

# 'The Target of a Double Exploitation': Gender and Nationalism in Portuguese Timor, 1974–75

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The Popular Organisation of Timorese Women is a mass organisation of the Revolutionary Front of an Independent East Timor – FRETILIN – which enables Timorese women to participate in the revolution. The principal objective of women participating in the revolution is not, strictly speaking, the emancipation of women as women, but the triumph of the revolution, and consequently, the liberation of women as a social being who is the target of a double exploitation: that under the traditional conceptions and that under the colonialist conceptions.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Introduction

1. In a rare statement issued on 18 September 1975 by Rosa 'Muki' Bonaparte Soares, the founding secretary of the first East Timorese women's organisation, the Popular Organisation of Timorese Women (Organização Popular da Mulher Timorense – OPMT), she articulates the inseparable relationship between women's emancipation and the nationalist movement within the rapidly decolonising territory of Portuguese Timor. Muki's priorities for the women's movement were: 'Firstly, to participate directly in the struggle against colonialism, and second[ly] to fight in every way the violent discrimination that Timorese women have suffered in colonial society.' East Timorese women were, she wrote, fighting 'a double exploitation': against traditionalist, patriarchal social structures and against Portuguese colonialism.<sup>[2]</sup>
2. The window of opportunity created for East Timorese women by the April 1974 Carnation Revolution in Portugal and the subsequent initiation of decolonisation processes in its overseas territories was short-lived. Indeed, the December 1975 Indonesian invasion ignored the unilateral declaration of independence made by the nationalist front, the Revolutionary Front of an Independent East Timor (Frente Revolucionária de Timor Leste Independente – FRETILIN), and precipitated a twenty-four year foreign military occupation. During this time, politically active women bore the brunt of violent acts that aimed to humiliate, demoralise and dehumanise the East Timorese population to achieve the broader political goal of integration with Indonesia.<sup>[3]</sup> Whilst there were instances of rebellion against colonial rule throughout the Portuguese period,<sup>[4]</sup> it was events in Portugal that facilitated the emergence of a widespread, anti-colonial, revolutionary nationalist movement within the territory. Alongside this movement, OPMT was established to enable women's participation in the struggle.<sup>[5]</sup> Radical nationalist rhetoric and FRETILIN's social democratic agenda facilitated the emergence of ideological and political spaces where women could participate in the broader political and social changes occurring within the territory. In this short period of time, from April 1974 to December 1975, we can see the emergence of an influential women's movement that was closely related to early forms of East Timorese nationalism.
3. Women are not very visible in accounts of early East Timorese nationalism but neither are they absent, and it is my endeavour to recover and to analyse the role of women and gender issues within this context. As such, I will use feminism as an interrogating force to reconsider the evolution

of political consciousness and nationalist thinking in Portuguese Timor. I will highlight the often overlooked presence of women within the early nationalist movement and explore the gendered manifestations of early East Timorese nationalism beyond their role as symbols within nationalist ideology, but via women's actions as informants and disseminators. I will situate the decolonisation process in Portuguese Timor within a broader context, by examining the ways in which transnationally circulated ideas about national liberation and women's emancipation impacted upon domestic political mobilisations. Portuguese Timor was comparatively cut off from global feminist movements; however, there were ideological links between the women's movement in Portuguese Timor and across the Lusophone world that shed light upon the nature and formation of the East Timorese women's movement. Using the case study of gender and nationalism in Portuguese Timor, I will explore intersections between local and global history in the late colonial period, trace the circulation of revolutionary ideas across national borders, and examine how this rhetoric impacted upon the development of East Timorese nationalism and women's participation in the process. Finally, I will reflect upon the relationship between women's experiences and East Timorese nationalist ideology, and suggest that this early period was both influential and formative for the women's movement and East Timorese nationalism. In doing so, I draw upon empirical research in the form of my own oral history interviews with East Timorese women, as well as rare archival sources located in Australia and East Timor.

4. From the late 1980s, 'Third World' feminist scholarship took the lead in reconciling the previously disparate fields of nationalist theory and feminist studies.<sup>[6]</sup> In particular, Kumari Jayawardena's landmark analysis of feminism across Asia utilised a cross-historical approach to explore women's political struggles in Asia and the Middle East.<sup>[7]</sup> Whilst some Asian women activists have been hesitant to use the term 'feminism' because of its perceived western and individualistic connotations,<sup>[8]</sup> others have suggested broader understandings of the term that make it more applicable to Asian contexts. In her essay on feminist scholarship and colonial discourses, Chandra Talpade Mohanty proposed the use of feminism as a lens through which other discourses can be understood and analysed. She writes, 'It is a directly political and discursive *practice* in that it is purposeful and ideological. It is best seen as a mode of intervention into particular hegemonic discourses.'<sup>[9]</sup> As other scholars have since demonstrated, the application of feminist insights to the study of nationalist movements has revealed the ways in which nationalist politics has been both liberating and constraining for women.<sup>[10]</sup> There is still relatively little written about women in Southeast Asian nationalist movements; a paucity that Susan Blackburn and Helen Ting's recently edited collection of biographical studies, among others, has sought to address.<sup>[11]</sup> Women's participation in organised political movements perhaps represents their most visible involvement in various nationalist projects.<sup>[12]</sup> Yet often, as was the case in Portuguese Timor, women's movements have extended well beyond the political sphere to constitute one of the points of intersection between revolutionary elite and the broader population. In Portuguese Timor, women were important in the cultivation of a broader revolutionary climate in 1974–75, and in engaging a cross-section of the population—both geographically and economically—in nationalist and revolutionary political ideas.
5. In exploring the ideological place and lived experiences of women within early East Timorese nationalism, a transnational perspective enables us to locate the origins of revolutionary ideas, to identify the particular sites of transference, and to trace the processes of mobilisation that led to their application within the territory. Guiding this approach is Mina Roces and Louise Edwards' proclaimed sequel to Jayawardena's text, which extends the study of feminism across Asia and cross-historically, and explores how national feminisms were influenced by transnational factors.<sup>[13]</sup> Ian Tyrrell raises the difficulties of applying the term 'transnational' to border-crossing at a time when the nation-state does not yet exist,<sup>[14]</sup> yet the movement of people and ideas across the colonial history of nations subsequently formed was significant in the development of

anti-colonial nationalism and early feminist movements within the late colonial world. This approach is in line with Ann Stoler and Frederick Cooper's proposal for a new research agenda that both unifies and re-examines metropole and colony as a single analytic field.<sup>[15]</sup> The common experience of colonial oppression, the opportunities and ideas provided through education, the examples of active women, and the emergence of women's associations linked to political groups, shaped the East Timorese women's movement as a derivative of the broader nationalist front.

6. Previous studies of early East Timorese nationalism have not adequately accounted for the roles and experiences of women within the formation of nationalist ideology and in practice. Foreign observers who visited Portuguese Timor to observe the decolonisation processes in 1974–75, such as Helen Hill, Jill Jolliffe and James Dunn, published informative accounts of East Timor's history in light of decolonisation and the impending Indonesian invasion.<sup>[16]</sup> Yet in these accounts, women's participation is an aside to the wider nationalist movement and to the unfolding story of Indonesian oppression—a trend that continued throughout most literature published during the subsequent period of Indonesian occupation.<sup>[17]</sup> The few studies that have been written about the East Timorese women's movement are situated within the seemingly inescapable, yet historically apt, sphere of resistance to Indonesian rule.<sup>[18]</sup> However, these authors are less concerned with the period of 1974–75 perhaps due to a lack of primary source material, contextual limitations, and other pragmatic research priorities. In East Timor's post-independence period, scholars such as Irena Cristalis and Catherine Scott, Sara Niner, Sofi Ospina, and Susan Harris Rimmer have written about the origins of feminist thinking in East Timor.<sup>[19]</sup> Yet these approaches are primarily intended as popular histories, or are situated within a political science framework and have been conducted primarily for the purposes of contextualising contemporary analyses. As such, there exists no theoretically informed, substantial account of the relationship between feminism and nationalism during the formative period of late colonial society and decolonisation – a period which, this article contends, was instrumental in shaping the course of East Timorese feminism and nationalism subsequently. Consistent with Cynthia Enloe's broader observations of gender and nationalism, the specific histories of East Timorese women's struggles have predominantly been suppressed by masculinist, nationalist narratives and accounts, and it is the aim of this article to redress such tendencies.<sup>[20]</sup>

### **The emergence of a nationalist movement**

7. Portugal's 1974 initiation of decolonisation processes in its overseas territories led to significant changes within the social and political landscape of Portuguese Timor. One of these changes included the colonial administration's legalisation of political associations,<sup>[21]</sup> which were formed rapidly and distinguished primarily by their differing visions for the future of the territory.<sup>[22]</sup> Almost immediately, the most popular party was FRETILIN.<sup>[23]</sup> Despite their different political outlooks, many of the main party leaders were related and united by their privileged backgrounds. Unlike other parties however, FRETILIN had a social and economic program and sought to internationalise its activities, which included identifying with national liberation movements in Portuguese Africa and with other liberation movements worldwide.<sup>[24]</sup> The party has often been analysed by scholars seeking a better understanding of early East Timorese nationalism because of its broader focus on anti-colonial nationalism, social democracy and independence.<sup>[25]</sup> The development of FRETILIN is inextricably connected to the birth of the East Timorese women's movement.
8. FRETILIN's philosophy was an explicitly anti-colonial form of nationalism, and its leaders sought to unite all East Timorese in the pursuit of independence. This goal involved not only freeing the people from Portuguese colonial rule, but also called for the elimination of all colonial social

structures and for the implementation of new forms of social democracy.<sup>[26]</sup> A popular explanatory statement issued by the party in 1974 outlines its purpose and aims:

FRETILIN is the REVOLUTIONARY FRONT OF AN INDEPENDENT EAST TIMOR. It unites all the nationalist and anti-colonialist forces in a common cause – authentic liberation of the people of East Timor from the colonial yolk. FRETILIN proposes to show the people of East Timor in a way towards PROGRESS, PEACE and FREEDOM [*sic*]. FRETILIN repudiates all forms of colonialism and neo-colonialism, so that the people of East Timor can be truly INDEPENDENT, FREE and PROGRESSIVE.<sup>[27]</sup>

9. The statement clearly articulates FRETILIN's nationalist, anti-colonial agenda. The notion of individual and collective freedom is also revealed, and FRETILIN adopted this lens to assess the impact of both colonial and traditional social structures for East Timorese women.<sup>[28]</sup> It sought to eliminate discriminatory traditional practices, such as polygamy, and advocated for equal wages, widespread educational programs and sexual equality.<sup>[29]</sup> The progressive ideological position of the party on the issue of gender equality was not reflected within its organisational structure, however, with only three out of fifty members of FRETILIN's original Central Committee being women: Rosa 'Muki' Bonaparte Soares, Maria do Céu Pereira, and Guilhermina Araújo.<sup>[30]</sup> However within the remit of FRETILIN a women's organisation was established, according to the party's political program, 'so that every person will actively contribute to the political life of the country' – OPMT.<sup>[31]</sup> There is no evidence of any other political party setting up a women's arm at this time, which demonstrates the intended inclusive and progressive nature of FRETILIN. OPMT can be seen as emblematic of an emerging women's movement, yet it is important to note that the organisation emerged quite explicitly within the context of the nationalist front's commitment to independence and the democratisation and modernisation of East Timorese society. Consistent with Kumari Jayawardena's observations of feminist movements in Asia more broadly, East Timorese women saw their political struggle (and, indeed, their political struggle was seen by men) as very much a part of the broader movement against oppression that was exemplified by colonial rule.<sup>[32]</sup> This organisation and the presence of three educated women on FRETILIN's Central Committee ensured that gender equality remained a concern for the nationalist movement.
10. Although during her visit to Portuguese Timor Australian Masters student, Helen Hill, recalled groups of women being pointed out to her as OPMT from as early as January 1975,<sup>[33]</sup> it is widely acknowledged that OPMT only really came into operation at the end of August after the Civil War.<sup>[34]</sup> Originally intended as 'a mass organisation' that would enable East Timorese women 'to participate in the revolution,' the immediate roles of the organisation were borne out of the post-conflict conditions: specifically, to attend to the children and families who were abandoned and homeless as a result of the recent conflict.<sup>[35]</sup> However, OPMT had a much broader ideological position that extended beyond the necessities of the situation to align with 'the final objectives of the revolution.'<sup>[36]</sup> In her famous statement, Rosa 'Muki' Bonaparte Soares envisaged women's roles to include educating the youth to 'continue the revolution,' as well as organising 'the more active and conscious women' and 'awaken those [women] who are passive and submissive.'<sup>[37]</sup> This idea of political awakening or *kore a'an* (self-liberation) aimed to encourage women to become aware of their conditions of repression under colonialism and under patriarchy, and to use this realisation as a motivating force to liberate themselves.<sup>[38]</sup> As one OPMT member from Liquiçá district, Aurora Ximenes, explained, 'women must liberate themselves from culture ... liberate themselves from the customs and traditions that tie them down. Women must free themselves.'<sup>[39]</sup> Women who participated in OPMT since its inauguration, such as Ilda Maria da Conceição from Viqueque district, recalled OPMT's early role as a vehicle for organising women, encouraging their participation in meetings, facilitating their role in public and community decision-making processes, and teaching women 'how to participate in politics.'<sup>[40]</sup> Women also established crèches and kindergartens across the country as part of their responsibility for the next generation—with the headquarters being at Mau-Koli in Maubisse—where children were looked after, were taught to

read and write, and informed about systems of colonial oppression and how to overcome them.<sup>[41]</sup> OPMT was therefore conceived as a source for the unification, organisation and education of East Timorese women within the context of a revolution that aimed to create 'a new society,' in which women would be restored to 'the position and rights due to them.'<sup>[42]</sup>

11. Whilst the prime objective of OPMT was the 'triumph of the revolution, the revolution of the Mau Bere people of East Timor,'<sup>[43]</sup> Muki's statement demonstrates an awareness of the exploitation and oppression of women as phenomena that were occurring well beyond the borders of Portuguese Timor. She notes that women were being oppressed and exploited in 'the great majority of countries' and that they were being 'deprived of their most fundamental rights, being denied an active participation in political life.'<sup>[44]</sup> She argues that this 'exploitation and oppression' was heightened by the colonialist and traditionalist conceptions of women prevalent within East Timorese society.<sup>[45]</sup> This approach indicates a specifically anti-colonial brand of feminism, but one that still constitutes a legitimate part of feminist historiography. Historically, feminism has almost always arisen in the 'Third World' in tandem with nationalist movements—in the case of Portuguese Timor this movement took the form of an anti-colonial struggle against the Portuguese, and therefore the fact that OPMT arose within the context of the nationalist movement does not discredit its feminist agenda. Indeed, Muki's assertion that East Timorese women were living under 'a double exploitation' parallels other imbricated feminist and nationalist struggles occurring in the colonial world.<sup>[46]</sup> Muki also draws upon the conditions of life within the territory of Portuguese Timor to ground these conceptions, noting repressive practices such as *barlaque*, polygamy and the sexually exploitative attitudes of the colonialists toward local women.<sup>[47]</sup> Whilst early forms of East Timorese feminism can be situated within the context of broader movements for women's emancipation, they were informed by the specific culture and experiences of exploitation within Portuguese Timor.
12. The changes that took place within Portuguese Timor in 1974 had broad ramifications for women within the territory. Nationalist elites imagined the destruction of all colonial and traditional social structures, and foresaw the necessity of women's participation in achieving this goal. FRETILIN's nationalist, revolutionary ideology and their vision for a rapid transformation of East Timorese society created and indeed *necessitated* a role for women. In this regard, FRETILIN sought inspiration from global struggles and their underlying ideologies. In particular, the intellectual discussions and literature circulated within informal student groupings in Dili and later in Portugal, and the ideas and experience introduced by Portuguese revolutionaries and African liberation movements, provided inspiration for East Timorese nationalists and assisted in the ideological framing of their nationalist outlook.

### The origins of revolutionary ideas

13. Perceptions of the neglect and brutality on the part of the colonisers were used at least from the 1960s by young East Timorese educated elite to unite broad sections of the population in the name of national liberation.<sup>[48]</sup> As one of the founding leaders of FRETILIN, Francisco Xavier do Amaral, explained, early forms of East Timorese nationalism were a direct response to the detached yet oppressive nature of Portuguese colonial rule, and their limited attempts to develop and modernise the territory.<sup>[49]</sup> These were topics of discussion for young, educated, Dili-based youth in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Many were students of the Jesuit seminary in Daré, in the hills above Dili, where they had first been exposed to anti-colonial rhetoric and new political ideas.<sup>[50]</sup> Following the Carnation Revolution in Portugal, participants from these discussions went on to establish the Timorese Social Democratic Association (Associação Social Democrática Timorense – ASDT), the forerunner to FRETILIN. One of the few women to participate in the informal discussions, Lola dos

Reis, recalled gathering informally with friends in 1974 at Café Luanda and, later, in the 'big, beautiful garden with acacia trees' opposite the Government Palace. She saw these groupings as 'the embryo of a movement' that would shortly after claim independence for the territory. At this point, Lola recalled that the issue of gender did not feature, nor did many women participate. She remembered that as a woman her participation was sometimes questioned, though in a light-hearted fashion: 'Lola, what are you doing here, you are a woman!' Participants in the discussions also circulated revolutionary literature, such as the books of Mao Zedong. Lola also recalled students possessing t-shirts and necklaces with images of revolutionary figures such as Che Guevara, Karl Marx, Mao Zedong and Fidel Castro, and wearing them under their shirts.<sup>[51]</sup> For Lola and her colleagues, these images and texts were symbols of revolution; they represented a desire for change but at the time, it was an abstract ideological change, rather than a clearly articulated political agenda. These points of transference also demonstrate the way in which the broader ideological, cultural and political climate shaped, in an abstracted sense, developments within the territory of Portuguese Timor.

14. Portuguese Timor remained a rather neglected outpost for much of the Portuguese colonial period; as Lola explained, 'We were totally isolated.'<sup>[52]</sup> However, the movement of political exiles both to and from Portuguese Timor and other territories in the 1960s and 70s meant that individuals were able to connect with liberation movements and to bring revolutionary ideas back to Timor. Individuals such as José Ramos-Horta, Mari Alkatiri, Nicolau Lobato and Xavier do Amaral embodied direct links between the nationalist leadership that was emerging in Portuguese Timor and the liberation movements in Africa.<sup>[53]</sup> They often consulted political exiles from Portugal and other parts of the colonial empire, such as Maria do Ceu Lopes' father, who was a political deportee from the Portuguese colony of São Tomé. Maria reflected upon the influence of this sense of 'upheaval in the world at the time, with the rise of communism and socialism' that had an important effect upon the rise of a nationalist movement within Portuguese Timor.<sup>[54]</sup> Despite the close geographical proximity, it is very unlikely that East Timorese nationalists collaborated with those from nearby Indonesia at this early stage. Difficult geographic terrain prevented much mobility between the two territories,<sup>[55]</sup> and different European colonisers created dissimilar colonial experiences.
15. The late-colonial period brought about steady change to East Timorese society, with some young East Timorese having the opportunity to pursue higher education in Portugal. Many received scholarships from the Portuguese government to support their education.<sup>[56]</sup> These scholarships, which accelerated in number from 1971, can be seen partly as an attempt by the Portuguese governor to train young East Timorese in preparation for government posts.<sup>[57]</sup> Lola, for example, recalled the lack of qualified individuals to 'lead the country': something that the Portuguese government started to realise from the 1970s, and therefore accelerated these educational programs.<sup>[58]</sup> Filomena de Almeida, who went to study in Portugal, suggested that the Portuguese government 'didn't want to lose face.' Because of the turbulent anti-colonial struggle taking place in the African colonies, she suggested that the Portuguese used these scholarships as a 'desperate attempt to please' the people of Portuguese Timor.<sup>[59]</sup> Many of the East Timorese students studying in Portugal were based at the Casa de Timor (House of Timor), a large flat in a high-density outer suburb of Lisbon. East Timorese scholar Antero Benedito da Silva suggests that there were at least thirty East Timorese students studying in Portugal by 1974.<sup>[60]</sup> Ironically it was in Lisbon, Portugal, that these students participated in political discussions and met with members of anti-colonial movements from Africa, as well as revolutionary Portuguese students, and thus developed their political ideas.
16. In Portugal young East Timorese students read revolutionary literature, discussed political ideas, and attempted to learn from the examples of other liberation struggles. In particular, they drew

inspiration from the revolutionary ideas and practice of the African liberation movements by studying the anti-colonial movements, attending their political meetings, preparing material for and attending political rallies. [61] They developed political materials for the movement that was emerging at home in Portuguese Timor, including a literacy handbook, *Rai Timor, Rai Ita Niang* (Timor is Our Country), that was written in Tetun. This was the most widely spoken indigenous language, and was used to cultivate unity and cohesion amongst the multilingual and diverse populations of the territory. The handbook drew upon the works of the Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire, and his *conscientização* (awareness-raising) method of literacy training that encouraged education for liberation. [62] Maria Madalena Brites Boavida from Ermera district, who received a scholarship to study in Portugal in 1974, recalled making contact with students from other Portuguese colonies, such as Mozambique, Angola, Guinéa-Bissau, Cape Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Macau. [63] Lola also recalled very frequent political discussions, 'every day, every night, every weekend.' She remembered attending meetings for the other African national groups, who would help the young East Timorese 'to understand the issues' and 'the essence of our rights. The essence of why we need to become independent.' [64] In reflecting upon this period, Filomena felt that it was not only the political nature of the discussions that inspired her, but that she felt 'motivated by the [revolutionary] environment itself.' [65] These recollections evoke a revolutionary atmosphere amongst young students in Portugal in the mid-1970s, in which they discussed political ideas and shared experiences that proved educational and inspiring for young East Timorese.

17. The movements that formed in Portugal's African colonies were advocating for immediate independence from colonial rule and for the elimination of all forms of oppression. [66] Unlike the rapid politicisation that had occurred in Timorese society in 1974–75, many of these movements had been fighting extended liberation wars since the 1960s and had established solid platforms for independence. The African liberation movements conducted analyses of discrimination under colonial rule that utilised the symbol of women as demonstrative of the broader oppression that they felt. Party directives and speeches from African nationalist leaders demonstrate the links that were drawn between national liberation and gender equality: a necessary feature of the new society. [67] These movements all contained women's arms within their organisational structures to facilitate the participation of women in politics. [68] The Mozambican Women's Organisation (Organização da Mulher Moçambicana – OMM), for example, was particularly concerned with the relationship between women's liberation within the territory and the worldwide struggle to end oppression. The organisation issued a booklet in 1972 that advocated for a 'general revolutionary struggle' and stressed 'the role of women' within this campaign. [69] The organisation sent a delegation to the tenth anniversary of the All African Women's Conference in 1973, highlighting their links with pan-African women's organisations. Representatives spoke of the conference as 'a platform of struggle from where women of our continent can coordinate their efforts in the hard struggle they are undertaking against the many forces which oppress them.' They pushed for coordination with other African women, appealed for material support and encouraged women to participate. [70]
18. Unlike Mozambican women's participation in pan-African women's conferences, and indeed Indonesian women's involvement with international organisations such as the Women's International Democratic Federation, [71] the women of Portuguese Timor were much less connected to regional and international movements and organisations that could be used to strengthen feminist political ties at home. However, drawing upon the ideological and practical inspiration of women within African liberation movements during their time in Portugal, East Timorese female students participated in political discussions in a way that they had not yet done at home in Portuguese Timor. The conditions in Portugal were 'very different,' Lola claimed, and gender inequality 'was not an issue.' [72] She noted that the women who participated in these

political discussions were 'very active and energetic,' that the different environment meant that the male colleagues 'understood that we [women] had a role to play, that we had a right to contribute.'<sup>[73]</sup> The students would debate the colonial and traditional conditions of East Timorese society, as well as issues that related specifically to the social and economic status of East Timorese women, such as the practice of *barlake*. Lola recalled the colourful and evocative nature of these discussions:

Debates were constant, for example, why should we call ourselves *maubere* and *buibere* and not Timorese? A lot of debates. Err, other debates like for example ... there were issues like women's participation: this we discussed a lot. But among the students, it was ok. They all saw that it was our right to be there. Other issues like what to do for the people to make sure that there will be a better life for them—there was a lot of discussion. For example, how to organize Timor-Leste in such a way that it will belong from [*sic*] everybody? So everybody can benefit from it and not just a few. A lot of the students were dreamers—they dream all these things, and we dreamt about coming back to Timor and helping the people.<sup>[74]</sup>

Lola suggests that practices and situations in which women were perceived to be disadvantaged were incorporated into student discussions not solely for the purposes of countering gender inequality, but as part of a broader vision of social equity within a new, independent state. The students were unified by a general sense of subordination under Portuguese colonial rule and the restraints of traditional society, and women's oppression was seen as symptomatic of these conditions.

19. Several of the students returned to Portuguese Timor in September 1974 to help with the revolutionary struggle that was being waged at home, including Muki.<sup>[75]</sup> On 11 August, the Timorese Democratic Union (União Democrática Timorense – UDT) had launched a coup against the Portuguese colonial administration and, shortly after, violent conflict had erupted between FRETILIN and the UDT.<sup>[76]</sup> By November 1975, FRETILIN had gained control of a large part of the territory and moved to fill the administrative vacuum left by the sudden departure of the Portuguese by acting as the *de facto* government. On 28 November 1975 FRETILIN issued a unilateral declaration of independence.<sup>[77]</sup> The influence of the returned students upon the party direction was instrumental, particularly, in creating a space for women to participate in the ideological and physical struggle for national liberation.

### Women's participation in the struggle

20. The students who returned from Portugal after the Civil War were important in determining the subsequent direction of the nationalist movement. Muki's role in organising the women via OPMT, the example provided by her active participation, as well as the incorporation of women within the literacy campaigns, inspired and encouraged a cross-section of women to participate. These conditions provided the context for later depictions by nationalist leaders of women's active involvement in the war against the invading Indonesian forces, by emphasising the language and analytic framing skills that were used to draw conscious links between women's emancipation and national liberation.
21. In his 1987 autobiography one of the early FRETILIN leaders, José Ramos-Horta, recalled the radical influence that these returned students had upon the party's direction. He claimed that they were 'instrumental in our campaign for mass support' by encouraging grassroots work that, combined with the popular support enjoyed by local leaders, resulted in huge popularity for FRETILIN.<sup>[78]</sup> 'Without them,' he wrote, 'FRETILIN wouldn't have exploded into such a mass movement within such a short period of time.'<sup>[79]</sup> Although the energy and radicalism of these students was somewhat at odds with the more moderate leadership of FRETILIN in Dili, which did



lead to discordance among the nationalists,[80] their role in extending FRETILIN's reach through the literacy campaigns and base work galvanised the support of the population and extended the reach of the nationalist movement beyond the urban-based elite. Although FRETILIN had already conceived of a program that advocated for gender equality and the idea of a women's arm within the organisation had already been raised, it was the example provided by the students that allowed the ideological constructs and principles to begin to effect real change for women throughout the territory.

22. OPMT members within Portuguese Timor commented upon the influence that studying in Portugal had on women such as Muki. A fellow classmate and member of OPMT from Ermera district, Lourdes 'Merita' Alves Araujo, fondly recalled that it was from her time studying in Portugal that Muki gained new ideas, new examples and new knowledge about politics from other countries, particularly African countries that also wanted to fight for their independence. When she returned to Timor, she tried to introduce these ideas and to mobilise the people—the whole population, including women, so that everyone could become a part of the political process. Merita claimed that Muki was one of the first people to raise the idea 'that all women could take part in the process.'<sup>[81]</sup> Another OPMT member from Aileu district, Zulmira 'Sirana' da Cruz Sarmento, recalled that when the students came back from Portugal both men and women shared stories about their time in Portugal, and in particular, emphasised the interchangeable gender roles of married couples in Portugal in terms of work, housework and studying.<sup>[82]</sup> The returned students transferred not only the ideas to which they had been exposed, but also the feeling of the revolutionary climate in Portugal across borders from Lisbon to the colony of Portuguese Timor.
23. Technological advancements that spread to Portuguese Timor in the late colonial period enabled the examples of active women, such as Muki, and stories of successful liberation struggles in Africa to be communicated more broadly within the territory. In a Dili-based newspaper, *Timor Leste: O Jorno do Povo Mau Bere*, Muki wrote an article that commemorated 11 November (Angolan Independence Day) as 'a day to remember in the history of the Angolan People and, consequently in the history of everyone around the World.' Angola's attainment of independence, Muki wrote, 'signals another victory of the People oppressed by the system of domination and exploitation in the form of colonialism.' In particular, she described Angolan women, who 'fought side by side' with men, as inspiration for East Timorese women to similarly organise themselves.<sup>[83]</sup> In another article for the same publication, Muki emphasised the participation of women in revolutionary struggles in Mozambique, Angola and Guinéa-Bissau.<sup>[84]</sup> Such framing enabled Muki to position East Timorese women and their struggles within a pan-Lusophone, transnational movement for liberation from colonial oppression that was intended to stimulate excitement and enthusiasm amongst the women of Portuguese Timor. At a time when illiteracy was estimated to be around 90 percent, however, the newspaper medium was not the most far-reaching method of communication and was primarily accessible only to the educated elite.<sup>[85]</sup> Yet the presence of newspapers demonstrates the ways in which ideas about women's involvement in the nationalist movement were being circulated and discussed, even amongst only a particular social grouping, and sheds light upon the thinking of those at the forefront of the movement.
24. New forms of media that came to the territory in the late colonial period were also used to reach out and to politicise a broader range of people, especially those who were illiterate and those in the rural areas. From September 1975 to December 1978 FRETILIN's radio station, *Radio Maubere*, broadcast traditional East Timorese music, nationalist poems and songs across the territory.<sup>[86]</sup> A young poet from Ermera district, Maria Olandina Isabel Caeiro Alves, was one of the announcers for the radio station prior to the Indonesian invasion.<sup>[87]</sup> On the first anniversary of the formation of FRETILIN, a film about the then-victorious struggle of the people of Guinéa-Bissau was screened in Dili.<sup>[88]</sup> As a young OPMT member, Sirana recalled seeing the film, which led her to comment

that Guinéa-Bissau was seen as an 'older brother' for the East Timorese—their experiences and ideas were an example for those of Portuguese Timor.<sup>[89]</sup> The social analysis, party platforms and examples provided by liberation movements in Portugal's African colonies had designated a particular place for women within the context of the revolution. That these Lusophone countries shared the mutual experience of colonialism and had struggled against it provided additional inspiration for East Timorese nationalists.

25. The literacy campaigns instigated by the returned students were also central for communicating political ideas to the population and in generating a broader understanding of FRETILIN's objectives. According to Estêvão Cabral, a young nationalist who was involved in the campaigns, female literacy volunteers outnumbered men in late 1974 and in early 1975.<sup>[90]</sup> Helen Hill similarly recalled being struck by the number of the women who participated in the programs during her visit to the territory.<sup>[91]</sup> The campaign was initially tested at two pilot centres in Namuleco (Aileu district) and Baucau (Baucau district), although after six months there were reportedly two hundred literacy centres operating across the country.<sup>[92]</sup> Through OPMT women participated in the literacy program, teaching children and adults how to read. *Brigadistas* (adult literacy volunteers) used the literacy handbook that had been designed and printed by students in Portugal to teach reading and writing, and to facilitate discussions about independence, East Timorese culture and nationalism. Using Tetun, they told traditional East Timorese stories and sang songs such as Foho Ramelau (Mount Ramelau – the highest mountain in Portuguese Timor) to encourage nationalist sentiment and to articulate a unique sense of East Timorese national identity.
26. This was often an educative experience for the volunteers themselves, travelling into the countryside and observing the lifestyles of the rural peasants. For Maria Maia dos Reis, the daughter of a *liurai* (traditional chief or ruler) from Baucau district, these observations shaped the development of her class consciousness. It also clarified the way in which FRETILIN sought to draw upon material conditions of life within the territory and to break down class and economic divisions. Maria later recalled:

The people there [in the rural areas] ate once in a day, they ate potato and cassava no rice to eat, they drank coffee, and they sold the coffee beans and drank the coffee leaves. Then we came to feel that we have to guide this people for the freedom, because FRETILIN's doctrine was that everyone must have an equal life. There should not be rich people and poor people.<sup>[93]</sup>

Another participant in the literacy campaigns, Aicha Basareawan, later wrote of their importance in enabling the population to participate in FRETILIN's revolution: 'How can a people take active part in a revolution against colonialism if it is illiterate, namely if it is unable to analyse its situation and the actions of the colonialists against it?'<sup>[94]</sup> In her statement, we see the inextricable connection that was constructed between FRETILIN's political ideology and the literacy campaigns. Women's involvement in these literacy campaigns and base work enabled OPMT to transcend class and geographic divides, drawing from FRETILIN in its inclusive approach to individual and collective emancipation.

27. Male nationalist leaders in Portuguese Timor highlighted this link between the liberation of women and of society from the repressive structures and institutions that shaped and informed colonial society. In political rhetoric, women were used as a symbol, as the epitomic example of colonial oppression. Male leaders described women using a particular definition of femininity, emphasising their oppression and backwardness under colonialism. Rogério Lobato, a young member of FRETILIN, insisted in a 1978 interview that 'East Timor cannot be liberated without liberating the women of East Timor.' He highlighted the emancipation of women as 'a very important factor in our revolution,' and the need to help 'the women comrades liberate themselves from their oppressors.'

Lobato stressed women 'liberating themselves,' which was an important part of East Timorese nationalism, to both literally and politically educate the people in language that would enable them to articulate their experiences of subjugation. [95] The experiences of young students in Portugal, and their work in the rural areas upon return, enabled this language to be disseminated to large sectors of the East Timorese population beyond the urban elite. In a 1978 interview, José Ramos-Horta similarly reflected upon the oppression of women within the colonised, patriarchal society. He described women as 'double slaves: slaves of the settlers, the colonial power, and slaves of the men, their own husbands and other relatives.' He drew upon material conditions within the territory, such as the multiple demands placed upon women within daily life. These conditions enable Ramos-Horta to depict the oppression associated with women as a symbol for the backward nature of Portuguese colonial society, demonstrating the necessity for revolution and change. [96] That FRETILIN's Central Committee was comprised primarily of men in 1975 meant that it was important for those individuals to be aware of ideas of gender equality and women's emancipation, but it also reveals a large discrepancy between ideals of gender equality and efforts to incorporate these into practice.

## Conclusion

28. The 1974 Carnation Revolution in Portugal brought significant changes to the social and political landscape of Portuguese Timor. It facilitated the emergence of a widespread nationalist movement that contained a commitment to women's liberation, and sought their involvement in the struggle against colonialism. Drawing upon the example of liberation movements in Portuguese colonies in Africa and the conditions of life under Portuguese colonial rule, women were utilised by the revolutionary elite as symbols for the backwardness of traditional and colonial East Timorese society. Whilst women did not occupy a significant number of leadership positions within the formal structure of the nationalist movement, they were very much involved in the education, politicisation and mobilisation of the broader population *on the ground*, in the name of independence, at this critical time. The revolutionary quality of the nationalist movement proved productive for East Timorese women. It enabled the women's movement to expand its scope and influence beyond the urban elite to rural women across the territory, and facilitated the dissemination of a language of gender equality within the broader scope of East Timorese liberation rhetoric. The creation of OPMT and the involvement of a small group of educated, politically driven women ensured that women's participation remained important to the broader nationalist struggle against oppression and inequality, despite their limited capacity to significantly penetrate the central leadership structure. However, these women did assert themselves within the broader ideological and political sphere, and these efforts encouraged a shift in colonial and traditional gender roles.
29. The violent onset of the Indonesian invasion in December 1975 radically changed the nature of the nationalist movement, and issues of gender equality were sidelined in the pursuit of national independence. As Sara Niner has noted, the revolutionary and gender-emancipative agenda of FRETILIN progressively waned throughout successive leaders and constant efforts to reorganise and unify the different factions of the nationalist movement. [97] However, the identification within this early nationalist movement that colonialism was a key source of women's oppression provided the women who participated in it with a critical sense of both gender and class awareness. The period I have discussed in this article was a time of political awakening for many women and its legacy— in raising the 'women question' for East Timorese nationalists and in highlighting the importance of women's participation in nationalist struggles— has endured beyond the conclusion of the East Timorese twenty-four year struggle for national liberation into the post-independence period, informing and justifying women's claims for recognition and compensation.

30. This article is part of an effort to recover the experiences of women within the period of decolonisation in Portuguese Timor. Rather than viewing the nation-state as an inherently masculine construct that excludes and marginalises women, I have demonstrated that East Timorese women were participants within the development and dissemination of nationalist ideology within Portuguese Timor, and within the cultivation of broader nationalist sentiment and political consciousness. They utilised the rapid politicisation of the territory, broader movements for social and political change, and the ideology of FRETILIN to assert themselves within nationalist processes. Women employed the national liberation ideology of FRETILIN to proclaim a platform of gender equality. Although their experiences and agency are less visible within previous accounts, I have argued within this article that women were active, present and indeed they capitalised upon the opportunities provided by the movement for broader social change to advocate for gender equality.
31. Situating East Timorese anti-colonial nationalism within a transnational framework, and examining the use of gender within its construction, is an approach that is attentive and responsive to the lived experiences of East Timorese women. It also sheds light upon the ideological sources of inspiration and practical examples that drove East Timorese women's assertiveness and agency—key features of the women's movement subsequently. However, this article is not solely an effort to revive East Timorese women from the 'shadows of history,' nor an attempt to consolidate their stories within the wider ambit of a purely nationalist narrative. It is a suggestion that the intersections between gender and nationalism within Portuguese Timor in 1974–75 can be seen as part of much broader events, processes of change, and systems of power and cultures.

## References

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- [2] Bonaparte, 'Women in East Timor,' p. 7.
- [3] Chapter 7.7: Sexual Violence, Commission for Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation in the Timor-Leste Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR), *Chega! The Report of the Commission for Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation in Timor-Leste*, Dili: CAVR, 2005; Amnesty International, *Women in East Timor and Indonesia: Standing against Repression*, AI Index ASA 21/51/1995, 13 December 1995; Torben Retbøll, 'The women of East Timor,' in *East Timor: Nationbuilding in the 21st Century*, ed. G. Jonsson, Stockholm: Center for Pacific Asia Studies, Stockholm University, 2003, pp. 11–31; George Junus Aditjondro, 'Violence by the state against women in East Timor: A report to the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Including its causes and consequences,' Fitzroy: East Timor Human Rights Centre, 1997; and George Junus Aditjondro, 'The silent suffering of our Timorese sisters,' in *Free East Timor: Australia's Culpability in East Timor's Genocide*, ed. Jim Aubrey, Milsons Point: Random House Australia, 1998, pp. 243–65.
- [4] For example, the 1719–1769 Calico Uprising, rebellions in Cova, Cotubaba and Batugade in 1868, and the 1895–1912 Manufahi rebellion led by the *liurai* (local chief or king), Dom Boaventura. See Ernest Chamberlain, *The Struggle in Iliomar: Resistance in Rural East Timor*, Point Lonsdale: Ernest Chamberlain, 2003; *Rebellion, Defeat and Exile: The 1959 Uprising in East Timor*, Point Lonsdale: Ernest Chamberlain, 2005; and *Faltering Steps: Independence Movements in East Timor – 1940s to the Early 1970s*, Point Lonsdale, Victoria: Ernest Chamberlain, 2010.
- [5] 'Program of the Revolutionary Front of Independent East Timor (FRETILIN)', p. 4.
- [6] Although I am conscious of its contested nature, I have consciously deployed the term, 'Third World,' within this article to refer to 'the colonized, neocolonized or decolonised countries (of Asia, Africa, and Latin America) whose economic and political structures have been deformed within the colonial process.' 'Preface,' in *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, ed. Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo and Loudres Torres, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991, p. ix.

- [7] The foundational texts in this regard include Mohanty, Russo and Torres (eds), *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*; and Kumari Jayawardena, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*, London: Zed Books Ltd, 1986.
- [8] See, for example, Maila Stivens, 'Becoming modern in Malaysia: Women at the end of the twentieth century,' in *Women in Asia: Tradition, Modernity and Globalisation*, ed. Louise Edwards and Mina Roces, Sydney and Ann Arbor: Allen and Unwin and University of Michigan Press, 2000, pp. 16–38; Louise Edwards, 'Chinese feminism in a transnational frame: Between internationalism and xenophobia,' in *Women's Movements in Asia: Feminisms and Transnational Activism*, ed. Mina Roces and Louise Edwards, London and New York: Routledge, 2010, pp. 53–74; and Madhu Chaudhuri, *Feminism in India*, London: Zed Books, 2004.
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- [17] Jill Jolliffe, *East Timor: Nationalism & Colonialism*, St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1978; James Dunn, *Timor: A People Betrayed*, Milton: The Jacaranda Press, 1983; Carmel Budiardjo and Liem Soei Liong, *The War against East Timor*, London and Totowa: Zed Books, 1984; and John G. Taylor, *Indonesia's Forgotten War: The Hidden History of East Timor*, London: Zed Books, 1991.
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[21] Programme of the Provisional Government, Portugal Ministry of Mass Communication, *Provisional Government: The Men and the Programme*, Lisbon: Anuário Comercial de Portugal, 1974.

[22] The main parties were the UDT (União Democrática Timorese – Timorese Democratic Union), the ASDT (Associação Social Democrática Timor – Social Democratic Association of Timor), which shortly after changed its name to FRETILIN (Frente Revolucionária de Timor Leste Independente – the Revolutionary Front of Independence East Timor), and APODETI (Associação Popular Democrática Timorese – the Timorese Democratic People's Union). There were several smaller parties formed at the same time, KOTA (the Association of Timorese Heroes – Associação dos Heróis Timorenses) and PTT (the Timorese Labour Party – Partido Trabalhista Timorese), but they did not garner much popular support.

[23] For example, Jim Dunn, leader of the Australian Council for Overseas Asia's (ACFOA) fact-finding mission in 1975 observed that between them, FRETILIN and UDT 'enjoyed the support of more than 90% of the population.' Jim Dunn, 'Notes on Portuguese Timor,' in ACFOA Timor Task Force, *Report on Visit to East Timor for ACFOA Timor Task Force*, Canberra: Australian Council for Overseas Aid, 1975, pp. 1–6, p. 5.

[24] The Programme of the Revolutionary Front of East Timor is available as Appendix A in Jolliffe, *East Timor*, p. 335.

[25] See Hill, *Stirrings of Nationalism in East Timor*; and Jolliffe, *East Timor*.

[26] Political Programme of the Revolutionary Front for the Independence of East Timor, Appendix A in Jolliffe, *East Timor*, p. 330.

[27] 'What is FRETILIN? (A popular explanatory statement),' in Grant Evans, *Eastern (Portuguese) Timor: Independence or oppression? Special report and photos*, An Australian Union of Students Booklet, 1975, n.p.

[28] Rosa 'Muki' Bonaparte, 'Timorese women 'are fighting on all fronts,' trans. and ed. *East Timor News* no. 14, 25 August 1977.

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[30] Informal conversation with Helen Hill, 25 January 2014, Melbourne, Australia.

[31] 'Program of the Revolutionary Front of Independent East Timor (FRETILIN), p. 4.

[32] Kumari Jayawardena, 'Introduction,' in *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*, p. 2.

[33] Informal conversation with Helen Hill, 25 January 2014, Melbourne, Australia.

[34] Hill, *Stirrings of Nationalism*, pp. 159–60. Maria Domingas Fernandes Alves et al. also note that OPMT was promoted in a book entitled *Estatutos da Fretilin* (Statute of FRETILIN) which was published on 5 January 1975, though

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[35] Rosa 'Muki' Bonaparte, 'Women in East Timor: Statement by Popular Organisation of Timorese Women,' 18 September 1975, *Direct Action*, 4 March 1976, p. 7.

[36] Bonaparte, 'Women in East Timor,' p. 7.

[37] Rosa 'Muki' Bonaparte, 'Women in East Timor: Statement by Popular Organisation of Timorese Women,' 18 September 1975, *Direct Action*, 4 March 1976, p. 7.

[38] See Michael Leach, 'Early themes of FRETILIN nationalism,' Paper presented at the Timor-Leste Studies Association Conference, Understanding Timor-Leste 2013: A TLSA Research Conference, Dili, Timor-Leste, 15–16 July 2013.

[39] Michael Leach's interview with Aurora Ximenes, 24 March 2010, Dili, Timor-Leste.

[40] Interview with Ilda Maria da Conceição, 5 July 2012, Dili, Timor-Leste.

[41] Australian Associated Press Reports from East Timor, 15 September–10 December 1975, Rick Collins and Jill Jolliffe, Press AustNews Sydney, Ex Jolliffe\Maubisse Relief One (22 November), p. 2. In The Australian National University Archives ET Z627.

[42] Bonaparte, 'Women in East Timor,' p. 7.

[43] Bonaparte, 'Women in East Timor,' p. 7.

[44] Bonaparte, 'Women in East Timor,' p. 7.

[45] Bonaparte, 'Women in East Timor,' p. 7.

[46] Bonaparte, 'Women in East Timor,' p. 7.

[47] Bonaparte, 'Women in East Timor,' p. 7. According to Sara Niner, the often mistakenly translated concept of *barlake* is best understood as 'a ritual and equal exchange that is the basis of regulating relationships in indigenous society.' See Sara Niner, 'Barlake: An exploration of marriage practices and issues of women's status in Timor-Leste,' *Local-Global: Identity, Security, Community* vol. 11 (2012): 138–53, p. 141.

[48] Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 2nd ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 169–71.

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[50] See Hill, *Stirrings of Nationalism*; and Antero Benedito da Silva, 'FRETILIN popular education 1973–78 and its relevance to Timor-Leste Today,' M.Phil. Thesis, University College, Ireland, 2011.

[51] Interview with Lola dos Reis, 23 August 2013, Dili, Timor-Leste.

[52] Interview with Lola dos Reis, 23 August 2013, Dili, Timor-Leste.

[53] For example, in the early 1970s José Ramos-Horta was exiled to Mozambique, where he witnessed the repression of the Portuguese government and learnt of FRELIMO politics and policies; whilst pursuing post-secondary studies in Angola, Mari Alkatiri met members of the MPLA, the umbrella group leading resistance against Portuguese colonial rule; and Nicolau Lobato travelled to Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, where he and Xavier do Amaral were guests of President Samora Machel at the declaration of independence in Mozambique on 25 June 1975. Hill, *Stirrings of Nationalism*, pp. 64–65.

[54] Interview with Maria do Céu Lopes da Silva, 20 July 2013, Dili, Timor-Leste.

- [55] Exceptions include the impact in the 1950s of separatist movements in Eastern Indonesia and the Anti-Colonial Movement of Indonesia (*Gerakan Penentang/Penghapusan Kolonialisme – GPKI*), though despite their explicit anti-colonial stance, this movement had remarkably little impact on events and the formation of nationalist ideas within Portuguese Timor. See Ernest Chamberlain, *Faltering Steps: Independence Movements in East Timor – 1940s to the Early 1970s*, Point Lonsdale: Ernest Chamberlain, 2010, pp. 33–34.
- [56] Email communication with Maria Madalena Brites Boavida, 5 September 2013.
- [57] Luís Cardoso, *The Crossing: A Story of East Timor*, London: Granta Publications, 2000, p. 83.
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- [59] Interview with Filomena de Almeida, 26 July 2013, Dili, Timor-Leste.
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- [67] Samora Michel, 'Establishing people's power to serve the masses,' a text that originated in President Machel's talks given during a reorganisational offensive in a FRELIMO education centre in November 1971, later expanded and amended, to appear in its present form in 1974, in Samora Machel and Barry Munslow, *Samora Machel, an African Revolutionary: Selected Speeches and Writings*, London: Zed Books; Totowa: Biblio Distribution Center, 1985, p. 18.
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- [70] Quote from the speech of Deolinda Raul Guesimane, Marcelina Chissano and Rosaria Tembe, pp. 14–16.
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- [72] Interview with Lola dos Reis, 23 August 2013, Dili, Timor-Leste.
- [73] Interview with Lola dos Reis, 23 August 2013, Dili, Timor-Leste.
- [74] Interview with Lola dos Reis, 23 August 2013, Dili, Timor-Leste. Used as a derogatory term by the Portuguese colonialists to refer to poor East Timorese, *maubere* (the female version of the word is *buibere*) was reclaimed by the nationalist movement to describe its supporters. According to the FRETILIN member, José Ramos-Horta, the terms became 'the single most powerful political symbol of FRETILIN's campaign.' In José Ramos-Horta, *Funu: The Unfinished Saga of East Timor*, Trenton: Red Sea Press, 1987, p. 37.



[75] Interview with Lola dos Reis, 23 August 2013, Dili, Timor-Leste. Clinton Fernandes notes seven students who returned from Portugal in September 1974: Abilio Araujo, Guilhermina Araujo, Antonio Carvarino, Vincente Manuel Reis, Roque Rodrigues, Rosa 'Muki' Bonaparte Soares and Venancio Gomes da Silva. See [Clinton Fernandes](#), 'Companion to East Timor,' FRETILIN, online: [http://hass.unsw.adfa.edu.au/timor\\_companion/before\\_the\\_invasion/fretilin.php](http://hass.unsw.adfa.edu.au/timor_companion/before_the_invasion/fretilin.php) (accessed 12 November 2013). Antero Benedito identifies twenty people—including five women—who returned from then until the time of the Indonesian invasion in December 1975. In da Silva, 'FRETILIN Popular Education 1973–78,' p. 96.

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[77] [República Democrática de Timor Leste](#), 'Texto da Proclamação da Independência,' 28 November 1975, Arquivo & Museu da Resistência Timorense, online: <http://amrtimor.org/amrt/index.php?lingua=en> (accessed 27 January 2014).

[78] Ramos-Horta, *Funu*, pp. 38 and 53.

[79] Ramos-Horta, *Funu*, p. 38.

[80] See also John G. Taylor, *East Timor: The Price of Freedom*, New York: Zed Books, 1999, p. 48.

[81] Interview with Loudres 'Merita' Alves Araujo, 6 July 2012, Dili, Timor-Leste.

[82] Interview with Zuimira 'Sirana' da Cruz Sarmento, 5 December 2012, Dili, Timor-Leste.

[83] Rosa 'Muki' Bonaparte, 'O.P.M.T. Texto alusivo à proclamação da Independência de Angola,' *Timor Leste: Jouro do Povo Mau Bere*, Sábado 15 de Novembro 1975, no. 8, p. 6.

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