diplomatic maneuvering to gather support behind its agenda like no other anticolonial group fighting for Guinea and Cabo Verde (Sousa 2016: 282).

Just as important as the interactions with the UN and the OAU, PAIGC aimed its international campaign at a multitude of supporters in Western countries. The movement connected with solidarity groups founded to assist the struggle in the Portuguese colonies, on the one hand, and with various non-state actors, on the other (Russo 2020; Barros 2020). The first group included, among others, the American Committee on Africa, the Committee for Freedom in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea, and the National Support Committee for the Liberation Struggle in the Portuguese Colonies (Parrott 2014). The second consisted of churches, religious groups, trade unions, political parties, student bodies, women's organizations, and so on (Schliehe 2019; Sellstrom 2002, 1999; Eriksen 2000). While engaging with the PAIGC, the solidarity groups and non-state actors forged networks and shared forms of action, transforming the struggle for the independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde into a transnational campaign, characterized by the coordination of people and ideas from different origins across national boundaries.

The interactions with solidarity groups and non-state actors walked hand in hand with the building of personal connections that were instrumental for PAIGC diplomatic agenda. Not only did the movement seek to cultivate personal contacts to internationalize the liberation struggle, but a wide variety of individual actors from across the globe voluntarily engaged in relationships with PAIGC (Santos 2022). Journalists, academics, filmmakers, missionaries, priests, doctors, intellectuals, and students, to name a few, reinforced the movement's international campaign, acting as proxies. These activists played a role in fueling anticolonial discourses for international audiences and in attracting a multitude of resources for the movements (Santos 2022: 156).

Another vehicle of PAIGC's struggle for the independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde, as equally relevant as those named above, was the creation of a communications apparatus. Using the Secretariat in Conakry, the bureaus, the representations, and the branches, the movement radiated its message and waged a war of words against Portugal. It established public messaging through publications (journals, communiqués, declarations, manifestos, memoranda, speeches, books, and so on), press conferences, radio broadcasts, appearances on television, and participation in films (Barros 2020). PAIGC capitalized on its connections, exchanging information with international organizations, solidarity groups, non-state actors, and individual activists with a view toward the propagation of its narrative. Due to its potential to influence world opinion, the movement likewise courted the international press, seeking coverage of its activities (Gorjão Santos 2010).

Notwithstanding its ability to project itself as the custodian of the struggle for the independence of Cabo Verde, PAIGC would be often divided about the strategy for the archipelago. The clandestine militants operating in the territory asked repeatedly for military training and armament, voicing disappointment with the delays in acting on the plans for armed struggle in the islands (Pereira[a] 2015: 189–190). These demands from the militants in Cabo Verde converged with divisions within PAIGC cadres abroad. The divisions were fueled by the perception among the Cabo Verdeans that the struggle for the independence of Cabo Verde did not have the same priority as the one for Guinea. The PAIGC Section in Lisbon, staffed mainly by Cabo Verdeans, often expressed frustration with the movement's inability to take the armed struggle to Cabo Verde (Pereira[a] 2015: 190–192). Similar concerns arose from the Cabo Verdeans cadres in Conakry, where some raised questions about the actions planned for Cabo Verde and how decisions about the archipelago were taken by the movement leadership (Pereira[a] 2015: 192–194). The result of such questioning was the creation in 1973 of the National Commission of Cabo Verde, a body inside PAIGC designed to enlarge the internal debate about the struggle for the independence of Cabo Verde (Pereira[a] 2015: 194).

The debate about the strategy for Cabo Verde added to the difference of opinions among PAIGC Guinean and Cabo Verdean cadres. The project for the unity between Guinea and Cabo Verde was the breeding ground for disagreements (Sousa 2016: 204). As a core element of the PAIGC, the unity of both territories was the object of contestation by many Guinean militants out of the fear that the Cabo Verdeans, traditionally associated with the Portuguese colonial administration, would dominate the Guinean state after independence (Sousa 2016: 558). The discontent found expression in initiatives to break away from PAIGC and to establish other political organizations committed only

to the independence of Guinea (Pereira[a] 2015: 207–209). While most of the challenge to the idea of unity came from Guinean militants, there were also Cabo Verdeans not keen to subscribe to the project (Pereira[a] 2015: 215–216). Despite the signs of discontent, PAIGC official discourse always pledged to not dissociate the independence of Cabo Verde from Guinea. The events evinced nonetheless that how to handle the struggle for the independence of each territory drifted apart after 1973 with the proclamation of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

4 The Negotiations for Independence

In response to repeated PAIGC invitations, the UN sent in 1972 a visiting mission to Guinea, whose report endorsed the movement's narrative. As a result of the mission, the UN recognized PAIGC as the sole and authentic representative of the populations of Guinea and Cabo Verde (Santos 2017: 267–280). After securing the recognition and the diplomatic support of several countries, PAIGC held elections for the National People's Assembly and proclaimed the Republic of Guinea-Bissau on 24 September 1973. Soon, many countries recognized the unilateral proclamation and the UN Resolution 3061 (XXVIII), of 2 November, took the independence of Guinea-Bissau for granted (Santos 2017: 295–297). From that moment, PAIGC diplomacy focused on Cabo Verde, while continuing with the armed struggle in Guinea. In the meantime, the dissatisfaction with the colonial war drove the Movement of Armed Forces (MFA: Movimento das Forças Armadas), a group formed by officers of the Portuguese Armed Forces (FAP: Forças Armadas Portuguesas), to overthrow the *Estado Novo* regime on 25 April 1974. The end of the dictatorship in Portugal opened a new period in the struggle for the independence of Cabo Verde, although the move towards statehood was not straightforward (Santos 2018: 116–133).

The immediate effect of the 25 April coup in Portugal was a military government, headed by António de Spínola, former Governor and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces in Guinea (1968–1973). The program of the MFA, which became the guiding document of the new government, called for a political solution for the colonies. Initially, it referred to the right of the colonies to self-determination, but António de Spínola objected to the idea (Rodrigues 2010). Spínola's views would likewise shape the decisions of the First Provisional Government (I Governo Provisório) inaugurated in May 1974. His project for the colonies comprised a cease-fire, information campaigns to raise awareness among the populations, and the holding of referendums (Ruivo 2014: 179–180). By agreeing with the *Estado Novo* interpretation that

self-determination was not equivalent to independence, Spínola refused to negotiate with the liberation movements and anticipated the creation of a Portuguese federation, in which the colonies would have limited autonomy (Ruivo 2014: 179–180).

Spínola's attempt at retaining control over the colonies faced the opposition of different actors, and the frustration of his plan paved the way to negotiations with the liberation movements. His change of position owed much to the friction with the MFA's desire to end the war through negotiations and direct transfer of powers to the colonies (Reis 2015: 95). The power struggle between Spínola and the MFA intertwined with the refusal of the FAP soldiers deployed in the colonies to continue to fight. Spínola's realignment was also determined by the fact that the liberation movements denounced his federalist plan, rejecting the cease-fire, and even increasing their military activities (Rodrigues 2010: 358). Moreover, Spínola had to take into account the opinions of the newly founded Portuguese political parties that supported the calls for an immediate end of the war, the opening of negotiations with the liberation movements, and the recognition of the right of the colonies to self-determination (Reis 2015: 85–94). Another circumstance he had to consider was the international pressure from countries, like Brazil, the Nordics, and the US, and international organizations.

Concerning international organizations, the UN, which for three decades had focused on defining and codifying norms on decolonization, rebutted Spínola's federalism to ensure the implementation of the resolutions adopted from 1961 onwards on the Portuguese colonial issue (Santos 2018: 120). As articulated in those resolutions, the organization demanded Portugal to recognize the right of its colonies to self-determination and independence, to adopt steps towards decolonization and to start negotiations with the liberation movements recognized by the OAU. The UN pressure was supplemented by the OAU criticism against Spínola's federalism, with the African organization denying diplomatic recognition to the Portuguese military government as long as there was no pronouncement on the right of the colonies to self-determination and independence (Silva 2015: 110–111). The OAU, in liaison with the UN, asked Portugal to negotiate the transfer of powers with the liberation movements it had labeled as representative of the populations, as was the case of PAIGC for Guinea and Cabo Verde.

The period following 25 of April in Cabo Verde brought an interval of political instability coupled with social agitation (Coutinho 2015: 130–137). With the end of Portuguese repression, the archipelago saw the mobilization of the population for independence. Public meetings, demonstrations, strikes, destruction of property, distribution of propaganda, and verbal and physical abuse

were among the repertoire used to protest against colonial rule (Pires[a] 2021: 192–256). Although sometimes the population acted spontaneously and independently, there were also instances in which the political organizations that in the meantime emerged in the islands oriented them. The period witnessed the appearance of different actors and narratives, leading to an intense confrontation among political organizations (Furtado 2016: 858).

PAIGC, to reinforce its position in Cabo Verde, dispatched cadres and resources from the diaspora to the territory. The movement sought to mobilize public opinion and organize its party structure while trying to shift the balance of power in favor of independence (Pires[a] 2021: 231–234). Besides PAIGC, the Cabo Verdean Democratic Union (UDC: União Democrática Cabo-Verdiana) and the UPICV became active in the archipelago (Pires[a] 2021: 216–217). Created in May 1974 in São Vicente by a mixture of intellectuals, landowners, merchants, civil servants, and members of the clergy, the UDC favored the integration of Cabo Verde with Portugal, like Madeira and Azores, or progressive autonomy. Being a sympathizer of António de Spínola's federalism, the UDC intended that no decision regarding the future could be made without a referendum (Coutinho 2015: 131; Pires[a] 2021: 217–222). Moving from Senegal to the archipelago, the UPICV attempted to influence the situation in Cabo Verde, displaying an open antagonism towards PAIGC. For the UPICV – which held different viewpoints over time – Cabo Verde was to become independent, without, however, forming a union with Guinea-Bissau (Pires 2021[a]: 222–231; Furtado 2016: 864).

Other less well-known organizations, especially the Broad National and Anticolonial Front (FANA: Frente Ampla Nacional e Anticolonial), the Group of Democratic Action of Cabo Verde (GADCV: Grupo de Ação Democrática de Cabo Verde), and the Group of Democratic Action of Barlavento (GADB: Grupo de Ação Democrática do Barlavento), contributed to the vibrant political environment in Cabo Verde (Pires[a] 2021: 218, 231–233). Likewise, many communities abroad responded to the events in the islands, articulating different narratives about the political future and trying to shape the debate within the territory (Amado 2020). For instance, the PAIGC USA-Support Committee, founded in 1972, engaged after 25 April in campaigns of lobbying, mobilization, and dissemination of information to win supporters for independence in the diaspora and counter the initiatives of rival organizations (Amado 2020: 37).

Notwithstanding the plurality of organizations and viewpoints, PAIGC succeeded in seizing control over the negotiations for the independence of Cabo Verde. The hegemonic position achieved by the movement due to the combination of methods used against Portugal before the 25 of April facilitated the leading role in the negotiations (Santos 2018: 120). After initial contacts

with the mediation of Senegal, Portugal and PAIGC engaged in negotiations in May in London. For PAIGC, the issues at stake were the Portuguese recognition of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau proclaimed in September 1973 and the right of Cabo Verde to self-determination and independence (Pires[b] 2021: 119–123). PAIGC's handling of the negotiations included channeling information to the UN, especially to Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, to leverage the organization against Portugal.[9] In parallel with the discussions in London, Waldheim held private meetings in New York with representatives of Portugal and PAIGC during which he insisted, like other UN bodies were doing, that Guinea-Bissau was already independent, dismissing the idea of a referendum.[10]

At the end of the negotiations, no agreement was reached because the Portuguese government, under the influence of Spínola, demanded a referendum and a transitional period for Guinea-Bissau (Pires[b] 2021: 121). Regarding Cabo Verde, Portugal intended a separate negotiation, objecting to independence without a referendum and to unity with Guinea-Bissau (Pires[b] 2021: 122). Portugal's position on Cabo Verde can be read in the context of the ingrained narrative about a supposedly Cabo Verdean exceptionality in relation to the other colonies and the influence of the US fear that because of its geostrategic position the archipelago could pass into the Soviet sphere in the view of the connections between PAIGC and the USSR (Pires[a] 2021: 244–245). With PAIGC continuing its diplomatic strategy of playing the UN against Portugal, the paralysis of the talks triggered a reaction from the organization. The UN demanded Portugal for clarification while sectors of the Portuguese government convinced of the need for decolonization also turned to the organization, inviting Kurt Waldheim to visit Lisbon to help break the deadlock.[11] Only after the inauguration of the Second Provisional Government (II Governo Provisório) in July, when the MFA asserted its authority over the colonial issue, Portugal made concessions recognizing the right of its colonies to self-determination and independence (Ruivo 2014: 197). Kurt Waldheim then paid a visit to Lisbon, contributing to hastening the pace of decolonization and

9 Arquivo Histórico-Diplomático (AHD), Fundo Política e Organizações Internacionais (POI), Assembleia Geral (AG), Mç. POI 700, Eventual Declaração de Independência da Guiné pelo PAIGC, Apontamento Elaborado por Sacadura Cabral, do Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros (MNE), 12 de junho de 1974: "Considerações Gerais sobre o Problema da Autodeterminação dos Territórios Ultramarinos Portugueses."

10 Idem.

11 United Nations Archives Record Management Section (UNARMS), S-0984-0001-04, Secretary-General (SG) Meetings, Under-Secretaries-General and Assistant Secretaries-General Meetings, 9 Jan 1974–27 Aug 1975, Note on the SG Meeting with the Under-Secretaries General and Assistant Secretaries-General on Wednesday, 26 June 1974, 10 AM.

to the resuming of the negotiations with the liberation movements (Ferreira 1994: 63–64).

In the meantime, PAIGC's negotiating position became stronger following its recognition as the legitimate representative of Guinea by the MFA troops in the territory (Silva 2015: 112–115). With the reconvening of the negotiations in Algeria, Portugal and the movement signed the Argel Agreement on 26 August, making separate arrangements for Guinea-Bissau and Cabo Verde. Whereas the agreement recognized the sovereignty of Guinea-Bissau, for Cabo Verde it only established the right to self-determination and independence (Coutinho 2015: 131–132). Anticipating the need for further negotiations, PAIGC managed to include in the agreement the commitment to solve the question of Cabo Verde along lines compatible with the UN resolutions (Pires[b] 2021: 123). After Portugal recognized Guinea-Bissau on 10 September, the situation regarding the independence of Cabo Verde reached a stalemate. With the replacement of Spínola by Francisco da Costa Gomes later in the month, the plan of holding a referendum in Cabo Verde surfaced again. The idea that Portugal could delay the implementation of the Argel Agreement ignited a tumultuous period in the archipelago and the intensification of competition among the political organizations (Pires[a] 2021: 166–251; Coutinho 2015: 130–137). PAIGC led the calls for immediate independence, threatening to unleash guerrilla warfare in the islands. The movement also continued to insist on the use of diplomacy, sending multiple communications to the UN to report on the events on the ground and challenge the Portuguese position.[12]

PAIGC would win over Portugal through the combination of political mobilization and diplomacy, benefiting in addition from the help of members of the MFA in Cabo Verde. In response to the tensions in the archipelago, the MFA imprisoned many of PAIGC adversaries and made an ultimatum to Portugal to transfer sovereignty to the movement (Pires[a] 2021: 254). The MFA ultimatum was consequential with Portugal agreeing to speed up the negotiations and signing with PAIGC the Organic Statute of the State of Cabo Verde (Estatuto Orgânico do Estado de Cabo Verde) in December. Specifically, this statute established a transitional government to prepare independence and elections for a constituent assembly with powers to draft a constitution for the territory (Coutinho 2015: 134). The holding of elections for the constituent assembly

12 AHD, Fundo POI, AG, Mç. POI 699, Descolonização de Cabo Verde, Telegrama da Missão de Portugal na Organização das Nações Unidas para o MNE, 22 de outubro de 1974; UNARMS, S-0904-0017-04, Country Files of the SG Kurt Waldheim, Guinea-Bissau, Tradução não Oficial do Telegrama Enviado por Aristides Pereira, do PAIGC, a Kurt Waldheim [setembro de 1974].

was a compromise between the Portuguese demands for a referendum and the PAIGC's refusal to consult the population. The decision of not submitting Cabo Verde's independence to popular vote was controversial for the UDC and the UPICV, with PAIGC explaining its position by referencing the pressure from the OAU to avoid opening a precedent that could affect Angola and Mozambique (Lopes 2012: 217).

On 30 December, Portugal nominated the transitional government, headed by High Commissioner Vicente Almeida d'Eça and comprising Portuguese officials as well as PAIGC members (Coutinho 2015: 137–140). With PAIGC sidelining the political organizations inside the archipelago, the debate shifted from whether or not Cabo Verde should become independent to the kind of independence the territory could have (Amado 2020: 47). Such debate expanded to the diaspora, with the participation of the Juridical Congress of World Cape Verdean Communities, formed in the US by lawyers from New England. The organization coalesced around the distrust against PAIGC's leftist orientation, the idea of union with Guinea-Bissau, the interpretation of the Cabo Verdean identity as a form of African regionalism, and the fear of a communist takeover in the archipelago (Amado 2020: 46–47). In February 1975, the Juridical Congress declared the agreement between Portugal and PAIGC as legally void, proclaimed the unilateral independence of Cabo Verde and called for the establishment of a government in exile. The group tried to lobby the UN, the US government, and other actors but failed to have an impact on the situation in Cabo Verde. It had to face the PAIGC-USA Support Committee initiatives to reinforce PAIGC position in the diaspora, disappearing by 1976 due to lack of support (Amado 2020: 50).

If relations with the diaspora are key to understanding the transitional period, the divergent interests within PAIGC about how to implement the union between Guinea and Cabo Verde complicated the picture. Tensions among PAIGC militants were not new since the unification of the two territories faced internal opposition, but the fracture became prominent once again in early 1975 (Lopes 2012: 223–225). Initially, PAIGC cadres agreed to share power between Luís Cabral as President of Guinea-Bissau and Pedro Pires, who would assume Cabo Verde's presidency, while Aristides Pereira, as PAIGC Secretary-General, would have influence on both territories. This arrangement proved not to be consensual and, in the end, PAIGC ruled that Aristides Pereira would be Cabo Verde's president and Pedro Pires the prime minister (Lopes 2012: 225–227). With this compromise conditioning the creation of unity, PAIGC invited the UN to send a visiting mission to Cabo Verde to hasten the pace of independence in a move similar to the one made for Guinea in 1972 (Santos[b]: 11). The visiting mission, held between 23 February and 5 March 1975,

sanctioned the PAIGC narrative, overlooking the other politically active organizations in the archipelago. It concluded that the population was determined to accede to independence under the banner of PAIGC and to form a union with Guinea-Bissau (Santos[b]: 13–14). In the aftermath of the elections of 30 June to the National People's Assembly, Cabo Verde gained independence on 5 July with PAIGC taking control over the state machinery, establishing a single party regime and a union with Guinea-Bissau that lasted until 1980.

5 Conclusions

After World War II, great diversity in understanding and plans regarding the political future of Cabo Verde emerged in resistance to Portuguese colonial rule in the islands. Nevertheless, the months immediately after the 25 April 1974 coup d'état in Portugal witnessed the affirmation of PAIGC as the only partner in the negotiations for the independence of the archipelago. The methods used by the movement since the late 1950s, including clandestine activities in the territory, mobilization among the diaspora, armed struggle in Guinea, diplomacy, and communications, were instrumental in its recognition as representative of the Cabo Verdean population. Even if Cabo Verde's independence resulted from bilateral negotiations between Portugal and PAIGC, the Portuguese internal turmoil, the ideas of the Portuguese politicians and newly founded parties, the pressure from other countries and international organizations, the disputes among the Cabo Verdean political organizations, the unrest in the archipelago, the initiatives taken by the diaspora, and the actions of the MFA troops helped shape the process.

While there is a growing literature on how complex Cabo Verde's rise to statehood was, we still need to widen the scope of the debate on the subject. The struggle for the independence of Cabo Verde has been studied mainly through the PAIGC lens, ignoring the other political organizations that also challenged Portuguese colonialism. The attention given to PAIGC has sometimes reproduced the official narrative, overlooking the dissident voices inside the movement. Another aspect that has been neglected is the comparative analysis between the Cabo Verdean path to independence and the end of colonial domination in other territories under Portuguese rule. We also have to explore in great detail the ideas and actions of portions of the Cabo Verdean society, namely members of the clergy, intellectuals, landowners, and so on, about the fate of the territory. Similarly, the role of the diaspora is yet to be fully understood since we lack information on how Cabo Verdeans located in different geographies reinforced the anticolonial rank and challenged Portuguese

colonialism. Likewise, we need to learn more about how the Cold War rivalry between the superpowers played out against or in favor of the independence of Cabo Verde.

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