



## The Image and Representation of Colonialism in the 1974 PAIGC History Textbook

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Textbooks have been the subject of intense academic debate in recent decades worldwide. Mainly around their role in transmitting educational content and knowledge.

This article analyses the image and representation of Western European colonialism and Portuguese colonialism, *stricto sensu*, in the textbook *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, published by the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands (PAIGC) in 1974.

In its eagerness to challenge and contest the colonial logic and Portuguese rule in Guinea (Bissau), the PAIGC invested, practically from the beginning of the armed struggle for national liberation, in teaching whose primary objective was to exclude the reproduction of the colonial mentality through the publication of textbooks with new content. The aim was to deconstruct a certain “glorious” colonial past to challenge European imperialism and build a new narrative based on new actors and protagonists in history and discourse. Keywords: textbooks; history; PAIGC; colonialism; Guinea; Cape Verde.

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### **A imagem e representação do colonialismo no manual de história do PAIGC de 1974**

Nas últimas décadas, os manuais escolares têm sido objeto de um intenso debate acadêmico em todo o mundo. Principalmente em torno do seu papel na transmissão de conteúdos e conhecimentos educativos. Este artigo analisa a imagem e a representação do colonialismo europeu ocidental e do colonialismo português, *stricto sensu*, no manual *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, publicado pelo *Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde* (PAIGC) em 1974.

Na ânsia de desafiar e contestar a lógica colonial e o domínio português na Guiné (Bissau), o PAIGC investiu, praticamente desde o início da luta armada de libertação nacional, num ensino cujo objetivo primordial era excluir a reprodução da mentalidade colonial através da publicação de manuais com novos conteúdos. O objetivo era desconstruir um certo passado colonial “glorioso”, desafiar o imperialismo europeu e construir uma nova narrativa baseada em novos atores e protagonistas da história e do discurso.

Palavras-chave: manuais escolares, história, PAIGC, colonialismo, Guiné, Cabo Verde.

# The Image and Representation of Colonialism in the 1974 PAIGC History Textbook

Julião Soares Sousa\*

## Introduction

In a chapter entitled “O Povo deve conhecer o seu passado. O lugar da História de África e da História da Guiné e Cabo Verde no ensino do PAIGC no decurso da luta pela independência” (in print), we emphasize above all, in line with Sónia Vaz Borges, the central role of the liberation movement in combating the “toxic residues” of colonialism in the minds of the people.<sup>1</sup> From this perspective and on the premise of generating a “New Man”, the national liberation movement needed to go further in its attempt to decolonize the mind of that same subject who had been subordinated by colonialism. This transformation would necessarily and inescapably involve the educational process. It was no coincidence that at the cadre’s seminar held in Conakry in November 1969, Cabral said the following about the establishment of PAIGC schools and their importance: “In our schools, we have to exclude everything that reflects the colonialist mentality. We have already begun to do this by publishing new books that talk about our land, our Party, our struggle, the present and future of our people and their rights.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, national liberation consisted of “a socio-economic group negating the negation of

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1 Sónia Vaz Borges, *Militant Education. Liberation Struggle. Consciousness. The PAIGC Education in Guinea-Bissau, 1963-1978* (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2009), 53-54.

2 Amílcar Cabral, *Pensar para melhor agir. As intervenções de Amílcar Cabral no Seminário de Quadros do PAIGC* (Praia: Fundação Amílcar Cabral, 2014), 199.

its historical process”. In short, it was the “reconquest of the historical personality of that people, its return to history, through the destruction of the imperialist domination to which it had been subjected”.<sup>3</sup>

To this end, the primary concern was to create schools. The first ones began to appear in the 1964/65 school year. At the time, according to Luís Cabral, there were no books and texts were hand-copied by party officials assigned to the general secretariat in Conakry.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, each monitor was responsible for reproducing the copies to be distributed to their students. The main objective was to teach them to write, read and count.<sup>5</sup>

Another concern associated with the establishment of schools was the creation of textbooks. *Ab initio*, the textbooks used in the learning process were designed by the teachers of the pilot school themselves, inspired to some extent by the Senegalese education system, and by university students in the diaspora (especially in Portugal) who were associated with the PAIGC.

In an informal conversation with former PAIGC fighter and teacher Maria da Luz Freire de Andrade (Lilica Boal) in November 2022 at her home in Praia (Santiago, Cape Verde), she told us that she went to Senegal several times in an attempt to produce the textbooks.

But, despite the existing Estado Novo textbooks, there was, on the PAIGC side, an attempt to “change the syllabus of subjects with a more intense ideological content, such as History and Geography, in which the reality of Guinea and Africa replaced the Portuguese and European reality as subjects of study”.<sup>6</sup>

The history of anti-colonialism, especially about psychological resistance, aimed to counter the colonial logic by trying to “transform individual and collective behavior”.<sup>7</sup> It was with this in mind that Cabral

3 Amílcar Cabral, *A arma da teoria. Breve análise da estrutura social da Guiné e de Cabo Verde. Fundamentos e objectivos da libertação nacional em relação à estrutura social. Portugal é imperialista?* (Bissau: Departamento de Informação, Propaganda e Cultura do CC do PAIGC, 1984), 41.

4 Luís Cabral, *Crónica da libertação* (Lisbon: O Jornal, 1984), 244.

5 Cabral, *Crónica da libertação*, 244.

6 Rosiska Darcy de Oliveira e Miguel Darcy, *Guiné-Bissau: reinventar a educação* (Lisbon: Livraria Sá da Costa, 1978), 23.

7 Cabral, *Pensar para melhor agir*, 199.

personally got in touch with the left-wing French historian Jean-Suret Canale (1921-2007), a specialist in African history, in March 1970, to write a history textbook,<sup>8</sup> aware of the role this subject could play in the ideological and cultural formation of PAIGC pupils and, ultimately, in the construction of national identity. There is no doubt that the fact that it was a foreigner, and a French citizen, who was entrusted with this task may seem strange. However, for this to happen is because there was trust. This was the decisive step that Cabral waited for, at a time when textbooks for elementary education had been available since: “O Nosso Primeiro Livro de Leitura”, printed in Uppsala (Sweden) in 1964 by the Secretariat, Information, Culture and Staff Training Department of the PAIGC Central Committee. This textbook was printed again in a second edition in 1966; “O nosso livro, 2.<sup>a</sup> classe”, published in 1970, was produced and edited by the PAIGC and also printed in Uppsala with the support of Sweden. The materials for the third and fourth grades were also being made in 1971. Cabral was proud of these developments, not least because of the importance these textbooks would play in liberating his people from the colonial mentality. That’s why, in 1969, at the staff seminar, he told his colleagues:

In our schools, we must exclude everything that reflects the colonialist mentality. We have already started to do so by publishing new books that talk about our land, our Party, our struggle, the present and future of our people and their rights. [...] We must make every leader and every militant with some knowledge a teacher, and not leave the job of teaching to the teachers in the schools alone. Any comrade, be he a commander, a member of the Party leadership, a political commissar, a security guard or a nurse, should always teach, clarify, explain and help. Every conversation with a comrade, at whatever level, should be used as a lesson.<sup>9</sup>

8 Julião Soares Sousa, “O povo deve conhecer a sua história...”, (in print).

9 Cabral, *Pensar para melhor agir*, 199.

There is no doubt that Cabral's speech points to a fight against the Eurocentrism that characterized colonial textbooks. According to Marta Araújo and Silvia Rodríguez Maeso, Eurocentrism was based on the idea that it was Europeans who created the modern world, so it should simply be accepted.<sup>10</sup> Colonialism would therefore use education with a view to colonizing<sup>11</sup> and also to assimilate. However, Cabral thought that history can also be seen "through the eyes of one people".<sup>12</sup> For Cabral, pedagogy meant teaching children about the struggle, about the PAIGC and its value "beyond A, B, C, the cat and the fox, the wolf and the whip, etc."<sup>13</sup> In short, the idea is that the PAIGC was the "guide, the light and everything for them, at the same time as teaching them to read and write, count, etc."<sup>14</sup> Therefore, for Cabral "education must, at each stage of the struggle, be conditioned by life and the history we are living at the moment".<sup>15</sup> Cabral thus proposed an ideological education, opposed to the content taught in Portuguese colonial schools in Guinea, which was essentially focused on Portuguese history<sup>16</sup> and the transmission of values defended by the *Estado Novo*. That's why he argued that ideologization should be present in textbooks. For this reason, according to Oscar Oramas, Cuba's former ambassador to Guinea-Conakry, Cabral defended the idea that the generation that emerged from the struggle "cannot be colonized; it has known another life".<sup>17</sup>

10 Marta Araújo and Silvia Rodríguez Maeso, *The Contours of Eurocentrism. Race, History, and Political Texts* (Lanham, MD.: Lexington Books, 2016), x.

11 See, on this subject, Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo, *Livros brancos, almas negras. A «missão civilizadora» do colonialismo português c. 1870-1930* (Lisbon: Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, 2010), 141.

12 Jerónimo, *Livros brancos, almas negras*, x.

13 Amílcar Cabral, "Intervenção de Amílcar Cabral na reunião do CSL de Agosto de 1971", in *A luta criou raízes (intervensões, entrevistas, reflexões, artigos - 1964-1973)* (Praia: Fundação Amílcar Cabral, 2018), 51.

14 Cabral, "Intervenção de Amílcar Cabral na reunião do CSL", 51.

15 Cabral, "Intervenção de Amílcar Cabral na reunião do CSL", 51.

16 Mariana Lagarto dos Santos, "A escola e a ideologia colonial. Contribuição para a formação das nacionalidades africanas de expressão portuguesa", em *Comunidades imaginadas. Nação e nacionalismos em África*, ed. Luís Reis Torgal, Fernando Tavares Pimenta and Julião Soares Sousa Coimbra (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2008), 53.

17 Oscar Oramas, *Amílcar Cabral para além do seu tempo* (Lisbon: Hugin, 1998), 66.

Louis Althusser, quoted by Mike Cole, wrote that the state apparatus of ideological education was the most important for transmitting capitalist ideology.<sup>18</sup>

He recalls that colonialism, in its textbooks, paradoxically, used the idea of immaturity and the “civilizing mission” associated with the low levels of schooling that it never offered the colonized people to justify the idea of non-emancipation. He writes that Portugal’s idea was not to create literate elites, but to make them “instruments” at the “service of Portugal”.<sup>19</sup>

For Cabral, normal school education could not be separated from political education. Both should necessarily lead to the emergence of a New Man, a concept that runs through Che Guevara, Frantz Fanon, Jean Paul-Sartre, Paulo Freire and Carlos Mariategui. The creation of a new society also required the creation of a New Man, as Guevara advocated.<sup>20</sup> For Paulo Freire, in line with Delinda Collier, the New Man was formed when the subject of oppression develops a critical awareness of himself and the society in which he is inserted.<sup>21</sup> For Fanon, a New Man is a denunciation of colonialism’s narratives of progress.<sup>22</sup>

### **The Image and Representation of Colonialism in History Textbooks**

The *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde* textbook, published in 1974, played an important role in education at the time. It filled a gap that existed in the later years of the pilot school, secondary school and even high school. There was no other History textbook during the

18 Mike Cole, “New Labour, Globalization, and Social Justice: The Role of Education”, in *Critical Theories, Radical Pedagogies, and Global Conflicts*, ed. Gustavo E. Fischman, Peter McLaren, Heinz Sünker and Colin Lankshear (Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), 10.

19 Cole, “New Labour, Globalization, and Social Justice”, 50.

20 Tony Monchinski, *The Politics of Education. An Introduction* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 133.

21 Delinda Collier, “A ‘New Man’ for Africa?: Some Particularities of the Marxist *Homem Novo* within Angolan Cultural Policy”, in *De-centering Cold War History. Local and Global Chance*, ed. Jadwiga E. Pieper Mooney and Fabio Lanza (London: Routledge, 2013), 191.

22 Alina Sajed, *Postcolonial Encounters in International Relations. The Politics of Transgression in the Maghreb* (London: Routledge, 2013).

period of political transition from the unilateral proclamation of the State of Guinea-Bissau on September 24, 1973, in Boé (east), to the negotiations between the PAIGC and the Portuguese government. This is why *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde* or its contemporary *História. A Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, both published by the Porto publishing house Afrontamento in 1974, were designed to function as a school textbook for secondary school students and teachers, but also as a pedagogical textbook aimed at a wider audience. Amílcar Cabral's contacts for the production of the *History of Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands* textbook by the French publisher, *Présence Africaine*, began in 1970. As a teaching and learning resource, the History textbooks give us an idea of the priorities of a parallel education system that the PAIGC has been building since the beginning of the armed struggle. An analysis of the contents of the 1974 *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde* textbook will be the method used to address the main objective of this article which shows that there seems to be no intention of devaluing colonialism or whitewashing it, even though the textbook was published during the transition to independence.



Figura 1. PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*



Quite the opposite. Colonialism occupies a central place in the History textbooks, as if justifying the anti-colonialism that opposed it, within the tradition of resistance of the African peoples. The number of chapters dedicated to the creation of the PAIGC and the liberation struggle, as well as pre-colonial history, the historical period and even the national liberation struggle, fall far short of the number of pages and chapters dedicated to colonialism and imperialism. Thus, from chapter XI to chapter XIII and from chapter XV to chapter XXVI, it is colonialism and the system of colonial exploitation that fills the overwhelming majority of pages. This is not unrelated to the revolutionary period that was taking place. One gets the feeling that there was a need in that final phase of the war in Guinea to continue to take an X-ray of colonialism, because only with that radiography could a formula be found to combat it effectively. This fight could not only be limited to classic colonialism, in its aspect of direct domination, but also in its phase of neo-colonialism or indirect domination. Perhaps that's why the general characterization of colonialism, especially Portuguese colonialism, has occupied the most attention in large part of the subjects dealt with in it, sometimes even with some repetition of ideas.

As Maria Glória Solé argues, textbooks and reading books “are not just a working tool, pedagogical and didactic material”, they are also, according to the same author, quoting Maria Fátima Bívar, “works of culture, representative of a cultural milieu and bearers of specific values and images”.<sup>23</sup>

Still quoting Allain Choppin, Solé assures that “textbooks represent the social, political and cultural ideology of an era” and are “an instrument used by social groups to propagate and perpetuate certain ideas and values, traditions and cultures”.<sup>24</sup> That was the case of the PAIGC with its History textbooks in which all the harmful aspects of colonialism are covered. From the reconquest of Portugal from the

23 Maria Gloria Solé, “História nos manuais escolares do ensino primário em Portugal: representações sociais e a construção de identidade(s)”, *Historia y Memoria de la Educación* 6 (2017): 101.

24 Solé, “História nos manuais escolares”, 101.

Arabs at the beginning of the 15th century (a subject that is dealt with in chapter XII) to the struggle for national liberation (chapter XXVIII). The image that the textbook leaves about Portugal is of a country that, after the Christian reconquest, did not intend to limit itself to the borders that had been reconquered in the meantime. Not satisfied, it went on the offensive against the same Arabs in African territory, where they founded the first settlements under the impetus of Henry the Navigator.<sup>25</sup> Later, continuing his expansion in North Africa, Portugal founded several warehouses along the African coast to the south, especially in Senegal, Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast (now Ghana), Benin and the Congo. In these warehouses, Portugal changed its goods for gold, pepper and chilli peppers from Guinea, ivory and slaves exported to the islands and to Portugal. It also colonized Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe, where the European element mixed with the African population that had been brought to these islands.<sup>26</sup> The textbook also conveys the image that in these wanderings along the African coast, the Portuguese were well-received, despite some incidents.<sup>27</sup> But soon their avidity and attention increasingly directed towards the search for slaves ended up compromising their relations with the local populations. It was in this context that the Portuguese established in Bambouk, a gold-producing region, were massacred.<sup>28</sup> The fragility of the Portuguese establishments on the African coast did not allow them to maintain their positions.<sup>29</sup>

The image generated about Portugal was that of a weak country that was unable, due to its structural weakness, to maintain its dominion in the face of fierce competition from its rivals (Spain, France, Holland, and England) who did not recognize the monopoly of the Portuguese Crown.<sup>30</sup> Another important element that it sought to instil

25 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde* (Porto: Afrontamento, 1974), 72.

26 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 72.

27 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 73.

28 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 73.

29 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 74.

30 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 74.

was the image of a colonizing country, but a weak one. This had to do with the fact that Portugal was said to have fallen under the domination of the Spanish Crown between 1580 and 1640. This would have paved the way for the Netherlands to take advantage of the situation to occupy some Portuguese establishments on the African coast in the first half of the 17th century. Among these were Berzeguiche (Gorée), Elmina, Arguim, S. Tome and Luanda. Only the warehouses in Guinea (namely Cacheu, Farim and Bissau) resisted these Dutch occupations.<sup>31</sup>

Furthermore, Portugal was presented as a country with no industry and no products to export to Africa,<sup>32</sup> quite the opposite of other European powerhouses such as England, France and even Germany.

Chapters XI to XIII explore topics related to the European presence in Africa, specifically at the commercial level and within this the triangular slave trade (chapter XI), the creation of trading posts and monopoly companies (chapter XII) and the decline of Africa as a result of the slave trade (chapter XIII); the end of the traditional colonial system; the decline of slavery and its trade; the evolution of colonial trade in Africa; European exploitation and colonization in Africa in the 19th century (chapter XV); imperialism and contemporary colonization (chapter XVI); the stages of colonial conquest (chapter XVII); the new Portuguese colonization of Guinea (chapter XVIII); resistance to Portuguese colonization (chapter XIX); African resistance (chapter XX); the economic exploitation of Africa by imperialism (chapter XXI); the Portuguese colonial system (chapter XXII).

Chapters XXIII to XXX are dedicated exclusively to Guinea and Cape Verde, with an emphasis on the following themes: the colonial system in these two colonies (chapter XXIII); the imperialist wars and the sinking of the colonial system (chapter XXIV); Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands on the eve of the liberation war (chapter XXV); the liberation movement in Africa and its development in the Portuguese colonies (chapter XXVI); the PAIGC (chapter XXVII); the national

31 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 74.

32 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 76.

liberation struggle in Guinea and Cape Verde (XXVIII); economic and political organization in the liberated regions (chapter XXIX); the anti-imperialist struggle and the future of humanity (chapter XXX).

Only chapters XI to XIII, dedicated to Europeans in Africa, deal with the so-called Portuguese “great discoveries” and the first commercial establishments in Africa, as well as trading posts and triangular trade. Except for chapter XIII, which has no map, chapters XI and XII are illustrated with maps of the sea voyages made by the Portuguese in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean (chapter XI), the Portuguese trading posts on the African coast, as well as a map of the triangular trade (chapter XII). The section on the so-called European “great discoveries” focuses mainly on Europe’s use of Arab and Chinese inventions during the 15th century, based on the use of gunpowder for cannons (a Chinese invention), which would give rise to European firearms, the rudder, the compass, etc.<sup>33</sup> Still on the subject of the “great discoveries”, the main aim was to highlight the fact that the coast of Africa south of Morocco was unknown to Europeans until the 14th century.<sup>34</sup> The Portuguese contributed greatly to this with the voyages of circumnavigation undertaken by Fernão de Magalhães, between 1519-1522, and Vasco da Gama to India in 1498 and the consequent doubling of the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>35</sup>

The Portuguese and Spanish contributed to the black trade and slavery generated by the need for labor in the so-called New World (Brazil, the Antilles and North America), where black slaves would replace the Amerindians.<sup>36</sup>

The textbook considered the slave trade, inaugurated by the Portuguese and Spanish and later joined by the French, Dutch and English, to be a “dishonourable” activity for humanity because it contributed to the deportation of millions of human beings.<sup>37</sup> Among its consequenc-

33 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 68.

34 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 69.

35 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 68.

36 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 69-70.

37 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 71.

es, in addition to the bloodletting of human beings and agricultural and industrial labor, were the deaths of tens of thousands along the land and sea routes. It also made a decisive contribution to the decline of some empires, as well as the proliferation of firearms brought by Europeans who traded them for slaves. All of this generated hunger and misery in Africa, but allowed wealth to be accumulated based on plunder and the slave trade.<sup>38</sup> The slave trade did not generate any progress in Africa. The introduction of more productive plants such as corn, manioc, peanuts, tobacco, among others, from other geographies (America), “did not compensate for the harmful effects of the slave trade”.<sup>39</sup> However, plundering in other parts of the world led to the emergence of the capitalist system in Europe, whose essential characteristics were the concentration of wealth and free competition, which in the 19th century ushered in a new race to Africa and a new exploitation of the continent, conquest and effective occupation of African territories.<sup>40</sup> This new race had been preceded by scientific explorations, led by several names such as the Englishman Hugh Clapperton (1823), the Frenchman René Cailé, the Englishman Alexander Gordon Laing and the British explorer of West Africa, Richard Lander, the German Heinrich Barth, Richard Burton and John Hanning Speke and later Baker, David Livingston and Henry Morton Stanley.<sup>41</sup>

From an economic point of view, there is also a shift from free competition capitalism to monopoly capitalism or imperialism, which is very much geared towards direct domination of the world market to place its products but also to find and exploit the raw materials or agricultural products needed for the emerging European industry.<sup>42</sup>

Another important element in the textbook is undoubtedly the colonial conquest following the sharing of the world by the great powers of the time. Especially in Asia and Africa, which, according to

38 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 78

39 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 78

40 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 87.

41 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 89.

42 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 89.

the textbook, was an unequal conquest.<sup>43</sup> In this respect, the textbook highlights France, England, the Netherlands and certain “latecomer” countries like Portugal, which “had inherited a colonial empire in the previous era”. They were to form vast empires from the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, which set the rules for the partition of Africa. He was referring above all to the cases of England, France, Germany and Portugal.<sup>44</sup>

### **The Slave Trade and Portugal’s Image**

With the division, the world came to have two blocs: the imperialist countries, mainly in Western Europe, the United States and Japan, on the one hand, and the other the colonial and semi-colonial countries (which on the surface appeared to be politically independent. These were China, Central and South America and Persia). The former (the colonial countries) were characterized by economic and industrial backwardness, with backward agriculture and where mining was the only form of production. In essence, they were important markets for products processed by European industry. This would have led to economic and political dependence. The textbook also refers to countries that occupied an intermediate position. In other words, they were semi-colonies, the most common examples of which were Portugal and Russia. The former (Portugal) was described as being essentially agricultural and backward, but with a “vast empire”. It also sought to highlight the fact that since 1702, through the Treaty of Methuen, it had become a “satellite state of England”. Russia was another example which, before 1917, was seen as being dependent on French, Belgian and English capitalism, but maintaining colonies in the Caucasus and Central Asia.<sup>45</sup>

The idea of backwardness corresponded to the image that, throughout the national liberation struggle, was conveyed at home and abroad, showing that Portugal was not in a position to have colonies or that it

43 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 90.

44 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 90.

45 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 91.

could only infect the colonized peoples with its backwardness. All because of the frightening rate of illiteracy, which from the PAIGC's point of view its textbook represented a misfortune for the people of Guinea and Cape Verde. It was this idea that circulated not only in discourse but also in various PAIGC documents. For example, in a document dated 1973, entitled: "Illiteracy in our land (its causes and consequences)", the PAIGC liberation movement assumes itself to be a tributary of this "heavy inheritance" of backwardness from Portugal.<sup>46</sup>

In chapter XVII, the consequences of the depopulation and impoverishment caused by three centuries of slave trading, in which political superiority (generation of hatred between the African peoples, between rival families and leaderships) and material superiority (cannons, rifles, guns) are manifest, are once again scalped.<sup>47</sup>

The territorial conquests from the second half of the 19th century and then the general imperialist invasion of the last quarter of the 19th century, with the French occupation of Senegal and the Niger Valley; the British dominated Egypt, which they occupied militarily, while the Portuguese, in Guinea, multiplied treaties with local potentates to buy territory and protectorates.<sup>48</sup> In turn, the Belgians, through their king Leopold II, started conflicts with France and Portugal (supported by England) over possession of the mouth of the Congo River. From 1884, the Germans occupied Togo, Cameroon, South West Africa (Namibia) and Tanzania.

Special attention is paid to the Portuguese trading posts in Guinea in the 19th century in chapter XVIII, which focuses specifically on Portugal's colonization of Guinea in new ways. The representation of the colonial administration in the territory was considered fragile, as it did not exist beyond the limits of the trading posts. He points out that Honório Barreto, an African, held the post of Governor of Guinea,

46 Fundação Mário Soares (FMS) – Documentos Amílcar Cabral (DAC), "O Analfabetismo na nossa terra (suas causas e consequências)", 1973, 04309.001.023 (casacomum.org), accessed 14 December 2023,

47 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 92.

48 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 93.

not because racism didn't exist, but because there was a lack of interest in the colony.<sup>49</sup> The textbook tries above all to highlight the fact that the administrative regime applied to the colonies was practically one of contempt for the local populations, although in 1834 it tried to make up for the distinction in the administrative organization of 1832, bringing Guinea and Cape Verde together in a single prefecture, with the colony being run by a sub-prefect.

In 1836, a General Government of the Cape Verde Islands was created in which Guinea became a district and in 1869 Guinea was subdivided into four communes: Cacheu, Bissau, Bolama and Buba, with the Governor residing in Geba.<sup>50</sup>

The state of abandonment of Guinea was what the textbook often sought to emphasize, which from the beginning of the 19th century sparked attempts by England to claim possession of Bolama Island, in the second half of the 19th century, which they wanted to incorporate into their possession of Sierra Leone.<sup>51</sup> This issue, as well as the arbitration by US President Ulysses Grant that followed, was in favor of Portugal's interests, which installed the colony's first capital on the island in 1879.<sup>52</sup> While there was a victory for Portugal in the Bolama issue, the textbooks also brings up other examples in which Portugal lost territory. This is the case with the establishment of the French in Casamance, which is also discussed in one of the topics in chapter XVIII ("Foreign Rivalries and the Fixing of Borders"). Some brief lines on the Franco-Portuguese conventions of 1886 fixed the borders between the French and Portuguese possessions. In this way, Portugal ceded Ziguinchor to France and relinquished its possessions on the Cacine River in the south to France.<sup>53</sup>

Once again, in the same chapter XVIII, the issue of the slave trade is a privileged topic for the colonial exploitation of Guinea, which

49 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 96.

50 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 96.

51 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 97.

52 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 97.

53 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 97.



despite its abolition in 1815, would continue for a long time in this Portuguese possession. However, it was gradually replaced by agricultural products produced in the colonies, such as coconuts, peanuts from 1840-1850, palm oil and rubber, which were exported by companies such as the French West Africa Company (CFAO, Marseille) or the German Rudolf Titzck & Co., Hamburg. We are also assured that at the beginning of the century, this trade was already controlled by three commercial houses, one German, one Belgian, one Franco-English and only one Portuguese: Sociedade António Silva Gouveia.<sup>54</sup> It also indicates the destination of some of the products produced in Guinea, such as peanuts and rubber, which were destined for France.<sup>55</sup> The text emphasizes, above all, the fact that only 18% of Guinea's foreign trade was with Portugal between 1903 and 1913.<sup>56</sup> The effects of the War of Pacification (dealt with in the History textbook with a specific topic of about half a page, later on, page 103)<sup>57</sup> in trade are also highlighted, especially the paralysis of trade with Germany, but in exchange, there is a strengthening of trade with Portugal, which grows between 25 and 30%, a situation that would remain until 1927.<sup>58</sup>

The elimination of a class – the grummetts – as intermediaries in this trade is also noted, they had played an important role in intermediating this trade with Europeans and the peoples of the interior, where part of the retail trade was carried out by Syrians and Lebanese.<sup>59</sup>

The coming to power of the Salazar regime, which established itself in Portugal in 1926, handed over part of the colonial benefits to the Portuguese financial bourgeoisie.

Chapter XIX is dedicated exclusively to the resistance of Africans to Portugal's attempts at domination, in particular, the Balantas, Beafada, Oincás and Papeis of Bissau in the final decades of the 19th

54 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 98.

55 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 98.

56 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 98.

57 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 103.

58 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 98.

59 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 98.

century, and the Fulas, Mandingas, Bijagós, Felupes and Beafadas at the beginning of the 20th century. All or almost all of them were associated with the refusal to pay taxes to the Portuguese.<sup>60</sup> Notable in these uprisings against the Portuguese presence were the names of Infali Sonco, a Beafada chief, who appears in the History textbook as a symbol of resistance to the occupation that would gain more momentum with the campaigns of Captain Teixeira Pinto, between 1913 and 1915, who is labelled in the History textbook as a “bloodthirsty massacre”.<sup>61</sup> He was removed from office in 1915, and accused of crimes and abuses committed as part of his military campaigns.<sup>62</sup> Some of these crimes and abuses include the burning of villages, massacres and pillage.<sup>63</sup> The text highlights above all Teixeira Pinto’s use of African aid workers (fulas and mandingas) who pay themselves through looting and captives.<sup>64</sup> The chapter also features a map depicting different peoples who symbolized the resistance against attempts at Portuguese colonial rule.

The economic exploitation of colonized territories by imperialism appears again in chapter XXI, with imperialism accused of having hindered the industrialization of the colonies.<sup>65</sup> This placed Africa in a situation of economic and commercial dependence, forcing it to import, for example, peanut oil or soap which resulted from the industrial transformation of products imported from Africa by large French or mixed Franco-Swiss companies. This was the case with Unilever or an Anglo-Dutch trust that dominated the vegetable oil market, such as United Africa Company, John Holt, NOSOCO and the French Niger Company in Senegal and Guinea.<sup>66</sup>

Chapter XXII deals with the Portuguese colonial systems, specifically its administration and economic exploitation. This was based

60 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 102.

61 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 103.

62 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 103.

63 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 103.

64 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 103.

65 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 110.

66 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 111.

above all on the inferiorization of the indigenous people, through the *Indigenato* Statute. This Statute would only be revoked when “the peoples of the colonies took up arms to free themselves definitively from Portugal’s colonial yoke”.<sup>67</sup>

Chapter XXIII deals with Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands under colonial rule, highlighting the political oppression, the economic, social and cultural exploitation and oppression, and the inhumanity of the colonial regime.<sup>68</sup> In the next chapter (XXIV), the collapse of the colonial system, which began with the First World War, the Russian Revolution of 1917, the Second World War, the extension of the socialist system and the collapse of the colonial system and imperialism.<sup>69</sup>

In chapter XXV, dealing with Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands on the eve of the liberation war, the History textbook outlines some specific characteristics of Portuguese colonialism which is represented as a “barbaric and more retrograde colonialism”.<sup>70</sup> The idea of its economic backwardness and semi-colonial status concerning England and its dependence on English, French, American and German capitalist societies, among others, is once again insisted upon.<sup>71</sup> What’s more, it was also characterized as the colonialism of a fascist state that maintained itself with the support of Western imperialist powers such as the United States, Britain and France. Portugal’s integration into NATO in 1949 also did not escape the attention of the author of the history textbook, before focusing on the emergence of the liberation movement and the struggle against Portuguese colonialism in the subsequent chapters, in which Africa’s current underdevelopment is still attributed to colonialism.<sup>72</sup>

67 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 114.

68 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 117-120.

69 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 121-125.

70 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 126.

71 PAIGC, *História da Guiné e Ilhas de Cabo Verde*, 126.

72 Leigh Gardner and Tirthankar Roy, *The Economic History of Colonialism* (Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2020), 2.

## Conclusion

The PAIGC was indeed an exemplary liberation movement, having managed to set up structures that served to run its schools during the national liberation struggle. With the History textbook published, there is an unusual attempt to change the narrative in the process of scrutinizing, questioning and challenging Portuguese colonialism in Guinea and Cape Verde. The idea behind the change of narrative has to do with attempts not to allow the silencing of subalternized voices or those fighting for their dignity and the recovery of history. This was one of the most important challenges of anti-colonial education in places of resistance such as Guinea-Conakry, Senegal or the interior of so-called Portuguese Guinea. In this process, it was also important to revolutionize education to bring about the emergence of a New Man, different from the one that was on the horizon under colonialism. Thus, with the history textbook available, the PAIGC hoped, based on its content, to reverse the process of ideologization in its favour, in the dispute with Portuguese colonialism, which was considered backward and dependent on England and other colonial potentials from an economic and financial point of view. In this regard, the socio-economic indicators were not at all favorable to Portugal, which was often accused by the PAIGC leadership of not being in a position to contribute to the progress of the colonies. In this respect, the PAIGC's History textbook, published in 1974, helped to consolidate a very bad image of European colonialism *lato sensu*, and of Portuguese colonialism, insofar as the following aspects are highlighted in its denunciation of its performance in Africa: the slave trade with all its consequences in the depopulation of the continent, but also in the crisis and collapse of some African potentates; the system of colonial exploitation, especially in Guinea and Cape Verde, the political, armed and psychological violence, namely through the "pacification campaigns"; but also the African resilience through processes of resistance that accompanied the whole process of colonial rule and which had its maximum exponent in the national liberation struggles led by the modern nationalisms that emerged in the Portuguese colonies of Africa after the Second World War.

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