FRETILIN POPULAR EDUCATION 1973-1978 AND ITS RELEVANCE TO TIMOR-LESTE TODAY

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DEDICATION

This is first and foremost in memory of my ancestors: Maulero-Dadakou, Gono So-Bo So, Daeloi-Daralo of Makasae-speaking Matebian and Abu-Afaloaicai clan, and the Naueti-speaking Bina-Borabo’o clan of of Uato-Carbau, who provided me protection throughout the years of the Resistance.

One day, in early 1976, my mother’s loud cry reached my ear. I run to the kitchen wanted to know what was happening to her. The ladies at the entrance door did not let me in. I was angry, fought, quarrelled and said many strange words. And I heard mother said: “Let him in!” Mother embraced me so tight and asked me to go, a baby girl was born, mom passed away and the baby was named after my mother, Maria Bendita. Sadly the young Maria Bendita died in Matebian in early 1978. When we got news from uncle Horacio Guterres and Aleixo Guterres who had travelled all the way from Matebian to Atantele in Uato-Lari, Grand Mother Maria Lurdes was heart broken. She was in her 70s, did not have second chance to know Maria Bendita.

I would like to recall those relatives and cousins of my father Agostinho da Silva who either died of diseases or were killed by the occupying forces namely: Napoleão da Silva, a common soldier of FALINTIL who was the first one killed by the Indonesian forces in his home place Malele-Borabohae; my father’s brother Lucas Baptista died of sickness after returning from a communal work in Mahele-Uato-Lari in the early 1978; Adelino de Carvalho of Afaloicai killed in a battle in Uato-Lari in 1990; João Boilo, a member of FALINTIL who was been killed but his whereabouts are still unknown; Alfredo Lhare who was a FALINTIL Company Commander and had been killed in a battle; José Henrique ‘Ko Susu’ (FALINTIL) who supported Xanana Gusmão to re-organise the resistance but was killed by diarrhoea in Same; Júlio Pires (Zone Secretary) executed in Uato-Lari; Acácio Carvalho executed in Uato-Lari; Luís da Silva, a member of the Intervention Forces was executed in Uato-Lari; my adopted father Ricardino Madeira executed by the Indonesian Special Forces in 1984; Relatives and friends of my father who had been massacred along a dozen of people from Uato-Carbau in 1984 namely Ernesto Konidere (Borabohae), António Nokorau, Luís and Carlos (Borabohae), Bernardo Liurai
(Borabohae), Gaspar Alacho of Irabin, and Chiquito Bahatata; and Martinho da Silva who was arrested due to riot in Uato-Lari in 1995, imprisoned, tortured, got sick and eventually died. I lost my brother Anacleto Benedito da Silva who was more a friend than a brother to me, when Batallion 745, the last Indonesian troops to leave, captured him on 21 September 1999. He is believed to have been executed in a military parade in Comoro, but his remains are nowhere to be found.

I am indebted to Agosto Gamma ‘Teki’, a Leader of HPP-MAI, whom Indonesian forces executed following the November 12 Massacre in 1991; Alberto from Vemasse, with whom we shared a student dormitory, who was killed in the November 12 Massacre; José da Costa ‘Mau Hodu Ran Kadalak’, Jacob Fernandes, and José Antônio da Costa ‘Ma’Huno’, Nino Konis Santana. From them I learned to become a mature political activist and today an activist-scholar.

My final dedication goes to all FRETILIN-RDTL leaders, Xanana Gusmão, Mari Alkatiri, José Ramos-Horta, Rui Fernandes, Francisco Guterres Lu Olo, Taur Matan Ruak; the members of UNETIM, HPP-MAI, OJETIL, LENAT, OSKTL, GERIPOTA, OPJLATIL, FITUN, RENETIL, AST, Sagrada Familia, DSMPPPTL-GFFTL, OPJT, APCET Philippines, International Students Festival in Norway, International Union of Socialist Youth, Socialist and Communist Parties and movements throughout the world, and all the people who I cannot mention here but with whom I have worked in the recent past.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My great appreciation goes to all those who have contributed to this research: Moisés da Silva Fernandes, from the Universidade de Lisboa, Luisa Teotónio Pereira from CPDM-CIDAC Lisbon, Anya Dettman from the Australian National Library, Helen Hill and John Sinnott, President and Secretary of Australia-East Timor Association, Kevin Sherlock who made his personal collections available, and made many copies of files useful for this study; along with numerous other friends including Rob Wesley Smith, John Waddingham, Afonso de Almeida, and many others.

I would like to say endless thanks to my principal supervisor, Associate Professor Bob Boughton and his wife Deborah Durnan, who not only helped me in the overall process of the thesis, as supervisor and proof readers, and as comrades; but also provided me nice meals and friendship throughout the three years of study at the University of New England. I also thank my co-supervisor, Dr Rebecca Spence for her support and guidance. My special thanks go to Dr Mike Donaldson for his generous assistance with editing of the final manuscript. Last but not least, I would like to extend my appreciation to Professor Peter Flood, who managed to find me a scholarship to fund my studies, and all the other UNE staff who have generously extended their support. There are so many of you whom I have met and interviewed and talked to in the past three years, and have directly or indirectly inspired me to finish this thesis. I thank you so much!

I also want to thank the Nicolson Family in Melbourne, Peter, Mary, Tom and Clare, who provided me a home during my visit to Melbourne in 2008-09. My great thanks goes to Peter Murphy and Patricia Ranald for their kindness in accommodating me in their house whenever I passed by Sydney. My final salute goes to Brian Manning, militant comrade and veteran of Radio Maubere; my nephew Guido Valadares and his family, in Darwin for their hospitality; and my friends from the Peace and Conflict Studies Centre and the Community Development Department of the Faculty of Social and Political Science of the Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa’e (UNTL), for their support and solidarity.
ABSTRACT

The Timor-Leste independence movement sustained a twenty-four year struggle against a genocidal occupation by the Indonesian military dictatorship, from the Indonesian invasion in December 1975 until the UN-supervised vote for independence in August 1999. This thesis argues that the capacity to resist was built through mass popular education work led by the first independence party, FRETILIN, both prior to the invasion and in FRETILIN-controlled Resistance Bases where the majority of people lived for the first three years of the occupation, from 1976-1978.

This popular education work was initiated by a small number of educated leaders who had formed two groups during the last years of Portuguese colonialism, the Informal Anti-colonial Discussion Group of Nicolau Lobato in Dili, and the Casa dos Timores university students in Lisbon. These early leaders adapted the popular education philosophy and methods of Amilcar Cabral, Paulo Freire and Mao Tse Tung to the language and cultural reality of Timor-Leste, to develop their own Pedagogy of the Maubere Revolution, whose twin goals were the liberation of the land and the liberation of the people. When the two groups came together to form FRETILIN in Dili in September 1974, they organised a campaign of ‘base work’ in the rural areas, working through a student organisation, UNETIM to undertake a literacy campaign employing Freirian-style themes to conscientise the population about independence. As the Indonesians began their incursions, the student organisation became the base for new popular mass organisations of women (OPMT), of youth (OPJT), and of workers (OPTT).

In the Resistance Bases, FRETILIN developed a new popular democratic one-party state, the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste (RDTL 1), proclaimed just days before the invasion, with its own organs of popular power, including an armed force, FALINTIL and its auxiliaries, popular schools and health services, systems of food production and popular justice. When the Bases fell in December 1978, RDTL1 was re-organised as a clandestine nationalist movement in the Indonesian-occupied territories, led by the people who had learned through the revolutionary pedagogy and practice in the mountains. Finally, when the majority of the population voted in...
favour of independence in a UN-supervised ballot in August 1999, radical student resistance organisations continued the work of mobilisation and conscientisation in the districts, now under the conditions of a new occupation, by the United Nations and the international community. Today, the challenge for FRETILIN and the social movements is to find ways to adapt this historic revolutionary pedagogy to conditions of a modern multi-party democratic state.

This thesis is the first insider account of the period from the perspective of popular education. It draws on the personal experiences of the author, who lived in the Resistance Bases as a child, and became a leader of the student movement in the 1990s. The evidence collected includes testimonies and recollections of over seventy people, the majority of whom worked at middle and lower levels of the Resistance in the Bases and in the rural areas in the years following. This evidence has been supplemented with extensive original documents retrieved from archives in Portugal, Timor-Leste and Australia.
Candidate’s Certification

I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree or qualification.

I certify that any help received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this thesis.

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Signature
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACFOA</td>
<td>Australian Coalition for Overseas Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AETA</td>
<td>Australia East Timor Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIDG</td>
<td>Anti-Colonial Informal Discussion Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>Australian Labor Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMP</td>
<td>Aliança de Maioria Parlamentar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APCET</td>
<td>Asia Pacific Coalition for East Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APODETI</td>
<td>Associacão Popular Democrática de Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APSOC</td>
<td>Asia Pacific Solidarity Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of South East Asian Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASDT</td>
<td>Association of Social Democrats of Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AST</td>
<td>Association of Socialist Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT</td>
<td>Alternative Trade of Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAC</td>
<td>Boletim Anti-Colonial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAKIN</td>
<td>Badan Koordinasi Intelijen Negara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTLF</td>
<td>Buka Tuir Liman Fatin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAA</td>
<td>Community Aid Abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAF</td>
<td>Comité de Acção da FRETILIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAVR</td>
<td>Comissão de Acolhimento, Verdade e Reconcilição</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCF</td>
<td>Central Committee of FRETILIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCO</td>
<td>Cooperative Caffee Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCO</td>
<td>Cooperative Caffee Organic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>The Chinese Communist Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDF</td>
<td>Comité Directiva da FRETILIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDPM</td>
<td>Centro da Defesa do Direito do Povo Maubere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIDAC</td>
<td>Centro de Informação e Desenvolvimento Amilcra Cabral</td>
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</table>
CEFORPOL - Centro de Formação Político
CDR - Conselho Democrático Revolucionário
CIA - Central Intelligence Agency
CIDA-C - Centro de Informação e Documentação Anti-Colonial
CIDAC - Centro de Informação e Documentação Amilcar Cabral
CIDA-C - Centro de Informação e Documentação Anti-Colonial
CIET - Campaign for Independent East Timor
CIPM - Centro de Instrução político-militar
CNRM - Conselho Nacional da Resistência Maubere
CNRT - Conselho Nacional da Resistência Timorense
CNRT - Conselho Nacional da Reconstrução de Timor
COCAE - Comissão Organizadora e Controla dos Assuntos de Economia
COMSEC - Commando Sector
COPCON - Comando Operational do Continente
CPA - The Communist Party of Australia
CP-FORPOLA - Centro para Planamento, Formação Política e Liderança Alternativa
CPS - Comissariado Político do Sector
CRRN - Conselho Revolucionário da Resistência Nacional
DFSE - Delegação da FRETILIN em Serviço no Exterior
DOPI - Department de Orientação Política e Ideologica
DK - Delegado Komissariadu
DSMPPTL - Dewan Solidaritas Mahasiswa Pemuda dan Pelajar Timor-Lorosae
DSMTT - Dewan Solidaritas Mahasiswa Timor-Timur
ERPOLEKS - Ermera/Potete/Lequisi
ETADEP - The East Timor Agricultural Development
ETNA - East Timor News Agency
ETRC - The East Timor Red Cross
ETSSC - East Timor Students’ Solidarity Council
ETTU - East Timor Teachers’ Union
FAB - Forças de Armas Brancas - the White Force army
FALINTIL - Forças Amadas de Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste
FARP - Forças Armadas de Revolução Popular
F-FDTL - FALINTIL-Forcas de Defsa de Timor-Leste
FOKUPERS - Forum Komunikasi Perempuan
FORSAREPTIL - Forum Sarjana Pro-Referendum dan Pembangunan Timor-Lorosae
FRETILIN - Frente Revolucionária de Timor-Leste Independente
FRELIMO - Frente Revolucionária da Libertação Moçambicana
FULINTIDI - Frente Unida de Libertação Nacional de Timor Dili
GCRE - Grupo Coordenador para a Reformulação do Ensino em Timor
GERIPOTA - Guerilla Political Military
GFFTL - Grupu Feto Foinsae Timor-Lorosae
HANSIP - Pertahanan Sipil
HASATIL - Haburas Agrikultura Sustentavel Timor-Leste
HPP-MAI - Himpunan Pemuda Pelajar Mahasiswa Anti-Integrasi
ICRC - the International Red Cross Committee
IDP - Internally Displaced People
IFET - International Federation for East Timor
IID - International Initiative for Dialogue
ISFIT - International Students Festival in Throndheim
IWDA - International Women’s Development Agency
JPM - Jornal do Povo Maubere
KJHR - Klíbur Juventude Haburas Rai
KOHA - Kooperativa Haburas Komunidade
KOTA - Klibur Oan Timor Aswain
KSI - Kdadalak Sulimutuk Institute
LENAT - Liga de Estudantes Nacionalistas de Timor
MAC - Movimento Anti-Colonial
MFA - Movimento das Forças Armadas
MIPLIN - Milícia Popular da Libertação Nacional
MPAC - Movimento Popular Anti-Colonial
MPLA - Movimento Popular da Libertação Angolana
MRA - Movimento de Reforma Agrária
MRPP - Movimento Reorganizativo do Partido Proletariado
MST - Movimento Sem Terra
MLSTP - Movimento da Libertação de São Tome e Príncipe
CMLK - the Centre for Martin Luther King
NCBA - National Business Cooperative of America
NFSA - the National Film and Sound Archive
NGO - Non-Governmental Organization
ODM - Organização das Massas
OJETIL - Organização da Juventude Estudantil de Timor-Leste
OPJLATIL - Organização Popular da Juventude Loriku Aswain de Timor-Leste
OSIS - Organization of Students Intra-School
OSKTL - Organizasaun Klosan Solidariedade Timor-Lorosae
OISCA - Organization for International Spiritual and Cultural Advancement
OJECTIL - Organização Juventude e Estudantil de Timor-Leste
OPJT - Organização Popular da Juventude Timorense
OPMT - Organização Popular das Mulheres de Timor
OPS - Organização Popular da Segurança

OPTT - Organização Popular dos Trabalhadores de Timor

PAIGC - Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné-Bissau e Cabo Verde

PASMAR XI - Pasukan Mariner X

PIDE-DGS - Policia Internacional para a Defesa do Estado-Direção Geral de Segurança

PNTL - Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste/East Timor National Police

PKI - Partai Komunis Indonesia

PSRI - Popular Socialist Research Institute

PSD - Partido Social Democrata

PML-F - Partido Marxista-Leninista-FRETILIN

RATIH - Rakyat Terlatih

RDTL - República Democrática de Timor-Leste

RENAL - Rehabilitação Nacional

RP - Responsible Principal

ROB - Resistência Organizada de Base

RPAC - Resistência Popular Anti-Colonial

RPKD - Regimen Para Komando

RPKAD - Regime Para Komando Angkatan Darat

SALC - Southern African Liberation Centre

SAPT - Sociedade Agrícola, Pátria e Trabalho

SECAE - Secção de Controlo de Assuntos de Economia

SGL - Sociedade Geográfica de Lisboa

SMKTA - Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan Tingkat Atas

SSB - Single Side Band Radio

TLRC - Timor-Leste Red Cross

TVTL - Televisaun Timor-Leste
UDT - União Democrática Timorense
UNAER - Union of Agriculture of Ermera
UNAEPTIM - União Nacional dos Agentes do Ensino Primário de Timor
UNDP - United Nations Development Program
UNE - University of New England
UNESCO - The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNMET - The United Nations Mission in East Timor
UNETIM - União Nacional de Estudantes de Timor
UPI - The Unilateral Proclamation of Independence
UNTAET - United Nations Transitional Administration of East Timor
UNTIM - Universitas Timor-Timur
UNTL - Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa’e (UNRTL)
URT - Uni Republica Timor-Dilly
USET - University Students For East Timor
USSR - The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WTO - World Trade Organization