

## Les numéros / "Métissages". Conflits épistémologiques, sociaux et culturels aux Amériques et aux Caraïbes

### « Use and Abuse of the Afro-Brazilian in Africa. Miscegenation, heritage and the politics of authenticity in Cape Verde »

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#### Résumé

Je me concentre dans ce texte sur le transit d'idées du Brésil vers le Cap-Vert ? celles-ci sont bien souvent prédominantes, bien que le Brésil ne soit pas l'unique pays qui soit pris pour source d'inspiration au Cap-Vert. Ce flux est facilité par le fait qu'une intense relation entre cultures et artefacts créés au Brésil et leurs équivalents produits au Cap-Vert aient existé durant des siècles. Ces dernières années, deux phénomènes reliés entre eux ayant eu un impact important ont croisé l'Atlantique : le processus de préservation de la culture matérielle et intangible en tant que patrimoine, et la spectacularisation et la re-sémantisation qui a transformé le « noir » en « Afro ». Il s'agit de deux phénomènes qui ouvrent de nouvelles possibilités, mais qui génèrent aussi de nouvelles contradictions dans le cas du Cap-Vert. Les cultures créoles et les nations métisses coexistent dans un état de tension constante, avec les processus de patrimonialisation promus par l'UNESCO.

#### Abstract

In this text I concentrate on the traffic of ideas from Brazil to Cape Verde ? which are very often predominant, although it is definitely not the only country that in Cape Verde is taken as a source of inspiration. This flow is facilitated by the fact that intense relations between cultures and artefacts created in Brazil and the equivalents created or conceived in Cape Verde have existed for centuries. Over the last few years, two new and interconnected phenomena have also been crossing the Atlantic with significant impacts : the process of conserving tangible and intangible culture as heritage, and the spectacularization and new semantics that have transformed 'black' into 'Afro'. Both are phenomena that open up fresh possibilities, but also generate new contradictions in the case of Cape Verde. Creole culture of so-called *mestizo* nations live in a state of tension with the processes of patrimonialization of culture stimulated by Unesco.

#### Resumo

Neste texto me concentro no transito das ideias do Brasil para Cabo Verde ? estas são muitas vezes predominantes, embora o Brasil não seja o único país que em Cabo Verde é tomado como fonte de inspiração. Este fluxo é facilitado pelo fato de uma intensa relação entre culturas e artefatos criados no Brasil e os equivalentes produzidos em Cabo Verde ter existido durante séculos. Nos últimos anos dois fenômenos interligados entre si tem cruzado o Atlântico tendo um impacto significativo: o processo de preservação da cultura material e intangível enquanto patrimônio, e a espetacularização e a re-semantização que tem transformado o 'negro' no 'Afro'. Ambos são fenômenos que abrem novas possibilidades, mas também geram novas contradições no caso de Cabo Verde. Culturas crioulas e nações mestiças coexistem em estado de constante tensão com os processos de patrimonialização da cultura promovidos pela Unesco.

In several countries miscegenation is a popular topic both among intellectuals and in popular culture. This is also the case of a number of countries where I have had the opportunity to carry out research ? Brazil,

Cape Verde, Surinam, the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua, South Africa and Guinea Bissau. In the history and in the present of these countries miscegenation is presented as a problem or a solution and, again, as a problem (1). Miscegenation (or *métissage*), once announced or spoken of, always comes to represent a political subject, whether positive or negative, as it can never be a neutral issue. Miscegenation has been historically part and parcel of the narratives around nation building of each and any country in Latin America. However, the interrelation between nation and miscegenation is not exclusively or predominantly a phenomenon that only takes place South of the Rio Grande. So, for example, in recent times narratives about the positivity of miscegenation were developed in various countries of the Tricontinental, such as Indonesia and Yugoslavia, as a key part of the process to create a new nation with a new people of its own. Certain countries even developed special policies for the creation of a new (mixed) population ? even though such policies were often perceived as intrusive by the natives, such as in Iran Iaya, Uganda and even Surinam. In Iran Yaya, the original Bornean population felt they were ?Javanized? through the subsidized immigration from overpopulated Java and felt that the Creole language Bahasa Indonesia had been imposed on them. In Surinam, the Hindustani leadership often resented the policy for the creation of ?one pipel?, which would have increased the number of *dogla* (the mestizo of Creole and Hindustani), and the transformation of the Creole language once called Neger Engels (?the negro's English?) into the new national language Sranan Tongo (the language of Surinam) then giving an almost equal status to the official language, Dutch. It is important to single out in which cases miscegenation, understood in the most limited sense of the word such as the creation of new peoples (like ?One Pipel?), or the smoldering of several peoples into one single people, is constructed as a proper and modern ethno-genetic project or, on the contrary, is seen as the result of a long historical process (2).

In the present text (3), I focus on the *mestizo*, miscegenation, syncretism and creolization as resulting from the colonial encounter ever since the Great Discoveries ; an encounter that developed together with a great process of classification of folks, cultures and also phenotypes. In other words, the *mestizo* is always a political project. The same thing can be said of the term creolization that has become fashionable in the social sciences as, in fact, it took the place of the term syncretism from the 1990's and in several contexts. However, in four of the countries mentioned before ? Surinam, Nicaragua, Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde ? the term Creole has been in use from the mid XIX century. In these four countries the term Creole is equivalent to the *mestizo* resulting from the encounter of the African with the European, and it also refers to a language that was born out of this encounter and has the same origins. In the case of Cape Verde I would say that speaking *Crioulo* is that which most distinguishes the Cape Verdean from other peoples, whether they are continental Africans or Westerners. Being a *Crioulo* often has a more positive connotation than other terms such as *mulato*, mixed or *misturado*. *Creolidade* distinguishes itself from syncretism, which is a process that implies a constant change, because of the fact that the former tends not to be considered a process, but, rather, a finished product ? something developed in the past that has come to certain fixation at some point in history ? so to speak, *Creolidade* is the final stage of syncretism. Cape Verde considers itself a country where creolization already occurred and that created a Creole language that is nowadays a language like any other one (with a degree of stability and with a set of fixed rules).

Such complexity cries for a new research agenda about miscegenation ? and related terms such as creolization ? that investigates when, how, why and by whom it is celebrated or repelled, and who is speaking of what ? it seems to me important to detect how those defined as *mestizo* talk about miscegenation and whether such categories are used in the same fashion from within and from without. The case of Cape Verde, an Atlantic nation two hundred miles off the West African coast that sees itself as *mestiza* and *crioula*, is especially interesting for a research focusing not only on the history of miscegenation, but also in what could be its future (4).

Like all the continents, Africa is an entity whose frontiers and geography are as physical as they are political, romantic and moral ? a continent, we could say, both porous and in flux. This is even more notable on the borders of Africa, those parts whose Africanity is frequently contested, whether in popular culture or in the accounts produced by academics ? both by being groups congenitally ?foreigner? to the African continent, because insufficiently native, black or autochthonous, and by being on the geographic margins of Africa, scattered across the Atlantic or Indian Oceans (Mbembe, 2001). Seen from these margins, it becomes evident that the continent of Africa can be understood and narrated from inside out, but also from outside in. Indeed if we consider the narratives of the last two centuries on the meanings of Africa and being African that have had the most impact in the West, both on racial and racist thought and in the human sciences and anti-racist thought, we can perceive that the vast majority have been constructed from the outside in.

The identificatory projects in Africa itself are not indifferent to these uses and abuses of Africa outside the continent and take place in a tense relationship between centrifugal constructions ? from outside

inwards ? and centripetal constructions ? from inside outwards. The force and fortune of each of these constructions is codetermined by a series of factors : the geopolitics of knowledge (Mudimbe, 1988 ; Mignolo, 2006) ; power and hierarchies in the global flows of cultural and identity artefacts circulated not only by the market but also by museums, libraries, archives, foundations, and so on ; the population flows associated with tourism, migration and diasporas ; and finally, the (new) communication technologies.

Many of these external gazes and narratives on Africa and Africanity are produced in the Southern part of the region that Paul Gilroy (2002) has called the Black Atlantic and others prefer to call the Diaspora. Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa always had a specific and relatively intense relation in terms of cultural flows, ever since they were constructed as cultural-political regions by the first wave of modernity. These regions maintained a South-South relation between themselves that considerably predated the relation labelled under the notion of the Global South, which became established in the human sciences in the 2000's. This flow was especially evident in music, sport and literature <sup>(5)</sup>. Musical styles and genres, creeds and languages, though initially introduced as a result of the colonizing process on both sides of the Atlantic, soon became configured too as opportunities and transnational channels for expressing ?other? feelings of emancipation and liberation. Far from there always being a dictatorship of meanings and the cultural hegemony of the North in the Global South, as we know it today, sometimes the meaning of things can be subverted in various forms, fostering a ?culture war,? a fight for the control over meanings, between different projects for using and exploiting culture.

In the case of Cape Verde, we can even speak of an established tradition in terms of the accumulation of external gazes and centripetal solutions ? searching for ?outside? solutions to ?inside? problems. In this text I concentrate on the traffic of ideas with Brazil ? which are very often predominant, although it is definitely not the only country taken as a source of inspiration. This flow is facilitated by the fact that intense relations between cultures and artefacts created in Brazil and the equivalents created or conceived in Cape Verde have existed for centuries (Lobban, 1995). Here I am thinking above all of the adaptation of cattle and plants, the education of slaves and their acculturation, the culture and jargon of the sailors, the use of tools and techniques (primordially, the mill, pier and alembic still) ; the saints, devotions and Catholic brotherhoods ; musical styles and genres, both ancient (*lundu*) and new (samba, *bossa nova*, *tropicália* ? we can recall that Cesária Évora's Brazilian tour was supported by Caetano Veloso ? and the *tecno-brega* (techno-kitsch) style, whose leading example over recent years has been the popularity in Cape Verde of Calypso, a band originally from Belém in Pará state, Brazil) <sup>(6)</sup>.

Today CDs by the singers Sara Tavares and Lura circulate among Brazilian intellectuals and it is almost impossible to surprise fellow Cape Verdean researchers with a CD of Brazilian music that is completely unknown to them. Brazilian literary styles and genres and their aesthetics (for example, the aesthetic of poverty) have influenced Cape Verdean literature for some time (Hernandez, 2002). Soap operas have transmitted images of beauty and consumption, or, more recently, the imagery surrounding new identities : black, female, homosexual. Brazilian Pentecostal churches, led by the UCKG (Universal Church of the Kingdom of God), have communicated a new modern religiosity, though presenting themselves as anti-modern in some aspects (Furtado & Laurent, 2008).

Over the last few years, two new and interconnected phenomena have also been crossing the Atlantic with significant impacts : the process of conserving tangible and intangible culture as heritage, and the spectacularization and new semantics that have transformed ?black? into ?Afro.? Both are phenomena that open up fresh possibilities, but also generate new contradictions in the case of Cape Verde.

The first is a global phenomenon : ?cultural diversity? has begun to be worshipped, which sometimes results in multicultural measures in education and even in State practice. In Brazil this phenomenon took a distinct course after 2002. Essential elements in this process were the introduction and gradual implementation of Federal Law 10369, which in the years corresponding with the Lula and Dilma Rousseff? governments (2002-2016) made the subject ?Afro-Brazilian and African Culture and History? compulsory at all levels of education (Sansone 2007), and a series of measures and postures designed to promote cultural diversity, conceived as part of the new value attributed to popular culture, undertaken during the office of Gilberto Gil as minister and promoted by various missions of the Palmares Foundation of the Brazilian Ministry of Culture in Cape Verde.

Towards this end, following the guidelines dictated by UNESCO and reinterpreted by the ministries of Culture and heritage conservation bodies, each culture seeking public support must possess items, places, habits and artefacts that are clearly identifiable, distinguishable, original, authentic, unique and, whenever possible, that can be turned into visible displays of culture. If Cape Verde ? a country that is identified

with and values its hybrid and creole character ? wishes to possess ?evidently? singular and unique cultural items, it may have difficulty in obtaining a high rating in terms of cultural diversity. Here I can recall another creole nation with a similar contradictory process of celebrating the ethno-cultural mixture of the people and the attempt to affirm the country as a ?different? nation : Surinam, which became independent in 1975 ? a date very close to Cape Verde?s independence (see Sansone, 2010a).

The second phenomenon is associated with the first and its creation of a new space for valuing cultural diversity. However it is more of a Brazilian phenomenon, or perhaps proper to the Latin America world ? a process related to the slow and contradictory transformation of the condition of being black, as well as the transforming of certain icons of slavery, once hidden, from onus into bonus, at least in some contexts. I refer to the access to higher education and the collective ownership of land. This is, relatively speaking, a more linear process ? one under way since the 1970s ? than the transformation of ?Africa? from a negative to positive icon, having begun with Pan-Africanist ideas and been reinforced during decolonization and the period that immediately followed. Here I argue that this new semantics of the ?Africa? icon in the Afro-Latin world has also affected Africa itself, including, especially, its most westerly margin, Cape Verde.

There is, moreover, something specific to the Cape Verdean context. Each narrative on the meaning of modernity and progress corresponds to particular local narratives about Africa, Africans and Africanity (Fernandes, 2006). Distances and geographic reference points change in the process, moving Cape Verde nearer to or further away from the African Coast (Sansone, 2010a). Consequently, depending on the type of political-cultural proximity being stressed, Cape Verde can, so to speak, move on the geographical maps, moving closer to Brazil, the African Coast or the region called Macaronesia ? the oceanic Madeira, Azores and Canary Islands, the furthest projection of the European continent into the Atlantic.

Below I present two concrete cases of uses (and abuses) of Brazil in Cape Verde. More specifically I aim to show how icons and attributes of ?Afro-Brazilian cultural heritage? can be exploited within a context of cultural activism and the endeavour to affirm some kind of singularity to Cape Verdean culture, based on the recognition of the country?s central role in the black Transatlantic diaspora. This involves the attempt to dramatize and spectacularize the notion of a World Heritage Site and its potential public benefits in the case of Cidade Velha, on Santiago Island, and the use of capoeira as ?anti-marginality therapy? for young people in the city of Mindelo on São Vicente Island.

The example of Cidade Velha, previously Ribeira Grande, is a complex case of ?top-down? conservationism undertaken at the wishes of agents outside the local resident community <sup>(7)</sup>. Once the capital of the colony, prior to its transference to the city of Praia in the mid-seventeenth century, easier to defend from the endless pirate raids, Ribeira Grande was also the headquarters of the Archdiocese and, very probably, the first city built and reinforced in support of the Transatlantic slave trade. Virtually abandoned, its function reduced to a place for growing sugarcane and producing rum, enabled by its relative abundance of water, the city was ?rediscovered? at the end of Cape Verde?s colonial period as part of an attempt to celebrate and trace the roots of the Portuguese presence in the Atlantic and Africa. A second ?rediscovery? would take place in the years after independence when the new State began to rewrite its history not only in books <sup>(8)</sup>, but also in monuments and in the identification of new sites of memory and a series of cultural elements now identified as part of the cultural heritage of the new homeland.

The third ?rediscovery? of Cidade Velha took place around ten years ago when, under the centre-right government of the MPD (*Movimento para a Democracia*) and then, more emphatically, the second government of the PAICV (*Partido Africano de Independência de Cabo Verde*), the process began that eventually led to the city?s recognition by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 2009 <sup>(9)</sup>. We are faced, then, with a context in which ?outside? agents are always involved in the process of ?rediscovery? and subsequent valorization : in the first rediscovery, the experts were from Portugal ; in the second, primarily Spanish ; and in the third, foreign and Cape Verdean experts, subject, though, to the new and more severe limits and guidelines imposed by UNESCO.

As shown in the research by Flávia Marques dos Santos (2009 : 25-74), this strong presence of outside agents is a double-edged sword : it confers authority to the intervention project, but increases the sense of alienation and a lack of control over the space among the local population, who, in many cases, do not see what possible benefit can be brought by, for example, the new and severe limits on the traditional freedom to build dwellings and set up businesses. The reporting on the UNESCO decision was made in emphatic language : a major event would take place in the nation?s history.

*UNESCO's decision to declare Cidade Velha a World Heritage Site will allow the development of the first settlement to have been founded on the island of Santiago, Cape Verde.*

*Cape Verde for the first time has a city declared as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. In Cidade Velha, or Ribeira Grande de Santiago, there has been a party atmosphere since the announcement was made in Seville, Spain (10).*

### *Cidade Velha ? The birthplace of our nationality*

*Cidade Velha is the birthplace of Cape Verdeanity. It is also the toponym of what was formerly the City of Ribeira Grande, for several centuries the capital of the archipelago of Cape Verde. It was the first city to belong to the Portuguese in Africa during their era of adventure and discoveries. Hence it is an unavoidable landmark in the history of the Cape Verde islands. Just a few ruins remain hunched sadly over the eternal blue sea of the archipelago, sleeping under the weight of the years...*



**Fig. 1** ? In Cidade Velha the ?Creole Man? was born. It was the meeting point of the first Europeans and black people from the coast of Africa, brought to populate these islands (11).

One of the requirements for a World Heritage Site to be able to retain this title over the long term is for the authorities managing the site to be able to demonstrate ? in various forms and to various types of public ? that it possesses something different, unique, non-reproducible and valuable that needs to be preserved and valued.

During my last visit in May 2014, the site comprised the following : a set of houses, arranged in two streets running from the seafront to the top of the river valley, a few churches, two of them fully restored and one used for small symposia and meetings (especially on topics such as heritage and national identity), a central square (the bus stop), where the ancient Pelourinho is located, facing the beach (where it is difficult to bathe because of the numerous rocks), a few gardens, a few small sugarcane plantations with traditional stills for making sugarcane rum (*grogue*), a perennial water source (something unique in this part of Santiago Island), the well-preserved ruins of the old cathedral, a centre for accommodating visitors with a number of rooms (built in stone in the ?ancient? style), about five restaurants (with prices beyond the reach of local residents), a few places selling tourist items (12), some NGO offices and, finally, the tourist welcome centre, run by a Spanish company that won the tender from the Ministry of Culture for exploiting Cidade Velha's tourist potential and valorizing its history and culture, with responsibility for training local people in the new professions that tourism would bring.

Above the river is located the old castle, built during the sixteenth century following an Italian design and recently restored. It is the region's most attractive landmark and probably receives the most visitors. The city lacks guesthouses or a ?homestay? program that could help redistribute income. I stayed at the only hostel that exists, a place with just two rooms, run by an elderly couple who returned to their country of origin ? after the experience of migrating first to Dakar and then to France ? and invested their savings in

the initiative. The welcome centre with the attached guesthouse mentioned above is more expensive and little used. Better visited is the welcome centre at the fortress where tourists all receive information about Cidade Velha and some notion of Cape Verde's history, frequently accompanied by the screening of a documentary film.

It is a tranquil and green vale, set in an arid region, a beautiful place to relax. But is it what the tourist wants? The tourists cited in the official documents of the Cape Verde government and UNESCO refer, almost by definition in this case, to international travellers, tending to be European or North American. Though few studies exist on the profile of these visitors and what they would like to see and consume on Santiago Island <sup>(13)</sup>, the general impression is that Cidade Velha, as it is now, offers little to them: there is little that can be transformed into a show for the type of international tourists that visit Cape Verde. What attracts an anthropologist such as myself? the combination of peace, *grogue*, sea and freshly grilled fish? does not seem to match whatever interests these travellers, as ideal-typical as they are unknown. The few who arrive along the new expressway that takes 30 minutes from Praia to Cidade Velha spend on average two hours visiting the fort, the Largo do Pelourinho and the restored churches. Spending more time, but consuming few goods and seldom visiting local restaurants, are the numerous school visits during the week and the Sunday picnics, very often organized by neighbourhood or village associations.

Compared to other places on the West African Coast, already glamourized by visits from the pope and presidents, that occupy a central place in the official narrative of the post-colonial nation, such as the Île de Gorée, in Senegal, and the slave forts on the coast of Ghana (Thiaw, 2009), Cidade Velha has yet to become part of a circuit of the so-called ethnic tourism <sup>(14)</sup>. What is displayed as different is very similar to what is found in other parts of Cape Verde, or simply does not match the idea of an exotic holiday desired by the large majority of tourists who visit or do? Cape Verde. Moreover the resorts are located outside the city, albeit just a few kilometres away, and nobody or almost nobody stays in Cidade Velha itself. From 2008 to the present (2012), a Spanish company has been responsible for commercially exploiting the welcome offered to the tourists, a fact that only increases the degree of alienation and the discourses on a magical economy of tourism, which supposedly generates (huge) profits, but only for foreigners. In an attempt to change this scenario and cultivate interest in this birthplace of Cape Verdeanity, diverse associations, along with the Cidade Velha Municipal Council and in some cases the Ministry of Culture, promote a variety of culturally dynamizing activities. These include fairs with typical produce, symposia on topics related to the issues of heritage and culture, and music festivals (sometimes with dancing).

All this appears too little different? for the Western tourist. To complicate matters, the declaration of Cidade Velha as a World Heritage Site in 2009 imposed severe limits on building work, stirring resentment in some cases, as well as making a series of preservation and education activities obligatory <sup>(15)</sup>. The project's long-term sustainability continues to be, in my view, an enigma. From where will the tourists come, given that most of the international tourism in Cape Verde is resort-based, concentrated on the islands of Sal and Boa Vista? The idea that national microtourism might have potential seems to occur to almost no one. Although this actually accounts for the bulk of actual tourism, local leaders prefer to dream of an imaginary tourism, usually international and five stars, rather than work to stimulate domestic tourism or mass visits (see Amar, 2008).



**Fig. 2** (© Livio Sansone, 2009) ?A fair of typical local produce shown in wicker baskets or wooden crates, placed on tables decorated with colourful cloths and coconut palm straw or banana leaves : various preserves, sweets and jams ? already made for sale to tourists in pots ; the local sugarcane rum ? sold pure or mixed with fruit juice as *ponche* ; CDs and DVDs of Cape Verdean music ; agricultural produce *di terra* (sugar cane, seasonal fruits), homemade sausages, some kinds of craftwork <sup>(16)</sup>. (Extract from field notebook, February 2009).



**Fig. 3** (© Livio Sansone, 2009) ? At a book launch in January 2009, a volume describing the memories of Amílcar Cabral in present-day Cape Verde, attended by around 100 people and held in the restored atrium of the church. This was generally used for symposia, where, during intervals, a dish of typical Cape Verdean food would be served, along with sugarcane rum and white wine from Fogo Island. The sound system would play ?old-style? Cape Verdean songs. Around twenty young men and women aged between 18 and 25 serve the food to the symposium members. They dress in clothes presented as typical of

Santiago Island, walking barefoot or wearing leather espadrilles. They speak little, even among themselves. They seem accustomed to this exhibition of traditional culture, which they perform elegantly. (Extract from field notebook, February 2009.)

Something more striking was judged to be needed ? and here the local leaders conceived of Cidade Velha as a World Heritage Site ? to obtain a growth of interest in this region through an external ?input.? We can turn to two examples of such an attempt : one begun in the United States and reinterpreted on the island, the other inspired by Afro-Brazilian culture. The first initiative, which had a huge repercussion in Cape Verde, involved the *Freedom Schooner Amistad*. What happened when this ship arrived, invited to dramatize the moment surrounding UNESCO's recognition of Cidade Velha ? This is what the website [www.panapress.com](http://www.panapress.com) had to say on January 31<sup>st</sup> 2008 :

### *Business leaders support visit of slave ship replica to Cape Verde*

*Praia ? Cape Verde (PANA). The group of American business leaders of Cape Verdean descent belonging to the Capeverdean American Business Organization (CABO) will finance the journey of the replica of the slave ship Amistad to Cape Verde, due to arrive in the archipelago's waters between the 27<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of February this year.*

*This group, composed of around 20 business leaders who have been visiting Cape Verde over the past week, met this Wednesday, in Praia, with the Cape Verdean Minister of Culture, Manuel Veiga, who they informed of this decision to help pay for the expenses involved in the journey to Cape Verde of the replica of the ship apprehended on August 26<sup>th</sup> 1839 in United States waters with a group of insurgent slaves on board.*

*The replica of La Amistad will undertake a 16-month voyage that will take it to countries in Europe, Africa and the Caribbean before returning to the east coast of the United States, a scientific reconstruction of the historical slave triangle that existed until the nineteenth century.*

*The stopover in Cape Verde will take place after the ship has sailed from Sierra Leone and called at the Senegalese Île de Gorée, recognizing the historical importance of this island in the Transatlantic slave trade.*

*In recent statements to the Voice of America (VOA) radio station, Clifton Graves Junior, vice-president of the Amistad Americas' Atlantic Freedom Tour, the entity organizing the voyage, said that he hopes that the vessel's scientific stopover will give a fresh boost to Cidade Velha's bid to become a World Heritage Site.*

*?As we know, most people know very little about the great historical legacy of Cape Verde, a fact that has led to a certain depreciation of the archipelago's role in world historiography and in particular in the Transatlantic slave trade. By visiting this port, we hope to be able to contribute to drawing the attention of the world ? and Americans in particular ? to the historical legacy of these islands,? he stated.*

*Conceived as a scientific project, the voyage began with the ship leaving the city of New Haven, in the US State of Connecticut, in June 2007, and plans to visit almost 20 ports that played an important role in the history of the slave trade and that today are also ?responsible? for the political, economic and social legacy of African culture across the world.*

*Aboard the schooner are scientists from the United States who intend to reconstruct the trajectory taken by the slaves who took over control of the Spanish vessel La Amistad in 1839, after it had set sail from Cuba with the slaves taken by Portuguese merchants, who for their part had captured them on the coast of Sierra Leone.*

*Initially the plan had been to stop in Cape Verde merely for technical checks, but thanks to the intervention of groups supporting Cidade Velha's bid to become recognized as a World Heritage Site, the voyage of the replica of the Amistad was adapted.*

*The ship's call at Santiago Island will provide the pretext to hold a program aimed primarily to involve the local population as widely as possible through study visits to the ship, which will result in the exchange of information, research and scientific studies.*

**And the website of the weekly *Expresso da Ilhas* on March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2008 published the following :**

### *The Amistad is already in Cape Verde*

*The replica of the nineteenth-century Spanish slave ship La Amistad is already moored in the port of Praia. It was 10 minutes past 2 in the afternoon when the Amistad docked at the quayside of Praia city, placing Cape Verde on the route of 20 ports that played a significant role in the slave trade. The ship, which will remain in Cape Verde until the 9<sup>th</sup> of March, will receive an official visit at 5 pm from a government delegation headed by the prime minister, José Maria Neves.*

*The crew of the Amistad will have an intense week of visits and meetings with national authorities, the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Culture and other government leaders, with a guided tour of the Island of Santiago already organized for tomorrow, in agreement with the schedule programmed by the committee responsible for the ship's visit.*

*The guided tour of the main points of historical interest in Ribeira Grande de Santiago, now known as Cidade Velha, from where African slaves departed for America, is set for the 7<sup>th</sup> of March.*

*Cape Verde was a space for the 'diasporization' of Africans across the Atlantic, pointed out Charles Akibodé, the scientific director of Cidade Velha's application to become a World Heritage Site, who says that 'the first slaves who left for the Americas left Cidade Velha.' 'We have clear information that the Latinized slaves of Cape Verde were in high demand. For this reason it is a historic moment that will give an extra boost to the arguments contained in Cidade Velha's dossier for its candidacy for World Heritage status,' Charles Akibodé explained. The stopover in Cape Verde forms part of the Amistad's Transatlantic voyage, which brings together international agencies and organizations in the United States, Canada, Europe, West Africa and the Caribbean in recognizing and celebrating the bicentenary of the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade in the British Empire and the United States of America. This eighteen-month voyage 'called a 'Voyage of freedom, cooperation, cultural exchange and celebration' will retrace the slave trade triangle (Africa-Europe-America).*

The operation, which is actually commercial, promises to confer immense benefits on the places, events and people who will be touched by the *Amistad* and its international support network. As part of this endeavour, the legacy of slavery will cease to be a stain or a wound and become something that connects places and events to the modernity of the First World (especially the United States) ; and for Cape Verde, connecting with the United States may lead to a big increase in the flow of tourists, especially the so-called 'ethnic tourists' ? and this should be further boosted by the election of Obama as president. Moreover, Cidade Velha will cease to be a problem (as an emblem of a past to be forgotten and something difficult to preserve in terms of tangible heritage) and become a solution ? a bridge to well-being, whatever its place in the world <sup>(17)</sup>.

*On a sunny day in February 2008, the Amistad weighs anchor in front of Cidade Velha. Two dinghies take the crew to the beach and the many curious locals wanting to visit the ship. The crew is formed by the captain, three sailors, a group of young Americans aged between 20 and 25 years, including a few black members, a retired American couple and two or three young Africans ? one of them being a member of the Sierra Leone military. At around 11 am the politicians arrive, including the Minister of Culture and the President of the Republic. After lunch in the Pelourinho square, close to the beach, a cultural show begins. Speeches are given by national and local politicians, exalting the importance of Cidade Velha's tangible and intangible heritage and celebrating the magnitude of the ship's visit, which will help to divulge to the outside the world the until now internationally little known history of the city. The musical show is formed by a sequence of acts : singer-songwriters, a batuco group and a large Afro dance group ? which begins to dance on the stage before climbing down to the public ? in the square, which is decorated with the market stalls of typical local produce. The dance group is the big novelty, composed by around 30 young people, male and female, aged between 15 and 25. Far from being a style akin to Cape Verdean dances, traditional or less so, like zouk, it heavily recalls the shows performed by Afro dance groups in the squares of Salvador, Bahia. The bare chest of the lads and the girls with bikini tops, straw skirts, bodies painted white (as in the Timbalada Afro block), adornments made from coconut or shells, Afro hair or dreadlocks. (Extract from field notebook, 20/2/2008.)*

This use of (Brazilian) Afro dance and the paraphernalia of the Afro carnival blocks, especially those from Salvador, Bahia, as dynamizing and spectacular elements that can attract attention to a 'traditional' cultural phenomena, is not a complete novelty. It has been perceptible for years in the Mindelo carnival ? for example, in the images available on YouTube of the carnivals from 2009 to 2011 ? where after decades of influence from the Rio de Janeiro carnival and its samba schools, people reinterpret icons of

the Salvador carnival, such as the *trios elétricos* (mobile sound systems) and the Afro blocks and their reinvention of Africa (Sansone, 2004) or the re-Africanization of carnival as a practice (Riserio, 1984). Over the last six or seven years such attempts have also been made in the city of Praia, part of a wider effort to revitalize the street carnival tradition.

As an important agent of change and an organizer of this carnival in Praia city, we can cite a well-known cultural animator : an artist of around 40 who experiments using a variety of resources, especially the performing arts, craftwork (or popular art as he prefers to call it), music and dance. He is a true agent of the two worlds, endowed with an extraordinary creativeness : born in Praia, the son of an important politician, trained in physical education in a university in the South of Brazil, where he lived for various years and met artists, black activists, artisans and intellectuals. He travels frequently throughout the archipelago and internationally, and is, so to speak, Brazilianized, at least in his gestures, the relative informality during our interview and his accent when speaking Portuguese with me. He has Rasta hair and, contradicting the practice of Santiago's elite, he speaks Creole with his son in public. He pays attention to environmental issues and the need for recycling ? aspects present in his choreographies. The latter, indeed, celebrate mixture and invention : Afro dance is combined with the *batuco*, creating new forms ? for example, a group of young men, bare chested and wearing short coconut straw skirts, who dance energetically, though in the traditional *batuco* only the women dance.

Jamal, the pseudonym used in this text for this influential cultural animator, wears African or Afro-Bahian clothing (Afro block-style frocks), also one of the few people to do so in Praia. Indeed, one way of researching the country's complex relation to its place between Africa, America and Europe would be to study the practice and politics of dress in Cape Verde : identifying who wears African clothing, how and when, and what this clothing involves ; or who wears traditional clothing and when, such as, in the case of women, *pano di terra* headscarf and full skirt (on this topic see Lopes Filho 1997). My observation is that so-called traditional clothing is only used in the interior of Santiago Island, or rarely at some celebrations of traditions, such as the rediscovery of the *batuco* or *tabanka*, in Praia ; such clothing is hardly ever used on other islands and may even, as in Mindelo, be a distinctive sign of the *rebidantes* <sup>(18)</sup>, the *badias* women <sup>(19)</sup> ? who travel to the city, especially by ship, to sell various products from door to door, or sometimes in the streets, particularly areas in the centre.

This cultural activist has an elaborate and coherent discourse on creativity, inventiveness and the need to make Cape Verdeans more aware of their cultural roots, in large part African in origin. The argument is that the form through which black people in Brazil have rediscovered with much effort their cultural roots in Africa ? their Africanity and *negritude* ? despite the racism of the whites and the severe difficulties caused by the distance from Africa, can and should be a source of inspiration and a tool of cultural activism in Cape Verde, where many people still deny Africa at all costs. Here we can turn to a few excerpts from a lengthy interview given by Jamal to Portuguese TV in 2009 :

[?] *I am an investigator of the traditional Cape Verdean rhythms. I am interested in the rhythms that I have heard in the street since a child. In Creole people say ?cultura sabi no chon de bo? (the culture is beautiful in your land). [?] A good son always returns home and our musicians travel and become inspired by the musicians of other countries, but at some point they come back to the land. There abroad people search for intercultural values, but here, after Ronaldo Pantera [LS : an unforgettable composer, now deceased], there was no love shown for the musical roots [...] I have an approach that is traditionalist but also universalist. I combine Afro and Afro-Cape-Verdean elements : they have a common ancestral root.*

Santiago Island and, to some extent, the Badius and their culture have been seen as components of Cape Verde's culture and population closest to Africa, or furthest from Portugal, since they traditionally possess artefacts like the *tabanca*, the *batuco*, the *funana*, or the *pano di costa* and the forms in which women dressed themselves made them ?different.? At the extreme opposite, the city of Mindelo, on São Vicente Island, represents the alter ego of Praia in the imaginary of Cape Verdean localism or *bairrismo* (Lopes, 2007). Mindelo is, so to speak, the cultural capital of the *sampajudos*. Since its original settlement, it formed the entry point for European uses, customs and cultures into the archipelago (Correia & Silva, 2000). What characterizes or makes the city ?different? culturally speaking is its impressive carnival. We know that carnival is, almost by definition, a festival that syncretizes, hybridizes, reinvents and mixes with ease ? principally in a fairly intense dialogue with carnivals of other places.

The Mindelo carnival is presented as a cultural expression in dialogue with the Brazilian carnival, originally Rio de Janeiro's and more recently Salvador's too. I am aware of one single, recent publication on the contemporary carnival in Mindelo, the result of master's degree research (Rodrigues, 2011), but no

scientific research on the carnival's history. In fact the information on the latter is divergent. We know that the carnival grew in strength especially after Independence, and that the dialogue between the Mindelo festival and Brazil inspired a famous song by Cesária Evora on the album *Café Atlântico*, "S. Vicente é um Brasilin" (São Vicente is a little Brazil). It is important to stress that the carnival's centrality and its dialogue with Brazil in its representation as the essence of popular culture in Mindelo, an idea present both in the opinions of the city's intellectuals with whom I spoke and in the tourist brochures, creates a context for Africanity and its transformation into spectacle that differs from the city of Praia <sup>(20)</sup>.

We can turn now to the case of the capoeira practiced in Mindelo, which has been documented in the city for at least a decade. For around five years now it has existed in a more structured form, no longer just an occasional dance performance, but a full-fledged capoeira school or academy run from a warehouse in the centre of Mindelo, next to the cultural centre where exhibitions are held and where the best bookshop and one of the cafés favoured by the city's intellectuals are found.

The most important message of the capoeira academy is that on São Vicente, as in Brazil's cities, for poor boys with little to do, there is nothing better than the discipline of a capoeira master. It is a message whose intrinsic strength, along with the undeniable skill and professionalism of the master, has proven successful : though less than the master would wish, the local authorities support the academy. It was by accident and with some surprise that I first found myself in a capoeira school. Hierarchical, disciplined and exciting as these schools tend to be. There, as soon as I arrived, I repeated the same error I had once made in Brazil : sitting by mistake on the master's chair. Immediately, a young follower told me firmly to sit on the much less comfortable wooden bench for visitors. This showed that in Mindelo the master had already gained the respect and discipline canonical in the capoeira academies found in any city of Brazil.

Fred, as I shall refer to the master in this text, is aged around 35, *pardo* (brown-skinned), born and raised in Minas Gerais, and schooled to secondary level. He understands but does not speak Creole. In 2007 he formed an NGO based in Mindelo, rented a historical building (a warehouse in the centre of Mindelo) and promoted his work as a cultural event. He produced a DVD called *Capoeira em Cabo Verde* ? decorated with the flags of Brazil and Cape Verde <sup>(21)</sup>. I interviewed him and later he kindly took me to see various places on São Vicente Island.

*Today working with capoeira in Cape Verde is easy. When I arrived here there were already some lad who had learnt about capoeira in Brazil and wanted to continue here. So, when I arrived, already a master, I had the feeling that in Cape Verde I could be a pioneer [?] (March 2008).*

## Conclusions

As mentioned in the introduction, the fusion of cultures towards the creation of something new and original and its claim to be one of the essential characteristics of "Cape Verdeanity" are processes as old as the history of Cape Verde as a political-cultural entity and later as an independent country. The archipelago's popular culture, once repressed because of its mostly un-European features and later promoted as the *alma da terra*, the "soul of the land," has become the battle ground for a fight for control over its apparently intrinsic force, a process that contributes to increasing the polyphony around what popular culture might be. As Maria Turano shows in her book (n.d.), in the post-independence phase some Cape Verdean intellectuals explicitly used invention and creativity to resurrect and value cultural forms previously repressed by the colonial power as "primitive" or African in origin. Turano cites the well-known case of the Bulimundo musical-cultural group, reformulating musical genres such as *finaçon*,

*batuco* and *fun*

- 1. South-South voyages are no longer the preserve of priests, anthropologists and diplomats : over recent years they have involved black activists, capoeiristas, musicians, *candomblé* priests, students, business leaders, Pentecostal pastors, advertisers and marketers, as well as adventurers. Researching these new personal trajectories and the survival strategies that these evince strikes me as important.
- 2. The emergence of the internet <sup>(23)</sup> and new communication technologies in general <sup>(24)</sup>.

- 3. The strengthening, now in the Global South too, of a set of international agreements and even laws intended to support and divulge not just heritage *per se*, but more specifically intangible or living heritage.
- 4. The maturing of the democratic process, which has by itself generated a growing demand for internationalization and opening, both in Brazil and in many African countries.
- 5. The growth ? or, in a certain sense, the revival ? in the influence of Brazil (and of Angola, which I have not discussed in this text) in terms of culture, music and popular religiosity, which has introduced more variety into the relation with Portuguese-speaking countries ? among which Portugal no longer dominates as a source of inspiration.

These novelties provide new opportunities, as well as new tensions within Cape Verdean society. Among other things we can note the desperate need to produce a Cape Verdean cultural diversity that makes the country ?different? from the rest. Being mixed or creole may be good in some contexts, but it may also be a burden when each country within the pantheon of nations has to be culturally different from the others. This is, indeed, the paradox of heritage conservation in Cape Verde : how can there be any clear classification of types, which seems to be necessary to identify and distinguish the aspects and artefacts deserving official support and recognition, in a society that thinks of itself as creolized ? Is it possible to somehow conserve miscegenation as heritage, or is this a phenomenon that can be celebrated in popular and erudite culture, but that encounters more problems in terms of obtaining formal recognition from the modern, self-proclaimed ?multicultural? State ? In the modern pantheon of nations, the multicultural model does indeed seem to be more accepted than the notion of miscegenation or creolization ? always a debating point in the major geographical-political-racial projects ever since the Berlin Conference in 1884-87 <sup>(25)</sup>. Ironically, the countries that have traditionally defined themselves or have been defined internationally as mixed race seem today to face more difficulties in verbalizing this characteristic in an easily intelligible language within the global discourse promoting diversity. The notion of mixture and hybridism tends to be more highly valued, as an attribute of late modernity, in countries that have not made mixture an integral part of their national narrative. In these countries the idea is presented as a modern form of dealing with the cultural diversity promoted by various facets of globalization (migrations, cultural flows, digital culture, etc.).

While this research corroborates some of the so-called canon associated with the globalization of cultures and their process of heritage conservation, I also came face-to-face with some veritable enigmas. Why was *candomblé* not exported from Brazil to Cape Verde ? It is difficult to believe that no Brazilian *pai de santo* or *mãe de santo* has ever tried to establish a foothold in the archipelago, while doing so in other non-black places, like the Rio de la Plata region or Europe. Why was spiritism in the first half of the XX<sup>th</sup> century also being inspired by Brazilian spiritism, or, over the last two decades, the Brazil-based UCKG (Universal Church of the Kingdom of God) arrived there in strength, and so too, albeit more subtly, the *curandeiros* (healers) from Guinea-Bissau ? Is there really no space in Cape Verde for a reinterpretation of Afro-Brazilian religiosity ?

Clearly both religious experience and the religious market are related to the wider identificatory complex and the latter, in the case of Cape Verde, has not been a fertile ground for all the icons associated with Afro-Brazilian cultures. Perhaps this enigma can be unravelled by detailed research into the trajectory of these Transatlantic ?ethnic-cultural-religious entrepreneurs.? It is equally important to observe the context in which they operate, and the political and economic forces involved. The identificatory power of a particular artefact ? its capacity to mobilize or activate identity ? depends much more on these contexts than on the intrinsic value of an object, song, lyric, dance or simply a way of being. We have seen in this text, for example, how capoeira can have one ?value? in Cidade Velha and another in Mindelo, due, among other reasons, to the support from the State or the fact that capoeira forms part of a mostly voluntary initiative.

In sum, the images of Africa and Africans produced in the diaspora, typically with anti-racist and identificatory aims, tend to relegate Africa to a static pre-modern or anti-modern past, coinciding with the attempts of many intellectuals on the African continent itself to foster a cosmopolitan life in Africa and a dynamic view of African history. On the other hand, these diasporic images of Africa reverberate in African realworlds. This functions like a short blanket, pulled in both directions : from the western side of the Atlantic, Africa is rediscovered in a huge series of pre-modern or even anti-modern guises (primitive, instinctive, telluric, natural, uterine, etc.) ; on the eastern side of the ocean, people and cultural agents are not immune to these processes : they are repudiated or reinterpreted for other purposes. The uses and abuses of Africa on the New Continent affect the Old Continent.

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## Notes :

1. On the contemporary backlash against hybridity in several Western and non-Western countries see the exceedingly good essay by Jan Nederveen Pieterse (2001).

2. Several books have been published over the last two decades, especially in France, on the history of miscegenation and on the mestizo logics and philosophy. See, among others, several publications organized by Serge Gruzinski, Jean-Loup Amselle and, especially, Kelly (2003).

3. A play of words based on Beatriz Gois Dantas *Vovó nagô e papai branco : usos e abusos da África no*

*Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro : Graal, 1988 ; and on the title of my article "Use e abuso da África no Brasil? [Use and Abuse of Africa in Brazil] published in the journal *Afro-Ásia* 27, 2002, pp. 249-269, available at [www.afroasia.ufba.br](http://www.afroasia.ufba.br).

4. Browsing the web on January 24, 2017 one can quickly get a sense of the degree of polyphony that there is around notions such as mixture, miscegenation or *métissage*. Consider, for instance the difference between the France-based projects,

<http://blackmetisplanet.skyrock.com/1645621882-HISTOIRE-METISSAGE.html>

<http://www.quaibrantly.fr/fr/editions/les-publications-du-musee/les-catalogues-dexpositions/anthropologie/> and the Angk

5. Anecdotally I can give three examples of the phenomenon : the famous popular hymn to independence of the Belgian Congo, "Cha, Cha, Cha de l'Indépendance," sung by Nico ; the size of the support for Brazil among African football fans, especially when Brazil faces a team from the North or a "white" team in the finals ; or the impact of Jorge Amado in the Mozambican literature from the 1970s onwards (Couto, 2011).

6. In January 2008, arriving on my first research trip to Cape Verde, I asked the taxi driver who took from the airport to my accommodation what music was most popular among Praia's young people. He replied, happy to make a Brazilian happy, the band Calypso ? not knowing that I, in search of "Africanity," would have been much happier if he had cited an authentically Cape Verdean or even African genre...

7. See the map of the zone at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1310/documents/>, browsed on January 24, 2017.

8. See the General History of Cape Verde, accessible online (in Portuguese) on the website of the Memory of Africa project: <http://memoria-africa.ua.pt/>

9. Receiving the status of World Heritage Site brings a series of new possibilities, but also a certain burden for the country involved, such as conserving the tangible and intangible heritage, enabling visits, promoting dialogue with the various sectors of the local population and, finally, ensuring the economic sustainability of the site as a touristic-cultural enterprise.

10. Source : <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0..4436475.00.html>. Accessed on January 24, 2017.

11. Source : [www.cidadevelha.com](http://www.cidadevelha.com). Accessed on January 24, 2017.

12. How the stock of sales goods is assembled and the difficulties faced in creating Cape Verdean souvenirs deserves a detailed analysis.

13. An exception is the recent on-line research on tourism carried out by the Cape Verde National Institute of Statistics : available at <https://www.facebook.com/ine.caboverde/> accessed on January 24, 2017.

14. See Patrícia Pinho (2010) and [www.bahiaturisa.ba.gov.br](http://www.bahiaturisa.ba.gov.br) accessed on January 24, 2017.

15. One time during my field research an elderly woman approached me and, raising her voice, insisted that I was the (Spanish) architect who was there to curb the freedom to reform the (poor) houses of the traditional residents. She only accepted the fact that it was not me with some difficulty.

16. Next to the fair of local products, almost always set up on the Largo do Pelourinho, four or five immigrants from the African coast, mostly Senegalese, regularly sell their craftwork and knick-knacks, benefitting from the higher flux of visitors, some of them looking for ideally original and exotic artefacts. This type of craftwork, according to some French tourists who I interviewed, is difficult to find among the Cape Verdean craftwork. A lack of "original" craftwork is, in fact, one of the complaints made by

tourists who I interviewed in various places of Cape Verde. They complain that the country, very differently from Senegal (the closest country on African coast), offers little that is 'original' aside from music CDs – these are seen as something specific to Cape Verde. In reality the supposed lack of originality and uniqueness of Cape Verde's popular culture, very often taken to be an impoverished version of the rural or maritime popular culture of Portugal, is a topic – or dilemma – already heavily debated among Cape Verde's intellectuals, which surfaces whenever it is necessary to identify cultural artefacts for conservation by museums, such as the small and interesting Praia Ethnographic Museum (IIPC 2007) or, more recently, listed as part of the process of Cidade Velha's promotion by UNESCO to the status of World Heritage Site.

17. The use of period ships for nationalist reasons and/or for the revival of traditions (nautical or otherwise) is not confined to Cape Verde and indeed is a long-standing practice. The training ships used by the world's navies can serve similar purposes, so too the replicas of Viking ships, Columbus's caravels, frigates from the US Civil War, or the slave ships displayed in various museums on slavery. And how to forget the ill-fated replica of the Portuguese ship built to celebrate the 500 year anniversary of the so-called Discovery of Brazil, but which barely managed to navigate and, after enormous public expenditure and innumerable accusations of it being unfit to sail, remained anchored at the Navy Museum in Rio de Janeiro – See <http://www.ipsnews.net/2000/04/rights-brazil-500th-anniversary-fiesta-already-a-flop/> accessed on January 24, 2017.

18. *Rebidantes* is the term used for women who sell fruits, fish or goods imported from various countries and in different forms (Grassi, 2006). This profession is constantly changing. For example, the arrival of numerous Chinese vendors, who directly trade various kinds of products from China, has profoundly altered the distribution networks in Cape Verde (Beuret 2008 ; see the doctoral thesis by Tatiana Reis for the Ethnic and African Studies Program at UFBA, 2012).

19. *Badio/a* is the name given to residents of the Sotavento Islands (Santiago, Fogo, Brava and Maio). The term comes from the word *vadio*, vagrant, but does not always have a negative sense today. The residents of the Barlavento Islands (S. Vicente, S. Nicolau, S. Antão, Sal and Boavista) are called *sampajudos/as*.

20. In the city of Praia, carnival is also going through a process of revitalization and reinvention. Although I am unaware of publications derived from research, journalistic reports and images can be found in abundance on the internet. See, among others, <http://entretenimento.uol.com.br/ultnot/lusa/2007/02/20/ult3680u420.jhtm> and [http://www rtc cv /tcv/index.php?paginas=47&id\\_cod=23555](http://www rtc cv /tcv/index.php?paginas=47&id_cod=23555) both accesses on January 24, 2017.

21. See the interview online at : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UsGJv94MeC8&feature=related> accessed on January 24, 2017.

22. Trajano (2009) shows that the context of *tabanca* in the island's interior is very different and less subject to external agents, like the cultural animators.

23. It is worth noting that a large amount of information exists on the web concerning the topics discussed in this text. For me this was the first time this had happened. Two factors are responsible : the exhibition on the web of what until recently were relatively isolated cultural phenomena continues to grow exponentially, shifting from invisibility to hyperexposure ; the cultural life of Cape Verde and the debate on 'Cape Verdeanity' and national identity are being widely circulated via the web – the relative weakness of the printed media in a country of scattered islands contrasting with the importance of the internet (all public squares in Cape Verde have free wireless !). This should be taken into account in our research methodology, as well as in the subject-object relation during research. On this point the doctoral thesis by Sonia Melo (2007) represents an original contribution.

24. See the exhibition *Africa Away From Home* curated by Antonio Motta, in 2011, at the Museu Federal da Abolição in Recife, which shows how much mobile phones, blogs, Orkut, Facebook and Skype have altered the play of forces in day-to-day Brazil-Africa relations.

25. At this conference – which, among other highly influential decisions, established a single prime

meridian passing through Greenwich, London ? a racial geography of the world was formalized in which each continent corresponded to what were defined them as the ?great races.? On the world maps of the period, Europe tends to be coloured green or pink, Africa brown, Asia yellow and America red ? Oceania, very often coloured blue, remains an isolated region without a native ?great race.? At this conference, as at the two subsequent international conferences on race, there seems to be no place in the world for mixed races : indeed their place remains undefined even on the evolutionary scale. At these conferences, people of mixed race were sometimes allocated a place merely as a temporary solution to the ?racial question.? If the ?great races? were thereby inscribed in geography, those of mixed race were excluded from it.

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