How Africa Liberated Portugal

presented by
Mustafah Dhada

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Love Library, Room 430
SDSU

On 25 April 1974, Portugal’s fascist regime fell—and with it five hundred years of colonial rule in Africa. Portugal’s armed forces were hailed as liberators. Luso-Africa therefore was a passive recipient of Lisbon’s newly gained liberty. This narrative has now become the prevailing orthodoxy in the field. Is this how Portugal shed its fascist skin? Using culture of evidence ignored in the field, this text argues for the central role that Africa played both through and outside the armed forces movements in delivering in utter silence Portugal’s freedom. The paper concludes, had it not been for the intellectual contribution of the Luso- African leadership and their successful diplomacy to out Lisbon’s conduct of war in the Western press, Lisbon’s fate under Caetano would have been far less decisive or clear.

Mustafah Dhada, FRAS, FRSA, DPhil (Oxon)

Mustafah Dhada, author of Warriors At Work: How Guinea Was Really Set Free (Niwot: University of Colorado Press, 1993) was born in Mozambique and attended the University of Sussex as an undergraduate. He graduated from Oxford, St. Catherine’s College. He teaches African and Middle Eastern history at California State University, Bakersfield campus, and is Associate Researcher at Coimbra University, Portugal. He has recently finished a landmark study on The Portuguese Massacre of Wiriyamu in Colonial Mozambique published by Bloomsbury Academic, which is also forthcoming in Portuguese by Tinta-da-china. The text is being considered for a feature film adaptation.