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Cape Verdean Oral History Project: Interview with Salahudine Matteos by Alberto Torres Pereira

Salahudine Matteos

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CAPE VERDEAN ORAL HISTORY

Tape # 11

May 3, 1973

Salahudine Matteos

Pyramids Press

Duxbury, Massachusetts

Alberto Torres Pereira, Interviewer

000- opening and introduction

005- perspective on political, cultural, economic problems in
Guinea, Cape Verde, Angola, and Mozambique

parents - Brava and Fogo. Raised by grandmother; feeling of
Cape Verdean cultural heritage strong in his makeup due to
his grandmother Caroline da Rosa, husband, Aurelio
father - Charles B. Mathews, grandfather, Emmanuel Mathews
grandmother, nha julia
knew Criollo before English
grew up in Marion, Mass.; worked picking cranberries, fed goats,
cows, pigs
as child ate jagacida, manioc, churisa, linguisa
grandparents still living - grandfather, 90; grandmother, 86
grandfather was musician

040- age 12, Matteos left Marion, Mass. for Boston
was never accepted as Portuguese, Cape Verdean only; family
physical traits range from white to black
none (Cape Verdeans) wanted to be "nigro"
1948- to Boston, living with "negroes" - black brothers and
sisters
hates to use terms "black" and "white"

066- problem seen not just as color but as one of oppressors
against the oppressed (interviewer and guest discuss J. Hope
Franklin and DuBois... "color line greatest problem of 20th
century.")

086- Cape Verdean product of all ethnic groups - Africans, Europeans,
Asians. Contradictions: that only Africans were enslaved, so-
called Cape Verdeans were products of Portuguese slavery.
Dakar - "Legionne de Cabo Verde"

111- Those taken as slaves from mainland to Cape Verde were from Guinea,
Bissau tribes - Balante, Fulanis, etc. Ethnic groups

119- information not written down, but close link with Africa
through history and blood ties (cannot separate Cape Verde
from Africa - "when you say Cape Verde Islands, that is Africa."
Salahudine Matteos

130- lack of knowledge of history of Cape Verde
Amilcar Cabral PAIGC

139- youth wants to be Cape Verdean-African. Elders identify with
Portuguese. Depiction of Africans as savages caused schism
in acceptance of African identity by Black Americans.

161- association with Malcolm X - 1964-
Adam Clayton Powell, Gizenga, Lumumba
United nations working for Arab nations

171- lack of books on Cape Verde Islands laid to Portuguese racism

176- to Africa - 16 mos. PAIGC with Louis Cabral (?)
Joe Fernandes, etc. Meneca

182- PAIGC suspicious of Matteos because of his sudden appearance

190- Cabral's origin - Bafata, Guinea; sent to school on Cape Verde
Islands. Cabral petty bourgeois, from family with means to
send to school.
What next in Guinea-Bissau?
from Cabral - independence: negotiation with Portuguese regarding
Cape Verde as well as Guinea. Guinea, Bissau, Cape Verde -
one country. 2/3 of land (Guinea-Bissau) will claim independence.

238- may have to fight on Cape Verde. Difficult, but possible, according
to Amilcar Cabral. Discusses war in Guinea-Bissau.

255- Matteos sees independence in 1974
interviewer quotes population 200,000 Cape Verde; 800,000 Guinea-
Bissau
is Cape Verdean distinct on Guinea-Bissau?

270- assimilation

278- many PAIGC officers were Cape Verdeans
Guinea-Bissau ruled by one governor, Portuguese
Guineans speak Criolle and Portuguese; schooling for Africans

299- struggle in Guinea-Bissau has implication for Angola, Mozambique.
    independence will cause "domino" theory, collapse of Portuguese
    possessions
    West Africa will become large land base area, entrance into South
    and Southeast Africa.
    Independent powers (excluding Portugal)

334- illiteracy in Portugal, agent of imperialism
    struggle (PAIGC against Portuguese) not racial but economic
    talks of degradation of Cape Verde by Portuguese; poverty of
    Cape Verde Islands.
    Cape Verde could be made economically viable; tourism, desalinization,
    agronomic sciences
Salahudine Matteos

388- American Cape Verdean support needed; independence does not preclude relation with Portugal

401- place in history for Cape Verdeans cites pride in being Cape Verdean-African; all black people may be Africans, but all Africans don't have to be black. Racial prejudice in America.

422- transformation coming; Cape Verdeans to win.

homily close.