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Fiddles in Luso-Afro-Brazilian cultures subaltern aesthetics

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**FIDDLES IN LUSO-AFRO-BRAZILIAN CULTURES:
SUBALTERN AESTHETICS**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the significance of bowed stringed lutes and of fiddle playing to musical traditions across the cultures of the contemporary Luso-Afro-Brazilian world. The research is based on a multi-site ethnography conducted in Cape Verde, Brazil and Mozambique, covering practices related to the violin, *rabeca* and one-stringed bowed lute. Taking as its starting point the narratives of living musicians about their daily practices in local or transnational social and cultural contexts, the analysis focuses on fiddle traditions in Africa and the African diaspora, reflecting on the dynamic processes of creolisation that have reinvented these practices in modernity, transcending the geopolitical boundaries established in the colonial era. I analyse the violin in Cape Verde, *rabeca* playing in a *quilombo* community in southeastern Brazil, and the one-stringed bowed lute which intersects with the African fiddle-playing heritage. I trace the dynamics of past traditions and the revival of these fiddles in continental and insular Africa and Brazil, hypothesising a linkage between them. The major conceptual concern structuring my analysis, informed by critical readings of the literature on African music and its representations, is how an understanding of musical aesthetics and especially the question of rhythm can contribute to a decolonial perspective on the significance of these musical practices. The qualitative outcomes of the research suggest that fiddle playing should be understood as allowing musicians to play a relatively autonomous role in a wide variety of contexts in contemporary multi-ethnic societies in a state of flux: as participants in the internationalised world of Cape Verdean music; as elements of the cultural environment in which *quilombo* inhabitants are campaigning for recognition of their land rights; and as contributors to Mozambique's national project to integrate its diverse ethnic groups. Ultimately, I argue that the fiddle is an active agent in the decolonial 'thinking and doing' of those of African descent in Luso-Afro-Brazilian cultures.

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To my mum Meire Cacciolari Moretto

In memory of my father Alexandre Moretto, (1927-1996)

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This thesis investigates how different types of fiddle playing across the Portuguese-speaking world have reinvented historical traditions associated with dance music in modern creole cultures. Bowed stringed lutes have been objects of cultural exchange across those societies comprising the Niger-Congo language family of sub-Saharan Africa, and as instruments of cultural intermediation they have transcended the boundaries and spaces established in the colonial era. For the purposes of this thesis I analyse three instruments and their respective performative cultures: the violin of Cape Verde; the *rabeca* in a *quilombo* community in southeastern Brazil; and the family of one-stringed bowed lutes found in Cape Verde and Mozambique. During the Atlantic slave trade forced displacement spread the one-stringed bowed lutes from continental Africa across new diasporic spaces. In Brazil, they have not survived, and are recorded only in nineteenth-century paintings and travellers' accounts, but I was able to record current practices in the island of Santiago (Cape Verde) and in northern Mozambique. Tracing the interactions between those older African traditions and contemporary revivals of one-stringed fiddles in Brazil, I also hypothesise a model for conceptualising the linkage between them.

Fiddling across the diasporic cultures of the former Portuguese empire (collectively termed 'Luso-Afro-Brazilian' for the purposes of this thesis) comprises diverse practices that have changed over time and location. In West Africa, fiddling is not a homogeneous tradition (Djedje 2008), and likewise in the diaspora it has undergone constant processes of transformation. Each tradition is unique as regards its instrumentation and accompanying dance and aesthetic features; however, they are also connected in significant ways. Besides an important shared language – the intermixing of

terms borrowed from Portuguese, African and creole languages to refer to dance cultures – they are informed by a common history, one shaped by the Portuguese colonial empire and by the forms of anti-colonial resistance it engendered. In the clash between African peoples and the institutions of European colonialism, primarily the crown, the state and the Catholic Church, Africans were subject to forced displacement, religious conversion and the imposition of colonial legal systems that were hostile to their socio-cultural structures of belief, language, territorial sovereignty, traditional rites, artistic expression and aesthetic notions. At the same time, however, across the diverse cultures that emerged in Portugal’s colonies in Africa and Brazil, *decolonial* forms of critical ‘thinking and doing’ (Mignolo 2011: xxiv) emerged to challenge or problematise the European logic of power and its accompanying assumptions regarding the status of Western civilisation. Bowed stringed lutes, as I shall argue, are one of the cultural practices that have mediated these critical, decolonial perspectives in the former Portuguese empire, and as such they have helped give rise to modern creole identities, functioning as ‘instruments of agency’ (Bates 2012) in the interactions between people and their material world.

Beyond the simple notion of resistance attributed to diasporic cultures, it could be said that, in creole musical practices, the fiddles are located in a ‘between-place’ of dynamic cultural transformation, following the concept of ‘transculturation’ coined by Fernando Ortiz (1995 [1947]). Transculturation envisages not only the processes by which one individual or group resists or acquires another’s culture, but also the subsequent transition towards a new cultural phenomenon, ‘completing the cycle of musical process set in motion by the cultural contact’ (Kartomi 1981: 233). The ongoing experiences and practices of fiddle players in the twenty-first century, as I shall examine below, suggest that their music has acted as an agent of decolonial strategies, not only by resisting imposed cultural models, but also by reinventing traditions and rituals as the

expression of autonomous individual and collective identities in contemporary societies. We shall see, for instance, how a small rural Afro-Brazilian community led by *rabeca* players has reclaimed the historical meaning of the *quilombo* (maroon community) by harnessing its cultural practices to the political campaign for the recognition of their land rights, empowering a minority in its struggles with the state.

The ideology of colonialism was responsible for constructing stereotypes of Africa, one of whose most emblematic fetishes is the idea of African musical rhythm. The notion of an essentially ‘African’ rhythm appears alongside the stereotypes of darkness, sensuality, complexity and, ultimately, ‘African drumming’ (Agawu 1995). In attempting to comprehend rhythm as an aspect of African and Afro-diasporic fiddle playing in different contexts, this study aims to deconstruct the notion of rhythm as associated exclusively with drumming in African and Afro-Brazilian music. Furthermore, the following analysis of Afro-diasporic fiddle playing will need to move beyond essentialising, dichotomised models when investigating the relationship between European and African identities. Such categorisations along ‘African’ or ‘European’ lines are problematic given the centuries of cultural interaction involved; it is more likely that rhythm in Afro-diasporic music is neither African in its polyphonic structures and ensemble textures nor grounded absolutely in Western notions of syncopation and metrical accentuation.

Instead, we will need to explore more complex and flexible analytical concepts such as syncretism, hybridity and creolisation, which over the last century have undergone various critiques and been either revised or discarded. One of the first serious attempts to identify African continuities in post-abolition American culture was conducted by W. E. B. Du Bois (1903), who recognised in the ‘sorrow songs’ aspects of culture that were common to African-Americans. The social context of the songs’

narratives, rooted in a rural past, connected individuals to a collective memory. One outcome of such a process of identification with the past could be the reification of tradition as a collective form of identity in the present (Eiermann 1998). In *The Myth of the Negro Past* (1941), Melville Herskovits warned of the political implications of investing in the essentialised notion of a mythical, immutable and original Africa, and its social and academic effects, emphasising that knowledge about African heritage in the New World was still scarce and based on unreliable assumptions.

Acculturation was the theoretical counterpart to Herskovits's critique of an essentialised Afro-centrism, but in implying a process of passive absorption of or adaptation to the colonising culture, he also failed to grasp the transformational complexity of the colonial dynamic. With this limitation in mind, Ortiz uses the term transculturation to express the idea of transition from one culture to another. Analysing the complex phenomenon of cultural transmutation in Cuba, involving Amerindians, Europeans and sub-Saharan Africans coexisting on the island, Ortiz (1995 [1947]: 102-3) used the concept of transculturation to encompass both the successive stages of cultural loss and the subsequent creation of new cultural forms ('neo-culturation'), with social implications for the coloniser and all others involved.

The term 'syncretism' has also been used to refer to the interactions between different cultural groups, and as deployed by Herskovits (1958) it implies a psychological mechanism of cultural integration and accommodation which conceals power relations and the oppression of one culture by another. In the case of Afro-American religious syncretism arising from the slave regimes, for example, it might suggest a 'harmonisation' between Yoruba deities and those of Catholic theology, something that would have occurred within the African diaspora in various places where slavery formed the basis of social relationships. This early use of the concept still tended

to maximise the action of the dominant forces and to emphasise the passivity of the subalterns (slaves, immigrants and ethnic minorities). In Brazil, Arthur Ramos (1942) and Roger Bastide (2007 [1960]) analysed the processes by which African religions and Christianity adjusted to one other, but Bastide distinguished between *mosaic syncretism*, whose practitioners were able to juxtapose the two sets of deities, acting simultaneously within both spheres (compartmentalisation), and *fusional syncretism*, where the constitutive elements of differentiation could no longer be identified and there was a loss of connection to an original culture and to an African collective memory (Capone 2007: 348). After an extensive, historicised re-reading of the uses of the term, taking into account both its more pejorative overtones and the Africanist critiques, Charles Stewart (1999: 55) nevertheless suggests that syncretism serves as a useful framework to ‘focus attention on accommodation, contestation, appropriation, indigenization, and a host of other dynamic intercultural and intracultural transactions’.

‘Hybridity’ (originally associated, like *mestiçagem*, with socio-biological and scientific racist thought), meanwhile, tends to refer to cultural interactions in which a hegemonic culture does not prevail, and where fusion does not preserve hierarchies but still allows some forms of differentiation to persist. For Michael Syrotinski (2007: 26), the ‘active reappropriation of hybrid cultural identities, and the disruption of homogeneity in all its forms, opens the way for counter-discursive and counter-hegemonic political theory and practice’. Néstor García Canclini (2015: 19) develops the concept of hybridisation (as distinct from decolonisation) to encapsulate the dynamics of post-colonialism within the Latin American context, which he describes as ‘those socio-cultural processes within which structures of subjectivity and power, which exist separately, merge to generate new structures, subjectivities, objects and practices’.

Finally, the concept of 'creolisation' has similarly become detached from its original associations with the language of racial politics to achieve a broader significance in the post-war context of decolonisation, migratory movements and globalisation. While it takes on specific meanings in different contexts, such as in Cape Verde, the French Antilles, the Anglophone Caribbean and Brazil, it 'allows for both the combination of cultural forms from two or more cultures as tangible, material creole forms (such as a food, musical style), and meanings, values, and ideologies associated with these forms' (Baron 2003: 110). There is a debate among scholars as to 'whether creolization should be universalized beyond its deeply evocative, politically resonant, and subversive local meanings in Creole societies' (Baron and Cara 2011: 6).

In conceptualising these processes of social change and cultural transformation as enacted through the post-colonial history of fiddle playing across the Portuguese-speaking world, creolisation will be a key model of analysis precisely because of its capacity to capture those subversive and politically critical local meanings within the dynamics of cultural interaction and mixing. A decolonial perspective on the diffuse and imprecise subject that is ethnography (Carvalho 2001) will depend on the analysis of subjects who have themselves implicitly or explicitly questioned the terms of the imperial order and its universalising discourses that shaped earlier descriptions and accounts of subaltern cultures. The 'African' or 'Afro-diasporic' meaning of the musical identities claimed by these practitioners of fiddle playing is no longer a matter of genealogical origins, nor even necessarily connected to specific African traditions, but instead implies the reinvention of those African 'roots' in new practices which affirm their sense of differentiation as 'in-between' (Bhabha 2004). Modern Brazilian Afro-Catholicism may not preserve endogenous African symbols and cult meanings, but its practices, such as in the music of the *folia de reis*, still enable Afro-Brazilians to claim their identities as such.

This study therefore pays special regard to what the practitioners of the various music genres and their associated religious traditions subjectively understand, or claim for themselves, as ‘African’ heritage.

This point may be manifested musically in many different ways but among the most expressive of these is without doubt the aspect of rhythm we recognise as syncopation. The discussion of African and Afro-diasporic rhythm will therefore have to pass through the deconstruction of older models of thinking and their fetishisation of the black ‘body-music’ trope, as well as critically assessing more recent efforts in Western ethnomusicology to approach the problem. So, as traditional Western musical notation has been deemed inadequate to record African music, computational analysis methods based on sonograms and amplitude graphs have offered an alternative means of capturing the microrhythms characteristic of subjective notions such as ‘groove’ or ‘swing’. However, although such scientific methods may elucidate the internal structural operation of microrhythms, they run the risk of being disconnected from the self-representation of musicians and performers, and from their subjective narratives of musical practice and experience, returning us to the old dichotomies of folkloric *versus* objective knowledge, body *versus* mind, sensorial *versus* rational, and black subaltern *versus* white coloniser (Perchard 2015: 14). The technocratic character of such scientific methods points towards an institutionalised colonial logic, in contrast to the more reflective, empathetic approach of qualitative ethnographic research, which considers the socio-political contexts and multiple musical subjectivities shaping musical style and performance. While this study does not propose to engage more directly with critical race theory and racial politics, but considers the understating of ‘discourse’ (Price 2001: 55), these concerns will remain implicit in the use of the concepts of cultural hybridity, creolisation and syncretism, as outlined above.

In considering the relationship between musical practice and decoloniality, this thesis will examine two major aspects of fiddle playing in Luso-Afro-Brazilian cultural spaces: first, the question of African aesthetics, which has been largely absent from scholarly analyses of Afro-Brazilian and Cape Verdean music; and second, the controversial topic of rhythm in the Afro-diasporic music of the Americas, particularly Brazil. These two problems are closely interrelated, since the perceptions of Africans, Afro-descendants and Western observers differ markedly in their recognition of rhythmic approaches and structures as radically singular, comparable or hybrid. According to some scholars – for example, Marcos Lacerda (2014) – post-slavery, Afro-diasporic music lost the major rhythmic structures of the West African ensembles altogether. But for others, when African and Amerindian traditions based on phenomenological accentuation (Andrade 1972; Agawu 1995) interacted with European approaches to metrical accentuation (Lerdahl and Jackendoff 1990), the arguably ‘African’ phenomenon of *free rhythm* (Andrade 1972; Clayton 1996; Miller and Shahriari 2012; Agawu 2016) may have remained decisive for enabling the formation of a hybrid, Afro-diasporic sense of musical time.

These musicological discussions emphasise the objective historical processes at work, but if we wish to avoid endowing them with a neo-colonial academic authority, then we should also take seriously the *subjective* claims of contemporary practitioners themselves as matters of socio-cultural identification and affectivity, which are just as significant in determining what is understood and recognised as ‘African’ in contemporary, creolised musical practices. Aesthetics as *perception* (Hamilton 2007) may therefore be a helpful approach to rethinking the cultural significance of ‘African’ rhythms when they are identified in, say, modern Brazilian music. The centrality of oral and aural learning procedures to the reproduction of performance practices and their

evolution in fiddle playing similarly calls for an emic perspective in order to arrive at a full understanding of how musicians narrate their own musical experiences and lives.

African musical aesthetics? Perception, the ‘sensuous’ and improvisation

The scholarship has historically framed aesthetic analysis of non-Western music within a ‘universalist’ approach that takes for granted concepts and standards drawn from the Western philosophical tradition (Kartomi 1981: 228). For example, as Alan P. Merriam (1964: 260) argues, the notion of ‘fine art’ counterposes the category of the ‘artist’ to that of the ‘craftsman’, and relegates folk culture to the status of ‘applied art’. Western musical aesthetics have also privileged the contemplation of the finished artwork as an object of perfection, and as such has been unsympathetic to non-Western musical cultures, such as the fiddling traditions examined here, which value spontaneity and improvisation over stylistic rigour and which perceive the artistic experience as *activity*. As Ted Gioia (1988: 102) found in the debates on African-American music, if measured against art-music criteria, ‘jazz may well fail even the most basic tests of aesthetic success’.

As a counterpart to this ethnocentric universalism, Merriam argues (1964: 269) that Western intellectual life has, historically, failed to acknowledge the presence of an aesthetic philosophy in, say, African cultures, in part because of the absence of a discourse named as such or systematised in ways familiar to Western thinking. According to John Murungi (2011: 2), African philosophical traditions which had incorporated musical aesthetics since pre-colonial times were discredited in accordance with the ‘European project of modernity to civilize Africa and Africans, and to replace what was perceived by Europeans as paganism or heathenism with Western civilization’. According to Murungi (2011), central to this colonial operation and to its post-colonial legacy was the assault of Cartesian thinking and Christian theology upon the *sensuous* as a source of knowledge and virtue, and as a principle of musical and religious life in

African and diasporic cultures, in which perception is an embodied experience, as defined in phenomenology (Irobi 2007), and the body the prime mode of inter-generational transmission for the visual arts, music, dance, carnival and ritual theatre.

More recent universalist approaches have sought to establish cognitive principles that might be shared across very diverse cultures, such as Kathleen Higgins's (2006) sixteen 'perceptual universals'. However, Stephen Davies (2011) is critical of the use of experimental psychology methodologies to reveal such cross-cultural communication through common principles of musical expressiveness, arguing that they have been applied reductively and without properly taking into account the cultural particularities that inform musical affect in diverse contexts. Adrienne Kaeppler (1971: 75) is another author who argues that aesthetics must be defined in a broader sense to be employed cross-culturally: 'We must define art in such a way that it will encompass what non-Western societies, as well as Western societies, perceive to be art.' Challenging the ethnocentrism of earlier approaches to musical aesthetics which concerned themselves chiefly with the European art music tradition (Hanslick, Adorno), Andy Hamilton (2007) argues for the application of aesthetic concerns to all musical cultures and domains, including the everyday and 'ordinary'. In a world pervaded by rhythm, musical activity 'arises out of, and indeed is part of, manual labour' (2007: 119), in which the body can be perceived 'as behaving musically'.

Alternatively, an approach to aesthetics as *perception* has been invoked by Robert Kauffman (1969) to acknowledge the diverse conceptions of music both in traditional societies and in the new cultural spaces of modernity. Kauffman observed that in the music-making of the Shona people of present-day Zimbabwe, touch, sight and hearing are closely associated within an integrated understanding of perception:

The verb that means ‘to hear’ is much more comprehensive in its meaning than are the other senses. It is ‘kunzw’a’, and it means ‘to perceive by touch, sight or hearing; understand’. Its meaning is very close to the basic meaning of aesthetics, involving perception in terms of a unity of the senses and cognition in understanding. (Kauffman 1969: 508)

The notion of the sensuous, rejected by traditional Western aesthetics, can thus be recovered within this understanding of musical perception and cognition, and the capacity of music to generate affinity through an intensity of feeling and pleasure. The exclusion of any one individual sense from considerations of aesthetic perception in African cultures is therefore problematic (Hornbostel 1928; Kauffman 1969), although it was common for the tactile sense, for example, to be disregarded by colonial accounts of African music on moral grounds due to its association with eroticism. As Kauffman (1969: 509) observes, dance can act as a tactile mode of musical perception, as when dancers beat the ground, using it ‘in the same way that the drummers use the membrane of a drum’.

Indeed, while cultural approaches to rhythm differ widely, Hamilton (2007) considers this dimension of musical practice as the most universal in its significance for human activity as it lies at the interface between labour and art. In contrast to mechanical movement, rhythm is the conscious, ‘humanistic treatment’ of time as pulse (2007: 128), and the perception of accent in its phenomenal or metrical nature. In some cases, this may take the form of free, non-periodic movements such as a fluid hand gesture or the temporal shape of an entire musical phrase, but even the regular accentuation found in metrical systems is not a mechanical periodicity but is organically repetitive (2007: 128). As we shall see in the following study, the distinctive aesthetic character of African and Afro-Brazilian music combines non-metrical phenomenal accentuation through off-beat and suspension in metrical syncopation. In the fiddle players’ descriptions of their own

musical practice, aspects of rhythmic patterning are perceived and articulated in subjective terms, in language that varies from individual musician to individual musician across different traditions rather than according to broadly shared parameters as in Western music theory.

Rhythm

African rhythm has been a focus of theoretical debate from the pioneering studies of Erich M. von Hornbostel (1928), A.M. Jones (1937, 1951), Richard Waterman (1948), Curt Sachs 1953, John Blacking (1955), Rose Brandel (1961), John Chernoff (1979) and Robert Kauffman (1980) to more recent works by Gerhard Kubik (1999, 2010), Kofi Agawu (1995, 2016), David Temperley (2000), Jeff Pressing (2002), Simha Arom (1991, 2004), David Locke (2009), James Burns (2010) and Godfried T. Toussaint (2015), to name but a few. In the discussion that follows, I have selected certain studies as relevant to the understanding of Afro-Brazilian and Cape Verdean music in as far as they are useful in supporting my analysis of fiddle playing and its rhythmic aspects. Indeed, this focus on rhythm in fiddle playing challenges one of the most pervasive, stereotypical Western assumptions about African and Afro-diasporic music, deconstructed by Agawu (2003), which is that ‘almost all African music instruments are rhythm instruments’ (Waterman 1948: 25) and that African music is primarily organised around drumming.

Accounts of the cultural history of the African diaspora have attempted to address the persistence of African elements in the music of the Americas. Hornbostel’s early comparative musicology (1928) was marred by evolutionary assumptions about the relationship of ‘primitive’ non-Western systems to those of Europe, while Waterman (1948) attempted to define what he saw as the major culturally standardised components of rhythm that spread from Africa to the Americas, suggesting that these were perpetuated more in the Latin American territories such as Brazil than in North America, where the

European elements supposedly prevailed. Some aspects certainly resisted transformation, remaining within the diasporic cultures as what Kubik (2013[1979]: 22) terms ‘extension overseas’ – for instance, the asymmetrical twelve-pulse standard pattern in Yorùbá bell playing as performed in Brazilian Candomblé religious ceremonies. However, even within the relatively conservative phenomenon of Candomblé, few polyrhythmic structures have endured in their entirety, while in most other music genres they have either disappeared altogether (Lacerda 2014) or been transformed by contact with Western music to form new music genres. More recent approaches have therefore been obliged to recognise that transformation within creole cultures does not necessarily mean cultural loss (Baron and Cara 2011; Hall 2015). A frequent feature of violin playing in Cape Verde is cross-measure syncopation, which often dislocates the downbeat metrical and non-periodical accentuation, while the most ‘African’ rhythm for Cape Verdeans is the *batuku*, although no clear connections to Africa have been traced in its rhythmic structure or choreographic features. In the Cape Verdean case, we will have to consider how the *ladinização* or acculturation of the many peoples brought from mainland Africa to work in the archipelago involved the interaction between their cultural memory, with its musical features, and European structures, especially dances such as the mazurka, polka and contradance.

Rhythm has been the most prominent and controversial topic in the debates about the comparability or otherwise of African and Western music, particularly in relation to the organisation of metre and the regular patterning of beats in these respective systems. As interconnected but distinct phenomena, metre and rhythm can be distinguished as follows: metre is the ‘background’ to a rhythmic pattern or the way in which the listener/musician perceives the strata of ongoing successive pulses within which rhythmic patterns are inserted. ‘In psychological terms, rhythm involves the structure of temporal

stimulus, while metre involves our perception and cognition of such stimuli' (London 2004: 4). According to Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff's *Generative Theory of Tonal Music (GTTM)*, the notion of metre in Western music theory is characterised by the periodic alternation between strong and weak beats (1990: 19) in what is defined as 'metrical hierarchy'. The Renaissance notion of *mensura* (measure) quantified periodic beats in a fixed, equal time span: 'The modern concept of metre evolved out of the mensural tactus (hence the German term for metre, Takt), with the duration of a whole measure (equivalent to a semibreve, the standard value of the tactus) functioning as the starting point of the metrical system' (Caplin 2016: 4).

For Martin Clayton (1997:10), the psychological capacity to form metrical perceptions depends upon the performer and the listener, and is therefore constructed differently across musical cultures. More recently, Justin London (2004: 8) has explored how our perception of metre is learnt and rehearsed as a kind of behaviour: 'Listening metrically involves our musical habits, and not just a few generic habits but a rich repertoire of metric responses to rhythmic patterns and process.' Nevertheless, David Temperley (2000: 90) argues that, 'based on ethnomusicologists' analyses of African rhythm, African and Western rhythms are profoundly similar', and he includes in this comparison the idea of a 'metronome sense', which has traditionally been attributed to African musicians as a distinctive mental ability to maintain an internal regular pulse in relation to contrasting accentuations and polyrhythmic patterns (Waterman 1952). If in Western music 'the "metronome sense" merely means the ability to infer and maintain a pulse that is not always directly reinforced by the music – or perhaps sometimes is even in conflict with the music – this is surely a commonplace ability among Western listeners' (Temperley 2000: 77).

Toussaint's (2015) '*pulse saliency histograms*' – quantitative analyses of samples of sixteen-pulse Western and African rhythms, including Renaissance pieces, art-music compositions, German and Ghanaian songs, and African asymmetric timelines – reveal that 'African timelines make use of most pulses with almost equal frequency, noticeably largely disregarding pulses 2 and 16'. The statistical evidence has demonstrated a high correlation for metrical hierarchy (the periodic alternation of strong and weak beats) between older Western practices from Renaissance music and African timelines. Meanwhile, Toussaint states:

The most salient pulses in the *Pater Noster*, the common-practice music samples, and the German folk songs are the first, fifth, ninth, and thirteenth pulses, whereas in the Ghanaian songs they are the first, fourth, seventh, and ninth. The inter-onset intervals of the former are 4-4-4, whereas as for the latter they are 3-3-2 [the *tresillo*]. (Toussaint 2015: 24)

In other words, on the evidence provided, the syncopation (or asymmetrical pulse patterns) better distinguishes African music from Western music than the possession of metrical hierarchy.

Besides this macro-rhythmic level of analysis, computational studies of micro-rhythm (Pantaleoni 1972; Gerischer 2006; Naveda et al. 2011) have elucidated the subjective descriptions of beat expressed by musicians and listeners, such as the delay effect, anticipation and even swing, which cannot easily be registered manually in Western music notation. Studies of swing in Brazilian rhythms from Bahia (Gerischer 2006) and in the Afro-Brazilian samba (Naveda et al. 2011) present audio sonograms recording micro-timed changes in the intensity of percussion strokes. These demonstrate what is frequently found in the discourses about the delay effect in singing or instrumental

performance of such genres: that is, systematic anticipations of the third and fourth semiquavers and a tendency to accentuate the second (Naveda 2011).¹

A further dimension of the debates about rhythm in African and Afro-diasporic music is the topic of polymetre, sometimes referred to as ‘metrical ambiguity’, indicating the simultaneous coexistence of more than one metrical level and the conflict generated between rhythmic patterns on levels below and above the primary metre. For Agawu (2003: 83), the notion that African music can contain different metres within a single time span is questionable, as different rhythmic patterns do not necessarily mean different metres. He dismisses the idea of polymetre as a distinctively African phenomenon, claiming that it is unsupported in the ethnotheoretical discourse, and instead believes that phenomenal² rather than metrical accents play the most important role in African music: ‘Polymeter fails to convey the true accentual structure of African music insofar as it erases the essential tension between a firm and stable background and a fluid foreground’ (2003: 84-5).

As for polymetre in Afro-Brazilian music, posited as an example of African continuities in the Americas due to the Atlantic slave trade (Waterman 1952; Béhague 1979; Kubik 2012), Gérard Guillot’s preliminary study (2016) seeks to verify the occurrence of isochronous (temporally equidistant) and non-isochronous metres. In Afro-Brazilian musical traditions, for example, the hypothesis of two or four regular pulses (2/4 or 4/4, respectively) occurring simultaneously with a 7- or 9-beat non-isochronous pattern would suggest metrical coexistence. Further studies on Afro-Brazilian music genres would be needed – for instance, the exclusively drum-based rural samba, or *samba*

¹ Luiz Naveda et al. (2011) also refer to Carlos Sandroni (2002), Roberto Moura (2004) and John Chasteen 1996.

² ‘By *phenomenal accent* we mean any event at the musical surface that gives emphasis or stress to a moment in the musical flow. Included in this category are attack points of pitch-events, local stress such as *sforzandi*, sudden changes in dynamics of timbre, long notes, leaps to relatively high or low notes, harmonic changes, and so on’ (Lerdahl and Jackendoff 1983: 17).

de bumbo – to verify non-isochronous subdivisions of the metre. However, this approach seems aimed more at corroborating the notion of polymetre, something that is not yet a matter of consensus in the scholarship.


Finally, we come to the topic of syncopation, the aspect of rhythm which runs throughout the academic literature on Brazilian music but whose status as a legacy of African heritage is very much a matter of debate. For one thing, syncopation has been a feature of European music from the pre-tonal Renaissance period (prior to the systematisation of metre and the introduction of bar lines in notation) to tonal music in which metrical accent and its shifts may be linked to harmonic functions. It is also an element in the music of Portugal's former colonies and their creolised dance and music forms, but the idea that syncopation was an influence from sub-Saharan African music has been in dispute since the early studies carried out by Oneyda Alvarenga (1946) and Mário de Andrade (1972), although there is a lack of supporting evidence (Sandroni 2001). Syncopation is one aspect of rhythm that makes sense within Western musical notation (Belinga 1965; Arom 1991) as it is based on the interaction between a metrical pattern of accentuation on strong and weak beats and phenomenal accents occurring at the musical surface. Syncopation takes place when the phenomenal accent becomes unclear or contradictory in relation to the metric structure: 'The listener's cognitive task is to match the given pattern of phenomenal accentuation as closely as possible to a permissible pattern of metrical accentuation; where the two patterns diverge, the result is syncopation, ambiguity, or some other kind of rhythmic complexity' (Lerdahl and Jackendoff 1983: 18).

The difficulty with conceiving of syncopation as a marker of African and Afro-Brazilian differentiation is that African music does not typically emphasise accentuation by way of a regular metre contrasting strong and weak beats. 'In African rhythm, for

example, notes which are attacked so as not to coincide with the pulsation are often accented more than others which do' (Arom 1991: 207), as in Kolinski's (1973) concept of contra-metric rhythmic and co-metric organisation. In Afro-Brazilian music, off-beat, suspension and cross-measure syncopation is recurrent, frequently shifting the downbeat from or to the next bar. Thus, although not exclusively a survival of African rhythm structures, this remains an 'African' marker for Afro-Brazilian listeners and performers, along with 'characteristic syncopation'. As to the circumstances in which syncopation was constructed in Brazilian music, Carlos Sandroni's (2001) hypothesis is that composers trained in Western classical music attempted to reproduce the music of African peoples in nineteenth-century Brazil through the musical system in which they were trained, based chiefly on metrical patterns of binary and ternary accentuation. 'If the notion of syncopation does not exist in African rhythm, it is through syncopation that elements of African music came to be manifest in written music; or, if we prefer, it is through syncopation that written music alluded to what is African in our music of oral tradition' (2001: 14). Syncopated patterns are found in many popular Afro-Brazilian genres played on the violin and *rabeca*, including the music of popular religious practices such as the *folia da bandeira*.

The most common syncopation in Brazilian music is the *síncopa característica* (characteristic syncopation), a term coined by the pioneer of ethnomusicology in Brazil, Mário de Andrade.


Music example 1.1.

X X . X X . X . or 

This type of syncopation is associated with patterns known elsewhere in Latin America as the *tresillo*, the *habanera* rhythm pattern (Vega 1967; Behague 1979; Sandroni 2001)

and the *cinquillo*, operating in diasporic music such as the *maxixe*, samba, *contradanza*, calypso and tango. These rhythm patterns are ‘derived from the time-line patterns of African music that have been historically central to the music of the African Diaspora’ (Floyd et al. 2017). Most polyrhythmic structures of Yorubá, Fon and Ewe origin were either transformed drastically or were excluded entirely from the new rhythmic structures, except in certain liturgical settings such as that of Candomblé (Lacerda 2014). Another of the few structures which did resist transformation from Africa to Brazil was the standard rhythmic pattern, a twelve-pulse timeline of seven strokes distributed asymmetrically as follows:

Music example 1.2.

X . X . X X . X . X . X or 

‘With the slave trade, this pattern was exported to various places in the Caribbean, notably Cuba, and to Brazil, where it survives in the Candomblé religious ceremonies’ (Kubik 1999: 53), and is heard on the cowbell, *agô* or *gan* (Kubik 2013; Lacerda 2014).

The *ritmo sincopado* (syncopated rhythm), or ‘Brazilian syncopation’, appears frequently through off-beat, suspension and cross-measure syncopation. However, Andrade (1972: 33) makes the point that syncopation is not a rule in Brazilian music and that many rhythmic patterns cited in this context are not syncopation but ‘polyrhythm or free rhythm’. Andrade’s concept of ‘free rhythm’ is probably a reference to the subordination of phenomenal accents in the melody to metrical accents within the measure. Free rhythm, in his description, denotes the oral and recitative melodic texture from Africa which contrasted with the metric structure of Portuguese music (1972: 30).

Andrade recognised that syncopation was much more a concept of the Western musical system as transplanted to Brazil by the Portuguese than of sub-Saharan African

musical systems, anticipating more recent scholarly debate. While later ethnomusicologists (e.g., Sachs 1953) also refer to free rhythm – in unaccompanied liturgies, for example, and recitatives of the Far East – Clayton (1996) notes that it has been neglected by Western ethnomusicology. It is likely to have been a prominent feature of both the Islamic and Christian musical traditions of the African slave populations and of some of the Amerindian religious systems with which they coexisted in colonial Brazil. According to Andrade (1972: 32), the conflict between free rhythm and the metrical musical system gave rise to Brazil's characteristic rhythm, which he goes so far as to suggest was converted by the Brazilian people into a 'musical expression' or even into 'a racial expression'. This narrative regarding the emergence of a distinctive 'Brazilian rhythm' is pivotal to understanding the subjective identification of Afro-Brazilians with syncopation as the basis of their historical connection to genres such as *lundu*, *samba*, *batuque* and *maxixe*, a matter of collective belonging shaped by resistance and cultural transformation during the process of creolisation.

When we turn to the violin playing discussed below, as documented in Cape Verde, we can observe similar patterns to those of the Brazilian musical tradition but in a context where transmission occurs aurally from older to younger violinists, with very limited use of notation. Thus, we cannot apply Sandroni's (2001) theory about the impact of written transcriptions on the interpretation of African rhythm in post-colonial Brazil. The musical practices themselves generate the transformations as shaped by memory, which constantly updates their playing mechanisms and techniques according to the new contexts in which performance is immersed.

The preceding review of the scholarly literature regarding African and Afro-diasporic rhythm was conducted in order to situate the fiddle playing of dance traditions within the context of post-colonial Luso-Afro-Brazilian cultures. I will argue in this thesis

that, whatever the cultural or civilisational attributes, similarities and differences of the rhythmic characteristics of African and modern diasporic fiddle playing, what is pivotal for a decolonial perspective is how rhythm is perceived as constructing cultural meaning in contemporary society. African rhythms ‘extend’ and endure in diasporic cultures by achieving different levels of social influence, emerging from resistance in the colonial slave trade to agency in the decolonisation process. The main question regarding the studies of African rhythm and its similarity (or not) to Western music should address what this kind of comparison means for those who perform these music genres as a form of ‘collective self-expression’ (Kabir 2014).

The significance of African rhythm, or of what is perceived as African, for those experiencing these musical practices is addressed in this study in ethnographic terms by considering the musicians’ own narratives as recorded in the fieldwork. People in Luso-Afro-Brazilian cultural areas claim their collective self-expression in fiddle music mainly through rhythm and dance. In Cape Verde, the *batuku* percussive dance genre is regarded as the most ‘African’ musical expression, although no connection with rhythms or dances from continental Africa has been established. The more syncopated rhythms played by *rabeca* players in a contemporary Brazilian *quilombo* are likewise regarded as ‘African’, with musicians performing the *folia da bandera* and stomp dances in a combination of syncopation, polyphony and pre-Baroque pitch levels.

Methodology

The research presented here is an ethnographic study grounded in the method of live observation: I observed the performances of fiddle players and addressed their oral narratives and experiences in their local societies and in the diaspora. I also analysed recorded music, both commercially released albums and recordings I made in the field in a number of different contexts, including live performances of dance events, religious

rituals and during explanatory talks given by the informants about their own traditions. I conducted interviews, with the objective of producing data about these activities, in a variety of settings, such as before or after a nightclub performance, in a parish yard, in a village square, at a radio station and in the homes of some of the players. If the informant was comfortable with talking and playing their instrument, as was the case on most occasions, I recorded the interviews. I abandoned formal questionnaires early on in the field research, in part because of the constraints this imposed, inhibiting the rapport between the researcher and the informant, and also because of their lack of suitability to the diverse cultural environments, languages, dialects and individual styles of the interviewees' responses. In a few cases, I adopted the note-taking method. While occasionally I had to obtain permission from a manager, all the players gave their consent to the recording of their solo or group performances.

In this *emic* approach, informants' views and accounts of their practice are thus accorded a conceptual significance which, even when mediated through the critical scrutiny of the ethnographer, retains epistemological autonomy. The uses and narratives surrounding these practices, styles and techniques can therefore emerge and be recognised as knowledge, rather than being gathered, organised and systematised according to a system devised by the external observer, as in the *etic* approach. Kubik summarises the distinction between these two perspectives as follows:

[T]o study from an emic standpoint is therefore to analyse a system according to its own meaningful components. To study from an etic standpoint on the other hand means to analyse one or more systems comparatively with reference to an analytical framework of concepts created by the researcher and projected upon those systems. (Kubik 1996: 5-6)

The social location of each musician and their role in the community was also a serious consideration when describing how music-making is related to questions of

hierarchy and status, given its close association with rural activities such as farming, hunting or religious leadership. For example, fiddle-playing artistry is accorded a high degree of prestige in communities such as the *quilombo* of Morro Seco and among the Makua *tchakare* players of Mozambique, where musicianship is associated with positions of leadership in the community. To allow for discrepancies in the musicians' narratives regarding their fiddle-playing practice, I also carried out interviews with other individuals, including archivists and local researchers who were not necessarily directly involved in the community's musical activities, as part of creating a broader cultural map of each region with which to frame the individual traditions and experiences.

One of the aims of the research was to gather information from the musicians' statements about the learning processes associated with each instrument, their preservation and also their transmission as material heritage, in some cases involving traditions that are on the verge of disappearing or are already defunct. Historically, this perspective on fiddle playing as an endangered tradition engages with the challenge of cultural resistance in the colonial period, when Portuguese rule prohibited many forms of expressions in music, dance, religion and language, and sought to impose European forms and practices. While the Christian colonial order aimed to demolish the enslaved African population's cultural frameworks and to erase any sense of ethnic identity from their memory, the study of fiddle playing across the diaspora demonstrates how, far from being merely passive objects of a uni-directional colonising agenda, musical instruments should be seen as forms of creative agency (Bates 2012), inventing syncretic or creolised systems and forms of resistance.

A key aspect of this creative work of resistance is the very diversity and autonomy of fiddle-playing traditions that have helped to construct the diaspora's post-colonial

identities, their ‘cultural location’.³ In Cape Verde, for example, individual musicians play different rhythm sets on their respective islands while sharing a common repertoire across the archipelago, as well as a strong sense of collective identification with fellow artists living abroad or touring in the United States and Europe. Another example of diasporic musical experience is the Brazilian *rabeca*, whose hybrid forms are reflected in different shapes, materials, pitchings, tunings and performance settings within syncretic religious rituals embodying Catholic and Afro-Brazilian subjectivities. In the Morro Seco *quilombo*, interviewees explicitly re-evaluated their heritage and its relationship to African cultural memory and the challenges of its transmission from ancestral forebears to new generations of players.

The field research I carried out in Mozambique, recording the music of the Makua, was aimed at documenting a type of one-stringed bowed lute which, although it has disappeared from Brazil since its arrival there during the slave trade, is still played in continental Africa. There is much to be learned from the cultural dynamics exposed by the fortunes of an instrument that has resisted modernity in one modern multi-ethnic society (Mozambique) while failing to survive in another post-colonial region (Brazil). Although each cultural area has its own dynamics of resistance or negotiation, the unique narratives of these musical instruments and their players enable us to understand how, materially and symbolically, they have reinvented African traditions beyond and across the boundaries established by colonialism, and as such can still manifest notions of ‘Africanness’ in the practical and symbolic interconnections between the instrument, the musician’s body and their social environment.

The fiddle traditions of the Luso-Afro-Brazilian world, then, are connected historically by the effects of European colonialism, by forced and migratory movements

³ Robert Neustadt (2007: 1) refers to cultural location as ‘not only to geographical place, but also to a people’s cultural values and traditions as situated within communities at particular moments in history’.

of populations, and by the ‘cultural collision’ that preceded creolisation.⁴ However, each practice is singular in terms of geographical space and historical time, and in relation to the chronologies of the colonial and post-colonial orders which differed drastically between Brazil (which gained political independence in 1822) and African territories such as Cape Verde and Mozambique, which were only liberated from Portuguese rule from 1975 onward. To take those specific historical contexts seriously in the analysis of creolised music genres obliges us to consider ‘whether or not it is possible to adduce a relationship between a cultural form and its historical source’ (Baron 2003: 112). One of the questions this thesis asks is to what extent each practice, in reinventing itself uniquely in the context of these very different emancipatory movements, can be said to express a kind of decolonial agency.

At the same time, however, in the diasporic context, there are also necessarily going to be musical forms, practices and instruments which, beyond their original cultural location, will be related by reciprocal recognition, understanding and application in ‘clusters’ or ‘affinities of cognates’.⁵ Such affinities and similarities might encourage a comparative approach, particularly as the discipline of ethnomusicology emerged from comparative musicology; indeed. The shift toward field research based on participant observation inevitably immersed the researcher in an experience approaching bi-musicality as, for instance, when an Eastern musician learns the Western musical system or vice versa (Hood 1960; Nettl 1973). ‘True and complete bi-musicality or multi-musicality is an unattainable ideal, but since our ultimate purpose is, after all, the

⁴ Stuart Hall (2015: 16) speaks of the ‘collision’ of cultures in his analysis of creolisation in the colonial context.

⁵ In ethnomusicology, an affinity of cognates in systematic comparison is a group of musical cultures known to be related historically. Clusters are musical cultures that share common elements because of contiguity factors and interaction (Nketia 1984: 12).

understanding of human musical behavior, comparison at some level is an indispensable tool' (Nettl 1973: 150).

Comparativism has been a topic of debate in cultural anthropology ever since Franz Boas (1896) first criticised its appropriation by the evolutionary thinking that was then in the ascendant, with its notions of universal, unilinear development tracing a continuum from 'primitive' to advanced civilisations. Bronislaw Malinowski (2014 [1922]) advocated the analysis of cultures in terms of their own dynamics through intensive fieldwork in individual settings. However, subsequent scholars returned to comparativism, with Oscar Lewis arguing in the early 1950s for the need for distinct categories of comparison, such as between or within geographical areas, while warning that the 'quality and reliability of comparative cross-cultural analysis can hardly be better than that of the original field data upon which it is based' (1955: 279). Folklorist Alan Dundes (1986) saw the cross-cultural comparative approach as positively indispensable for rigorous cultural characterisation, since the separate analysis of individual cultures alone must lead to relativism. He believed that the comparative method is essential to the study of the relevance of folklore to a culture or to an individual in that culture: 'One cannot know *a priori* what is or is not unique to a culture without seeking possible cognate phenomena in adjacent or historically related cultures' (1986: 138).

Reviewing the history of thinking on comparativism as developed by these and other scholars, J.D.Y. Peel (2016) proposes a new mode of comparison which takes as its objects of analysis, not so much individual cultures, but their histories – that is, societies in a process of change. This method seeks to restore the connection between cultural phenomena and their real-time occurrences, so as to avoid the distortion that data can suffer if dehistoricised: 'Its aim is to explain historical particulars through applying to them general statements, which are theories or models, rather than to move from

particulars to empirical generalizations or laws' (2016: 35). To what extent systematic comparison is viable across the field of Luso-Afro-Brazilian fiddle playing is not the primary concern or approach of this thesis. However, it is conducted in the spirit of Peel's historical anthropology, in as far as both the distinctiveness of specific musical phenomena and the possible affinities between them are grounded in the historicity of the practitioners' narratives, as recorded in the fieldwork, and in relation to the social, political and cultural events that have shaped them.

While the terms syncretism and hybridism may be helpful in understanding the role of cultural mixing and diversity in Cape Verdean and Brazilian music, in all their historicity, for the purposes of this research analysis creolisation was considered the most appropriate concept for addressing the political aspect of the encounters and 'collisions' between cultures in the Atlantic and for verifying the agency of those people who persist in reinventing musical traditions (Price 2001; Baron and Cara 2011). Creolisation takes into account the practitioners' narratives which, as observed in this study, reveal a decolonial stance in the face of the colonialist matrix of power (Mignolo 2011), as counter-discursive narratives. It is the role of the researcher to reflect on these discourses and to recognise their epistemological autonomy. Cultural traits and musical aspects are understood as existing in constant dynamic transformation, and analysing them requires us to abandon the notion of 'roots', 'original cultures', and 'extensions' (Kubik 2013 [1979]) as a matter of direct, sequential linkage between African and African diasporic musics. However, it is occasionally necessary to refer to degrees of filiation and cultural influence in cross-cultural histories, such as that of the fiddles in their Atlantic trajectory, where colonial narratives have neglected or erased African cultural elements, and this erasure has left individual and collective effects on the post-colonial condition.

Organology

Adopting the emic perspective discussed above, whenever possible the descriptions of the instruments are based on the accounts provided by the community consultants in their own languages and terms. Opening our understanding in this way to new patterns of musical discourse in individual cultures is a healthy counter-tendency to the tradition of employing metropolitan categories over indigenous ones (Agawu 2016: 81). Working from the consultants' conceptual terminology and taxonomy did not therefore allow for the analysis of instrument transformations from one geo-cultural setting to another. It is also the case that travellers' narratives and iconographic sources do not provide adequate historical data to account for the disappearance, revival or transformation of instruments in their entirety. It was therefore not possible to establish with any certainty what constituted distinct instruments as opposed to variants within types of instruments. The range of variables encountered in the instruments' histories, morphology and playing techniques posed an obstacle to systematic classification based on parameters applied consistently and equally to each instrument and analytical context. I did consider carefully the approaches to organology developed by Erich von Hornbostel and Curt Sachs (1914) and the reviews, critiques and new proposals by Geneviève Dournon (1981), René Lysloff and Jim Matson (1985), Margaret Kartomi (1990), Kevin Dawe (2001) and Roderic Knight (2015), but concluded that a systematic organology of the bowed lutes would only have been viable if undertaken from the outset of the field research. Instead, following Peel's historical anthropology and an emic approach to the musical communities, the instruments were examined with regard to their sociocultural contexts (Dournon 2000 [1981]: 12), but from a post-colonial perspective in their political contexts, through the oral narratives and histories provided by their practitioners.

When describing each fiddle tradition, I refer to their representative chordophones using local and/or indigenous names, while the field research focuses on each fiddler's narrative of their experience as musicians in their respective societies. The images mainly provide a record of the instruments in the act of being played rather than inert or in isolation, and these are compared to iconographic sources in books and other historical documents. The evidence gathered revealed many variations in the dimensions of instruments of the same type, even when produced by the same maker, as in the case of the *cimboa* and among different *rabecas* in the Vale do Ribeira. Brazilian fiddles differ from contemporary European bowed stringed lutes in that they are not standardised in shape, length or the material used in their construction. I record information concerning these materials and the construction of individual instrument parts, such as the neck, resonator, pegs and bridge, the resonator shape, the hole position, the bow and hair material, and the number and material of the strings. I also provide information about holding positions, bowing techniques, fingering techniques and sound-event production, including double-stopping and harmonics. The violin played in Cape Verde is mainly the European instrument that appears in classifications of European bowed stringed lutes from the sixteenth century onward,⁶ as well as contemporary electric versions of a similar construction to the modern (post-eighteenth century) modified violin.

Transcription

For Richard Widdess (1994), the representation of non-Western music in Western musical notation is a valid tool for ethnomusicologists and musicologists:

⁶ European bowed string instruments have appeared in the classification made by Martin Agricola (1529), with earlier chordophone predecessors of the violin created in Italy. Michael Praetorius described different types of viols of the renaissance period in 1617 (Stowell 2001). The violin was described as early as 1556 by Philibert Jambe de Fer. A more systematic classification was proposed by Victor-Charles Mahillon in 1888 and later by Eric Moritz von Hornbostel and Curt Sachs in 1914.

[T]he act of reducing one's aural experience of music to written form is itself a means of generating ideas and insights, of illuminating structures and features that might otherwise have passed unnoticed or remained incomprehensible. A transcription is thus a tool of analysis as well as of communication. (Widness 1994: 59)

He notes, however, that in 'any transcription there is an inevitable level of imprecision and of subjective judgment' (1994: 61). Anthony Seeger (2004: 139) likewise draws attention to the limitations inherent in transcription which, when combined with other techniques, may contribute to analysis but should not be confused with it. A range of alternative notation systems have been proposed in the literature on African music in an attempt to address these limitations, such as circular notation (Raycroft 1967), the stave with equidistant vertical lines (Berliner 1981), drum tablature (Serwadda and Pantaleoni 1968) and the 'time unit box system' (TUBS) (Koetting 1970). But while the use of such specialist notational transcriptions can assist in describing rhythmic structures and patterns, and in demonstrating the principles of polyrhythm and timeline, there is no universal system capable of systematising objectively the cultural codes and variations in musical practice for a non-native observer, since translation and representation from one cultural field to another must necessarily be informed by interpretation. As Gerd Grupe (2005: 88) says, 'there is no neutral or "objective" way of writing down music. Rather, any notation and particularly transcriptions must be understood as approximations which first and foremost reflect those aspects which the transcriber deems relevant in the respective music'.

The interpretative act and the methodological apparatus supporting it cannot easily be divorced, either, from the relations of power that are implicit in the investigation of post-colonial cultural practices: that is, 'the privileged position of the ethnographer', as Cooley (2003: 3) puts it, who enjoys the conditions and the access necessary to carry

out the research. As I describe in Chapter Three, at least one informant expressed an awareness of my economic status and its bearing on my freedom to travel and to access remote communities. As far as the symbolic power of Western transcription is concerned, it is legitimate to ask to whom this mode of representation is addressed, and who might benefit from it, especially since most of the traditions and musicians I investigated do not themselves make use of notation but rely on aurally transmitted processes of learning and performing. In this study, therefore, my use of Western notation to transcribe some musical examples is pragmatic rather than systematic, and is deployed to a limited degree to describe certain melodic and rhythmic structures of fiddle playing, including improvisation, while the informants' narratives of their aurally conveyed traditions remain central. Indeed, while the systematised Western sense of tonality and chord progression might be meaningful for Cape Verdean violin playing, this is not true of most of the other cases analysed, such as the Brazilian *rabeca* as heard in the *folia de reis* and *fandango*. Dmitri Tymoczko (2011) suggests that five senses of tonality may be present in both Western and non-Western music, but analysis using conventional notation is severely challenged by instruments – such as the viola (regional guitar) and the one-stringed bowed lutes – which lack equal temperament and feature harmonic inconsistencies in the form of asymmetry and microtonal inflections.

Instead, while taking a degree of imprecision and inaccuracy for granted, my concern was to identify the major features of style and performance, and the variations from performance to performance, and to demonstrate that entire structural patterns in the form are characteristic of a coherent system or tradition (Alvarez-Pereyre and Arom 1993: 22). Rather than using software to produce transcriptions automatically, my transcriptions focused on the sound events of pitch, rhythm, accent and style, and were achieved by tuning my own instruments to the pitch of the fiddles studied, whether these were one-,

three- or four-stringed instruments, and by learning from the consultants' explanations, as well as from more formal 'lessons' and my field recordings, about appropriate tunings and approaches to playing the relevant styles in preparation for their transcription. Similarly, the Cape Verdean pieces were first learnt by ear, transcribed to stave notation on a paper shift and then recorded on notation software. Reflecting the aural transmission of most of the musical output investigated here, which has not been affected by written, printed or recorded media (Nettl 2003), my transcriptions in Western notation serve to register what I learnt by ear from the music of the fiddler players, combining a musicological approach with an ethnographic method. This was the same process I used as a performer when playing the fiddle in different groups, without written scores or parts.

The case of the violin tradition of Cape Verde is different in some respects as it is located in an era of prolific sound recording and reproduction which has influenced repertoires, styles and instrumentation to a considerable degree. Nevertheless, as with the *rabeca* from the Brazilian *quilombo*, Cape Verdean violin playing elaborates its melodic contours in close association with the dancers' rhythmic patterns; this dance 'sense' is present even in solo fiddle playing as a rhythmic background (Burns 2010: 3). Binary representations of these rhythms as duple metre seem to match most faithfully the pendulum sense of the dance steps, so that the fiddle playing of the Makua and some Cape Verdean playing is best written in a 6/8 compound metre, while most Brazilian music is best notated in 2/4 duple metre. The learning and performance of the tradition should therefore be seen as a simultaneously aural and corporeal process, involving distinctly subjective forms of communication among the musicians. Automatic transcriptions and computational analyses of microrhythms as represented through histograms may provide more systematic representations than can be achieved by Western notation, but they

would miss that connection with the aesthetic and subjective understanding of musical practice that the emic approach captures so well.

Previous fieldwork experience

In undertaking an academic study of these practices through field research, the learning of a new musical system and its performative aesthetic became incorporated into my methodology, in the spirit of Mantle Hood's (1960) concept of 'bi-musicality' or John Baily's (2008: 118) 'intermusability'. The participant ethnomusicologist, according to Kay Shelemay (2008: 152), takes on a 'bifurcated identity, which draws at the same time on musicological commitments to performance and anthropological tenets of non-interference'. However, in sharing the informant's aesthetic experience subjectively, through learnt performance, the musician-ethnographer cannot avoid being implicated in the transmission of the practices, and therefore in their preservation or revival by 'preserving tradition, memorializing tradition, and mediating tradition' (2008: 149).

In terms of my own impact as an ethnographer in the field, the following section aims to situate the dynamics of the research in relation to my professional and artistic background, prior to the elaboration of the project. My previous experience as a performing musician working for more than ten years with African musicians in the cross-cultural musical environment of Lisbon acted as an important apprenticeship, immersing me in some of the traditions investigated here. A few years prior to this I had concluded an undergraduate degree in classical music in Brazil at the State University of Santa Catarina (UDESC), a five-year degree programme, including a dissertation. The syllabus embraced traditional aspects of musicology, such as the principles of music, music theory, harmony and counterpoint, music analysis, the history of Western music, performance, repertoire, chamber music and arrangement, as well the aesthetics and anthropology of art. During the course I also attended seminars and lectures on cultural anthropology by

specialists in Brazilian indigenous cultures. As a violin and fiddle player, I attended extra-curricular courses in jazz improvisation and Brazilian popular music at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) and elsewhere, and on the basis of this theoretical background I wrote my final dissertation on fiddle improvisation in jazz and Brazilian popular music.

My fieldwork effectively began in 2000, when I arrived in Portugal to perform in a guitar and fiddle duo with a fellow Brazilian musician. We started busking close to the Jerónimos Monastery and the Monument to the Discoveries, in a pedestrian subway chosen for its natural acoustic properties, while performing in bars and hotels in the evenings. A few months later, I started to perform with musicians from Cape Verde, Angola, Mozambique and other African nations, which exposed me to a new kind of music, despite my familiarity with Afro-Brazilian genres such as *choro*, samba and *baião*. This experience with African instruments, garnered over many rehearsals, live performances and related social activities, introduced me to more open forms, new approaches to improvisation and new configurations of rhythm, pitch, scales and timbre, and led to my interest in African music from the perspective of ethnomusicology. Unlike the training in Western music of the kind I had encountered in Brazilian universities, the approach to the repertoire with these African musicians and ethnic instruments started by aurally repeating rhythm patterns, scales and phrases. When this stage was consolidated, we were able to give an improvisational character to the live performances and recording sessions.

For some years, I played with musicians from Mozambique, mainly *timbila* player/singer and anthropologist Eugénio Santana (stage name, Genitho Rasta) and the

different bands he led at the time.⁷ Genitho played the southeast African Chopi/Shangana *timbila* or xylophone,⁸ the Shirima *chitata* or Makonde *chitaya* lamellophone, and the Makonde/Yao *mbamgwe* or zither, each with a different range and pitch patterns. The band occasionally mixed traditional drums from Mozambique with the guitar, bass guitar and traditional dancers, depending on the performance. Together, we recorded an album with original songs such as ‘Xibubutela’.⁹ In this context I was first introduced to the one-stringed bowed lute called the *tchakare*, which gave rise to my interest in researching how this instrument is played by the Makua, Makonde and Yao of northern Mozambique.¹⁰

The second musician with whom I recorded and performed was Angolan musician Victor Gama, whose work focuses on creative reinventions of traditional instruments from Angola, mostly the *mbira* plucked idiophones and gourd-resonated string bows.¹¹ I collaborated as a violinist on the recording of Gama’s *Pangeia Instrumentos* and other albums.¹² Cape Verdean dancer Tony Tavares also appeared as a percussionist playing the Pangeia instruments made by Gama. We toured Gama’s project in Portugal and Europe, including a performance at London’s Institute of Contemporary Arts as part of the 2002 Atlantic Waves Festival. At one of these gigs Tavares introduced me to a recording made by Cape Verdean violinist Antoninho Travadinha; the highly distinctive character of his playing stood out from among the different violin and fiddle traditions

⁷ Eugénio Santana is the author of *Moçambicanidades Disputadas. Os Ciclos de Festas da Independência de Moçambique e da Comunidade Moçambicana em Lisboa* (Lisboa: Fim de Século, 2011), which traces the relationship between Mozambican international migration and identity construction.

⁸ *Timbila* is the plural form of *mbila*.

⁹ <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1PpO8cWhfMg>> (accessed 23 January 2018) and <<https://soundcloud.com/luizmoretto-violin/pangeia-ii>> (accessed 23 January 2018).

¹⁰ The *tchakare* is also found among the coastal Swahili peoples and in Tanzania.

¹¹ Victor Gama is a musician and instrument maker who has composed for film, dance, theatre and multimedia performances. He has constructed unique musical instruments, initially based on traditional lamellophones and musical bows from Angola, expanding the creative processes to a set of unique instruments and sound. See <<http://www.victorgama.org/>> (accessed 5 December 2017).

¹² <<https://www.discogs.com/Victor-Gama-Pangeia-Instrumentos-Victor-Gama-Pangeia-Instrumentos/release/198354>> (accessed 5 April 2018).

around the world and immediately attracted my attention, leading to my desire to research the topic further.

The third group with which I performed and recorded was Refilon, a line-up of Cape Verdean players (with guitar, bass guitar, percussion and voice). Together with a Portuguese drummer and myself, the players were all living in Lisbon and performing in Portugal, Spain and Cape Verde.¹³ With Refilon, I was able to put into practice some of the Cape Verdean violin styles, rhythms and harmonic patterns I had been listening to on Travadinha's recordings. The band members composed original songs, fusions of Cape Verdean traditional music, jazz, blues and other genres.

I also recorded and performed with traditional Portuguese group Contraponto, which researches and interprets popular songs from different regions of Portugal, including Estremadura, Minho, Beira Baixa, Beira Litoral, Alentejo and the Azores. The instrumentation used was the Portuguese *cavaquinho*, *bombo* and *caixa*, the *adufe* and other hand percussion instruments, the guitar, mandolin, flute, *rabeca* and the voice.¹⁴ The group recorded one album, entitled *Quadrás Soltas*.¹⁵ The leader, Porfírio Regado, created most of the arrangements of Portuguese popular songs, the majority related to traditional dances such as the *vira*, *malhão*, *saias*, *regadinho* and *chula*.¹⁶ The most recent album that I recorded myself as a musician and composer was the Luiz Moretto Quintet's *Vampyroteuthis Infernalis*, released in the UK by the Slam label.¹⁷ It experiments with a

¹³ Refilon recorded one album of original songs all sung in Kriolu, entitled *Nôs Xtória*: <<https://open.spotify.com/album/1d7sFHmdVVBC8dVg759HZU>> (accessed 4 March 2018).

¹⁴ The Portuguese *cavaquinho* is a small-necked box lute belonging to the European guitar family, which can differ in shape, construction and tuning according to each region in Portugal. The *adufe* is a double-membrane, square frame drum, also common in other parts of the Iberian Peninsula; it was probably introduced to Portugal by the Moors in the eighth century. The *bombo* is a membranophone bass drum with two skins, and is struck on the upper skin with a single wooden drumstick. The *caixa* is a membranophone snare drum with two skins, and is struck on the upper skin with two wooden drumsticks.

¹⁵ Released by the Planicoa cooperative, produced by Realisasom. <<http://realizasom.com/>> (accessed 5 April 2018).

¹⁶ For a description of Portuguese dances, see Ribas (1983); Castelo-Branco (2000).

¹⁷ <<http://www.slamproductions.net/menus/main.asp?PN=detail&QItemID=321> (accessed 5 April 2018) and <<https://open.spotify.com/artist/5ruYzsp1whlSwHfiOEtRCX>> (accessed 5 April 2018).

blend of northeastern Brazilian *rabeca* styles, jazz and improvised music played on the regional *rabeca* from Iguape (included in the research for this thesis) and on the violin, with vibraphone, tenor and soprano saxophone, double bass and drums.

I also participated for seven years in a project under the auspices of an official partnership between an NGO and the Portuguese government, aimed at bringing artistic activities to youths in custody, including children of African descent from Portugal's former colonies. My role was that of a kind of musical 'socio-cultural entertainer', interacting with other activities such as *capoeira*, circus, dance, hip hop and drama. In the closed regime of an educational detention centre, I led a percussion group, which played basic elements of African rhythms and Brazilian *capoeira* rhythms performed during local festivities. I also built bowed stringed instruments (one and two-stringed bowed lutes), re-creating African instruments and *berimbaus*, from recycled materials such as wood from furniture, gourds, used violin strings and steel from car tyres. The project reflected Portugal's multicultural environment, highlighting the fact that it is one of the most ethnically mixed countries in Europe (Arenas 2011), but also the conditions suffered by its migrant communities. While the more recent migratory movements from the ex-colonies are no longer driven by economic factors alone, many Africans, such as Cape Verdeans, end up living on the margins of the urban centres in conditions of social and political exclusion (Meintel 2002: 38). Aware of this fact, an internal rule of the project was to use the *creole* languages from the Portuguese ex-colonies, which are prohibited in the schools, preventing pupils from communicating in their native tongue.

These formative musical experiences helped me develop and shape my research activities. They determined which instruments and cultures I selected for my study, my approach to the musicians and their narratives, and the recording and analysis of their practices and performance in the local and diasporic contexts of Cape Verde, Brazil and

Mozambique. A particular interest arising from my activity as a musician and participant ethnomusicologist is the ongoing history of these traditions in the conditions of post-colonial modernity, in particular in recent decades, with the acceleration of social and economic change. The question is, in the context of the new political demands (since 1975) relating to Cape Verdean migration, the campaigns of Afro-Brazilian *quilombolas* over territorial rights, and the attempts at the national integration of ethnic groups in Mozambique, do the role and significance of musical traditions in these respective settings remain the same as in previous decades? And to what extent do they express the autonomy and agency of their practitioners and communities?

Thesis outline

The following chapter, Chapter Two, examines violin-playing traditions in Cape Verde, investigating how the European instrument was incorporated and re-signified in Kriolu culture. The violin-playing aesthetic is a phenomenon of the dances and autochthonous rhythms of the archipelago, such as the *morna*, *coladeira*, *funaná*, *San Jon* and *batuku*. Even European ballroom dances of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries like the polka and mazurka were assimilated into the Kriolu musical aesthetic and reworked in the light of Cape Verdean violin styles through its characteristic ensembles and instrumentations. My field research on the three Cape Verdean islands of Santiago, São Vicente and Santo Antão documents the fiddle playing I experienced by listening to album recordings released on local labels and attending live performances, including a violin festival held annually on the island of Santo Antão. Cape Verdean musical production has achieved a more transnational status in the post-independence period, giving musicians opportunities to perform on the overseas circuits.

Chapter Three describes the practices associated with one-stringed bowed lutes in continental Africa and the diaspora, and explores the possible connections between Cape

Verde, Mozambique and Brazil. The Cape Verdean one-stringed bowed lute, the *cimboa*, can be found today in the interior of the island of Santiago. The county of São Domingos, where the most traditional practices of the dance genre *batuku* can be found, is home to the renowned singer, Ntóni Denti d’Oro, the *cimboa* player, Mano Mendi, and his apprentice, Pascoal Fernandes, who in recent years has extended fiddle practice across other genres, attempting to legitimate its revival (Hill and Bithell 2014). In this chapter, I analyse the *batuku* and *cimboa* with the help of interviews and recordings, revisiting and reconsidering the debates concerning the *cimboa*’s origins. Based on the instrument’s characteristics, its geographical distribution in Africa and the placement of the resonator hole described by Jacqueline DjeDje (2008), I speculate that the *cimboa* could be a Cape Verdean recreation of the Gambian Fulbe *nyanyeru* or *riti*.¹⁸ I also draw on ethnographic data from the narratives of Brazilian musician Gentil do Orocongo to link his one-stringed bowed lute to the Cape Verdean *cimboa*. I examine a second one-stringed bowed lute from Brazil, referred to as ‘Mozambican’ in the nineteenth-century paintings of Jean-Baptiste Debret and Henry Chamberlain, which has since disappeared. On the basis of iconographic analysis, I hypothesise a connection with the one-stringed fiddle practices of the Makua and Yao, two ethnic groups transported to Brazil in the last phase of the Atlantic slave trade. The tradition of *tchakare/tchkwèsa* playing is still maintained in Niassa province in northern Mozambique, where I conducted field research.

Chapter Four moves onto an analysis of *rabeca* playing in the *folias de reis* (the revelries of kings) and the *fandango* dance genre, as played and described by musicians in a southeastern Brazilian *quilombo* (former maroon community) of the Vale do Ribeira. Although familiar with this fiddle tradition from my previous activities (the *folia de reis* is performed in many areas of Brazil), my fieldwork gave me a new perspective on its

¹⁸ The Fulbe and other people of Senegambia also employ the Wolof term, *riti* (DjeDje 2008: 65).

distinctive regional significance as it focused on the narrative provided by a large Afro-Brazilian family regarding what they perceive as African elements in the musical, dance and cultural practices as a whole. The *rabeca*, which is the focus of the analysis, plays a significant role in these dynamic, syncretic musical practices which cannot be disassociated from their religious and social function within popular Catholic rituals. Both traditions, the *folia de reis* and the *fandango*, are in a fragile state of preservation, and are reported by their informants as being on the verge of disappearance due to the pressures of social change and the influence of urban recorded music. At the same time, however, in association with the rituals of popular Catholicism and the socio-economic networks of the rural agricultural economy, these musical traditions offer a focus for resistant cultural identities and for the formulation of political demands. In affirming its own collective memory of the ‘Africanness’ of its musical practices, the community has challenged the state’s official narratives, and its patrimonial claim has formed part of a campaign for the recognition and demarcation of its ancestral lands.¹⁹

¹⁹ The Federal Constitution of 1988 (article 68 of the Transitional Constitutional Provisions (ADCT) provided for the right of the remaining *quilombo* communities to ownership of their lands. Despite recent attempts in 2018 to amend the act, the Supreme Court has reaffirmed it. The definition of a *quilombo* that has prevailed is that of the Brazilian Association of Anthropology (ABA): that is, a black community, not necessarily founded by ex-slaves, which established practices of resistance, and has continued to maintain and reproduce its characteristic way of life in a certain place (O’Dwyer 2002).

CHAPTER TWO

THE VIOLIN IN CAPE VERDE

Introduction

The Cape Verde archipelago is located approximately 500 km west of Senegal (see map 2.1) and is divided into two groups of islands, the Ilhas do Barlavento or Windward Islands (comprising Santo Antão, São Vicente, Santa Luzia, São Nicolau, Sal and Boa Vista) and the Ilhas do Sotavento or Leeward Islands (Maio, Santiago, Fogo and Brava). The Portuguese settled these volcanic islands in the fifteenth century (between 1456 and 1462), although there is some speculation as to whether peoples from the African continent – possibly the Wolof, Serer, Lebu or Lebu-Wolof – had already discovered the archipelago before the Europeans (Carreira 1982). However, if they did so, they did not establish any systematic, long-term settlements (Albuquerque 2001).



Map 2.1. Administrative map of Cape Verde. (Source: Nations Online Project)

Due to its strategic location, Cape Verde was rapidly incorporated into the Atlantic trading routes and became an integral part of the transatlantic slave trade. According to Antonio Carreira (1982: 5), slavery was not a legal activity at first, but the Portuguese crown soon recognised its profitability, particularly in furthering its aim to exploit new, potentially productive land. Slavery was practiced in the Iberian Peninsula throughout the wars waged by the Portuguese crown against the Islamic states. The enslavement of sub-Saharan Africans was justified by the ideology of this so-called ‘Holy War’; however, it also became associated with a second factor, the ideology of race and colour, which enabled Portuguese navigators to distinguish who could be forced into slavery (Green 2011). Thus, the transatlantic slave trade and the demands of the plantation system in the

Americas that it fed from the sixteenth century onwards, not only affected the societies of West Africa, but was also instrumental in the institutionalisation of forced labour in Cape Verde. The archipelago played a significant role in this human trade, supplying passing slave ships with staple foods and providing slaves themselves to ships that came directly to the archipelago from the Americas without docking on the Upper Guinea coast (Green 2011: 15).

Cape Verde was populated by white Europeans (the majority Portuguese, but with a small percentage from other parts of Europe), Jews and sub-Saharan Africans – the latter were soon caught up in the Atlantic slave trade. The precise numbers of the various ethnic groups from sub-Saharan Africa who were forcibly displaced to the Americas remained unknown for many years due to the lack of records and the loss or destruction of documents and archives, among other factors. However, recent studies have been able to supply more accurate data, thanks to surveys on a number of different fronts. David Eltis and David Richardson (2010), for example, refer to 12.5 million Africans transported to the New World and provide details of their ethnic groups, the states they came from in Africa, and their ports of departure and arrival. In Cape Verde itself, the most reliable source is the census data from 1827 to 1868 (Carreira 1982: 411), particularly from the island of Santiago, one of the older settlements, which operated as a slave warehouse for the Atlantic trade. This data reveals that a total of twenty-seven different sub-Saharan ethnic groups and sub-groups entered Cape Verde during this period (Carreira 1983: 321). The most significant groups in terms of numbers were the Bambara, Balanta, Banhuns, Bijagos, Fula, Jolof, Mandinka, Papel, Manjak and Nalu,²⁰ while the main ethnic groups that contributed to the formation of contemporary Cape Verdean society were the Mandinka, Fula and Balanta.

²⁰ António Carreira (1982) provides tables referring to the ethnic groups, and the provenance, individual names, ages and occupations of the sub-Saharan peoples in Cape Verde.

The geographical position of the Western Sahel is characterised by its arid to semi-arid climate. Cape Verde is also affected by the fact that it is part of the intertropical convergence zone,²¹ and this has helped define its pattern of human occupation (Amaral 1991). The irregularity of the rainfall in the islands causes persistent droughts – catastrophic ones were reported in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – and its lack of water and its poor soil have had a detrimental effect on the archipelago’s subsistence-based agriculture. Arable land constitutes twelve per cent of the total land area, which yields only temporary crops and pasture. Thus, the economy is overwhelmingly dependent on external factors and therefore highly susceptible to the volatility of the international markets. As a result, Cape Verde has experienced several cycles of migration from the late-nineteenth century on, continuing after it gained its independence from Portugal in 1975. By forcing many of its population to seek a living elsewhere, the archipelago’s geo-economic conditions have created a far-flung Cape Verdean diaspora that is responsible, either directly or indirectly, for a steady flow of remittances that contributes substantially to investment in the islands. In the last decades, however, Cape Verde has also been supported by European partners, and tourism from Europe has become an increasingly important economic sector.

The Cape Verdean communities formed in the diasporic spaces of the Americas, Europe and mainland Africa have become points of connection for new migrant networks with a broader geopolitical scope. Numerous academic debates have addressed the importance of music for these diasporic connections, particularly in relation to the establishment of a collective Cape Verdean identity, with studies emphasising that the sense of cultural belonging that migrants experience through musical practices has helped reconstruct Cape Verdean subjectivities abroad (e.g., Pereira 1998; Cidra 2008; Arenas

²¹ A belt of converging trade winds and rising air that encircles the earth near the Equator.

2011). As a consequence of this internationalisation, Cape Verdean culture has been widely distributed, not only catapulting its music beyond the archipelago but also allowing it to absorb new aesthetic influences, with subsequent effects on the local recording and music production scene. The present research focuses on the musical practices of the post-1975 period, when a more globalised market began to focus on ‘ethnic music’, incorporating local minority groups into the rapidly expanding category known as ‘world music’. It was in this context that Cape Verdean music became more internationally available, with record labels releasing albums in Europe and the United States.

One of the the traditional instruments of Cape Verdean music is the violin, and it is found on all the islands of the archipelago. Instrumental ensembles associated with genres such as *morna*, *coladeira*, *contradança* and *taláia-báxu* traditionally consist of a violin, two guitars and a *cavaquinho*; they rarely include drums but instead use idiophones (different types of rattles) as percussion instruments. However, this formation varies more widely in contemporary groups, which often include accordions, bass guitars, drums and clarinets, as well as vocalists. In these ensembles, the violin is used for solos or to provide a counterpoint to the vocal lines.

Cape Verdean music combines European and African influences, reflecting the archipelago’s social formation. This is because the reconstruction of subjectivities in diasporic spaces engages cultural expression in a circular dialogue – the local is carried abroad with the migratory flows of Cape Verdeans, and it returns bearing new cultural influences from Western musical sources, especially European dance music. The African elements of Cape Verdean dances (such as the *batuku* and *fição*) and their musical instruments (for example, the one-stringed bowed lute called the *cimboa*) resisted the attentions of the colonial regime; however, due to the lack of historical sources and the

transformative creolisation of the islands, it is generally very difficult to connect Cape Verdean musical practices to African mainland cultures. Cape Verdean violin playing has its own, unique techniques that inform its particular style and aesthetics – I analyse these techniques in this chapter through the transcription of a few of these pieces. The melodic development of the violin line is intrinsically related to rhythmic patterns connected to specific dances. The music is diverse and can differ from island to island; nevertheless, the genres that are generally played on the violin are part of a common repertoire that musicians interpret according to their own specific style. These rhythmic patterns and dances comprise a source that musicians from the different islands draw from and use to communicate with each other, and include the *coladera*, *morna*, *contradança*, *taláia-báxu* and *mazurka* – names that also refer to the music genres associated with the violin.

The music of violinist Antoninho Travadinha is a touchstone for all violin music both in the archipelago and abroad, probably as a consequence of the recordings he made in Portugal in the 1980s and his international status during the post-independence period. My research was inspired by listening to Travadinha's recordings; they introduced me to the archipelago's distinct instrumental tradition and led me to inquire about other violinists who, for the most part, continue to live and perform in Cape Verde. I collected most of the data presented in this study during my fieldtrips to Cape Verde in 2009 and 2014. The violinists I interviewed frequently mentioned Travadinha in relation to their own repertoire and style, and as this is a predominantly aural tradition, they referred to his recordings and radio shows. My fieldwork was carried out on the islands of Santiago, Santo Antão and São Vicente, where I interviewed the musicians Nhó Nani, Kim Alves, Breka, César Costa and Pascoal Fernandes, a guitarist who also plays the *cimboa*. These fieldtrips also yielded invaluable information about recorded albums, instruments and texts that would have been extremely difficult to access outside the islands; however, it

was the recordings of Travadinha and the singer Nhó Tani Denti D'Oro which provided me with the core material that was key to my understanding of these music genres.

Transnational cultures

The creolisation process in Cape Verde was a result of centuries of cultural encounters between Africans and Europeans, the main outcome of which was the Cape Verdean language, Kriolu.²² The various music genres among the different islands are thus united by a mutual understanding that is mediated through both music and language. As Elisa Andrade (2002: 265) comments, '[o]verall it can be said that the archipelago is characterized by a relatively homogeneous Creole culture, with widely shared traditions and a common linguistic heritage'. This 'homogeneous' creole culture, as suggested by Andrade, was established through syncretic cultural practices: the diverse cultural elements salvaged from the cultural ruptures experienced by the enslaved peoples from sub-Saharan Africa were reorganised to form the basis of Cape Verde's music, language and religion. Peter Fryer (2000: 173) defines Cape Verde as 'a hybrid and syncretic society of unusual intellectual and historical interest since at many levels of sensibility, and of social contact, African elements interpenetrate the imposed European patterns'.

Kriolu itself was formed as a result of the contact in Santiago between West African languages (mostly those of peoples from Senegambia, such as the Mande, Wolof and Temne) and Portuguese (Rougé 1999: 61). Applying the linguistic concepts of Noam Chomsky, Dereck Bickerton (1983: 67-8) argues that 'there is an innate universal grammar underlying all human languages' and that 'all children in their learning process will access this innate grammar of inherent human codes that are available from the local

²² This thesis uses the spelling of 'Kriolu' differently from the more broadly used term 'creole'. It does so in response to 'native' Cape Verdean language use and to the use of this spelling by authors such as Márcia Rego (2008) and Fernando Arenas (2011).

vocabulary'. This is one explanation of the way Kriolu evolved not simply as a syntax or a grammatical reduction of Portuguese but as a distinct language. Márcia Rego describes how this formative process took place through negotiation with and resistance to the colonial regime:

Kriolu is a convergence (or clash) of two opposing movements. The first toward collaboration – between coloniser and colonised, between master and slave, between Portuguese and Cape Verdean and African slavers, between slavers and the Catholic Church. The second movement, in contrast, was geared toward differentiation, whether in the form of exclusion, resistance [or] subversion. Thus, from its very origins, Kriolu was located, paradoxically, both within and outside of the Portuguese language. (Rego 2008: 147)

The consolidation of this local language is significant, considering how the great majority of Cape Verdeans living abroad have recreated their sense of identity through maintaining the Kriolu language spoken in their homeland. This sort of cultural development related to language did not occur in the same way in Brazil, due to that country's far greater geographical dimensions: although Brazilian Portuguese displays clear evidence of African and Amerindian influences at the level of its lexicon and phonology, indigenous and African languages were completely discarded in favour of Portuguese. According to Manuel Ferreira (1973), the isolated, highly mixed and fragile social structure in Cape Verde, with its scarce agrarian resources, created a differentiated regional behaviour that privileged Kriolu over the language of the colonisers. By contrast, in Brazil, with its distinct lack of cultural homogeneity due to the country's size, the Portuguese language was the norm and the South American Tupi-Guarani language, for instance, lost ground because minorities did not become completely 'acculturated'. Consequently, such languages continue to be spoken only among small communities. Speakers of Portuguese, which reached larger segments of society and easily overwhelmed these minority

languages, became the dominate linguistic group. As minority communities were slowly integrated into the country's new social structures, they were forced to succumb almost completely to the language of the coloniser.

During the eighteenth century, 'creole' was an ethnic designation that referred to the first colonial generation born outside of Europe. The term, however, acquired a broader definition as creolisation occurred in the Americas and the African colonies from the nineteenth century onwards. Benedict Anderson argues that the capacity for unification based on the language spoken among the creole communities of the Americas meant that they naturally turned to the language of the coloniser:

In the first place, whether we think of Brazil, the USA, or the former colonies of Spain, language was not an element that differentiated them from their respective imperial metropolises. All, including the USA, were creole states, formed and led by people who shared a common language and common descent with those against whom they fought. (Anderson 2006: 47)

Following independence in 1975, as with other former African colonies, Cape Verde continued to be subject to the after-effects of the colonial system. However, the Kriolu language possessed the autonomy to function both as a source of resistance and of negotiation during the colonial period, and as a component of integration after independence. This factor also had implications for the diasporic spaces most Cape Verdeans inhabit today. By way of contrast, in the mixed colonies of the Americas and Europe, the language of the coloniser functioned not as a point of differentiation but as a force for integration.

In the nationalist, pro-independence movements in Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau, the Kriolu language was used to promote the political interests of different groups or parties. The tropes of nationalism and cultural unification were employed to further

the interests of centralist parties, often committed to socialist ideals, which aimed to control the state after winning freedom from colonial control. Patrick Chabal (2002: 27) argues that the aim of the one-party states formed in all the Portuguese ex-colonies after independence was ‘to establish a socialist state not just to capture the economy but also to transform society, that is to create the political and administrative structures to enable the party to control virtually all levels of society’. However, these pro-independence movements contained not only those who wished to see a one-party, self-sufficient national government with socialist principles but also many who were intellectually and politically committed ‘Africanists’. An independence movement grounded in pan-African ideology had emerged in opposition to years of colonial advance to form a certain national consciousness among the African subjects of colonial rule. As a collective ideology, however, it seemed to operate more within the cultural realm than in the national political sphere in Cape Verde itself. It aimed to focus attention on African subjectivities after centuries of Portuguese imperial rule, which was regarded as less hierarchical, more ‘miscegenated’ and informal than other European colonial regimes (Morier-Genoud and Cahen 2012).

The subsequent period in Cape Verde culminated in a multi-party system and a more liberal economic regime intent on opening the country up to the global market. According to Elisa Andrade (2002), however, these political transformations did not give Cape Verde any guarantees of sustainable human development and led to an acceleration of emigration, enhancing the role of music, which achieved even greater significance among the diaspora in the Americas and Europe. Yet, despite the international status the archipelago has gained through its music, the musicians I interviewed in Cape Verde stressed that they face the same historical problems of unemployment or low income as they struggle to survive in an unbalanced, basically informal economy. Their relative

poverty contrasts with the earnings of their compatriots who migrated abroad. This is the case for the majority of the musicians still living in the archipelago.

During the upsurge of national movements in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, which contributed to the era of independence in the former European colonies, folk music was frequently imbued with the ideology of nationalism. According to this new political concept of the 'nation', major aesthetic notions and styles could be ascribed to the need to express a sense of 'collective belonging'. In the cultural sphere, nationalism emerged as a post-romantic reaction to the Eurocentric scholastic institutions: the conservatoires, academies and concert halls (where music performances had already become a profitable business). In Cape Verde, a nationalist stance was more comprehensible on the level of community bonding due to the role music played both locally and abroad as, according to Rui Cidra (2008: 106), 'music operated as social mediation abroad through community networks while maintaining emotional and intellectual connections with the homeland'. However, the emergence of independence movements in Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde and other colonies led the Portuguese government to impose a change in the status of citizenship, removing Portuguese nationality from those without immediate kin born in Portugal. This caused problems of mobility for many inhabitants and represented a real loss for those people who, following independence, struggled to establish their rights in a globalised world. The citizenship of the Kriolu community had previously guaranteed a certain degree of mobility within the Portuguese empire; the actions of the Portuguese state, post-independence, affected border crossings between Africa and Europe.

Since the earliest stages of settlement in Cape Verde, a racial ideology had operated as a means of justifying slavery. The social pyramid was structured with whites at the top, *forros* (free blacks) in the middle, and slaves at the bottom. A more

systematised racial ideology emerged in the twentieth century and was put into practice by the military governments of Antonio de Oliveira Salazar and Marcelo Caetano in Lisbon. This late colonial regime, which led to the wars of independence, was responsible for maintaining and disseminating a racial ideology in its colonies that was ‘especially important [to Portuguese rule] after World War II, when other European powers began to relinquish (or were forced to relinquish) their territorial claims in Africa and Asia’ (Meintel 1984: 73). The political regime proposed that ‘the colonies and Portugal formed a single state, with a single economy and a single citizenship, and granted that the islands would never become independent and have to fend for themselves or establish economic self-sufficiency’ (Newitt 1981: 217-18). In the post-independence period, however, the racial ideology that had once allowed a certain autonomy to those free blacks and Kriolu connected to the metropole became instead a means of exclusion; it thus no longer coincided with the interests of the urban elite in Cape Verde and racial agency no longer empowered the universalising concept of *creolidade* (Fikes 2007).

As mentioned above, the Cape Verde diaspora that emerged as a consequence of the migratory movements fuelled by socio-economic factors formed a networked community. To some extent, this implies a more subversive political intention, a desire to break with the imperialist order that segregated Africans in their own lands and abroad. In such a context, music works as a mode of autonomy: it has the ability to cross international borders and the barriers of citizenship to acquire recognition in a mixed cultural environment and help maintain the autonomy of a national culture subsisting within the confines of another, dominant culture. Once we realise this, ‘integration’ takes on a different political perspective – it does not mean abandonment of the place of origin and its related traditions; on the contrary, the link is normally preserved, but now it is not necessarily overwhelmed by essentialist demands. New influences from abroad are

incorporated without breaking with the notions of tradition and homeland: a group of musicians can use their characteristic musical style to define precisely which structural elements are recognisably Cape Verdean and which are not. In this sense, Cape Verdean nationalism conforms to Anderson's (2006: 5-6) conception of 'an imagined political community' that is 'imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign'.

Using this concept of 'imagined communities' to reflect on Cape Verdean music begs the question of how national musical frameworks can be 'deterritorialised' or detached from their national origins, style and aesthetics. Detaching nationality from music genres or the aesthetic phenomena through which they are perceived represents a challenge since the idea of origins and roots are part of the national discourse in music – as it was throughout all the encounters and diasporic collisions between African and European cultures in the 'black Atlantic' (Gilroy 1993). Musicians tend to assert the origins of their music as a means of maintaining tradition, generally avoiding replacing elements of a specific style with forms from another branch of music. However, the national framework's denial of self-identification in terms of performance, composition and above all the music marketplace prompted an anti-essentialist demand for greater diversity of expression. Such a stance denied culture any 'national place' or origin. This has led to a dualistic approach: at one extreme, nationally rooted music is regarded as a purely nationalist phenomenon; at the other, musical fusion is perceived as lacking any roots (anti-essentialism). However, the meta-narrative of 'anti-anti-essentialism' offers a potential way out of this impasse. Paul Gilroy (1993), for example, appears to avoid this problematic duality by attempting to mediate a local spatial delimitation of music. As the Cape Verdean archipelago was, historically, an essential intersection in the Atlantic slave trade, it could be thought of in broader geopolitical terms as a part of the Lusophone 'black Atlantic'. Arguably, therefore, Gilroy's notion of Atlantic identity as a non-fixed

essence in the context of local and transnational spaces can be applied to Cape Verde and its music:

The pre-eminence of music within the diverse black communities of the Atlantic diaspora is itself an important element in their essential connectedness. But the histories of borrowing, displacement, transformation, and continual reinscription that the musical culture encloses are a living legacy that should not be reified in the primary symbol of the diaspora and then employed as an alternative to the recurrent appeal of fixity and rootedness. (Gilroy 1993: 102)

This discussion seems to echo the Cape Verdean musical experience and the way its music genres were transformed by the influences of the new cultural spaces of the diaspora. According to Fernando Arenas:

It is in 1917, in New Bedford, Massachusetts (the epicentre of Cape Verdean migration to the United States), where the first manifestations of Cape Verdean music outside the archipelago can be situated. It was there where the Ultramarine Band, which included both Cape Verdean and Portuguese immigrants, mixed Creole sounds with the military marches that were popular at the time. (Arenas 2011: 49)

Music genres from the Americas had become more pertinent to Cape Verdean music from the 1930s onwards, including the Brazilian samba, which arrived with the Brazilian ships and influenced the music of B. Leza, Luís Rendall and Muchin d'Monte, for example (Martins 1989: 21). Jazz was another source of inspiration for Cape Verdean musicians living in the northeast of the United States. As Arenas notes:

[B]y the 1940s, as Cape Verdean musicians assimilated to American culture, they absorbed jazz influences by incorporating the piano, drums, and saxophone [...]. In the 1940s Columbia Records signed up some of these groups that mixed Americanized Cape Verdean music with Cuban and South American sounds. (Arenas 2011: 49)

The violin in Cape Verde is the main instrument of the ensembles which, at an earlier stage, performed European ballroom dances such as the Polish mazurka, Czech polka, German waltz, Bohemian *schottische* and the mixed-origin Scottish-English-French contradance. Some of these dances were transformed in the Americas, mainly due to their encounter with Afro-Brazilian dances such as the *lundu*, mixing with the *habanera* rhythmic patterns and the *tresillo*. The results were genres like *choro*, *schottische-choro* and *maxixe*. Some of these dance genres also became part of Cape Verdean music (Brito 1998). Afro-Cuban dance genres like *son*, *mambo* and *chachachá* were also assimilated into Cape Verde's musical genres and were performed in the archipelago. These influences can be noticed in the style of violin playing on the more recent recordings made by Nhó Djonzinho Alves and Nhó Nani.

The violin in Cape Verde

The Cape Verdean violin is physically no different, in terms of its construction, to the standard Western violin that was invented in Italy in the sixteenth century and modified in the eighteenth to become the modern violin we know today. This is the instrument Cape Verdean musicians play with no variation in its tuning – at least as far as contemporary players are concerned. However, the term '*rabeca*', which alludes to popular or folk music, is also used to distinguish traditional Cape Verdean violin playing from that of musicians formally trained in the European classical style. Nevertheless, despite the similar terminology, the Cape Verdean violin differs from the Portuguese

rabeca and the huge variety of Brazilian fiddles,²³ although there is a *rabeca* in Cape Verde, called the *rabeca de caco de bli*, whose resonator is made of gourd.²⁴

Violinists are employed in traditional ensembles (which most often consist of a violin, *cavaquinho*, guitar, clarinet, accordion, saxophone and idiophones, usually rattles such as *chocalhos* and *maracas*) either as soloists or to create countermelodies to the leading voice. Some of the music genres in Cape Verde are shared among violinists from the different islands, forming a common repertoire, while other genres and styles are related to specific islands: for example, the *morna*, *coladeira* and mazarca are generally part of the standard repertoire of violinists but the *contradança* is more related to Santo Antão and the *taláia-báxu* to Fogo.

In his work, *Aspéctos Evolutivos da Música Cabo-Verdiana (Evolutionary Aspects of Cape Verdean Music)* (2005), Manuel Tavares compiles a list of Cape Verdean musical instruments and their players (see Appendix 1), organised as a table with columns for name, locality and island. The list comprises approximately three hundred violinists and includes players from all the nine inhabited islands. During my research in the field in 2014, however, I was able to interview violinists who are not included in this list, indicating that the number of violinists might be even greater and the tradition of violin playing is still thriving throughout the archipelago.

²³ The *rabeca* is a bowed stringed lute of Portuguese origin that is found in many musical traditions in Brazil. The instrument that is found in northern regions of Portugal, such as Minho, Douro Litoral and Beira Litoral, is the shorted-neck *rabeca chuleira*, which is used in popular music ensembles (Oliveira 1982 [1966]: 224). According to Luis Soler (1978: 100), the *rabeca* was originally a Renaissance instrument, whose form was influenced by the Arabic knowledge of music and musical instruments that was transmitted to Europe in the medieval era during the melding of cultures in the Iberian Peninsula. Veiga de Oliveira (1982) maintains that the *rabeca* is of North African origin and is a variation of the Arab *rebab*. The medieval *rebec* is the instrument most closely related to the Arabic *rebab* (Panum 1939; Bachmann 1969). The Brazilian instruments, which are not standardised in terms of shape or measurement, also have different tuning and string numbering according to the different regional traditions. They are associated with popular drama, dances and religious rituals.

²⁴ The *rabeca de caco de bli* is a bowed stringed lute, whose resonator is made of gourd and covered with goatskin to form the table. It is a four-string instrument, and is used as a substitute by musicians who cannot afford to buy a real violin. This happened more frequently in the past, when the European instrument was imported to Cape Verde but was considered too expensive for most local musicians (Brito 1998: 86).

According to Margarida Brito, the violin probably landed in Cape Verde at the end of the eighteenth century or in the early nineteenth century:

On the island of Boa Vista, people still [hold] balls of ‘rabicada’ dance [music] which uses the violin as the main instrument. It is in the *Lundu*, a form of music that still exists on the island, that the violin takes a more prominent role. [...] A very common feature in older violinists is marking [time] with their feet, when they are seated... In the old days, there even used to be a wooden tablet, which served [as an] authentic percussion instrument. (Brito 1998: 80)

The presence of the Brazilian *lundu* in contemporary Cape Verdean violin music is obviously reminiscent of the set of dances and theatrical performances that took place in Portugal and South America between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.²⁵ Although António Lima (2004: 272) emphasises that the *lundu* was historically part of the slaves’ repertoire of resistance on the island of Boa Vista and has its origins in ritualistic African dances connected to fertility rites, it later became a dance performed by all social classes in very different contexts and places (Ulhôa 2013: 11); Nestor Canclini (2008) uses the term ‘hybrid’ to refer to its transnational and presumably transcultural character. Cape Verde, as a point of intersection for ships travelling between Brazil and Europe, may have assimilated the *lundu* into the violin music Brito describes above, and it was no doubt born out of the cultural exchange between Brazilian sailors and the inhabitants of Boa Vista, spreading through the archipelago along the trading routes between the islands (Lima 2004: 279). However, even if – as is indicated – this genre has been preserved in small communities, it has since disappeared from most musicians’ repertoire and from mainstream album recordings. During my fieldwork, musicians from islands other than

²⁵ The *lundu* is an Afro-Brazilian dance of Angolan origin (Cascardo 1972). It was originally a Bantu-Kikongo dance filled with erotic meaning – a choreographed simulation of the sexual act (Tinhorao 1994: 28-29). However, the Afro-Brazilian dance, most notably the ballroom *lundu*, has also incorporated European influences (Andrade 1999).

Boa Vista did not even mention its name; they mainly related their music to genres such as those already mentioned – the *taláia-báxu*, *morna*, *coladera*, *mazurka*, *polka* and *contradança*. However, in Boa Vista, the *lundu* is still played by ensembles with a lead violin (Brito 1998: 80), and it remains part of the cultural identity of the island's inhabitants (Lima 2004: 272).

The European violin in Cape Verde, therefore, became incorporated into and re-signified in the Kriolu culture and its music integrated with African dances and rhythms. European ballroom music of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, like the *polka* and *mazurka*, were assimilated into the Kriolu style of violin playing – an aural tradition, comprising a set of musical practices with a particular aesthetic that is shared across the generations of musicians in the archipelago. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (2013: 4) describe tradition as a collection of invented rituals, cultural practices and institutions that become embedded in society through a process of formalisation and ritualisation characterised by reference to the past, not least through repetition. In colonial societies, the musical rituals of the colonial rulers were repeated and recreated by military bands and orchestras. Ranger (2013: 211), for example, illustrates how ecclesiastical, educational, military, republican and monarchical traditions, invented in Europe in the nineteenth century, were reconstructed in colonial Africa by the white settlers 'to justify their roles as colonial masters and to reinforce the subservience of Africans'. Cape Verdean violin music, in contrast, is a tradition invented on the 'inside'. Creolisation itself functioned in Cape Verde as a means of resisting the imposed colonial rituals by deploying an African sensibility rather than simply reconstructing Europeans values. In its cultural encounters, creolisation appropriated music and dance from genres such as the *mazurka*, *polka*, *waltz* and *contradance* and assigned them new meanings as they became incorporated into the Kriolu cultural lexicon. Hence, in the context of the cultural

encounters of the Atlantic, this process could be considered not as acculturation or the replacement of elements but as a particular syncretic stance, whereby the imaginary and the symbolic operate through the aesthetic perceptions of individuals or groups in society.

In the post-independence period, from 1975 onwards, the expanded migratory movements heading to the Americas and Europe began to transform Cape Verdean music, mainly due to the growing frequency of recordings made by local musicians and their entry into the ‘world music’ marketplace. For instance, the rise of the singer Cesária Évora (1941-2011) paved the way for many other Cape Verdean artists to conquer the international scene. At the same time, local production companies became increasingly connected to external agencies, as in the case of producer and manager Djô da Silva, who operates simultaneously in Cape Verde’s capital, Praia, and in Paris.

Antoninho Travadinha – the improviser



Figure 2.1. Travadinha playing the violin. (Photograph: Unknown)



Figure 2.2. Travadinha and composer Fernando Lopes Graça. (Photograph: João Freire)

Most Cape Verdean violinists cite Antoninho Travadinha as a major influence, not only because of his reputation as a talented musician, but also due to his ability to express the synergy between traditional music and an improvisational framework in a way that was unique among his musical peers. He personally experienced the transition from the limitations of the colonial era to the flourishing of Cape Verdean music on the world stage, where he represented the archipelago's violin tradition through his repertoire and live performances. However, Travadinha's improvisational interpretations had an even wider impact, giving the traditional dance genres a far greater stylistic freedom: in particular, two of the albums he recorded in Portugal, one of them released in France as

Le Violon Du Cap Verde, became historical reference points in the Cape Verdean violin tradition.

Born Antônio Vicente Lopes in Santo Antão (1937-1987) to a family of musicians, Travadinha started performing with his father at local dances while still a child. However, it was later, in his forties, that he achieved widespread recognition after performing in Portugal. He became renowned for conquering the international scene – in Portugal, for example, he recorded live at Lisbon’s most historic jazz club, the Hot Club de Lisboa. João Freire (1988), reviewing one of these performances, wrote: ‘In musical terms, Travadinha is deeply rooted in tradition, but his interpretations are developed in a completely unique style, always reinventing each melodic phrase, and adding extensive improvisations to the songs he plays.’²⁶ Travadinha played the rhythmic genres of Cape Verde typically related to dance music, although it is not clear if his sense of melodic improvisation was derived from American music such as jazz, which was such a significant influence on Cape Verdeans living in North America and was rapidly assimilated into the music of the archipelago itself. On the one hand, he developed an improvisational melodic discourse similar to that of the great African-American jazz players, but on the other he maintained the same stylistic treatment of traditional genres as other Cape Verdean musicians when playing the *morna*, *coladeira* and *mazurka*. As such, his interpretations could be perceived as traditional music imbued with a personal, improvisational character.

In 1982 Travadinha arrived in Portugal with his group, most of them musicians living in São Vicente and Lisbon (this recruitment pattern was not unusual as many Cape Verdean musicians established transnational links and their bands incorporated players

²⁶ See João Freire’s introduction in the accompanying booklet to *Travadinha no Hot Club* (Africazz Records, AF200001, CD, 1998).

from the various diasporic spaces outside their country) and was recorded live at the Hot Club. According to Freire, in his review on the album's sleeve notes:

In 1982 Travadinha travelled to Portugal to participate in the Second Vilar de Mouros Festival. On his way through Lisbon, the Hot Club opened its doors to him and Antoninho made his fiddle sound in a way never before heard in our jazz cathedral. The best tradition of improvised music and contagious swing was not lacking but the language was Cape Verdean Creole. On the night of 21 August 1982, the Hot Club of Portugal overflowed with people and enthusiasm, because in that small room the music of Cape Verde coming from the fiddle of António Vicente Lopes, Travadinha, was heard as he only knows how. He was vibrantly applauded, in a climate of complete communication, counting on the support of excellent accompanists. Travadinha played at ease, with no established programme, giving way to his creativity and imagination. What a delight! (Freire 1998: 4)

Below is the transcription of a small part of the concert that created the atmosphere evoked by Freire (music example 2.1.). 'Stancha' is a piece by an unknown composer. I have transcribed the musical theme and two-and-a-half chorus improvisations for the violin only in order to analyse Travadinha's phrasing and technique. The line-up of musicians who participated in the performance of the piece comprised Travadinha on violin, Teodoro Lopes, Armando Tito and Agostinho on guitars, Mario on *cavaquinho* and Lino Nascimento on *chocalho* (rattle).

Music example 2.1. (track 1)

$\text{♩} = 138$

26 Dm Gm *gliss.*

34 Dm A7 *gliss.*

43 Dm Gm *gliss.*

51 Dm A7

59 Dm *tr* Improvisation Gm

67 Dm A7

73 Dm Gm

81 Dm A7

89 Dm Gm

97 Dm A7

Detailed description: This musical score is for a piece in 2/4 time with a tempo of 138 beats per minute. It consists of ten staves of music, each starting with a measure number. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score includes various chords: Dm, Gm, and A7. It features several triplets (marked with a '3' and a bracket) and glissandos (marked with 'gliss.'). An improvisation section is indicated between measures 59 and 67, featuring a trill (marked 'tr') and a sixteenth-note run (marked '6'). The notation includes slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like 'tr' and '6'.

melodic descent, playing a F# in bar 82, borrowed from the harmonic field of Gm. The rhythmic and melodic patterns of the solo vary considerably with the improvisation. Bar 77 starts with a well-defined period (see the long brackets); the following period, starting on bar 93, works as a variation of the first; and both periods start with the same phrase and conclude with an F note, a major seventh chord broken in arpeggio and ending on the third of the chord (see the short brackets). Travadinha uses descending arpeggios on bars 81, 91, 97, 99, 107 (in squares), which creates some tension with the harmony but is always resolved by the consonance of the following chord. The varied motifs in both periods reveal a systematic development of the improvisation within the formal structure.

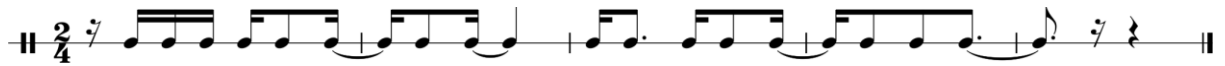
Travadinha performs ‘Stancha’ with a *coladeira* rhythm, structured by a fast duple metre that was regarded as speeding up the *morna* – a genre that is usually played at a slow tempo (Brito 1998; Tavares 2005). The *coladeira* is considered a recent phenomenon, spreading across Cape Verde from the island of Sao Vicente in the 1950s. One hypothesis for the use of this kind of dance rhythm is the influence of African-American rhythms; another relates it to the revival of African practices that introduced a sensual and rhythmic background into Cape Verdean music (Ferreira 1973: 192). The *coladeira*’s lyrics are satirical in character, deploying social criticism and jokes. Ferreira (1973) believes that it was a cultural development of the Kriolu people (Cabo-Verdiano), who used it to express their freedom in the face of colonial censorship, revealing their rebellious nature and self-confidence, unafraid to appear ridiculous. The representation of the rhythmic pattern is as follows:

Music example 2.2.



In the introduction to the piece, we can hear a rhythmic signal starting in bar 20. It was not possible to identify which instrument was playing this beat; however, as Freiere (who was responsible for recording this live session) describes in the album's accompanying booklet, Travadinha beat the bow on the violin table.²⁷ The rhythmic structure of this motif is different from the *coladeira* pattern. The transcription of this rhythm is as follows:

Music example 2.3. (track 1)



Freire observes that Travadinha was probably correcting the rhythm or the tempo. As the structure of the rhythm is different from the *coladeira* pattern, however, he could have been intending something other than rhythmic pattern and tempo – possibly it was an indication of the kind of groove he wanted.

I am aware that the analysis of transcriptions of Cape Verdean fiddle playing and their related rhythmic patterns represents a personal approach – as Richard Widdess (1994: 61) warns, transcribing music automatically introduces a level of imprecise and subjective judgement. Arguably, however, maintaining a musicological perspective, whether in relation to the notation of African music or the experience of the performance itself, enabled me to improve my understanding of some of the characteristic techniques of Cape Verdean violinists. This approach assisted my conceptualisation of the technique, style and, ultimately, aesthetic perception of the fiddle tradition. In the case of the music of Cape Verde, and the violin in particular, this involved observing the phrasing of the rhythmic patterns in the music genres related to the dances of the archipelago.

²⁷ See Freire in the accompanying booklet to *Travadinha no Hot Club* (Africazz Records, AF200001, CD, 1998).

Travadinha's style is an elaboration of aspects of a specific fiddle tradition combined with a personal approach to improvisation. Violin playing in Cape Verde, as an aural practice, follows certain cultural parameters: it communicates through its playing techniques, using the left hand, and employs bowing techniques that are associated with elements of the rhythmic patterns of local dances, the main ones being *detaché* and *legato*. A short overview of Travadinha's violin technique is described below:

- *Bow*: Basically, the bowing is used to interpolate *detaché* and *legato* from the middle to the tip. The *legato* occurs on cross-measure syncopation. The sound could be considered similar to the jazz violin's 'tip of the bow', described by Stéphane Grappelli (Glaser and Grapelli 1981) as 'the right point to swing'. The tremolo is also employed in the improvisation, including tremolo on double stops, as in bar 133.
- *Left hand*: Glissando – note the approximation and bend.
- *Rhythm*: Syncopation – recurrent contrametric accentuation generating tension with the metric hierarchy of the measure.
- *Breathing*: This speeds up or slows down the tempo and in the process conveys emotion over the structures and establishes personal control of the timing of the characteristic *coladeira* rhythm. This does not necessarily indicate the use of *rubato*; rather, it means playing with a degree of rhythmic freedom that is accomplished through bow control, using similar expressive techniques to other popular violin genres such as swing jazz while continuing to accentuate the Cape Verdean style.

Overall, these techniques reveal a specifically individual way of playing the violin which helps expose those traditional elements that can be treated according to parameters set by

the performer. These parameters, which are related to aesthetic perception, seem more flexible in aural traditions, particularly those with an improvisational character, than in written music. Travadinha respected the parameters of the Cape Verdean violin tradition associated with dance without limiting his interpretation of this tradition, particularly through his use of improvisation. His improvisational style had its subjective aspect but the freedom to improvise was continuously grounded on the rhythmic structure, harmony and form of the music, although the form did not necessarily develop in the chorus as exactly as the theme numbers of the bars indicate. His improvisation occurred over the diatonic scale, eventually using an alteration on the scale degree as chromatic notes that are not part of the chord or harmonic field. He also used a blues note by changing the pitch of the fifth with a specific effect – a lowered fifth. The accentuation frequently occurred on metrically weak points and also in cross-measure syncopation. The technique Travadinha employed in his improvisation illustrates how the timbre renders the Cape Verdean violin tradition unique, with its ensemble of guitars and *chocalho* establishing the overall perception of the timbre.

Travadinha's improvisations of Cape Verdean music were a specific form of expression that he invented to deal with phrase, theme and form. Playing with repetitive rhythmic and harmonic structures through the free expression of improvised music opens the way to realising the endless possibilities offered by a given theme. It seems somewhat similar to the ideas determining improvisation in jazz as a way of establishing a final composition. However, it is important to point out that the analysis above does not equate the transcriptions of the violinist's improvisation with the transcription of a composition. As Andy Hamilton (2007: 215) notes, in order to understand improvisation, we should 'avoid the picture of instant composition', and when discussing the aesthetics of

improvisation as an imperfect art in contrast to the ‘aesthetics of perfection’, composition should not be taken as the paradigm.

Taking this approach as a point of departure, it is possible to broach a humanistic philosophy of music that considers improvisation as a music ‘event’, allowing for the analysis of many aspects of the performance rather than considering the composition itself as the final work. Hamilton (2007: 215) states: ‘The aesthetics of imperfection is right to focus on music as event – a position which subverts the standard perfectionist account whereby works are merely exemplified in performance.’ The spontaneity of Travadinha’s improvisations can be comprehended as an inventive way of performing Cape Verdean pieces, preserving tradition while giving the music a subjective artistic character beyond its local manifestation. Improvisation in traditional, aurally transmitted music, in which a theme is never played the same way twice, cannot be treated using the parameters employed to analyse composition or the notions of aesthetics that are applied to Western classical music. This is exemplified by Travadinha’s version of the popular Cape Verdean song ‘Blimundo’.

‘Blimundo’ relates the tale of an ox with magical powers, who is characterised as a lover of life and freedom. As it is an oral narrative, the tale can vary considerably and it is narrated in multiple versions. In one, the king sends a young man to recapture the runaway Blimundo. The youth sings the ox a magical song, accompanying himself on the *cavaquinho*, and promises him that if he returns he will marry the king’s daughter. Blimundo accepts on the condition that the youth continues singing. Once in the village, however, he is betrayed. In some versions, he kills the king and dies; in others, he escapes with the king’s daughter. According to the fable, the song the young man sang to Blimundo still echoes among Cape Verde’s mountains. On Travadinha’s recording, the *cavaquinho* starts by using plenty of reverb/echo effects. This deeper, longer propagation

of the sound in its traditional style evokes the isolation of the people of the archipelago, living between the mountains and the sea. Music example 2.4. (below) is a transcription of the introduction and theme of 'Blimundo' as recorded by Travadinha on his album, *The Violin of Cape Verde*.²⁸

²⁸ Travadinha, *Feiticeira de Cor Morena (The Violin of Cape Verde)* (Buda Records, 92556-2, CD, 1986).

Music example 2.4. (track 2)

♩ = 64

Violin

Cavaquinho

Acoustic Guitar

8

16

25

34

42

47

1. 2. Em G

D *gliss.* Em G

D *gliss.* Em D *gliss.* B⁷ Em

D *gliss.* B⁷ Em D *gliss.*

B⁷ Em D *gliss.* B⁷ Em

The *cavaquinho* plays the first phrase in a progression to the dominant (bars 1 to 7) and a second phrase in a progression to the tonic (bars 8 to 14). These two phrases work as a call motif, with the response phrase starting on anacrusis in bar 14, a bass line performed on the guitar (bars 14 to 18). These three phrases, played in the introduction, are structured on a pentatonic scale of E-G-A-B-D and comprise the theme. This starts in bar 20 on the violin. The pentatonic in Cape Verde appears in music related to traditional tales known mainly to the older members of the population (Brito 1998: 16). Travadinha plays a lowered fifth B \flat , a blues note that is a melodic descent played through glissando (bars 24, 32, 36, 40, 44, 48). The harmonic progression is i-III-VII for the two first phrases (bars 20 to 34) and i-VII-V7 for the third phrase (bars 34 to 50), notated as Em-G-D and Em-D-B7 in the score. Cape Verdean pieces make frequent use of the chord built on the seventh-scale degree, cadencing upward to the tonic VII-I throughout the process of harmonisation. One example is the song, ‘Sodade’, which is frequently harmonised as i-bVII-i-V7. This functions to soften the constant use of the dominant tonic V-I progression and provides a different harmonic effect, similar to the phrygian tetrachord of the Andalusian cadence i-bVII-VI-V, in minor mode but interrupted. This use of harmonic cadence may have arrived in Cape Verde with the Iberian *folias* and *fandangos*, as mentioned by two of my interviewees, Pascoal Fernandes and Francisco Sequeira; however, I could not find any information in the literature to confirm this connection.

‘Blimundo’ is part of a repertoire of animal-herding songs referred to as *pastorinho de cabra*. In the context of Brazilian folklore, these songs appear in practices such as the *bumba meu boi*, an Afro-Brazilian tradition created by African slaves in colonial Brazil, including the *boi de zabumba* which uses a double-headed bass drum, the *zabumba* (Mukuna 1994: 221). The songs are associated with traditional dances, each with differing rhythms, movements and choreography, and are used to express criticism

of the dominant classes. The *boi* (bull) is the main character, ‘representing for some an African totemic survival’ (Béhague 1998: 347). In Brazil, ox traditions are regarded as syncretic practices that blend elements of Iberian, African and Amerindian cultures. The *aboio*, for example, is another cattle-herding singing form, common among Brazilian *vaqueiros* (cowboys).²⁹

‘Blimundo’, in Travadinha’s interpretation, embodies the technical potential of the Western violin to express an African repertoire and style. When playing this song, he used his personal style of playing to address Cape Verde’s African heritage, giving a glimpse into an African imaginary that has survived in the archipelago mainly due to his musical skill. Travadinha accessed this musical aesthetic, as John Murungi (2011: 35) observes, by listening to stories of African life, a fundamental part of Cape Verde’s oral tradition. While Murungi refers to an African aesthetic and philosophy, it is rather a specifically Cape Verdean aesthetic that is recognizable in the experience of Travadinha and the violin of Cape Verde. This Cape Verdean aesthetic is transmitted rhythmically through what is known in Brazilian music as characteristic syncopation (cross-measure syncopation as seen in in bars 3, 5, 9, 11), the use of glissando so as to emphasize the melodic development, including altered notes such as a major to minor 6th (bars 26, 34, 38, 42, 46, 50), but above all, the embodiment of a mode of social life in the pentatonic structures of an animal-herding song. These structures have averted the risk that this music might be subsumed into classical modes of playing – a potential danger where contemporary Western performance practices associated with the violin have discarded

²⁹ *Aboio* is unaccompanied singing. ‘It is freely improvised, in unmetered rhythm, with long-held notes, legato singing, and frequent glides between pitches. Mostly sung with nonlexical syllables, it utilizes stock endings such as the phrase “*ei boi*”’ (Crook 1998: 328).

the glissando. Instead, in Travadinha's hands the violin has been reinvented as an expression of Cape Verde's African aesthetics.

Research in Santiago (the Ilhas do Sotavento)

I undertook my first journey to Cape Verde – to the islands of São Vicente and Sal – in 2009, to perform with some Cape Verdean musicians from Lisbon. What caught my attention at the time was the popularity of the violin and its ubiquity in the traditional music of the archipelago, where it was played in a whole variety of venues, including in bars and on the streets. This experience aroused my interest and I determined to return one day to undertake more systematic research into the violinists of Cape Verde. My subsequent fieldtrip began in December 2014 on Santiago, the largest island in the archipelago and one of the four Leeward Islands or Ilhas do Sotavento. While browsing in a music store (Harmonia) on the island, as well as purchasing some albums, including two CDs, *Cabo Verde Instrumental*, produced by the Lusafrika label, I met a number of individuals connected to local labels or involved in the production of local musicians. I also unexpectedly encountered someone on the second floor of the shop, close to a busy office, who gave me some contacts and the names of places where I could watch violinists perform; he also made a few phone calls to check if the musicians were still in town. As I was about to leave the shop, I suddenly realised that this was the producer Djô da Silva. I asked a young sales representative at the counter if he could arrange an interview, and after a few minutes I was invited to join da Silva again, who also turned out to be the owner of the shop. The young man told me: 'You're lucky to have him here today. He has a busy schedule, travelling between Europe and Cape Verde, and is leaving in half an hour.' The producer used his network of contacts to help me to structure a plan for meeting and interviewing the violinists.

Da Silva has been producing Cape Verdean musicians since 1983. He was previously an amateur percussionist (whilst working on the Parisian railways) and made his debut as a producer by recording his own band, Sound of Cape. He describes his experience as follows:

I got a place to rehearse, brought the instruments and organised the first party where the band would perform – it was an unexpected success. No one knew how the media worked, so I went to the street for answers. I talked to friends who were working in [the] music [business]. As a result, in three years, between 1983 and 1985, we recorded three albums. I was arranging the contracts, selling the discs, attempting to conduct all of this with dedication and success, so I ended up becoming a manager.

Da Silva chooses each new artist according to his own musical taste and is considered to have a fine, precise instinct for discovering new talent. He participates in all the steps leading to the production of an album: the recording and choice of repertoire, the mixing process, and the decisions about who else should be involved in the production, as well as booking and organising the artists' shows. He produced Cesária Évora, from the time of their very first meeting in Lisbon (where he discovered her singing without a contract or career expectations) until her death in 2011, eventually launching her into international stardom as a Cape Verdean diva. This provided him with extensive experience abroad and he currently works mainly from his office in Paris. Over the last ten years, many more recordings have been made in Cape Verde itself; however, da Silva has managed to reallocate some to Paris, where he still lives and works at the studio facility he calls The Soul, releasing them under his label, Lusáfrica. In terms of the projection of Cape Verdean music, however, da Silva declared that, without a doubt, it is the singers who manage to crack the overseas market, whereas instrumental music, particularly

instrumental violin music, is an example of a style that is mostly oriented to audiences in the archipelago, with the exception of the violinists Bau and Breka, and the guitarist Hernani Almeida, and a few others, who have played in Europe a few times.

As the interview was short, I asked da Silva to suggest a musician I could talk to in more depth. He mentioned Kim Alves, whom he has worked in partnership with at his studio in Praia. Due to the constraints of time, I was unable to garner a significant amount of information regarding Cape Verde's violin music and its players. Da Silva did, however, give me an invaluable overview of the Cape Verdean music market. His knowledge of the market for artists – in the international but particularly the national scene – helped me gain a better understanding of the local violin tradition and how its production operates in the archipelago.

Kim Alves

In my first attempt to interview the violinist Kim Alves, he asked me to visit his home studio. His directions included the remarkable instruction to 'find the street, Nhô Djonzinho Alves', the name of a famous violinist in Santiago, who happens to be his late father. Nhô Djonzinho was also an accomplished mason who built most of the houses in this street, including the family home (located close to the church of Santo Antonio in an area called Machada). This reveals that even though he was considered one of the most important violinists in Cape Verde, Nhô Djonzinho was unable to make a living as a musician. At that time, the music market in Cape Verde was still at an embryonic stage and professional development was only available to a very few musicians. For most, their instruments and performances were intimately related to their lives on a basic, day-to-day level and, as musicians, they played an integral part in their community's entertainment

and rituals. However, before examining Nhô Djonzinho's life in more detail, I will first describe the interview with his son.³⁰



Figure 2.3. The young Kim Alves playing the violin. (Photograph: Unknown).

Alves began playing the *cavaquinho* at the age of six, and by the time he turned ten, he already considered himself a professional musician; thus, by the age of fifty, his career had spanned forty years. Alves has performed with all the major names in Cape Verdean music at both local and international festivals. Although his first instrument was the *cavaquinho*, he was soon playing the violin, followed by the guitar: ‘I am a left-handed player, the same as my father.’ During the interview, Alves demonstrated his strong technique and agility on the guitar; he is in fact one of the most acclaimed

³⁰ In the first part of the interview, I asked Alves about his musical experience and career. I have transcribed the questions that were most relevant to this study, and his answers, as they emerged.

instrumentalists in Cape Verde today, a reputation that is mainly based on his guitar performances. However, he started out by learning the violin with his father: ‘My father was a great violinist, a [musical icon] in Santiago. Almost everyone here learnt from him.’ Alves remarked that he has recorded two albums under the name of the Em Família group: the first, *Tributo*, a tribute to his father, completely sold out, while the second, *Memoria*, was awarded a golden disc, which now hangs in his living room (see figure 2.4). Alves created all the musical arrangements on these albums and played most of the instruments in the recording sessions, using multiple musical styles, not only incorporating influences from different islands but also various Latin styles. As he generally mixes Cape Verdean and imported styles, Alves considers his music ‘universal’, placing it within the world-music spectrum. He also stated in the interview that he was committed to playing many different instruments at almost the same level of skill.

Luiz: *Did you have any formal study or have you learnt everything by ear?*

Alves: When I was ten, I started attending seminars – there was a priest who taught me music theory – but from there on, I studied on my own. I studied harmony for almost twenty years; I studied all these instruments [he points to his studio filled with instruments and equipment]. As a consequence of becoming a father early in life, I had to work; I had no way of going to university. I bought books, I used cassettes and videos – there was nothing like this digitised material available today. So, I learnt alone. I have a lot of experience in terms of theory and practice. It’s interesting: once, when I was in the US, signing up to enter the Berklee College of Music in Boston, they asked me where I graduated! In fact, I just wanted [to gain] a diploma [...] there. Today, I make string arrangements and people still think I studied at a conservatoire, but [I didn’t] really.

Luiz: *Have you been able earn a living through your music, as a professional?*

Alves: Yes, as a performer and as a [sound] engineer and [music] producer.

Alves built on the musical legacy of his father, and despite being mostly self-taught, he then took his musical practice to higher levels by studying different instruments and music theory, as well as learning audio-recording techniques. All these factors, including his work in the studio, both in the recording and postproduction stages, contributed to the expansion of album production in Cape Verde. Thus, beyond his status as a musician, Alves has also become renowned as a producer, and his partnership with his manager, da Silva, has had a considerable impact on the market for Cape Verdean music.

Nhô Djonzinho Alves

In the second part of the interview, I asked Alves about his father, Nhô Djonzinho Alves. As mentioned earlier, Nhô Djonzinho was a famous violin player in Santiago.

Luiz: *Do you know how Nhô Djonzinho learnt to play the violin?*

Alves: He had some friends who were constantly playing. Consequently, he became interested in the instrument and his godfather built him a violin – it was a somewhat rudimentary violin, but he could learn something. From there, [he was] ready to progress to another stage, and he got his first [real] violin and began to play at dance events. He had an anecdote he used to tell: when he started playing the violin, he played two songs very well. People didn't mind that he played only two songs, but then one day he was invited to perform at a dance party. He said: 'How can I do that if I only know two songs? Are you joking with me?' [He was told]: 'Fend for yourself!' So, he played the first half hour of music, then he detuned the strings and turned the pegs to tune the strings again, and another half hour passed. After playing the second song, he repeated the other one once more, and that's how he filled out the whole event. My family is a family of great musicians. My uncle Djedje Matias was one of the great violinists here in Cape Verde, and he taught my father to play. My father was also a composer and a great deal of the songs people play here in Cape Verde are compositions by Nhô Djonzinho. He was a musician on the radio – at that time, there was no recorded music. The radio host spoke and, in the break, Nhô Djonzinho performed. So

people retained these songs in their memories, even some famous songs I didn't even know were my father's compositions. He composed many instrumental songs. My father was [also] a foreman, a bricklayer; I admired how he used to [carry] 10-to-15 kg stones to fit into walls and then [play the violin with] an an incredibly refined sound and sensibility.

Alves' revelation that Nhô Djonzinho was a radio musician is significant. His identification of the role the radio played in the memory of people who relied on an oral tradition brings to mind the comment by Bruno Nettl (2005) that an aural tradition requires the learning of a social repertoire.

Luiz: *Could Nhô Djonzinho secure, at some stage of his life, a living from his musical career?*

Alves: In the past, it was difficult here in Cape Verde. To sustain his whole family, he took up manual work: he was [also] a barber [as well as] a musician. He was familiar with many professions. That was good because he taught us all those skills. That was mandatory, even if you were studying, planning another career: you had to learn the things he knew such as music, building, cutting hair, everything.

Luiz: *Did people make violins here in Cape Verde?*

Alves: Yes, my great uncle was a woodworker. He built furniture, houses and musical instruments. He had never built a violin but promised that, when he got to a good level, he would build a violin for my father. He succeeded, but what he built was not a violin as it is typically known. This was due to not having adequate material, suitable wood, etc., but the violin could be played. He managed to build the instrument in the traditional violin shape.

Luiz: *And what about the violin we've seen in the entrance hall? Did it belong to your father?*

Alves: Yes, it is our dad's violin.

Luiz: *I think it's the same as on the album *Em Família*, isn't it? Where does that violin come from?*

Alves: That came from Boston. [...] What happened [was this]: can you see that the violin is bigger than usual?

Luiz: *Yes, it does seem bigger.*

Alves: My father had big hands. Once, in the US, my father saw a violin in a shop window and he told me, ‘I want to play that violin.’ ‘Father, it isn’t a violin, it’s a viola.’ So, we replaced the strings – we put violin strings on a viola. Then he said, ‘Oh yes, I have a violin that’s my size. I want this instrument!’ All this because his hands were huge.

Luiz: *Did he tune the viola using the violin pitch?*

Alves: Yes, he used to tune it like a violin and he got a great sound from the instrument. He discovered his own sound.

Luiz: *Nhô Djonzinho played almost every genre of Cape Verdean music: morna, coladeira and mazurka, among others. How about the taláia-báxu from the island of Fogo? Did he play that too?*

Alves: Yes. This is a genre from Fogo, a kind of improvised music. The song and its chords are always in minors and dominant sevenths. For example, if you’re playing in E minor, the chord progression is Em-Am-Em-B7. This is the sequence.

After listening to some musicians performing *taláia-báxu*, it is possible to confirm that the most common progression used is i-iv-i-V7.

The *taláia-báxu* is the most popular genre in Fogo and is performed with the violin or *gaita* (accordion), the guitar and different types of rattles such as the maracas. One of the most famous *gaita* players in *taláia-báxu* from Fogo was Minó Di Mamá. According to Tavares (2005: 69), it is possible that *taláia-báxu* is a variant of the *funaná* genre: ‘Both musical genres were conceived as improvisational music, mainly performed on the harmonica. The poetry is based on the satirical description of socio-cultural and economic occurrences based on their social spaces.’ However, the *funaná* has a strong accent on the first beat in 2/4, being strictly a duple metre, while the *taláia-báxu* can be notated in 4/4,

according to the melodic development on the *gaita* or the violin.³¹ The tempo in both genres is played from moderately fast (102 bpm) in the *taláia-báxu* to fast (130 bpm) in the *funaná*. The similarity of the rhythm construction is evident.

Luiz: *Do you play the talaia baxu as well? Although it's from Fogo, is it also part of the tradition here?*

Alves: Yes, my father left the island in 1960 [...] but he always maintained the [cultural] tradition of Fogo. It's amazing that he never spoke a single word of the Kriolu of Santiago, never anything but Kriolu do Fogo.

Luiz: *Is there some religious relationship in the use of instruments here in Cape Verde? What I mean is, are violin traditions just related to dance music? Did you participate in any religious rituals?*

Alves: I spent many years playing the organ and guitar in the Catholic church. It was there, in the church, that I learnt [to play].

Luiz: *Did your father play the violin in the church too?*

Alves: No. But my father was religious – he never missed a single Sunday – [but] all he did was go to mass.

Luiz: *Did he ever play his music at any church ritual?*

Alves: No. Here in Cape Verde, violin music is only for dancing [and] festivities.

After concluding the interview, Alves showed me some of his studio equipment, including his latest-generation Avid C/24 – a 24-channel control surface and sound desk that provides direct, hands-on control of the Pro Tools and Pro Tools/HD systems' software for mixing, recording and editing. Alves claims that he learnt the entire recording and mixing process through studying it on his own. Next, we went to see the room where he keeps his musical instruments and equipment. His studio, Kmagic, is located in the family home that Nhô Djonzinho built (most of the family still live there).

³¹ An example of this is 'Talaia Baxu' on Nhó Nani's album, *Música tradicional de Cabo Verde*, (AV Produções, CD, 2009).

In the entrance hall, the viola that Nhô Djonzinho tuned as a violin is displayed in a glass display case next to a golden disc award. These displays, prominently situated at the entrance to the house, are a striking illustration of how central music is to this family and the importance to them of Nhô Djonzinho’s musical legacy. They maintain that this legacy is grounded in the cultural tradition of Cape Verde despite its contact with new cultural influences when performed abroad, especially in the large Cape Verdean immigrant community on the northeast coast of the United States.



Figure 2.4. Nhô Djonzinho Alves’ golden disc. (Source: Private collection)

Alves is similarly proud of being a self-educated musician – he mentioned the relationship he established with the musical knowledge he inherited through his family several times during the interview. As the son of Nhô Djonzinho, a man who invested a great deal in

his theoretical approach to Cape Verdean music, Alves felt it was of particular importance not only to imitate his father's music but to also learn its history, performance conventions and rhythms.

Nhô Djonzinho was born João Alves on Fogo on the 6 April 1924 but he moved to Cidade da Praia, and according to RTC (Cape Verdean Radio and Television), the street in Praia where he lived was named after him in 2012. This is testimony to the fact that, apart from his musical talent, the town council still considers him as a model citizen and family man who contributed greatly to the community. Listed below are some of the declarations of praise that accompanied this act of remembrance, which I have transcribed verbatim from the original Portuguese:

És um grande homem e adoro bastante as tuas musicas como a 'Rabecada' e o 'Maria Barba'. (You're a great man and I love your songs like 'Rabecada' and 'Maria Barba'.) (Pedrito Mabiala).

Muito bem merecido, Djonzinho Alves grande homem, e como pai, exemplo para todos, que bem merece esse atributo, felicidades. (Very well earned, Djonzinho Alves is a great man. As a father, he is an example to us all. He deserves this homage. Many happy returns.) (Maria Timas)

Uma homenagem justa e merecida `a Nho Djonzinho. Conheço Nho Djonzinho Alves desde a minha Infância como vizinho, homem exemplar na família dele, tocador de violino e como e logico, ele passou o conhecimento musical para os filhos Quim Alves, meu amigo e colega e para os restantes filhos. (A just and rightful tribute to Nhô Djonzinho. I've known Nhô Djonzinho Alves since my childhood as a neighbour, family man, violin player and, logically, he passed his musical knowledge to his children, to Quim Alves, my friend and colleague, and to his other children.) (Divo Monteiro)³²

³² Radiotelevisão Caboverdiana (Cape Verde Radio and Television)
<http://www.rtc.cv/index.php?paginas=21&id_cod=5592> (accessed 23 October 2014).

These declarations reveal the role that an artist occupies in the community in Praia, highlighting both musicality and fatherhood. Nhô Djonzinho's engagement with the Cape Verde musical tradition and its role in society is something that his son also emphasised in his interview. Alves considers that he is perpetuating the knowledge that he received from his father, whose musical identity is recognised throughout the archipelago. But the importance of Nhô Djonzinho's legacy reaches far deeper than musical celebrity; it encapsulates a sense of belonging to Cape Verdean society. It is this sense of a specific subjectivity that Cape Verdeans attempt to replicate in the diaspora and which unites them as a community.

This sense of community was highlighted during the time I was carrying out this fieldwork in 2014, when a large volcanic eruption took place on Fogo. In that same December, Alves released two fundraising songs, performed by various artists, to support the island's displaced inhabitants. The first was 'Fran undé du ta bá' (composition and lyrics by Luis and Antonio Montrond); the second, 'Tchã das Caldeiras' (composition and lyrics by Alves himself) – which literally translates into English as 'crater ground'. The songs were composed as part of a project called Unidos pa Djarfogo (All United for Fogo). An album was also recorded, *Nu cumpira CD pa nu podi djuda Nôs Irmãos de Fogo*, with the claim that those who bought it would be helping their brothers and sisters in Fogo, emphasising Cape Verdeans' shared heritage, and two video clips were released, showing the studio recording session alongside images of streams of lava engulfing homes and covering plantations, including the vineyards that produce Fogo's famous wine.³³ This wine is considered a successful local export, but the lava from the 2014

³³ 'Fran Undé Du Ta Bá' (composition and lyrics by Luis and António Montrond) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMjw4skMRg>> (accessed 27 June 2017) and 'Tchã das Caldeiras' (composition and lyrics by Kim Alves) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Np7A2O61Nis>> (accessed 27 June 2017).

eruption devastated almost the entire cultivated area of the island, destroying the income of many local families at a stroke.

Nhó Nani

In the capital, Praia, I attended a concert at Fogo d'África, a bar, dance hall and restaurant that hosts live music – the Portuguese word *fogo* translates as 'fire', a metonym for the island's huge volcano. The violinist Nhó Nani was performing at the bar from Wednesdays to Saturdays, accompanied by his quintet of violin, *cavaquinho*, guitar, keyboard and bass. All the musicians were from Fogo, including Nhó Nani himself. Inside the Fogo d'África, at the right-hand side of the stage, the main wall was replete with images depicting major Cape Verdean musicians, including Luís Morais, B. Leza, Cesária Évora, Ildo Lobo, Bana and Frank Cavaquim, among others, and the restaurant menu boasted traditional Cape Verdean cuisine, the most remarkable dish being the well-seasoned *arroz de búzios* – rice and *búzios* (a small edible sea snail). *Búzio* shells also feature in Cape Verdean music: when a hole is made on the edge of the shell it becomes a melodic instrument and is played in *takanka* processions alongside the *corneta* (trumpet) and *tambores* (a type of membranophone).

The show at Fogo d'África generally starts late at night, after 11 p.m. During the performance, couples and groups of people move into the open space in front of the stage, while any vacant tables are fiercely disputed. The venue, which is always full booked, accommodates at least thirty tables and people standing or dancing by the bar. The live music continues throughout the night; the band has only one break, and the show normally finishes between 4 a.m. and 5 a.m. The Nhó Nani show is unusual because it is mainly instrumental, with only the occasional guest singer. Their repertoire of traditional pieces and Cape Verdean songs is vast, and the dances, which include genres such as the

coladera, funana, talaia baxu and mazurka, keep people dancing enthusiastically all night long. As the main soloist in the group, Nhó Nani's leadership is clear.

During the first performance I attended, I requested an interview with Nhó Nani. The violinist and his manager at Fogo d'África arranged a conversation before a performance the following day. Nhó Nani describes himself as one of Fogo's personalities even though he was born in Angola and came to Cape Verde at the age of twelve. He has been playing the violin for forty-one years, most of this period as professional musician. Nhó Nani is also self-taught (by ear) – he received his first violin as a present from his father and then just 'kept practising'. As he observed, 'I listened to violinists such as Travadinha, Nhô Djonzinho Alves and other violinists from Fogo such as Djedje Matias and Djô de Corvo'. He has lived for fifty years on the island of Sal, where he receives constant requests for gigs as a professional fiddle player on the island's tourist circuit.

Intrigued by the instrument he was playing, I asked why he was using an electric violin similar to the Yamaha SV series model. Nhó Nani considers acoustic instruments superior in sound but he amplifies his violin when performing live with a band as he believes it is better suited to achieving a balance between volume and feedback. He explained that he is more concerned with how people hear and interact with the music than with the texture or the singular sonority of the acoustic violin: for Nhó Nani, it is crucial that people enjoy themselves while he is playing. Thus, the venue is more than just a stage, it is a place for people to engage with the music, not simply listen passively.

In terms of the band's repertoire, Nhó Nani claimed that he is able to play 'everything', by which he meant pieces from the entire Cape Verdean violin tradition, including the different genres of each island – for instance, the *taláia-báxu* of Fogo, the *contradança* of Santo Antão, and the *morna, coladera*, waltz and mazurka that are not

only prolific in São Vicente, São Nicolau and Boa Vista, but are played all over the archipelago. One of the pieces I listened to at Nhó Nanis's live performance that particularly captured my attention due its repetition was a 6/8 one. The ostinato-like piece comprises two main phrases which Nhó Nani constantly repeats at different times.

Music example 2.5. (track 3)

The image shows a musical score for a violin in 6/8 time. It consists of two staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 6/8 time signature. The melody starts with a quarter rest, followed by a series of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The first measure is marked with a Dm7 chord. The second measure continues with G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, marked with an E7 chord. The third measure continues with G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, marked with an Am7 chord. The fourth measure concludes with G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, marked with a Dm7 chord. The second staff begins with a treble clef and a 6/8 time signature. It starts with a quarter rest, followed by a series of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The first measure is marked with a Dm7 chord. The second measure continues with G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, marked with an Am7 chord. The third measure continues with G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, marked with a Dm7 chord. The fourth measure concludes with G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, marked with a Dm7 chord. Both staves end with a double bar line and repeat dots.

The first phrase is played as the main motif, and the second, which is divided in two half phrases, seems to be a complementary motif. This is the structure Nhó Nani played during the interview; however, in the live performance I attended, he occasionally played two repeating arpeggio patterns over the Dm7 and Am7 chords to return to the two phrases. Nhó Nani and other musicians describe this piece as in the *talaiá baxu* genre. In relation to the binary sense of the duple metre, they do not refer to metrical or phenomenological accentuation but to the dance-like up movements in the genres of Fogo and Santiago which they consider related, in some degree, to a dance called the *batuku*. In fact, the most suitable metre signature in which to transcribe the *batuku* in Western notation is the 6/8; however, there are no references in the literature that indicate that these genres are connected. Many Cape Verdeans affirm that *batuku* and other rhythms of the Sotavento islands may have their origins in West African traditions, mainly those of the Mande, the

historically dominant group both in Cape Verde and in Gambia where they expanded their territory, pushing other peoples towards the coast (Carreira 1983: 332).

On the CD, *Nhó Nani - Música tradicional de Cabo Verde*, Nhó Nani also appears as a composer. He is the author of the first song, 'Duco'. The band's line-up on the album is as follows: Manel Calote on guitar; Valter on *cavaquinho*; Ndu on drums and percussion; and Hernani on bass and lead guitar. Calote mentioned that he had accompanied violinist Nhó Djonzinho Alves on one of his European tours.



Figure 2.5. Nhó Nani playing the violin with Valter on *cavaquinho* and Manel Calote on guitar. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

Nhó Nani is one of the most renowned violinists in Santiago, giving daily performances at local venues and festivals. Although his repertoire is vast and includes all genres of violin playing from Cape Verde, a significant part of it is related to music from Fogo and Santiago. However, he has his own style of interpreting traditional music, using electric

instruments and electronic equipment to produce a unique sound. His left-handed technique includes a long glissando between phrases, with ironic connotations.³⁴

I had met Nhó Nani's executive producer, Gugas Veiga, earlier at the music store Harmonia. During my interview with Veiga, in which we discussed the music of various violinists, he mentioned a violin festival that takes place in Sal, sponsored by the local council, and another on the island of Santo Antão, which occurs occasionally in April and attracts violinists from all the islands of the archipelago to perform on a stage mounted in front of the historic Ribeira Grande council building. Veiga's work is mainly focused on the national music industry, and he has participated in the establishment of the Kriol Jazz Festival and programmes at the Atlantic Music Expo.

Research in the Ilhas do Barlavento

Travelling from the Ilhas do Sotavento to the Ilhas do Barlavento, I arrived in Mindelo, the capital of Sao Vicente. The first islands of this group to be settled were Santo Antão and São Nicolau (Baleno 1991: 146) as they possessed reliable water sources; São Vicente's lack of water proved an obstacle, and it was not settled until later, at the end of the eighteenth century, and until then served as pasture for livestock. However, the island's natural harbour attracted passing ships (including pirates), and it began to flourish when the Portuguese and English colonial powers invested in developing coal deposits to supply the slave ships of the Atlantic trade. Its harbour filled with ships from Africa, Europe and the Americas, and as a consequence, until the twentieth century, it boasted a

³⁴ Nhó Nani makes use of glissando as part of the left-hand technique and an expression of Cape Verde violin playing. By contrast, the long glissando generally covering up to one octave range and played in different pieces is employed by him as an affirmation of his personal style. It can be perceived as an ironic use of the glissando since it is always overstated, dislocating the normal use of the glissando in opposition its literal meaning or expression. In other words, Nho Nani makes the long glissando his gesture signature by exaggerating and playing it in association with his facial expression, defying expectations in the melodic development of the theme or solo. This expression creates a unique way of playing that differs from the popular uses of the glissando by other important violinists of Cape Verde.

cosmopolitan mix of cultures. The Kriolu language of the Ilhas do Barlavento was formed later and was considered more ‘aristocratic’ (as it contained more than ninety per cent of European phonemes) than the Kriolu of the Ilhas do Sotavento, which was influenced by the Mande peoples of West Africa (Carreira 1983: 331-32). Such encounters between different cultures, a result of the Atlantic trade, helped form the music of Cape Verde, which reached its pinnacle in the 1930s and went on to gain international acclaim after independence in 1975.

São Vicente was home to the violinist Travadinha (although he was born in Santo Antão), Cesária Évora, B. Leza, and other well-known names, and it played a particularly important role in the consolidation and internationalisation of genres like the *morna* and *coladeira*. I had been in Mindelo once before, performing with Cape Verdean musicians in venues such as the Centro Cultural do Mindelo and the Café Katem Music, but five years on, some of the places where musicians had gathered in former times had disappeared from the high street (the Rua de Lisboa), although the small Café Lisboa could still be found there. This was a place where locals would meet to discuss politics, sport and national events, and to occasionally listen to ad-hoc performances and jam sessions. During my first visit, a public petition had been organised to try to keep the emblematic bar out of the hands of property developers. I was also advised to go to the *livraria* (bookshop), Nhô Djunga. This was a venue that traditionally hosted live performances, and in its more recent incarnation is not simply a bookshop but also contains a bar with live music and serves as a meeting point for artists. It was there that I was able to establish new contacts and receive updates on the current music scene in Mindelo.

Francisco Sequeira (archivist) and Malaquias Costa (violinist)

I conducted some of my research in the archives at Radio Cabo Verde. I had visited the station's headquarters once before, in 2009, when I was interviewed alongside Djory Abu Raya, the founding member of the band Refilon. This time, I was able to interview Francisco Sequeira, who curates the sound archives at the station. Beyond his office window, ships of all sizes traversed the waters while the bare mountains rose high in the background. The scenario seemed a graphic illustration of the birth of Cape Verde's music, formed over the centuries by the melding of the many different cultural influences that arrived in Cape Verde along the Atlantic's trade and migration routes. This evocative background was enriched by Sequeira's historical narrative, based on over thirty years of working as a professional archivist.

Sequeira mentioned the documentary film *Eden* by Daniel Blaufuks (produced by David and Golias in 2010), which tells the story of a group of amateur actors in the 1940s, and portrays the apogee and decline of cinema in Mindelo. The plot revolves around the city's movie theatre and its screening room, where the interviewees present old movie posters and recount the role that cinema played in their lives. As one actor says in the film: 'We live on an island, always looking at the horizon and wondering what there is on the other side. And the cinema was a way to know what was out there.' The historic building is shown in its current ruinous state, and the film ends with the famous Mindelo violinist, Malaquias Costa, performing the dramatic *morna* 'Eclipse' (composed by B. Leza) on a disused stage.

Following his arrival as a child from Ribeira do Corvo (Santo Antão), Costa performed at bars and restaurants in the town throughout the rest of his professional life. He first learnt the violin from a neighbour, Muchim do Monte – Costa believes that du Monte was the best violinist that Cape Verde has ever boasted. He later met composer

and guitarist B. Leza. A devoted performer, Costa himself came to be regarded as one of the most important violinists of the archipelago. He formed his own quartet of a violin, two guitars and a *cavaquinho*, which, according to the interview he gave to *Nós Genti*,³⁵ was his favourite ensemble formation. The group proved popular with the tourists who flooded off the ships that docked on the island, and it also performed regularly on shows hosted by Radio Cabo Verde. Costa also performed with Cesária Évora and other well-known names on the Cape Verdean music scene, including Bana, Ildo Lobo and Celina Pereira.



Figure 2.6. Malaquis Costa playing the violin. (Source: *Nos Genti*)

Following our discussion, Sequeira offered me a copy of the CD, *Iles du Cap-Vert – Les Racines (Cape-Verde islands – The Roots)* (Playa Sound). The album was recorded

³⁵ *Nós Genti* is a Cape Verdean Magazine, available at: <<http://www.nosgenti.com/?p=924>> (accessed 2 October 2014).

in 1990 and featured a song called ‘Cimboa’. This track was performed by Nhô Henrique on the *cimboa* and was described as “‘Vielle Solo” played by Nhô Henrique, eighty-five-years-old – one of the last musicians able to play this instrument’. Sequeira also spoke of Travadinha and his performances in the archipelago and abroad, recounting how he came to be regarded as a top performer, although Sequeira believes that placing Travadinha alongside the great names of the jazz violin has somewhat exaggerated his standing:

Travadinha experienced great success following his ‘discovery’ by the industry. He is probably the first Cape Verdean violin performer to achieve such international recognition, playing at important venues and jazz festivals. Meanwhile, there have been many great anonymous violinists who never got to record but who have been performing frequently throughout these islands.

According to Sequeira, a certain seventeenth-century Jesuit priest, Padre Antonio Vieira, contributed to the transformation of Cape Verdean history and culture through his creation in 1652 of the first seminary and school of crafts in Cidade Velha, the historic centre of Santiago, during his transatlantic travels between Brazil and Portugal. It was from Santiago that Vieira wrote a series of letters, known as the ‘Cartas de Cabo Verde’, describing Cape Verde and its creolised society, with its mix of European and African cultures, and detailing aspects of slavery and religion in the archipelago.³⁶ Sequeira emphasised the humanistic ‘Luso-Brazilian character’ of the priest as a way of reinforcing the idea that there was a less hierarchical relationship between the African slaves and their European overlords in the Portuguese empire compared with the other colonial regimes. In Sequeira’s words: ‘Padre António Vieira left us a legacy which indicates that, here, the Lusophone world worked well.’ Sequeira also mentioned Gilberto Freyre (1940), a Brazilian author, whose concept ‘Lusotropicalism’ advocated a similar

³⁶ See letters 62, 63, 64 in José P. Paiva (ed.). 1999. *Padre António Vieira 1608-1697: Bibliografia* (Lisboa: Biblioteca Nacional) p. 45.

argument. Although this theory was acclaimed by some in the Portuguese colonies, it was controversial, particularly given Freyre's relationship with the Portuguese dictator Salazar. Nonetheless, it is interesting to note how Sequeira still believes that the Lusophone empire operated in a more humane way, despite that fact that the Cape Verde liberation movements were invigorated by the analyses of writers such as Baltazar Lopes da Silva, Manoel Lopes and Jorge Barbosa in the journal *Revista Claridade*, with their cogent arguments for the cultural and political emancipation of Cape Verdean society. However, Sequeira did cite the enduring problems that have historically affected the archipelago's population:

We faced mass migration in Cape Verde in the period after the Second World War when people were starving to death. There was emigration to São Tomé, where many died; it was a very difficult situation. There is a *morna*, 'Caminho de São Tomé', by E. Duarte, which addresses the issue in a subtle way. It's about a woman who has [grown] old; her only hope was her son who was working [in São Tomé]. [But] she receives a letter that says, 'your son died, too' – and she just wants a little money to [give him] a decent funeral. This is considered a [companion] piece to the *morna* 'Sodade', composed in São Nicolau. In fact, the full name of the song is the 'Saudade of St. Nicolau'. It was recorded anonymously. Armando Cabral played this *morna* in California with jazz musicians, and it became a famous hit, coming out on vinyl in the late 1950s.

Sequeira went on to mention another famous guitarist, Armando Tito, who recorded with Travadinha and Cesária Évora when they lived in Lisbon: 'We have here the first recordings in the radio archive. These are from the days when [Tito] and his brother played in the *Janeiras* [January festivities], going from house to house [the Cape Verdean *folia de reis*].' Sequeira referred to other festivities, such as the 'Kings Day' or Epiphany on 6 January and the *tabanka*, a kind of *folia da bandeira* or 'flag procession'. He also mentioned that he believes that dances arrived in Cape Verde via Paris – people

in Cape Verde practised ballroom dances, such as the mazurka, polka, *contradança*, waltz and *galope* (the latter is still known in Brazil although it has since disappeared from the archipelago). Sequeira recalled some of the violinists who performed at dances and festivals, both in the past and more recently, including Jorge Monteiro; J. Hill, who performed in Brazil; Augustine de Pina from Fogo; Ninkin, who lives in the United States but is also from Fogo; and Vieira Santos, father of the composer Paulinho Vieira. He also stressed the importance of the percussionist Té Gonçalves and the rhythmic mixtures of his group, before he became Cesária Évora's accompanist. As São Vicente was populated by Cape Verdeans from other islands, Sequeira claims it is an island of 'miscegenation' and the cultural capital of the archipelago, particularly as it was home to a group of intellectuals who formed the *Movimento Claridade*. Cape Verde's first national secondary school and first technical college were also established in São Vicente.

This interview was one of the longest I conducted during my fieldwork in Praia. Sequeira gave me his personal analysis of the dynamic history of Cape Verdean music and its violinists. Despite the fact that he appears to envisage history as a continuous process, praising certain problematic figures in Cape Verdean history such as Padre Vieira and Gilberto Freire, I believe it is important to incorporate his vision into this study as it represents a mnemonic account of the role played by radio in the diffusion of Cape Verdean popular music during the twentieth century. Some emblematic older-generation violinists, such as Malakias, Nhô Djonzinho Alves and Nhô Kzik, passed away a few years before I started this fieldwork; however, their lives and their music could be evidenced in their recordings and videos, as well as in local press cuttings and the oral histories of relatives and members of the community. The subsequent generation of violinists incorporated these traditions into their own repertoires and, more importantly, they were provided with a space to perform their music at local events and festivals

despite the difficulties presented by their semi-professional status. Nevertheless, they were seldom able to finance a recording. At the time of my field research, however, violinist César Costa was preparing to record an album. I conducted a short interview with him in a restaurant where he was performing as part of a violin-guitar duo.

César Costa

César Costa recounted how he began his musical career by playing the guitar in his childhood and only shifted to the violin years later, initially attempting to transfer the same melodic lines from one instrument to the other. He learnt to play the violin by ear, listening to Travadinha and a number of other violinists. However, he is a builder by trade, working in civil construction, and he described how exhausting it is to perform on a frequent basis while continuing to maintain a strenuous day job. At the time of the interview, as mentioned above, Costa was preparing to record his first album of interpretations of traditional songs, incorporating new phrasing and rhythms, and he spoke with pride about playing at the Santo Antão violin festival.³⁷ The following day, I watched him perform at the nightclub, Kretcheu, with a six-piece band, including a singer. As violin playing is rooted in an aural tradition in Cape Verde, each violinist is, to a certain degree, free to consolidate his own style, extending the parameters of the tradition while still maintaining it in terms of repertoire, form and rhythmic patterns. Watching Costa perform on both the electric and acoustic violin, I received the impression that he had established his own sound and style, especially in his treatment of genres such as the fox and *schottish*, while adhering to Cape Verdean musical aesthetics in a stylistic sense.

³⁷ The annual Santo Antão festival is a gathering of the best violin players in Cape Verde, and offers an opportunity for musicians to achieve visibility by performing their own music.



Figure 2.7. César Costa playing the violin. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

Nhô Kzik

The ferry crossing of the Mar di Canal, a large oceanic channel linking São Vicente to the southeast side of Santo Antão, the westernmost island in the Ilhas do Barlavento, is impressive: tiny fishing boats plough through the huge waves, battling strong currents and high winds. The most magnificent part of the spectacle comes when the peaks of Santo Antão emerge on the horizon. Some tragic incidents have occurred in the sea around the archipelago – in one, a small boat was wrecked in a heavy storm and the crew was thrown overboard, finally washing up still alive on the Brazilian coast.

I disembarked at the port of Porto Novo and set off in a van to Ponta do Sol – a fifty-minute trip along a sheer, winding road to the opposite side of the island. My intention was to talk to the musicians of the Nhô Kzik group, a band whose name refers to a violin master of the *contradança* genre that Santo Antão is famed for. This genre is thought to have originated in the English quadrille folk dances that flourished in twentieth-century Europe and were taken to Cape Verde by French navigators. As Tavares (2005: 15) says, '[t]he guiding voice still upholds the French language'. It

appears, however, that in Santo Antão, the *contradança* is a type of pure dance music, with no singing or verse recitation.



Figure 2.8. Mar di Canal – Santo Antão. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

During the trip, I discovered that the co-driver of the van I was travelling in, António Eduardo, was a grandson of Nhô Kzik. He kindly offered to introduce me to the people of his village and to take me to see the musician, Pedro Guilherme Santos. Nhô Kzik passed away in 2005 but Santos still performs with the group Nhô Kzik founded. He plays *cavaquinho* and guitar, although he works as a mechanic outside of his profession as a musician. Santos told me that we were lucky to find him at his office – a music session had been cancelled: he was supposed to be playing at a funeral. At first, he seemed uncomfortable with the idea of an interview, but after we started talking, he relaxed and began to offer more generous answers. He spoke of the earlier presence of violinists on the island:

In fact, we have a violin tradition; the festival Nhô Kzik reunites almost all [the] violinists of Cape Verde. [We have] already [had] the fifth staging of the festival, which we started in 2008, and it is [returning] next in June 2015. As a homage to Nhô Kzik, the festival's date coincides with his birthday.

During our meeting, Santos began to speak about his own experiences with the Nhô Kzik group:

I'm a grandson of Nhô Kzik and I've been playing with the Grupo Nhô Kzik for many years – we decided to pay tribute to the violinist by using his name. We've played in several places: on other Cape Verdean islands, in Italy, France, Holland and Luxemburg. The group has a certain [fame]. I used to play bass before but now I've changed to playing guitar; a friend shifted to the bass. Domingos Costa is the current violinist in the band. After Nhô Kzik died, [Costa] took over the violin – he'd been learning to play with Nhô Kzik since his childhood (we've all been together for thirty years). I [also] learnt music with Nhô Kzik. He had many instruments in his house, and I started learning the *chocalhos* (shakers), later moving on to the *cavaquinho*, then to the *o baixo* (the bass) and finally to the viola (guitar). Almost all of Nhô Kzik's grandchildren are musicians. There are some really good artists here: there's always a support band to receive other musicians coming from outside. We recorded a CD with the band in Portugal and it sold out – at present, there's not a single copy available. Our group plays at funerals, baptisms, weddings, every kind of event, and we also play for tourists in the bars. We usually perform every day; most of the tourists who come here are looking for the genuine music of Cape Verde, styles [without] too many external musical influences. They want to hear the *mornas*, *coladeiras* and *contradanças* played in a simple way.

Santos did not perform during the interview because our meeting was spontaneous and it took place at his workplace; however, he emphasised how important it was that Nhô Kzik had passed on his musical knowledge to his sons and grandsons, who in turn have become respected musicians in the community. He considers *mornas*, *coladeiras* and

contradanças to be the ‘genuine music of Cape Verde’ but is unconcerned by the fact that Cape Verdean musical genres resulted from a ‘cultural collision’, a process that mixed different musical traditions; what is more important to him is the distinctiveness of the rhythms that current musicians in Santo Antão have learnt from their forebears. This music is made for consumption and is performed on stages and in recording studios, at social events and in functional and ceremonial contexts. For Santos, the musical tradition he inherited is not tied to any original roots that have been preserved untouched; rather, it belongs to the legacy that the first generation of musicians transmitted as their own, distinct way of making music. Arguably, this narrative reaffirms Gilroy’s (1993) critique of the concept of an idealised, homogenous African identity, pure and a-historic.



Figure 2.9. Nhô Kzik group photo. (Source: Private collection)

Eduardo, another grandson, took me to visit Nhô Kzik’s house where the daughter of the violinist, Gertrudez Evora, still lives. She told me that her father learnt to play with his father, Antonio Costa, who made him a *cimboa*. His daughter’s testimony provided important information about the uses of the *cimboa* beyond the island of Santiago,

revealing the possibility that this African instrument (probably a Fulbe fiddle) has been part of the traditions of other islands, either excluding the practice of *batuku* or as a reference to the practice of *batuku* in Santo Antão. Evora mentioned that Nhô Kzik's brother also played violin – he was the well-known violinist of Mindelo's nights, Malaquias Costa, whom the radio archivist, Sequeira, had mentioned earlier. Nhô Kzik himself also worked as a farmer, barber and fisherman, but Evora confirmed that he performed regularly and that his rendition of the *contradança* was a source of great enjoyment to his community. He also regularly participated in the *kola*, a religious festival (the *Kolá San Jon*) held on the feastday of St John³⁸ – the family is Catholic, as is the majority of the population of Santo Antão.

On my return to São Vicente, I met another of Nhô Kzik's grandsons, Roger Santos, who plays drums in the Nhô Kzik band. I told him about my search for the album *Contradança* as it was no longer on the market.³⁹ Fortunately, he had a copy of the album and kindly offered it to me later in Santiago, where he was performing in the 'December Celebrations' promoted by the council. As the title suggests, the main musical genre of the album is the *contradança*. Although rarely heard on the other islands of Cape Verde, the genre is still common in Santo Antao. It is remarkable how stylistic elements of a syncretic musical genre are preserved, but in a dynamic way, on a single island despite

³⁸ The Kolá San Jon is a popular festivity which incorporates music, dance and choreography and is performed during the feast day of São João (Saint John) in June. The instruments used are the *tambores* (two-skin drums, struck on the upper skin with wooden sticks, with the beat in a duple metre) and the *apitos* (different types of edge-blown aerophones, tin whistles that are played while dancing). People also carry artefacts, including objects of devotion, while singing in a recitative style known as *melopeias*. This festivity has similarities with the Brazilian *Festa Junina*. With some variations, similar festivities occur all over the country in Brazil, part of an Afro-Catholic syncretic rite that reflects the encounter between the Portuguese and Africans in the colonial period. Margarida Brito (1998: 18) describes it thus: 'In São Vicente, the rhythm called *kola san jon* is danced in pairs (men and women and sometimes women with women) [and is] characterised by a retreat and advance movement while touching simultaneously with the upper thighs. The rhythm of the dance is similar but varying [in] the movement (slightly slower) and the choreography, especially in the Praia Branca area in the island of São Nicolau. In this area, dances can consist of two lines (mostly women) face-to-face and sensually swaying, accompanied by malicious and lewd utterances, aimed at [the] men.'

³⁹ The album was relaunched by the record label Sons D'Africa in 2016.

the fact that the microspaces of the archipelago are open to the flux of constant cultural exchange. The violin playing on the album resembles that of European folk genres, including dances such as the mazurka and polka, revised in Cape Verdean styles.

Breka

In the capital, Praia, I attended a live performance by the violinist Breka and his band at the Kiosk Bar (every Sunday there is a *tocatina* (music session) featuring the band's line up – violin, two guitars, *cavaquinho* and vocalist). After the first set, they opened up the stage for the audience to participate, singing, playing and dancing in a jam session that continued for hours. The 'tall man', as he is known, played at a soft, dancing pace with his pinkish-purple electric violin (figure 2.10.). Our conversation was snatched between songs since he played almost without a break. Breka is from Fogo, and he emphasised that he taught himself to play in the *taláia-báxu* tradition by listening to Travadinha, Nhô Djonzinho Alves, Nhó Nani, and other violinists. His repertoire therefore includes the standard songs of Cape Verdean music in genres such as the *morna*, *coladeira* and *taláia-báxu*.

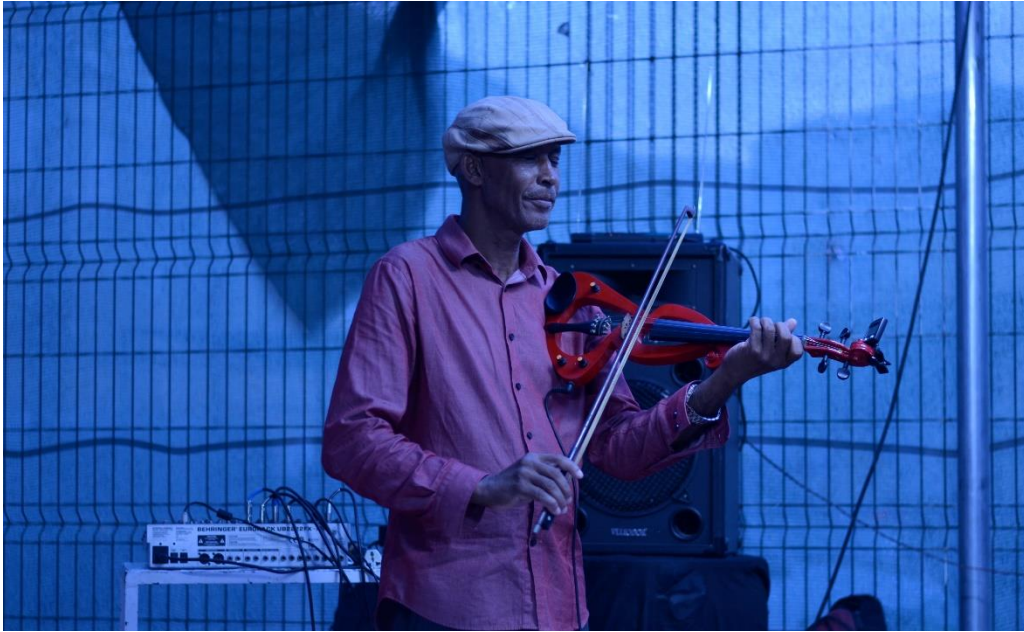


Figure 2.10. Breka playing the violin. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

Breka's use of an electric violin is another example of how violinists in Cape Verde have adopted this instrument with its amplified sound, mainly when performing live in large or open spaces – Breka's performance at the Kiosk Bar and Nhó Nani's at Fogo d'África, both of which I attended, drew hundreds of people, and both violinists have taken part in Santo Antão's violin festival. However, Breka's and Nhó Nani's attitude towards the materiality and technology of their instruments goes far beyond the dichotomy of modern *versus* traditional. Both appear totally aware of their insertion into a Cape Verdean violin tradition but they view it as a living one: that is, they each interpret it in their own way. Breka also mentioned that his audience likes to hear and dance to the old songs played in this new fashion (using the electric violin). This audience, no different from the one I had witnessed at Nhó Nani's gig, mainly comprised middle-aged, working-class people, some in couples, some with family and friends, and all Kriolu, with a few exceptions. In short, despite being in a relatively sizable urban environment, Breka

usually plays for an audience that could not be called a ‘community’ in the strict sense of the word but who share a very close musical background in common.

The anthropologist Miguel Vale de Almeida (2002), in his critical reading of Gilroy (1993), draws attention to the specificity of the southern region of the ‘black Atlantic’ due to Portuguese colonialism and the country’s continuing post-colonial influence. He argues that the Portuguese colonial enterprise justified itself by using the rhetoric of a ‘humanised’ racism and ‘miscegenation’ as a way of minimising the disastrous effects of late colonialism. For Almeida, the Luso-African and Brazilian relations should be described not as the ‘black Atlantic’ but as the ‘*pardo*’ or ‘brown Atlantic’. Nevertheless, despite certain unique aspects in the colonial and neo-colonial practices of the Portuguese state, Almeida agrees with Gilroy about the similarities with the Anglo-African context in terms of the dynamic of modernity and tradition, movements that are not necessarily opposed to one another. Bearing this debate in mind, Breka’s choice of a fancy electric violin (a symbol of modernity) in order to play songs whose aesthetic refers to the music of his ancestors (a symbol of tradition) shows that it is possible to perceive in Cape Verde’s violin music the constant reinvention of a counterculture that refuses to reify the foundations of its cultural and musical aesthetics.

Breka, Nhó Nani and Kim Alves have never hesitated to use the latest available technology because they do not perceive it as diluting the richness of the inherited musical repertoire they wish to dignify and maintain. Hence, these musicians reveal in practice that transforming tradition is a way of keeping it current and vigorous. The intriguing question remains, however, as to whether these new technologies and instruments have changed the way the music is played and perceived. In other words, is there another factor attached to the materiality of the instruments and the venues in which they are played that represents a historical change in the violinists’ ancestral musical traditions? This is not a

question that can be answered in this study as the scope of the research does not allow for the sort of comparative, long-term analysis that would be necessary to trace possible changes in the dynamics of the music through the use of the electric violin. It is also beyond the range of this research to conduct a reception analysis of how audiences reacted when they first saw and listened to one of their violinists using such an instrument. This question may have arisen as this research was conducted from the perspective of an outsider and most of the recordings I analysed were of acoustic instruments. Nevertheless, it is important to note that, even while using the electric violin, these musicians did not change the repertoire, rhythm patterns or harmony, which indicates that the integrity of the structure of the music was maintained.

Conclusion: Kriolu violin playing

In this chapter, the interviews with violinists have provided a vivid illustration of Cape Verdean musical practice from the perspective of the musicians themselves. The violin possesses a cultural meaning in Cape Verde: it operates as a signifier of Kriolu culture and its people, objects (instruments) and music. The archipelago's violin music is a tradition that arose out of dances, old and new, that have been recreated both locally and abroad, and the violin ensembles continue to play Cape Verdean dance genres. Rhythmic patterns serve as expressions of dance movements, for instance, in street parties; in the absence of drums, a violin ensemble with guitars and a *cavaquinho* can express dance movements melodically or through harmonic accompaniment. This aspect of Cape Verdean music emphasises that African music is not, as once thought, exclusively related to drumming rhythms (Agawu 2003; Kubik 2010). The ban on the use of drums by the colonial regime and the Catholic Church operated in a way that is similar to the exclusion of one of the senses – in this instance, the tactile sensation of drumming and dancing. But although it is true that aesthetic experiences – that is, perception and cognition through

the senses (Kauffman 1969: 508) – depends on the simultaneous engagement of different senses, eliminating one of these sensations during the reception of music does not necessarily also eliminate individuals' aesthetic perception of their musical culture. Indeed, Cape Verdeans transferred the rhythmic sense of the drums to other families of musical instruments. From a colonial perspective, their music therefore represents an elementary fusion between elements of African rhythm and European harmony: even with the ban on drumming, the rhythmic expressions of those dances the colonial regime considered 'lascivious' survived. Creolisation mixed African musical expressions, mainly those connected to West African Bantu-speaking ancestral subgroups, with elements of the European musical tradition, and as such, contemporary Cape Verdean musicians experience their musical practice as an inherent aesthetic phenomenon that they permeate with rhythm, phrasing and improvisation.

Cape Verdean violin music is therefore a dynamic aural tradition, but it is also one that is highly influenced by recorded music (also an aural experience). For a violinist in Cape Verde, learning music traditionally starts within the family but this is followed by a method of transmission that involves listening to the 'masters' (live or through recordings) and to older players. Local violin ensembles generally perform at social events and festivals with the aim of recording an album, usually on a local label – apart from Travadinha and a few other violinists who recorded and performed abroad, the internationalisation of Cape Verdean music is more related to singers on the world-music scene than to violin players, except when they are incorporated into a vocalist's ensemble. Despite this, the Cape Verdean diaspora in Europe and the Americas is intimately connected to the Kriolu culture, and the violinists in the archipelago comprise an essential part of this culture – they are integrated into it through their living musical practice.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CULTURAL DYNAMICS OF AFRICAN ONE-STRINGED FIDDLES

Introduction

This chapter contains three parts which, taken together, offer a description of the one-stringed bowed lutes found in three Lusophone cultural contexts. It analyses the specific musical practice of *batuku* that is associated with the *cimboa* in Cape Verde; the transformation of the *cimboa* into the *orocongo* in Brazil; and finally, the Makua *tchakare* fiddle practice of northern Mozambique. While the analysis of *cimboa* and *tchakare* playing in Cape Verde and Mozambique is based on field research (interviews and performances) combined with an examination of the relevant literature, the study of the *cimboa* in Brazil is grounded exclusively in bibliographic and archival research. This includes the consultation of iconographic sources in order to investigate the presence of African one-stringed fiddles in Brazil during the nineteenth century – and their subsequent disappearance. It is important to note, however, that the chapter is intended neither as an exhaustive nor a comparative analysis of the different instruments and their respective forms of playing, nor does it aim to offer a continuous historical narrative from the nineteenth century to the present day. Rather, what emerged during the research were fragmented narratives and some visual images that helped contribute to the analysis of these instruments and their cultural dynamics.

Although each fiddle-playing tradition is associated with the specific context of the country in which it arose, they are related to each other through cultural affiliations due to the history of interactions between these countries and to their shared colonial past. The enslaved peoples who were forcibly displaced from Africa managed to take knowledge of some of their artefacts with them, including their fiddles. As a consequence, these instruments should not be perceived simply as the artefacts of a particular material

culture; they are not only representatives of that culture but are themselves agents in the encounter between the different cultural traditions.

The description of the fiddles in this chapter is based on the accounts provided by members of the music communities in these countries and, wherever possible, it uses their language and terms in order to expose our musical understanding to new patterns of discourse arising from these cultures and to counter the tendency to privilege metropolitan categories over indigenous ones (Agawu 2016: 81). It was not possible to opt for a specific system of classification or organology when analysing the transformations of the fiddle from one geo-cultural setting to another: not only is there a lack of sufficient data in the iconographic sources, but the instrument also disappears at one historical moment, only to be revived and transformed at another. As Margaret Kartomi (2016: 80-81) notes in her critique of the systematic and typological ‘upward-grouping’ approach, ‘not all instruments are closely comparable’. In a qualitative classification such as this, which is based on orally transmitted evidence, it was not possible to establish whether there were variants within the different types of instruments themselves. Taxonomies and classification schemes played no part in the narratives of the interviewees, nor are they present in the literature produced by local scholars. A systematic organology is an organisational model that lies beyond the scope of this thesis; it would only have been possible if this had been its purpose from the start of the field study. Instead, the approach I took from the outset when contacting the communities of musicians in these countries was as ‘emic’ as possible. Hence, the main questions in this research are related to the instruments in their cultural and socio-political contexts, and to their history and their place in oral narratives, from a post-colonial perspective.

In part 3.1., I analyse the *cimboa* in Cape Verde and its association with *batuku* practice. The main rhythmic pattern of this genre shapes the fiddle playing in the *batuku*

ensemble which follows the cultural parameters and aesthetic perceptions of song, percussion and dance. The narratives of the interviewees support the idea that the instrument has been put to new uses in contemporary Cape Verde. In this section, I detail the *cimboa*'s characteristics in terms of its manufacture and its method of playing, and propose that it is associated with the West African Fulbe fiddle, the *nyanieru* or *riti*.

In part 3.2. I describe how, according to the oral narratives, the *cimboa* was introduced into Brazil by a Cape Verdean who arrived on the island of Florianopolis. He taught a Brazilian musician to play the instrument, and the Brazilian in turn incorporated the music into the practices and style familiar to him and his community. Thus, the fiddle's morphology and sound was transformed and integrated into the music genres found in Brazil.

In part 3.3., I investigate iconographic sources to establish the presence of African one-stringed fiddles and their related musical cultures in nineteenth-century Brazil, and the possible causes of their later disappearance from Brazilian music genres. I hypothesise that the one-stringed fiddles referred to in the nineteenth-century illustrations (and their accompanying descriptions) as 'Mozambique fiddles' are instruments that originate with the Makua or Yao people. I follow this with an analysis of Makua fiddle playing in the *tchakare* tradition, based on interviews and recordings made in the field in Mozambique, in order to compare the traditional form of playing to how it is performed today. This analysis incorporates the narratives of two players in the province of Niassa who display their instrumental technique in the ensembles that perform the dance music of Mozambique's multi-ethnic music scene. Since my hypothesis regarding the influence of Mozambican fiddles on Brazilian instruments of the nineteenth century is based on two drawings, it remains speculative and still lacks empirical evidence. Although the forced displacement of Makua and Yao people to Brazil during the slave trade is documented,

further research in Mozambique will be necessary to verify the historical presence of Makua and Yao cultural traits and their musical aspects in Brazil.

3.1. The *cimboa*

The *cimboa* or *cimbó* is a one-stringed bowed lute with a resonator made of a *buli* or gourd, similar to instruments found in Upper Guinea such as the *nyanieru* and *riti*. Upper Guinea, which today includes the countries of Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, originally comprised a number of small states with distinct political and ethnolinguistic boundaries, including Futa Jallon in central Guinea and the territories of the Mandinka and Wolof peoples, among others. It was the first region in Africa to become part of the Atlantic slave trade, from 1501 to 1856 (Eltis and Richardson 2010: 96-97). The Portuguese gathered slaves from all the different parts of Upper Guinea and brought them to Cape Verde, which lay on the trade route from Africa to the Americas, to either use as forced labour or to export to the Americas (Eltis and Richardson 2010: 96), and the Mandinka, Wolof and Fulbe were among the ethnic groups who were transported to the archipelago (Carreira 1983),

Santiago was the island with the highest number of African peoples forcibly displaced to Cape Verde, and the wild areas between the mountains and the valleys were often settled by runaway captives who formed communities of ‘maroons’. The *cimboa* provides a melodic accompaniment to the *batuku* dance genre that originated in the rural interior prior to the urbanisation of the archipelago (Hurley-Glowa 1997: 119), and it was in the interior of the island that I interviewed a *cimboa* maker and musician.

The *cimboa* has often been pronounced extinct, and speculation over its continued existence has persisted despite the fact that there are known to be contemporary players of the instrument in inner Santiago. For example, João Lopes Filho (1976: 52) observed in the 1970s that the instrument seemed to have disappeared in Cape Verde, while Susan

Hurley-Glowa (1997: 167) twenty years later describes how, during her research, she saw ‘a *cimboa* hanging on the wall of the *batuko* leader António Dente d’Oro’s house in São Domingos’ but never heard anyone performing on it, although she does mention that until recently some people still played the instrument, stating that ‘in [the] recent past, a one-string bowed fiddle of West African origin called [the] *cimboa* was used to accompany *batuku*’. However, she adds that it has since ‘virtually disappeared in Cape Verde’.⁴⁰ According to Carlos Gonçalves (2006: 19), the instrument is now purely ornamental and he declares there are no *cimboa* players in the archipelago. Yet, despite these assertions, the existence of musicians who still play and make the instrument in Cape Verde today is an indication of a possible change in the musical practice but not of the *cimboa*’s disappearance or revival. Even after the death of the last traditional *cimboa* player, Mano Mendi, in 2008, the fiddle was still being played in a number of different contexts. Current *cimboa* practice confirms the perspectives of ethnomusicologists (e.g., Merriam 1964; Blacking 1995; Nettl 2005) who argue that musical changes follow a dynamic course. This section therefore presents an ethnographic survey of interview transcripts, field recordings and recorded albums in order to explore contemporary *cimboa* fiddle playing in Cape Verde and its connection to the dance music of *batuku*.

A Fulbe heritage?

The *cimboa* is a one-stringed fiddle, used in *batuku* performances, which is fashioned out of a *buli* (a hemispherical gourd covered with goatskin). Its neck is fixed through the body resonator with a tuning peg at its tip and a hank of horsehair, and its bridge is made of a little piece of gourd. Margarida Brito (1998: 84) affirms that the style of playing and the material used to make the *cimboa* are similar to those of a one-stringed instrument from

⁴⁰ See Susan Hurley-Glowa (2001) in Oxford Music Online (Grove Music Online).

Mozambique. Although she does not mention its name, Brito may be referring to the *kaniembe*, *tchakare* or *chikwèsa*; however, as there are no material sources that indicate the construction, physical characteristics or musical context of these instruments, or the cultural traits of the southeastern ethnic groups in Cape Verde, it seems problematic to link the *cimboa* with fiddles from Mozambique. The area of Africa in which one-stringed fiddles are used is vast and contains a diverse range of instruments that vary according to the ethnic group, although some have strong similarities due to certain groups' cultural proximity.

Many members of ethnic groups such as the Fulbe, the Nago/Yoruba and the Dagbamba play the *nyanyeru*, *goje* and the *gondze*, respectively. However, the term '*cimboa*' could be of Mandinka origin. Ethnologist Jean-Yves Loude (1998: 15) believes that it derives from '*cimbi*', 'a Mandinka word referring to a type of *kora* in Western Africa'. Loude is probably referring to the Mandinka *simbi*, a seven-stringed bowed harp that is generally played by hunters but is also as part of the repertoire of instruments used by the *jelis*, a caste of musicians.⁴¹ In terms of its construction, the *cimboa* is similar in shape and size to the *nyanyeru* fiddle of the Fulbe or possibly the Mandinka. However, despite a certain degree of relationship between these ethnic groups due to intermarriage and corresponding customs, the Mandinka, according to Jacqueline DjeDje (2008), refer to the fiddle as a *susaa* and rarely perform on it.

Among the wide variety of fiddles in West Africa, 'the placement of the resonator hole(s) is a feature that distinguishes the geographical location of a fiddle' (DjeDje 2008: 28). The placement of the hole in the body of the (gourd) resonator occurs in West Sudan and may indicate the association of the *cimboa* with the cultures of this area, but it is also

⁴¹ For further information about the *simbi* and Mande music, see Eric Charry (2000: 80-85).

relevant to consider the *cimboa* resonator's size of approximately six inches, similar to the Fulbe instrument:

Like the body resonators of other West African fiddles, the resonator of the Fulbe fiddle is round and covered with the skin of a reptile (lizard). Unlike fiddles in the Central Sudan and Volcanic areas, however, the resonator hole of the Fulbe fiddle is placed in the sound box, not the skin. Although fiddle size varies to suit the taste of the performer, the dimension of the body resonator used by the Fulbe tends to be smaller – anywhere from five to six inches in diameter, compared to six to twelve inches for those used by the Hausa and Dagbamba. (DjeDje 2008: 65)

In fact, the *cimboa*'s resonator hole is placed on the side of the gourd resonator and its size is also smaller than in other similar continental instruments. In figures 3.1. and 3.2., it is possible to see the resonator hole in the gourd. The *cimboa*'s opening is normally circular but the instrument in the photo has a resonator hole in the form of a mandala – the personal choice of the instrument maker.⁴² The side where the gourd is cut is covered with a skin to form the top plate and this is fixed to the gourd by wooden pins made of *carriço* reed (*schoenoplectus lacustris*), also known as *cana brava*. The resonator is a small, round *cabaça* (gourd) with a relative diameter of six inches, and the total length of the instrument is between eighteen and twenty inches. The neck is made of a flexible wood such as acacia or pine and measures approximately twelve inches, while the string, which is made of *crina-de-cavalo* (a hank of horsehair), is around the same length. The neck crosses the resonator internally through two holes on each side.

⁴² The Sanskrit term *mandala* was used by the informant, the *cimboa* maker Pascoal Fernandes, to describe the form of the resonator hole of the *cimboa*. Although the term refers to iconography in Hindu and Buddhist belief its use is common in the Portuguese language.



Figure 3.1. Example of a *cimboa*, viewed from the side. (Source: private collection)



Figure 3.2. Example of a *cimboa*, viewed from above. (Source: private collection)

Figure 3.3. depicts the *ponte* (bridge), made of a single piece of gourd with the feet placed directly on the skin plate and held in the right position solely by the pressure of the string. Meanwhile, Figure 3.4. shows the tuning peg, made of a piece of hard wood like mahogany, inserted in the neck through a hole. The peg has a groove to hold the string.



Figure 3.3. The bridge of a *cimboa*. (Source: private collection)



Figure 3.4. The tuning peg of a *cimboa*. (Source: private collection)

Figure 3.5. shows the *cimboa arco* or bow. The stick's relative size is eighteen inches and it is made of a curved wood such as the *barnelo* (*grewia villosa*). The horsehair is attached to the end of the stick.

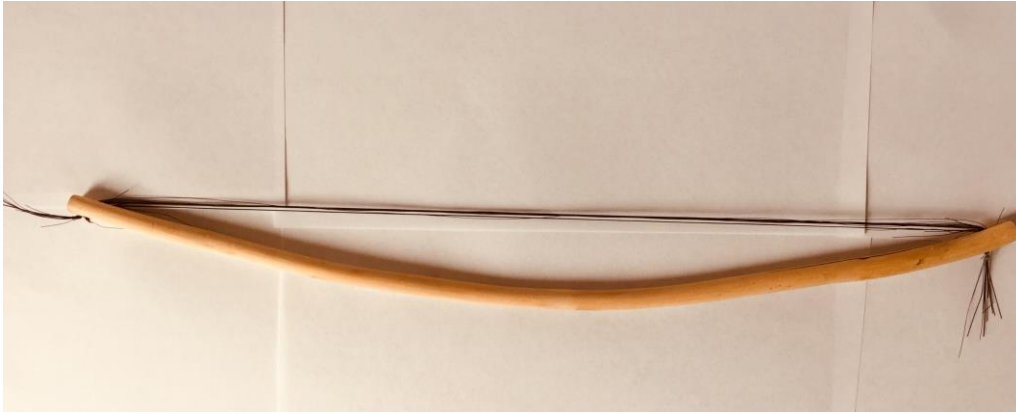


Figure 3.5. A *cimboa* bow. (Source: private collection)

The bridge is similar to certain West African fiddles in that it is usually made from a piece of gourd. In Sierra Leone, the bridge of some Mande fiddles is made of gourd, while other Mande, Wolof and Fulbe musicians use a tuning ring (Lamm 1968: 14-15; Djedje 2008: 30-31). The drawing in figure 3.6. of two *griots* (musicians and storytellers) in Sierra Leone depicts a fiddle that appears to be of a similar size and shape to the *cimboa*, with no resonator hole on the skin.



Figure 3.6. Copy of an illustration in Alexander Gordon Laing’s 1825 journal *Travels in the Timannee, Kooranko, and Soolima Countries in West Africa*, facing p. 148. (Source: The Library Company of Philadelphia)

If the *cimboa* is the result of the transformation of an instrument from West Africa, its changes and adaptations may have occurred as a consequence of Cape Verde’s semi-arid climate which affects the size of the gourds – they are generally smaller. Similarly, goatskin may have been used in the absence of reptiles such as lizards, alligators and snakes. The *cimboa*’s use in *batuku*, however, is an aesthetic experience that is unique to the Cape Verdean Kriolu culture. The Sahelian and Savannah styles are the obvious starting points for an investigation into the instrument’s musical associations.⁴³ However,

⁴³ Djedje categorises fiddling as falling ‘into three performance styles – Sahelian, Savannah and Forest – using geography loosely as a basis for the distinctions. ‘The Sahelian performance style includes musical characteristics identified with Arab culture. Not only is there a close relationship between the voice and the fiddle, but percussion instruments are rarely used. Most important is the central position of melody and the absence of complex polyphony. The performance style prominent among people living in the forest region is distinctive because of the type of fiddle melodies used, the large number of instruments included in the ensemble, and the emphasis placed on polyphony (multipart structure) and rhythm. With greater attention given to the group and the interplay among performers, the fiddle is one instrument among many. The savannah performance style includes elements from both the Sahel and forest. Like other styles, a pentatonic scale is used. Although the group and percussion are emphasized, the fiddle is the primary and lead instrument, and it plays a central role in the interplay of sounds regardless of the size or ensemble organization’ (2008: 37-40).

it appears that, although there are similarities between the *cimboa* and the Fulbe and Mande fiddles as physical instruments, it is not so easy to discern similarities in terms of music, given the cultural transformations that have taken place over time and space.

The cimboa in batuku

In the Cape Verdean journal, *Claridade*, Baltazar Lopes (1949) defines *batuku* as a popular genre of music and dance from Santiago, although its presence in the Ilhas do Barlavento may indicate that it was common across the archipelago.⁴⁴ Manuel Ferreira (1973) reflects on Cape Verde's cultural and religious manifestations; he believes they indicate that the culture is neither European nor African but a third, specifically Cape Verdean kind. He refers to Lopes' observation that *batuku* is not a pure black African dance form but derives from a combination of influences established in Cape Verde (Lopes da Silva 1949, cited in Ferreira 1973: 83). This is indicative of the many diverse peoples who settled in the archipelago (which lies at the crossroads of the Atlantic) and shaped its culture, creating a multi-ethnic society of sub-Saharan Africans, Europeans, Sephardic Jews, Lebanese and Americans. The slave trade shaped Cape Verdean society, and the country's political agenda was set according to the interests of the Portuguese Crown and the commercial demands of the plantation economy in the Americas.

According to the historical context described by Richard Lobban (1995: 47), the majority of Africans who were forcibly displaced to the archipelago were Wolof, Fula and Mandinka peoples from Senegambia and Befada peoples from Guinea-Bissau (see Chapter Two). The *cimboa* possibly arrived in Cape Verde because of the connection of *batuku* with one of the cultures of Upper Guinea. However, the social changes engendered by creolisation renders the search for cultural traits in Cape Verdean music quite

⁴⁴ See Baltazar Lopes. 1949. 'O Folclore Poético da Ilha de Santiago', *Revista Claridade*, 7 (São Vicente: Sociedade de Tipografia e Publicidade), pp. 43-46.

challenging. The shape and physical characteristics of the fiddle reveal significant similarities with African instruments (as discussed more fully later in this chapter), but since the revival of the *cimboa* in Cape Verde is relatively recent, it is possible to refer to descriptions dating from the nineteenth century. Hurley-Glowa (1997) cites Austrian naturalist and ethnographer Dr C. Doelter, who travelled to the Guinea coast and Cape Verde in 1880 and 1881, as mentioning that the *cimboa* was used in Santiago. According to Doelter's description, the *cimboa* was similar to the instruments played by the *griots* of Senegambia (Hurley-Glowa 1997: 167-68). A number of different studies mention the integral connection of the *cimboa* to *batuku*, as noted by Manuel Tavares (2005); he refers to the work of poet and folklorist Pedro Cardoso who recognised the *cimboa* as the characteristic instrument of *batuque* (*batuku*).⁴⁵ Although the spelling '*batuque*' is usual in Cape Verde, as a genre it differs from the *batuque* that appears in other Lusophone contexts in Brazil, Angola and Mozambique and which is associated with other musical practices.⁴⁶

Batuku in Cape Verde is more than simply music and dance; it is a social event immersed in the oral narratives of the secular rites of Cape Verde's people. *Batuku*

⁴⁵ See Pedro Cardoso (1983 [1933]), *Folclore Caboverdiano* (Paris: Solidariedade Caboverdiana), pp. 87-89.

⁴⁶ In Brazil, *batuque* was initially performed in the *senzalas* (slave quarters) in the *terreiro* (slave yard) and it is still performed in *quilombo* communities or is associated with religious practices. The term was used in the nineteenth century to designate African dance gatherings in Brazil (Cascudo 1954: 114). According to the vernacular reports of the Portuguese colonial authorities, slave owners and white luso-Brazilians in general did not discern between secular and religious practices. *Batuque* was generally associated with the act of drumming, clapping and dancing. As a consequence, it acquired different meanings from those attributed to specifically African dances in Brazil, and the term was used for all dance gatherings, ensemble drumming practices and combat games like *capoeira* (Giffoni 1973: 44). According to Jocélio Santos (1998), it was also associated with religious codes such as those found in the Afro-Brazilian religion, Candomblé. Despite the different practices associated with the term, it is frequently mentioned in the literature as being of Congolese-Angolan origin (Ramos 1935; Giffoni 1973; Kubik 2013). Different African dance and music practices entered southeastern Brazil with the slaves, the highest number of whom came from the Congo-Angola region, but also from Mozambique. *Batuque* is also related to a specific Afro-Brazilian syncretic religion in southern Brazil. Norton Corrêa (2006) argues that the rhythm/music/religion of *batuque* and the associated worship of *orixas* (deities) by the Yoruba of Nigeria and Benin, as currently practised in southern Brazil, originated with the Jêje-Nagô people.

practices first emerged in Santiago but are currently performed all over the archipelago and among communities in the diaspora. Performers of *batuku* dance and play music at festivities and religious events such as weddings and baptisms, and proffer political opinions and advice in the form of improvised verses. The dancers, who today are mainly female groups called *batukadeiras*, perform on a *terreru* or *te reru*, a circular structure in a yard or on a stage. Historically, migration depleted Cape Verde's male population and as a result women have assumed a special position in the local culture, sustaining the 'cultural ring' for those within and beyond the shores of the archipelago.

Sitting in a circle, the *batukadeiras* strike the rolled-up *panos* or cloths worn rolled around their waists, playing polyrhythmic textures – in the absence of membranophones, *batuko* performers give the beat by striking their *panos* and clapping. This percussive aspect of the dance is called *txabetas* (Hurley-Glowa 1997: 125; Tavares 2005: 45; Nogueira 2011). The other parts of *batuku* are *sambuna* (the initial session of *batuku*) which consists of a simple, stereotypical song accompanied by clapping and 'drumming' on the *panos* (Tavares 2005: 44). Gláucia Nogueira (2011: 56) also refers to *sambuna* or *zambuna* as another part of the *batuku* session. The *batuku* dance, the *torno*, is characterised by a pronounced motion (wiggling) of the hips – *da cu torno* (literally, 'give with turns').⁴⁷ Another part of *batuku* is the *finaçon*, solo singing (a sort of oral poetry) in which the singer declaims improvised verses in a rhythmic style, accompanied by the percussion of the *panos* and the melody of the *cimboa*, but without dancers. Although *finaçon* is considered a different musical genre from *batuko* (Silva 1949: 46), the boundaries between the two are not always clearly discernible, even for those who come

⁴⁷ *Torno*, with its movements of *da cu torno*, is similar to dances found in other Lusophone contexts, such as the Brazilian *umbigada* and *batuque de umbigada*.

from Santiago (Hurley-Glowa 1997: 34), as both practices employ the same pattern of an ostinato rhythm, with some variations.

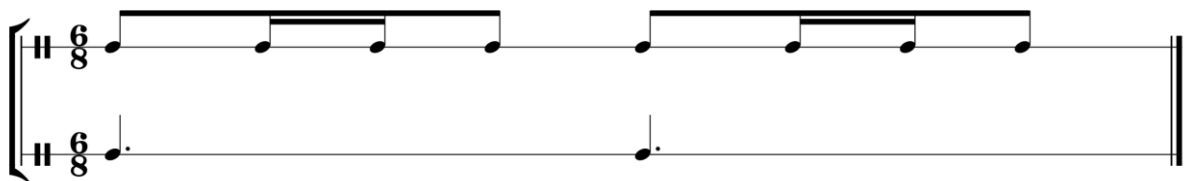
The rhythm of cimboa music

There are no African drum ensembles in the music of Cape Verde. The most frequently used percussion instruments are *tambores* or membranophones – the *caixa*, *bombo* and *tamboril* – that consist of two membranes which are normally struck on the upper skin. According to Brito (1998: 46), the instruments played in Cape Verde are the same as those used in Portugal; however, although West African drumming traditions may once have been widespread, they nearly vanished from Santiago during the last century (Hurley-Glowa 1997: 180-81). Although the Mandinka made up a great part of Cape Verdean society during its formation, the use of carved wooden drums, as in the *djembe* genres, is scarce. Occasionally, a single drum will be used, as in the Ntóni Denti d’Oro ensemble or some contemporary groups, but it does not form a traditional part of an ensemble as it does in the musical tradition of the Mandé and other West African groups. However, the *batuko* has the same polyrhythmic textures as drum ensembles, and oral narratives about Cape Verdean music usually assert that *batuko* is an African rhythm. Hurley-Glowa (1997: 119) notes that ‘of all the music of Cape Verde, *batuko* has the strongest resemblance to traditions from mainland Africa in its dance style, polyrhythmic organization, and call-and-response structure’. Nevertheless, despite the resemblance of *batuko* to mainland traditions, there is speculation about its origins since no direct genealogy can be found that connects it to mainland Africa; it does not appear possible to directly link the rhythm structure of *batuko* to the drum-ensemble traditions of West Africa.

The following music examples show the basic pattern of *batuko* in the notation in 3/4 and 6/8. In music example 3.1., the notation of *batuko* is displayed as a duple metre.

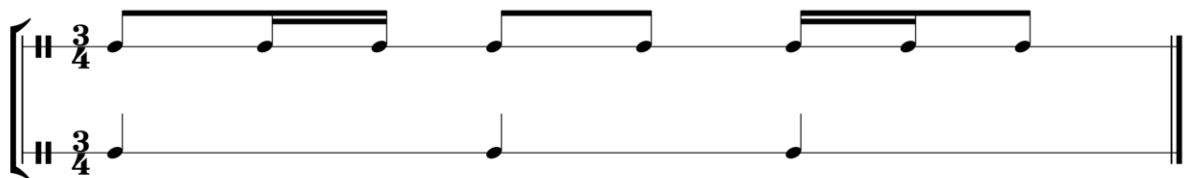
The bottom and top lines are played without contrast between the hands. The two-line musical example represents the polyrhythmic character of the rhythm pattern with a lower pitch sounding on the bottom line. If the rhythm is beaten out on a drum, for instance, the bottom line is an open bass centre stroke.

Music example 3.1.



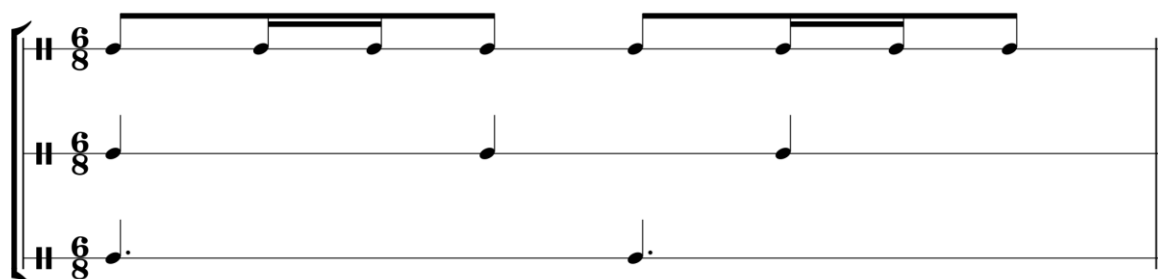
The rhythmic pattern can also be notated in triple metre, as in music example 3.2., below.

Music example 3.2.



The duple metre and triple metre represent two different approaches to playing the rhythm but the resulting sound is similar as it is played in a moderately fast to fast tempo, however it appears that no one thinks of the *batuku* beat in 3/4. If the structure is played with two bass strokes in the time of three against two in a 3:2 ratio, as in music example 3.3, the hemiola effect seems to better reproduce the sense of the *batuku* rhythmic pattern than the duple and triple metres.

Music example 3.3.



In musical example 3.4. (below), I have transcribed the introduction to the *batuku* piece ‘Disgraça Di Um Camponesa’ by Kim Alves from his album *Dança das Ilhas*.⁴⁸ Alves based this album on his research into the traditional rhythms of Cape Verde. In his interview (see Chapter Two), he mentioned that when he recorded *batuko*, he maintained its traditional form by using the *tchabeta*’s rhythmic pattern. However, he intended to record the theme on the violin instead of the *cimboa*, introducing the *batuku* ensemble and its rhythmic texture as an aesthetic allusion but reinterpreted with harmonic progressions that are usual only in contemporary Cape Verdean music. The introduction is performed on violin and percussion. However, apart from the violin and the *tchabeta*, the other instruments are not named in the description of this piece in the album’s sleeve notes, although there appear to be percussion instruments of a similar timbre to claves, possibly the *chocalho*, *udu* and *bombo*. The melodic phrase is played by the violin, acoustic bass guitar and guitar, but I have opted to notate only the violin part. The phrase is structured in descending sequences. The *tchabeta* is performed by the group Pó di

⁴⁸ Kim Alves, *Dança das Ilhas: Music of Cape* (Kmagic Productions, CD, 2014).

Terra, which employed an unusual variation, subdividing the first quaver into two semi-quavers on the second beat of each bar in the *tchabeta* part.

Music example 3.4. (track 4)

♩ . = 80

Violin

Claves

Chocalho

Tchabeta

Udu

Bombo

5

Given that the rhythm pattern remains constant throughout the performance of *batuko* pieces, there is no need for the player to have a perception of the metre: metrical accents

seem irrelevant for a repeating pattern like *batuko*. As to the rhythmic density, there is no emphasis on the hierarchical accentuation of the metre when considering beat 1 and beat 2 of each measure as there are no significant changes in duration. As James Burns (2012: 2) notes, ‘for reasons both aesthetic and practical, changes in duration and stress are not effective means of musical expression in African performance practice’. The repeating pattern of the *tchabeta* as ostinato maintains a perception of timing, but not as a metric background. The violin, claves, *udu* and *bombo* play more in contrasting points of attack in the rhythm structure than in converging points. Bars 7 and 8 convey the most contrast, with more differing points of attack. *Batuku*, as a genre that is neither African nor European but Kriolu, resonates with Burns’ (2012: 2) description of an African ‘community music event’ in which ‘the pulse is perceived as a multi-sensory phenomenon: it can be sensed physically, in movements and in instrumental fingering, and sticking patterns; visually by the swaying of bodies, costumes, and items in the dance space; and mentally’.

The rhythmic texture Alves uses reinforces the polyrhythmic structure of *batuku*, gravitating around the *tchabeta*’s core pattern. The insertion of the violin in the multipart rhythmic texture conveys the perception of a *batuku* ensemble aesthetic, which gives the *cimboa* a melodic and rhythmic role. Alves mentions the *cimboa* playing technique he employed in this piece in the album’s accompanying booklet.

Mano Mendi and Pascoal Fernandes

Cimboa players Mano Mendi and Pascoal Fernandes – the latter also makes *cimboas* – are both members of Ntóni Denti d’Oro’s *batuku* group. Following the death of Nhó Henrique, Mano Mendi was often referred to as one of the few remaining musicians to revive the *cimboa* tradition. The music of Nhó Henrique, who worked as a street sweeper in the city of Tarrafal and who used to perform with the *finaçon cantadeira* (female

singer) Nha Bibinha Cabral (Nogueira 2007: 177-78), can be heard on the album *Cape-Verde Islands – The Roots*.⁴⁹ His death in the 1990s is said to have marked the passing of the last generation of *cimboa* players; Mano Mendi, however, continued to keep the tradition alive until his death in 2009, alongside a few other musicians such as Miguel Tavares, Joaquim Fonfon, Valentim and João de Gongon (see the list of *cimboa* players compiled by Tavares (2005) in Appendix 2). Born Pedro Mendes Sanches Robalo in 1927 in Ribeirão Chiqueiro, a village in the municipality of São Domingos, Mano Mendi earned his living as a peasant farmer. In 2006, he was asked to lead a workshop on the construction of the *cimboa* and the traditional techniques of playing the instrument as part of a project, *Salvaguarda da Memória da Cimboa*, which had been established to reawaken interest in the *cimboa*. He was also featured in the documentary ‘Dix Petits Grains de Terre’, performing with Ntóni Denti d’Oro’s ensemble.⁵⁰ The group recorded the album *Cap-Vert, Batuque et Finaçon – Ntóni Denti d’Oro*, which is analysed later in this chapter.⁵¹

In music examples 3.5. and 3.6., I have transcribed phrases from solo pieces performed by both *cimboa* players, Nhó Henrique and Mano Mendi. The first is a recording entitled ‘Cimboa’ by Nhó Henrique from the album *Cape-Verde Islands – The Roots*. The phrase that plays from 1m 35s to 1m 46s is the main motif of the piece and is a usual *batuko* phrase, with a four-bar melody that is repeated with subtle changes in melody and rhythm. The eight-bar melody works as a call by the ensemble’s leader that elicits a response from the chorus. The phrase is repeated from bar 5, with some rhythmic variations. The quadruplets represent patterns which constantly emphasize the polyrhythm in relation to the tactus and its regular subdivisions in the *batuku/tchabeta* rhythm.

⁴⁹ *Cape-Verde Islands – The Roots* (Playa Sound, 1990).

⁵⁰ ‘Dix Petits Grains de Terre’, dir. by F. Manso, D. Spencer and F. Le Bayon. (Production Francisco Manso; Lieurac Productions, Format Beta, 1999).

⁵¹ *Cap-Vert, Batuque et Finaçon – Ntóni Denti d’Oro* (Ocora Radio France, CD, 1998).

Although it is a solo piece, the *batuku* style of the *cimboa* playing is evident: the pitch for the open string is a Bb3, allowing the fiddle player to reach the fifth between the Bb to F with the fourth finger of the left hand.

Music example 3.5. (track 5)



Music example 3.6. (below) is a transcription of a recording of Mano Mendi by musician and instrument maker Victor Gama in Ribeirão Chiqueiro, Santiago, in 2003.⁵² The transcription endeavours to capture the microtonal inflections of Mano Mendi's *cimboa* playing. The twelve notes of the chromatic scale, which are of equal temperament, do not represent the real sound of each of the notes in the transcription. The Db notes played in bar 3 sound between Db and D, naturally higher than the C# on the first bar. The whole and half steps do not always follow the same proportions of the diatonic scale, missing microtones in the notation. The open-string, relative pitch is G3, and the range is only achieved by changing the position of the left hand. The phrase of four bars followed by repetition that is played on the *cimboa* follows the usual pattern in *batuku* singing, the eight bars call for an eight-bar response, although in a solo performance the improvisational character is more evident. In the *batuku* ensemble, the *cimboa* is also played in an improvised way but is more connected to the phrasing of the leading voice.

⁵² Victor Gama, instrument maker and composer (private archive).

Music example 3.6. (track 6)



During my research in Santiago, I visited Pascoal Fernandes, a *cimboa* maker and musician. Although he learnt his technique from Mano Mendi, he has since developed a different approach to the instrument, finding other uses for the fiddle which he elaborated on during the interview. He performs other Cape Verdean musical genres besides *batuku* on the *cimboa* as he considers that this is a way to keep its practice alive. Pascoal, a former army captain, studied in the former USSR and is knowledgeable about the history of Cape Verde, particularly the legacy of colonialism in the archipelago, and he volunteered information related to the historical-cultural context of *batuku* and the practices associated with the *cimboa*. First, however, he showed me his atelier, which housed a number of instruments under construction; then he took up his own *cimboa* and started to play Cape Verdean melodies. As he did so, he related his experience with the fiddle and with his *batuku* master, Mano Mendi.

Pascoal: The *cimboa* is an instrument used in the *batuku* tradition. Nowadays, this instrument is rare, almost disappearing. So, with the aim of recovering the cultural traditions of the *cimboa*, I joined a project [some] years ago. The Institute for Heritage Research became involved in the *cimboa* project and it was [funded] by UNESCO. With these funds, the Institute decided to provide training for all those working in the councils of Santiago; recently, the councils [...] had the benefit of hosting a course about the *cimboa*. At this point, we had been training

on average more than 150 people, who learnt to make the instrument. A workshop held in Tarrafal took two members [from] each council to learn the technique of [...] the *cimboa*. I consider myself now in a new phase – the reintroduction of the *cimboa* in the musical field. There is the risk that young people will not be attracted to the *cimboa* as it is employed in *batuku*. But drawing their interest might be possible [in other genres]: I am also a guitar player so I have taken this opportunity to introduce the *cimboa* alongside other instruments common to genres like the *funana*, *morna* and *coladeira*.

Luiz: *How did you learn to play the cimboa?*

Pascoal: I was privileged to learn with Mano Mendi, who also introduced me to the art of making the *cimboa*. He was the best teacher out of the three that existed at that time.

Luiz: *Do you think Mano Mendi learnt to play the cimboa in this area?*

Pascoal: Yes, he learnt in Ribeirão Chiqueira, 5 km away, at a young age.

Luiz: *Did he teach you to play the melodies of batuku songs?*

Pascoal: I had the opportunity to play with him. We recorded an album, *Batuque et Finaçon*, with the singer Ntóni Denti d’Oro [he shows me the CD cover]. Can you see? I have the *djembe* under my arm but I played the guitar on the album. I had the opportunity to perform with Mano Mendi in the *batuku* tradition. So, listening to new musicians who were suddenly appearing and claiming that they were *cimboa* players, I realised immediately that many were not able to, they were like ‘fake prophets’; if someone started to sing before they played, they would never enter in the right key. He or she would strike the musical bow and then the melody would start. In my opinion, the *cimboa* is not a percussion instrument. They were using it as a percussion instrument only.

Pascoal demonstrated this sort of playing on his instrument, beating the bow against the string. His opinion that the *cimboa* is a melodic instrument reinforces the idea that the role of this one-stringed fiddle is as a ‘drone’ (a sustained sound) to support the voice, giving the *batuku* singer a pitch reference. However, the use of bowed lutes as percussive

instruments in West Africa – beating the bow against the string in a similar fashion to the way gourd-resonated musical bows are played – is not unusual. As Djedje (2008: 66) comments: ‘In a few societies, the fiddle is played in a percussive manner with little attention given to developing the melody.’ Pascoal continued by explaining his understanding of *cimboa* playing and the notions employed in the performance of *batuku*: ‘To play the *cimboa* you need to listen to the chord progression and the pitch of each song. It is also a solo instrument like the Western violin.’ He then played a CD for me, telling me that it was the only copy available in the area these days: ‘Can you hear? The *cimboa* is accompanying the singer. This instrument should provide guidance to the singer in *batuku*.’ The idea of the *cimboa* working as a pitch reference for the voice is plausible, since in a *batuko* session with no Western instruments of equal temperament, a singer might require a pitch reference. The melodic phrases played on the *cimboa* also function as a counterpoint to the leading voice and the rhythmic structure of the *batuko* ensemble. However, it is not rare for *batuko* ensembles to include Western instruments – for instance, Ntóni Denti d’Oro’s ensemble included a guitar.

Luiz: *How do you think people coped with the measures taken by the colonial rulers such as the attempted prohibition of batuku?*

Pascoal: The coloniser, in this case the Portuguese, prohibited the *batuku*, *tabanka* and *funana* for political reasons. Slaves always wanted to say something, but they could not speak, they had nowhere to speak, they had no chance to get up there [...] So, it was through singing that the Caboverdiano [Cape Verdeans] expressed themselves. They criticised the priest, the master and the police, criticised [them] there in the *terrero* [the yard where *batuku* is performed]. In an effort to put an end to this popular criticism, one response that gained ground was to ban the practice. If you sang *batuku*, you would be harassed, receiving punishment; they would bother your family. For example, if a wedding was scheduled for 9 a.m., the priest would start at 11 a.m. or noon. I mean, they would

spoil the party.

Whether *batuko* was actually prohibited, however, is a matter of debate. Lobban refers to the fact that the Catholic Church disapproved of *batuko* because of its sexual connotations, as well as mentioning the occasional repressive measures meted out by the colonial rulers due to the implicit militancy of some of the verses:

The Portuguese authorities went so far as to ban the *badius* dancing the *batuko* style, which was projected as ‘too African’ and ‘too primitive’. Some *badius* in the twentieth century responded by ‘outrageously’ reinterpreting the meaning of Catholicism as the *rebelado* movement emerged. This merged Catholicism with a folk and personal spiritualism that the bishops and priests found repugnant. (Lobban 1995: 73)

On the topic of the widespread beliefs and folk theories about *batuko* and its prohibition, Hurley-Glowa (1997: 177-79) points to the lack of any documentary evidence that *batuko* was illegal, although oral narratives in Cape Verde indicate that the religious and colonial authorities may have practised coercion or even tried to prohibit *batuko* music and its dance practices. After examining oral sources and official archives, Nogueira (2011) refers to the ‘suppression’ of *batuko*. The official registers do indeed reveal that some form of coercion did take place – it became necessary to request permission to hold festivities such as the *tabanka* and *finaçon* which were associated with *batuko*.⁵³ As far as the actions of the Catholic hierarchy were concerned, Nogueira located

⁵³ The *tabanka* is a kind of procession related to rituals with both religious and secular characteristics. Despite the syncretic usage of catholic symbols and influences, such as the performance of the practice on holy days with the saint represented by a flag, *tabanka* is at the same time ‘a political and social organisation’ (Gomes 2011: 1907) with hierarchical structures dedicated to providing mutual aid. In festivities, its cultural manifestation brings a sense of collective belonging, especially when people pray for rain or a good harvest. ‘The procession is accompanied by *corneterus* who play the *buzios*, a sea shell divided in three registers, a lower, middle and higher register responsible for the rhythmic-melodic ostinato, whose tessitura reaches a sixth’ (Brito 1998: 57). The *tamborerus* use instruments very similar to the *caixas* (drums) found in the *folia de reis* in Brazil and in the traditional music of the province of

documents that reveal ecclesiastical requests to the administrative authorities to prohibit dance events during religious festivities. These were probably *batuko* events, as this was the most frequently performed dance in inland Santiago (2011: 70).

Some of the oral narratives coincide with Pascoal's comments that the Catholic Church considered the practice 'obscene' and the dance 'lascivious', and that the clergy prevented people who practised *batuku* from marrying or baptising their children in church. According to Jean-Yves Loud (1988: 14), the legal records of 31 March 1866 show that 'the "*batuque*" was banned in the name of morality and [the] maintenance of public order. Offenders were liable to a fine and even prison [...] It did not gain recognition until Cape Verde became independent in 1975.'⁵⁴ *Batuko* thus became a cultural icon of resistance for the movements fostered by revolutionary intellectuals. In his interview, Pascoal explained:

For instance, the *tabanka* procession was also forbidden. When people arrived at the Pontoon beach, they sang whatever came into their minds [so] [...] they would [all] be held responsible for it. On the other hand, players who sang *morna* did not experience such treatment because *morna* had written lyrics [with] the author's signature so one [person] could be blamed. The singer of *batuku* had no written lyrics. They improvised at any given moment. So, if any embarrassing situation were to emerge, someone could say: 'No, I heard this song there'; 'I don't know'; 'I learnt this song with someone.' Who was there? 'I was there on a plantation, just listening to everyone sing.' So that's what I consider to be a reasonable explanation about the prohibition of *batuku*. In addition, the *cimboa* was prohibited as well as *batuku*. [By contrast], the guitar, played by people with a [certain] level of education, was employed in *morna* songs. The guitar was an elite instrument, but [...] the *cimboa*, the oldest Cape Verdean instrument in the hands

Beira in Portugal. Some people in Santiago, however, argue that *tabanka* has lost a part of its original esoteric character connected to animistic practices and objects of worship.

⁵⁴ Jean-Yves Loude's contribution is included in the booklet accompanying Ntóni Denti d'Oro's album, *Batuque et Finaçon*.

of slaves, was excluded.

Here, Pascoal reveals two important points related to censorship and the transformation of African music traditions. The musical changes that took place with the introduction of Western harmonic instruments (such as the guitar) that were similar in many ways to the *cimboa* fostered the cultural predominance of the coloniser over the colonised. There was an obvious intent on behalf of the colonial authorities to suppress some *badiu* cultural manifestations.⁵⁵ Pascoal's testimony resonates with Kofi Agawu's (2003: 8) arguments about the cultural imperialism inherent in the colonisers' use of tonal harmony: 'We might say that the greatest colonial power is harmony. African melodies, especially those generated by the proto-musical essence of spoken language, are able sometimes to resist the blandness and squareness of certain European diatonic melodies.' This aesthetic interference, combined with the desire for control, also occurred linguistically – a recognisable compositional form, expressed through self-censored language, was more likely to avoid political tensions. However, when the inhabitants of Santiago adopted the use of European instruments, they incorporated the aesthetics of *badiu* music and forms of dance into their own dynamic creolised tradition. In other words, there was an aesthetic Africanisation of the European instruments that involved a mutual dynamic: they did not entirely overcome the powerful forces of censorship aimed at undermining their African musical heritage but neither did they become wholly subservient to cultural colonisation.

Taking into account Agawu's ideas about the colonial imposition of tonal harmony through choral music, anthems, popular music and the introduction of Western instruments into Africa, it is nevertheless difficult to be precise about the extent of this

⁵⁵ *Badiu* is a term derived from the Portuguese word *vadio* (vagrant). The runaway slaves who formed the first maroon communities in the mountains were called *badius*. Despite its pejorative connotations, the term was re-signified by the people of Santiago. 'Badiu is associated with a set of characteristics attributed to the descendants of slaves in Santiago; qualities such as self-reliance, independence, freedom of spirit and expression – especially as manifested in music and dance' (Hurley-Glowa 1997: 175-76).

cultural interference on the Cape Verdean musical experience. As Agawu says in reference to the African continent:

The most obvious sign of colonial influence is the *material* presence of foreign musical instruments in Africa. It is true that Africa has long been the site of various forms of culture contact, contact that is not restricted to Europe. For example, the one-string fiddle or *goje* (it comes under a variety of regional names) prominent in the Sudan and in portions of the Islamic belt of West Africa may well have come from the Middle East via North Africa. (Agawu 2003: 5)

As Cape Verde was not inhabited until the end of the fifteenth century, what occurred there was the syncretic experience of a cultural collision – amidst the involuntary ruptures of slavery – which reassembled the broken cultural ties with Africa to form the new subjectivities of a Kriolu society. The reverse side of this Cape Verdean experience could fit perfectly within Homi Bhabha’s definition of ‘between-ness’ transported into this African diasporic context. As Bhabha (1994: 2) says, ‘[i]t is in the emergence of the interstices – the overlap and displacement of domains of difference – that the intersubjective and collective experiences of *nationness*, community interest, or cultural value are negotiated.’ Pascoal, for example, is a guitarist who plays the *cimboa* as a way of maintaining the *batuku* cultural heritage, but he is simultaneously changing the *cimboa* tradition by playing the instrument in other Cape Verdean music genres.

This approach can be understood as lying beyond the duality of resistance and negotiation; rather, it represents a creative process. As David Treece observes:

The colonial cultures are not just countercultures or cultures of resistance: they not only resisted the West, but transformed, expanded, and enriched it. Perhaps they should rather be seen – or heard – as counterpoints, to invoke a musical analogy, as distinct yet simultaneously resonating voices weaving a polyphonic texture. (Treece 2007: 6)

Treece's analysis emphasises the process of negotiation that occurred in the encounters between different practices, sidelining the search for the genealogies of music genres in Africa and the diaspora. Once the colonial culture (imposed from the beginning) has been appropriated and transformed, the musical legacy is not necessarily perceived by future generations as inauthentic but rather as a creolised creative force. This is confirmed in the interview with Pascoal:

Luiz: *Is there no way of knowing where the cimboa came from?*

Pascoal: No, because the slaves who arrived in Cape Verde came from various parts of Africa, and most of the continent has instruments similar to the *cimboa*. There are one-stringed instruments in Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Chad, Sudan and Mozambique.

Luiz: *Is the cimboa played throughout all the parts of batuku – in ceremonies, for example – or just during the introduction, to establish the pitch for the singer?*

[Pascoal demonstrates by playing along with the CD.]

Luiz: *In tabanka, we can see wind instruments, buzios and percussion, but never the cimboa. Is that correct?*

Pascoal: Look, I cannot tell you either 'yes' or 'no' because I am too young [in relation to these traditions]. It is possible that the *cimboa* has been used in *tabanka*, but with the emergence of the drums and the use of shell *buzios*, it fell out of favour due to the amount of volume produced by the fiddle in comparison to these loud instruments.

Pascoal demonstrated this by showing me the shells he keeps at home – they indeed produce a far louder sound than the fiddle. As a consequence, the *cimboa* may not have been played in *tabanka*. The difference in volume, however, is not a limiting factor for African ensembles, since the rhythmic textures allows quieter instruments to be heard at different points during the multipart passages. Nevertheless, as *tabanka* is a procession, its contemporary practice is associated with drums such as the *tambores* and with *buzios*.

Pascoal: At that time, there was nothing to amplify the *cimboa*, but now I use a pickup. [He arranges his pickup and demonstrates the amplified *cimboa*.] I don't know if you can recognise this *marrabenta* from Mozambique? [He plays 'Elisa Gomara Saia' on the *cimboa*, the emblematic song from the famous Mozambican genre.]

Luiz: *Which material do you use for the construction of the cimboa? How do you find these materials here?*

Pascoal: I use a gourd for the body and a *pinus* stick [*muricata soursop* from the pine family]. The bow is made of a *barnelo* [a curved piece of wood], giving it flexibility. Horsehair is used for the string and the bow; the black is a good type to get the sound. Resin is used to get the best friction.

Luiz: *As there are no pinus trees here in Cape Verde, how do you obtain the resin for the bow?*

Pascoal: The resin [used to] come from Portugal; today it [still] comes from Portugal but it isn't used for the *cimboa* but for the violin [he laughs].

Luiz: *Which animal skin do you use to make a cimboa?*

Pascoal: The skin should come from a young goat, a kid's skin, which I buy in Praia or from the butcher.

Luiz: *Who else played the cimboa?*

Pascoal: There was Mano Mendi, here in Santo Domingo, and Roque Sanchez, known as 'Bandi', who lives over in Baia da Estada.

Luiz: *Do you participate in a group as a cimboa player?*

Pascoal: Here in the community, I belong to the group Discípulos do Ano Novo (Disciples of the New Year). This is also an opportunity to introduce the *cimboa* into other music genres, such as the *coladeira*, *funaná* and *morna*, and [to also introduce] instruments such as the six-stringed acoustic guitar, keyboard, bass guitar and percussion.

Luiz: *Is the drum that is played on the Ntóni Denti d'Oro album the djembe?*

Pascoal: Yes, we used the *djembe* and a big drum covered in a blanket, similar to

a *tom tom*; it's an old instrument that's no longer used in *batuku*.⁵⁶

The big drum mentioned by Pascoal is a type of *tambor*, a membranophone with two skins similar to the Portuguese *caixa* and *bombo* (also covered with a blanket). A hallmark of Ntóni Denti d'Oro's playing was his personal approach to the instrument, striking it with his bare hands rather than using drumsticks.

After this conversation, Pascoal showed me one of the twenty-three *cimboas* he had been commissioned to make by the Cape Verdean government as souvenirs for each of the defence ministers from PALOP (the official Portuguese-speaking African countries) who were attending a meeting in the archipelago. I asked Pascoal if there is a specific pitch to which he tunes the string. He replied that 'there is no specific tuning. I set a pitch when I want to play accompanied by guitar. I tune in D (D4) because of my voice, to be able to sing well. Mano Mendi tuned from memory depending on the song's key.' Following these comments, Pascoal played the 'Blimundo' song on the *cimboa*.

Pascoal also demonstrated how to hold the *cimboa* horizontally. The bow runs more perpendicular to the string than other types of fiddle I have played. The special trick he taught me was to fit the fiddle between the forearm and the chest in such a way that the left hand remains free to change position from lower to higher pitch and back. The left-hand technique includes using the four fingers on stopped notes, although the fingers rarely touch the fingerboard, meaning that both harmonics and artificial harmonics are possible. There are many possible tunings for the open string depending on the key of an instrumental piece or a song.

⁵⁶ The *tom tom* is referred to in oral narratives as a drum that has since disappeared from Cape Verde. Loude (1864: 15) and Nogueira (2011: 26) both mention the nineteenth-century Portuguese traveller Travasso Valdez, who described the instruments of a Cape Verde orchestra: along with flutes, guitars and fiddles, he included the *tom tom* or *batuque*, the instrument from which the dance music genre gets its name. However, he did not elucidate the context in which it was played, nor provide any descriptions of the drum.

Luiz: *How are the gourds faring nowadays in Cape Verde?*

Pascoal: In the past, there were a lot, but now we have to order them from Fogo. There are some here and there. Gourds used to be used to store milk and carry water but with the arrival of wine bottles they fell into disuse. The problem is also the amount of rain that falls: gourds do not grow everywhere [but] they grow whenever and wherever they want. Now, the biggest problem we have here is horsehair. It has to come from Senegal, Portugal, Uruguay or Brazil.

Luiz: *How about the size and proportions of a cimboa?*

Pascoal: The instrument's size is proportional to the *cabaça* [gourd]. To avoid sound leakage in the neck's junction with the *cabaça* resonator, I apply a layer of glue which makes the connection perfect.

Luiz: *Are most of the songs on the album, *Ntóni Dente d'Oro*, batuku?*

Pascoal: All the songs are exclusively *batuku*. It was [part of the] work that Ocora Radio France did in an effort to record African music genres that were endangered or disappearing; this album was dedicated to *batuku*. There is not a single copy in Cape Verde any more. They brought a copy for each member of the group (ten or twenty) to the Centro Cultural Francês. You can still find it in France but not in Cape Verde.



Figure 3.7. Pascoal playing the *cimboa*. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

The recording mentioned above was one of the last performances of this kind of ensemble, which Cape Verdean musicians refer to as ‘old *batuku*’, the most traditional form of *batuku* and *finaçon*. It combines older expressions sung in the linguistic variant of the Kriolu *badio* from inland Santiago (as well as older African instruments such as the *cimboa* and *djembe*) with the contemporary guitar, and is complemented by the *batukadeiras* (singers and percussionists). The text in the booklet accompanying the CD was written by Loude, who gives the ethno-historical background of *batuku* based on the narrative of Ntóni Denti d’Oro. The singer’s metaphorical verses are set in the context of a polyphonic African aesthetic texture of voices, drums and fiddle.



Figure 3.8. The cover of Ntóni Denti d'Oro's album, *Cap-Vert – Batuque et Finaçon* (Ocora Radio France).

The album *Cap-Vert – Batuque et Finaçon* was released by Ocora Radio France in 1998, with Ntóni Denti d'Oro as the lead singer and drummer. Ntóni was born in the province of São Domingos to a family of peasants and was regarded as one of the few male singers of *batuku*, performing this genre from an early age. According to a recorded interview with Ntóni, when he reached the age of eight, his mother told him: 'Now your work is *batuku*. You will grow to appreciate it. You do not have anything else to do but *batuko*.'⁵⁷ It is particularly striking that Ntóni's mother made this decision in the period preceding independence, when *batuku* practices were routinely suppressed by the colonial

⁵⁷ See Al-bloc.net <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ENCKZk-foD0>> (accessed 13 December 2015).

authorities; it reveals the extent to which *batuku* was regarded by the inhabitants of Santiago as representing a culture of resistance. As Peter Fryer (2000) suggests, it served as a ‘rhythm of resistance’ throughout the colonial period.

Ntóni has performed at traditional festivities all over the archipelago and abroad, including a European tour. As a male singer, he is ‘a true phenomenon in many ways in this female universe of the *batuku* and *finaçon*’ (Loude 1998).⁵⁸ On the album, Ntóni sings and plays the large *tambor* (drum) wrapped in cloth, as mentioned in the interview with Pascoal above. His ensemble consists of three female percussionists, who also comprise the chorus, a percussionist (a *djembe* player), three guitarists and a *cimboa* player. The improvisational character of *finaçon*, which is organised into verses that are half-spoken, half-sung in a rhythmic fashion, allows the performer to deliver advice and demonstrate their wisdom. Ntóni’s defiant voice, counterbalanced by its eloquent quasi-expressionist tone, is consistently accompanied by the counterpoint voice of the *cimboa*. This establishes the structure of Ntóni’s *batuku-finaçon* ensemble: a solo narrative with the African fiddle providing the counterpoint in a polyrhythmic structure. Hurley-Glowa (1997) mentions the importance of *finaçon* as song-narratives that correspond to an ‘informal history’, reflecting on the norms, behaviour, people and events of the past while commenting on the present. She argues that ‘*finason* resembles other traditions rooted in West Africa, especially those with professional praise singers or *griots*’ (1997: 135). Loude (1998: 14) similarly remarks on the importance of *finaçon* as a way of disseminating popular wisdom, also drawing parallels with the *griots* of West Africa. Analysing the song ‘Sambuna e Finaçon’, he gives a contextualised description of the theme of a *finaçon* narrative and its oral poetry, commenting on the way Ntóni improvises ‘a dense chronicle of events which have affected the community. [...] This is *finaçon*, a

⁵⁸ Loude’s comments can be found in the booklet accompanying Ntóni Denti d’Oro’s album *Batuque et Finaçon* (1998).

lesson on how to behave in society' (1998: 18). Loude cites some of the lyrics in Ntóni's Kriolo *badiu*.⁵⁹ *Badiu* is the Kriolu of Santiago; however, the term took on a different meaning when used in the colonial context. 'The song combines edifying, picturesque scenes, moral utterances and exposure of ordinary stupidity, and it ends up describing a frantic quest for the ideal woman' (1998: 18).

A particular theme that appears in Ntóni's lyrics is the challenge faced by Cape Verdeans searching for non-existent work in São Tomé e Príncipe in the post-war period. In one song, a part of which I have transcribed below in music example 3.7., he reveals the desperation of those faced with the choice of staying in a drought-ridden land scourged by famine or entering into forced labour abroad. I have transcribed a short period of transition from the instrumental to the vocal in order to illustrate the musical texture of Ntóni's *batuku* ensemble. The song's structure is based on *batuku* – the *tchabeta* rhythm pattern with not many rhythmic variations and contrasting moments of attack. The guitar functions as a bass, with the bass line establishing the tonality of Eb minor. The opening phrase on the *cimboa* is divided into two halves – measures 1 and 2 comprise the first half-phrase, and measures 2 and 3 the second – functioning in counterpoint to the repeated bass line. The *cimboa* repeats the same motif in the following three measures but in an abbreviated pattern in the time span (the quavers are divided into semiquavers). These rhythmic variations match the rhythm of the leading voice which enters in measure 4, forming a counterpoint that occurs particularly in the placing of the syncopation. This relationship between the singer and the fiddle provides the key to

⁵⁹ 'Ntóni Denti d'Oro starts by sketching the portrait of a man he met on the way to the recruiting agent – the man in charge of writing down the names of the poor wretches who were forced to enrol in the plantations of São Tomé e Príncipe in the 1950s: "*Homi feio, galanti, som comprido, cadera baxu, pé ma trance simitéri, boca ma cusa l'côba tchom, odju ma lua trás di cutelo, nariz ma si nomi é dia dimingo, dja'm fassi ideia ma nem si cumberso n'ka entende'l*" ("He was an ugly, strange-looking man, with a long back and a low bottom, feet like graveyard wooden latches, and a mouth like 'the thing used to dig the ground', eyes like the moon setting on the hills, a nose as long as the name of Sunday, I felt as though I couldn't understand a word that this bloke may say to me")' (Loude 1998).

understanding the *cimboa*'s role in the *batuku/finaçon* ensemble. The music of the *cimboa* not only supports the singer, as Pascoal mentioned in his interview (above), but plays an independent role, parallel to that of the voice, by giving the ensemble the texture that is apparent in the sections with no leading voice.

The rhythmic character of *tchabeta* shapes the way the instruments create the polyphonic texture which supports the sung verses. The motifs that arise from the phrasing of the voice and the fiddle confirm the aesthetic perception that *batuku* is always connected to *tchabeta* patterns. This sense exists even in the *cimboa*'s solo performances: the binary pulse and the variations in the pattern guide the musicians more than the background metre in the notation. However, it is the rhythm events, in cycles of pulses rather than hierarchically accentuated, that generate the pendulum impulse – the swinging movements of African dance as described by Mark Knowles (2002: 24). It maintains the continuum effect, a repetition of patterns which allow the singer to improvise verses *ad infinitum*. This percussive genre is unique in fiddle music and is an example of the way the African rhythm is expressed melodically, in constant interaction with drums and clapping.

Music example 3.7. (track 7)

The musical score is for a track in 6/8 time with a tempo of 86. It features five staves: Voice (tenor), Cimboa, Acoustic Guitar, Tchabeta, Djembe, and Tambor. The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains measures 1 through 3. The second system, starting at measure 4, contains measures 4 through 6. The Cimboa part is a single melodic line. The Acoustic Guitar part provides a harmonic accompaniment. The Tchabeta, Djembe, and Tambor parts provide a complex rhythmic accompaniment. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat).

The Museu de Etnologia (Cape Verde's museum of ethnology) in Praia hosts a permanent exhibition of traditional musical instruments that includes the *cimboa*. The one-stringed fiddle of Cape Verde is therefore still part of the national memory, symbolic of the cultural practices of the archipelago prior to independence. However, the apparent consensus in the literature over the disappearance of the *cimboa* (mentioned above) is questionable. If the instrument continues to be made and is still played, albeit it in new

ways, it points instead to a process of musical change and transformation (Merriam 1964; Blacking 1995). Within the re-contextualisation of the musical and cultural traditions of Cape Verde, the continuity of *cimboa* practice depends on how individuals or groups of revivalists (including projects such as the Salvaguarda da Memória da Cimboa) interpret the idea of passing on a tradition. The particular social context and different perceptions of history may shape not only the rhetoric but also the actions of those dedicated to reviving the *cimboa* tradition (Bithell and Hill 2014: 14). The revivalists do not regard the new approaches of contemporary *cimboa* players as ‘evolutionary’. However, it seems that rather than adhering to a concept of tradition based on notions of ‘authenticity’ in an attempt to re-create an imagined past, these musicians are re-contextualising the practice by establishing a dialogue with other musical genres in the present day. Furthermore, the *cimboa* has also become a cultural material in transit from one geographic location to another, and is playing a part in a further process of creolisation in Brazil.

3.2. The *cimboa* in Brazil

Gentil do Orocongo

It appears that the only representative of the one-stringed fiddle tradition noted in Brazil in recent years has been Gentil do Orocongo. Gentil played a fiddle of his own design, an adaptation of the Cape Verdean *cimboa*, and his approach to the instrument was symbolic of the social process whereby it has become de-contextualised (Ronström 2014). Gentil Camilo Nascimento Filho, better known as Gentil do Orocongo, was born in southeast Brazil, in the island city of Florianópolis. He learnt the art of *cimboa* making and playing from a neighbouring Cape Verdean family whose forebears arrived in Brazil about a hundred years ago, after the wreck of a cargo ship. The story goes that a Brazilian from Bahia and a Cape Verdean were washed ashore together on a raft fashioned from the ship’s wreckage, and they joined the community living on the island of Desterro (now

Florianópolis), never returning to their respective homes.⁶⁰ Listening to his neighbour Raimundo, nicknamed ‘Cabo Verde’, Gentil was captivated by the remarkable sound of the fiddle and started to learn it by ear at the age of ten. With the help of his neighbour, he was soon initiated into the art of *cimboa* playing. This chance encounter ensured the survival of the *cimboa* as Gentil kept the cultural legacy he received in Florianópolis alive. However, he also enhanced this legacy with his own musical interests, with the result that his music was a product of two different musical geographies – a record of its journey from one diasporic space to another. ‘Revivals are productions whereby things, actions, or ideas [are] actively brought from one context to another to make them accessible to new actors, in new places and times’ (Ronström 2014: 44). In this case, Gentil, who became a practitioner of a singular tradition, embodied not the continuity of a historical tradition but its transformation over space and time.

Gentil adopted the name ‘Orocongo’. The term is generally associated with bows hailing from Central and West Africa that were commonly referred to in Brazil as *urucongo*, *oricongo*, *gobo* or *rucungo*. These names, which may share a similar provenance to that of the *berimbau* used in the combat game/dance of *capoeira*, were incorrectly used to describe the *cimboa* developed by Gentil do Orocongo.⁶¹ However, there is no documentary evidence on the employment of the word *orocongo* or the bow to which it refers, nor are there any organological references that would corroborate the interchange of nomenclatures. Indeed, the fact that the name *orocongo* was associated with the *cimboa* in Brazil indicates a problem with the nomenclature. Some illustrations and chronicles appear to show that the fiddles may have been confused with the Angolan

⁶⁰ This report, which comes from the field research of musician and composer Marcelo Muniz, was published in 2004 in the newspaper *Ô Catarina* (Fundação Catarinense de Cultura, 60, p. 7).

⁶¹ There are a number of detailed descriptions of the African musical bows associated with Brazilian instruments and their possible origins and transformations (e.g., Shaffer 1977: 7-17; Kubik 2013 [1979]: 47-57; Redinha 1988: 104-07; Graham 1991: 1-20; and Assunção 2003: 170-173; 2005: 41-42).

bow, which is used to strike a string attached to the resonator of an instrument, probably due to the fact that both instruments have a single bow, a single string and a gourd resonator. Consequently, the names *orocongo* or *orucongo* were employed for the ‘belly bow’ and occasionally for the one-stringed fiddle. It is important to note that most of the experiences of the musical practices associated with these instruments were transmitted orally to later generations, perhaps accounting for the different spellings of the same terms. Western artists, travellers and iconographers also confused instruments and African place names due to their lack of knowledge about the ethnic linguistic groups that circulated in Brazil during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, whatever the etymology, Gentil became known by the artistic name of Gentil do Orocongo.

Gentil lived in a community of mostly Afro-Brazilians known as Mont Serrat in Maciço do Morro da Cruz, and was regarded as the only known *orocongo* player in contemporary Brazil. Not only was he a master of the instrument, but he continued to invent new ways of performing with the fiddle and embellishing the traditions associated with its fabrication. He rapidly became a recognised figure in the town, performing in the streets and the *mercado público* (the central marketplace), as well as at municipal events, and he was frequently invited to give talks about his experiences as a musician. Gentil recorded only one album, *Cantando e Contando Histórias (Singing and Storytelling)*, which contains popular songs and some of his own compositions. However, he also took part in a recording with the Grupo Engenho, a popular band in Florianópolis, and in 2006 he performed in northeast Brazil at a series of concerts organised by the SESC⁶² in different Pernambuco cities. In the same year, when attending the Espaço Cultural

⁶² The SESC is a private association of workers in the commercial market, which offers its members entertainment, arts and sports.

Embratel, he was invited to join the project, Documentos Sonoros do Instituto Itaú Cultural (Sound Documents of the Itaú Cultural Institute).⁶³

Artistically speaking, Gentil introduced the Cape Verdean instrument into regional Brazilian music and, with it, an element of the collective social practice of the *batuku* tradition. His master, Raimundo, a descendent of Cape Verdeans, had already started this process, engaging in a practice of musical exchange and reinvention based on a process of cultural syncretism. Musical change implies prior social changes, which ‘may eventually be followed by changes in the musical system, but they would have to be demonstrated by more than an accumulation of new sounds’ (Blacking 1995: 149). The case of the Cape Verdean *cimboa* in Brazil is an example of such a change in the musical system because it involves the transformation of the instrument, its performance, repertoire, language, and its melodic style and harmonic references. If Cape Verde and Brazil are perceived as ‘diasporic spaces’, the Cape Verdean family in Brazil who inspired Gentil do Orocongo, as well as Gentil himself, could be considered the beginnings of a ‘new social formation’. According to John Blacking (1995: 150), ‘a new social formation may have profound consequences on musical structures, if attitudes to music and social formations involved in its performance are an integral part of the musical process in a society’.

At some point in time, the music performed on the *cimboa*, now called the *orocongo*, began to incorporate the characteristic melodies of regional Brazilian genres like the *boi*, *reisado*, *folias*, Candomblé songs and *ratoeira*.⁶⁴ Azorean songs also influenced the coastal musical culture in the state of Santa Catarina. When new genres

⁶³ <<http://alasisidera.blogspot.co.uk/2011/08/homenagem-postuma-gentil-do-orocongo.html>> (accessed 17 March 2016).

⁶⁴ *Ratoeira* is a game, dance and musical genre in the oral tradition. Its narratives refer to love, relationships and everyday activities. The practice helps to strengthen the memory of their Azorean ancestry amongst the community in the coastal areas of Santa Catarina in Brazil.

were incorporated, the new practices rarely preserved traces of the music's Cape Verdean heritage and its foundation in genres like the mazurka, *morna* and *batuku*, instead adopting a new repertoire. Gentil also made changes to the instrument: he extended the length of the fiddle's neck, occasionally inserting fret marks and a mechanical tuning peg, and he replaced the coconut or gourd sound box with wood and added vivid, decorative colours. He generally tuned the string to D but was able to change this according to the occasion or when playing with another instrument such as the guitar. Gerhard Kubik (2010: 20) notes how 'African musical instruments have been modified and sometimes developed in deviating directions in the New World'. The *orocongos* made by Gentil in Brazil were similar to the *cimboas* made in Cape Verde, although the resonator size is not defined and Gentil established the width of the neck according the size of the *catuto* (gourd). The wood of choice for the neck was the *pinus*. Figure 3.9. shows *cimboas* with *braços* (necks) and resonators of different dimensions. The *cimboa* could be made from coconut shell (although not in Cape Verde), but Gentil preferred the *catuto* (gourd), which he believed delivers a better sound (Marchi et al. 2002: 252).

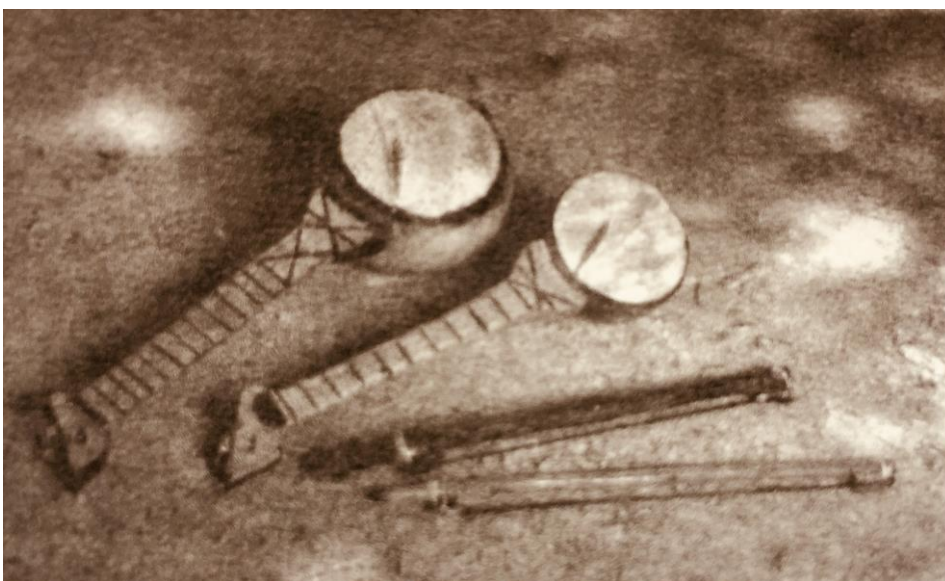


Figure 3.9. *Orocongos* and bows made by Gentil do Orocongo. (Photograph: Zig Koch. Reproduced from *Tocadores: Homem, Terra, Música e Cordas*. 2002. (Curitiba)

In figure 3.10., is possible to see the resonator hole placed on the side of the gourd. According to Gentil, the *buraco* or hole could be carved in either a circular or rectangular shape.



Figure 3.10. *Orocongo* resonator made by Gentil do Orocongo. (Photograph: Zig Koch. Reproduced from *Tocadores*)

The table of the *orocongo* was made from goatskin fixed onto the gourd and the bridge was a loose piece of wood (*pinus*) placed on the skin table, as depicted in figure 3.11. The *cravelha* (tuning peg) was made of a hard wood such as the *canela* (*ocotea catharinensis*), as was the top nut. In more contemporary versions, Gentil replaced the wooden tuning peg with a mechanical one from a guitar. Figure 3.12. shows the single guitar tuning peg attached to the top neck and the top nut, with a groove to hold and direct the string. Gentil used a guitar string instead of horsehair. The *rabo-de-cavalo* (horsehair) was used for the bow, whose stick was made from flexible wood, the *pinus* or *pau-brasil* (*paubrasilia echinate*).



Figure 3.11. *Orocongo* skin table made by Gentil do Orocongo. (Photograph: Zig Koch. Reproduced from *Tocadores*)

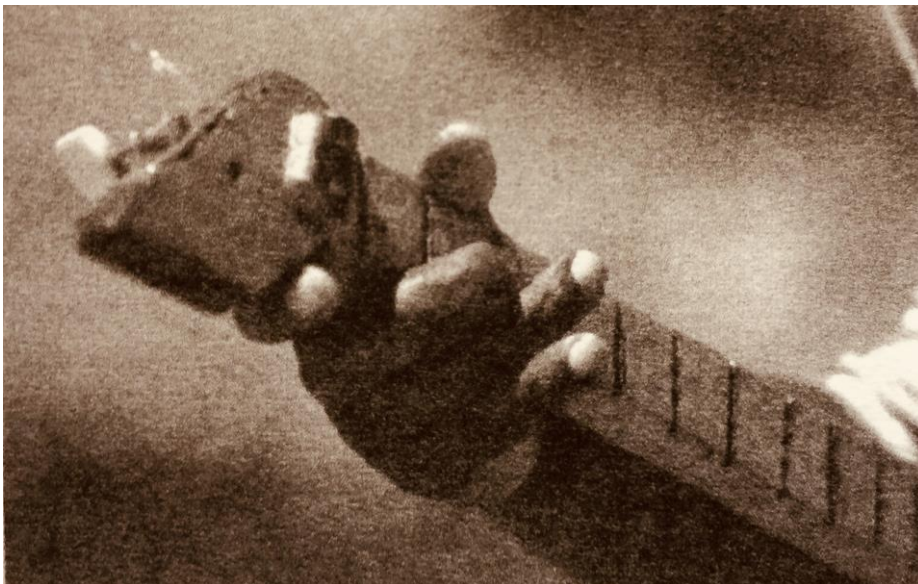


Figure 3.12. *Orocongo* neck, top nut and tuning peg, made by Gentil do Orocongo. (Photograph by Zig Koch. Reproduced from *Tocadores*)

Among Gentil's transformations to the construction of the instrument were the distinctive *marcas* (frets) on the neck. Gentil emphasised that the frets on the neck are

decorative, an aesthetic choice, since the fingers do not touch the fingerboard. In fact, in African one-stringed lute playing, the fingering is stopped and the harmonies are produced by simply pressing the string so that it does not touch the fingerboard. The tuning, according to Gentil, is ‘*de acordo com o que eu vou sentir na voz*’ (‘according to what I will feel with the voice’) when accompanying the singing.⁶⁵ He shifted to using a violin bow as he preferred its dimensions, and its precision and response on the string (Marchi et al. 2002: 252).



Figure 3.13. Gentil do Orocongo. (Source: Alasi Academia de Artes)

Gentil do Orocongo’s experience was remarkable as it demonstrates an instance of the cultural crossroads in the Atlantic that reconnected Africa and Brazil via Cape Verde, a principal point of intersection during the slave trade. In the context of this movement of peoples, musical instruments took on an independent role as cultural objects. According to Blacking (1995: 226-27), ‘the concept of culture is an abstraction designed to describe all the patterns of thought and interaction [...] Musical instruments

⁶⁵ Gentil died, aged sixty-four, on the 18 November 2009. These descriptions are taken from a recorded interview with him on the TV show *Pelas Ruas da Minha Cidade (On the Streets of My Town)* by Claudia Barbosa. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yg3TLcJZIAQ>> (accessed 14 December 2015).

are not the culture of their makers: they are the manifestations of culture, the products of social and cultural processes.’ Blacking’s suggestion alludes to the social interaction mediated by musical instruments. As Eliot Bates (2102), in his article ‘The Social Life of Musical Instruments’, argues, in the context of cultural networks, the instrument is an actor with agency. This concept of the social materiality of the instrument and the ‘independence’ of instruments from their own makers sheds light on the case of Gentil and the *orocongo*. The *cimboa* fiddle is a visible material survivor of the uprooting of one culture and its transference to another social milieu within the spaces of the diaspora. The *cimboa* of Cape Verde became the *orocongo* of Brazil, mediating social interactions and fostering the construction of shared meanings among individuals. Bates (2012: 372) describes the role of the instrument ‘as neither a subject nor object, but as a source of action’, referring to the Actor-Network Theory (ANT) of Bruno Latour.

Addressing the topic of modernity, Latour (1993) argues that modern critiques have oscillated between seeing the natural world as completely separate from human passions or interests and regarding it as the object of human domination, existing only to serve humanity. The dichotomy of nature *versus* society renders the understanding of the hybrid mixture of humanity and nature illegitimate, and the hybrid nature of life either invisible, unthinkable or unrepresentable (1993: 34). Latour asks how we should deal with this paradox. His answer is to identify what he considers to be ‘quasi-objects’ and ‘quasi-subjects’ (1993: 51). In pursuing this line of thought, Latour suggests that the average citizen believes that he/she is free to modify their reality according to their desires and rational strategies; however, the tension between society and nature is strong enough to guide the subject’s will in a different direction and achieve different results. Neither social rules nor biology determine entirely the shape of goods, persons and practices. In Latour’s (1993: 55) words, ‘science studies have forced everyone to rethink anew the role

of objects in the construction of collectives, thus challenging philosophy'. It could be surmised that this paradigmatic shift also challenges the narratives concerning African music and musical instruments.

The greatest challenge represented by the idea that musical instruments possess agency is how to locate them in the context of the displacement and fragmentation of diasporic subjectivities in the colonial and postcolonial worlds. It is not just a question of how people and things interact within active networks in a cultural temporality, there are also the issues of cultural change and extinction, when the musical instrument ceases to act as an agent. When an instrument vanishes, along with its culture, it is often due to the lack a single, 'homogenous cultural block' (Thornton 1998: 184): without a minimum number of people who share the same cultural codes, specific cultural practices disappear and consequently so does the instrument. However, whether or not the reverse is true – that the disappearance of an instrument as an inherent cultural agent can lead to the extinction of a culture – is another question.

In the heterogeneous cultural history of Brazilian society, music and musical instruments were transformed or disappeared mainly during the transition from slavery to the post-abolition period. The resurgence of the one-stringed fiddle, put in motion by Cape Verdeans in contemporary Brazil, once again reconnected the Atlantic routes. Gentil subtly transformed the repertoire to evoke his own diaspora (which was not Cape Verdean), thus deterritorialising the instrument and its musical technique in order to produce a new musical formation.

However, while apparently unexpected, the encounter between Gentil and Raimundo required a certain degree of probability mediating their relationship. This event brought together sources of knowledge that were no longer fixed to their roots – that is, to a traceable origin. The philosophical idea of the 'rhizome', developed by Gilles

Deleuze and Félix Guattari in their 'Capitalism and Schizophrenia' project (1972-80), is a useful conceptual tool with which to address these multiple encounters within the African diaspora. According to these scholars, the rhizome can be described as a dense network of 'roots' that form mutual, trans-species connections, as opposed to the strictly vertical and linear connections of the infamous hierarchical 'tree of knowledge'. It is, however, an unpredictable meeting, generating different, unexpected effects that can range from the terrible to the gifted.



Figure 3.14. Gentil do Orocongo. (Photograph: Alisson Mota)

In contrast to arboreal structures, 'a rhizome as a subterranean stem is absolutely distinguished from roots and rootlets. Bulbs and tubercles are rhizomes' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 06). Rhizomes, therefore, constitute a labyrinth without beginning or end; as such, they suggest an analogy with inter-related aspects of music. Temporal musical structures such as rhythms can be extended and recreated indefinitely, forming new, multiple stems; they are not preserved but rather transformed as part of a whole gamut of

cultural variations. In describing the concept of the rhizome, Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 7) stress the principles of connection and heterogeneity: '[A]ny point of a rhizome can be connected to any other and should be. It is very different from the tree or root fixing a point, an order.' This idea differs from most models of hybridity, which to some extent imply the existence of roots prior to and during 'hybridisation'. In the discourses of 'cultural miscegenation', the existence of a hybrid implies some sort of lineage that allows us to point to the origin of each part; in contrast, 'the rhizome is anti-genealogy' (1987: 11). Such an emphatic affirmation throws into question the usual methodological approach to the analysis of cultural practices in different contexts.

As far as musical instruments are concerned, it is often problematic to use the applied hierarchical taxonomy of instrument classification to analyse different cultural contexts and unrelated types of instruments, filling all the gaps in time and space, authorship and morphogenesis. It is not possible to account for the entire history of the encounter between Gentil do Orocongo and the Cape Verdean musician who inspired him and taught him to play the *cimboa*. Nonetheless, we can be sure that Gentil's experience shows that the displacement of both the fiddle and the musician (from Cape Verde to Brazil) was key to keeping alive the knowledge and resources required to both build and play an instrument that previously had no relevance in twentieth-century Florianopolis. Gentil's story emphasises the fact that when it comes to knowledge about the *cimboa* and its practices in Brazil there are a considerable number of gaps, and circumstances make it difficult to map the trajectory of the displacement of the music and the crafting of the instrument, and their subsequent transformation in another context. However, by using the idea of the rhizome to deal with these incomplete sources and the partial and dispersed autobiographical narratives, it is possible to reveal the historical relevance of the – albeit sparse – presence of the instrument in Brazil and Gentil's very personal way of playing.

In other words, it is part of the process of ‘creative creolisation’ in Brazil (Baron and Cara: 2011).

The concept of the rhizome as anti-genealogy contrasts with the notion of the ‘transplantation’ of a culture, a botanical term used to describe the loss of a culture or the imposition of an existing one in a new environment, and its acculturation. Notions of acculturation mainly derived from colonial ideas about the mixing of cultures, which was based on Western aesthetic standards and was used to classify the hybrid as ‘exotic’. These ideas usually addressed the transformation from a ‘higher’ culture to a ‘lower’ or subaltern one. In the musical context, such notions fail to take into account the creative changes that occur in the encounter between different cultures. The botanical meaning of transplantation, which is applied to plants and the way they can survive and adapt to new environments without undergoing major transformations, contrasts with the meaning of the term in music. Margaret Kartomi (1981: 5) criticises the notion as she considers that ‘music [is] normally subject to transformational change to one degree or another’. Transplantation is only an initial stage in the dynamic transformative process which takes place in the new environment, as in the creolisation of the music of the Americas, for example. Kartomi emphasises the creative process of intercultural musical synthesis that takes place in the new social context, addressing not only the transitory process of loss but also the creation of a new cultural phenomenon, and suggests adopting the concept of ‘transculturation’ coined by Fernando Ortiz (1995 [1947]: 97-103) to address the transformational processes that are set in motion by intercultural contact, as occurred in the musical genres of the Americas, including the Cuba of Ortiz. The idea that a new cultural phenomenon emerges from cultural contact is key to this study, which considers that a revised notion of hybridisation, and ultimately creolisation, is the best way to describe this creative process. The idea of a dynamic, transformative process is not the

same as, but corresponds to, the anti-genealogy of the rhizome in that it does not reify the roots and origins of the ‘transplanted’ phenomenon.

This notion of anti-genealogy contrasts with the idea of African ‘extensions’ formulated by Kubik (2013). Kubik employs the term ‘extension’ to explain how the music of the Americas is linked to specific cultures in Africa. He identifies convergent rhythmic practices (and other musical aspects) on both sides of the Atlantic, within cultures that today are distinct yet share similar or even identical patterns. The concept of ‘extensions’ seems somewhat predictable: it is a theory that presumes shared expressions, based on close empirical observation and historical knowledge of involuntary migration. Kubik (2013: 1), however, considers African music and dance as ‘products of people living in various African cultures which have changed continuously in history, absorbing and processing elements from inside and outside the continent, creating new styles and fashions all the time’. It may be thought of as corresponding to an idea sited within a dichotomic notion of cultural authenticity – folk *versus* rootless culture or genuine *versus* mass popular culture. However, in the case of diasporic cultures, musical extensions are not rooted in specific areas; rather, they can be seen as spreading stems, connecting musical genres from across the Atlantic map. Even at the level of musical change, cultural disruption and fragmentation, extensions are still capable of unpredictable meetings.

The rhizome is map and not outline, [it] is open, connectable in all its dimensions, it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived as a work of art, constructed as a political action or as a meditation. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 12)

The idea of the map further addresses the problematic of African culture in the diaspora. This rejection of the outline in favour of the map matches the notion of the

‘black Atlantic’ proposed by Paul Gilroy (1993). It helps to address the challenges facing models of nationalism and transnational agency in which the act of tracing indicates national borders. On the one hand, such an approach, as Gilroy (1993: 4) notes, presents ‘a nationalistic focus that is antithetical to the rhizomorphic, fractal structure of the transcultural, international formation I call black Atlantic’. On the other hand, the map is a transnational cartography. The phenomena of the forced displacement of musicians and instruments, aural narratives, fragmented traditions and an African heritage in the diaspora can be thought of as rhizomatic. There are no longer any musical roots to be identified but a multiplicity of unpredictable encounters and ruptures that recreate and reinvent new creolised cultures and their aesthetics. Gentil do Orocongo, as a musician who adopted a singular tradition from another culture and transformed it, accessed one of the rhizomes on the African diasporic map.

3.3. Mozambique and the *tchakare*

Among the few African one-stringed bowed lutes documented in Brazil is one that is referred to as ‘Mozambican’. Nineteenth-century illustrations, such as those by artists Jean-Baptist Debret (1748-1825), Joaquim Candido Guillobel (1787-1859) and Sir Henry Chamberlain (1796-1844), reveal the historical presence of these instruments and their musicians in Brazil. Two of the illustrations specifically depicting the fiddle were directly associated with Mozambique: Chamberlain’s coloured lithograph carries a text describing the fiddler as a native from Mozambique and Debret’s sketch of African instruments includes a one-stringed fiddle, below which he notes the word ‘Mozambique’. Although these references are very generic and lack any contextual description of the use of the instruments in their related cultures, they are still useful as sources for further investigation.

Given the diversity of slave society in nineteenth-century Rio de Janeiro, it probably contained considerable numbers of different peoples from East Africa; however, they were greatly affected by the long journey from the eastern part of the continent and many died on the way, while many others were doubtless classified as of ‘unknown’ African origin. Studies indicate that the main groups brought to Brazil from the region during this period were the Makua and Yao (Eltis and Richardson 2010), but their cultural traits are less well known than those of peoples from Central and West Africa, and sources relating to their presence in Brazil are scarce. Nevertheless, following the lead of the artists’ references to Mozambique, I focus in this study on the one-stringed fiddle, the *tchakare*, that is played today in Mozambique’s northern province of Niassa. At this stage, the association of the *tchakare* with the fiddles depicted in Chamberlain’s and Debret’s illustrations is hypothetical. The following section therefore analyses these iconographic sources by relating them to the descriptions of Makua *tchakare* playing in the interviews I conducted with two musicians in Niassa which give a contextualised view of this musical practice in contemporary Mozambique.

Vestiges of Mozambique in Brazil

African one-stringed bowed lutes have vanished in Brazil; they have not been part of musical narratives from the twentieth century onwards. Apparently, there are no living traditions of *rabecas de uma corda* (one-stringed fiddles), nor are there any contemporary examples of their use in Brazilian music genres beyond a few sporadic manifestations. This type of fiddle was occasionally referred to in the descriptions of travellers and in artists’ illustrations. Maria Graham (1785-1842) and Reverend Robert Walsh (1772-1852) both spoke of African instruments in Brazil in the early nineteenth century (cited in Fryer 2000: 169). Graham, in her narrative of her travels in Brazil, describes slaves in rural Rio de Janeiro playing ‘rude African instruments’, which she claims were called

gourmis. Among the instruments she describes was one played with a bow: ‘it has but one string, but is fretted with the fingers’ (Graham 1824: 199). However, there are no other references in the literature to the term ‘*gourmis*’ in association with musical instruments. Walsh, in his account of Brazilian society and the living conditions of the slaves, not only remarks on the diversity of languages spoken by Africans in Brazil and the work songs popular among the slaves, but also mentions several musical instruments. He describes the one-stringed bowed lute as:

[A] rude guitar, composed of a calabash, fastened to a bar of wood, which forms a neck to the shell; over this is stretched a single string of gut, which is played on by a rude bow of horse-hair; and by moving the finger up and down along the gut, three or four notes are elicited, of a very plaintive sound. The minstrel is generally surrounded by a group sitting in a circle, who all unite their voices as accompaniments to the music. (Walsh 1830: 335-36)

Other references to one-stringed bowed lutes in Brazil can be found in contemporary illustrations; unfortunately, however, these rarely provide an additional textual description of the instrument or the musician. When a description does occur, it is usually very general, revealing no details about the music’s context. Guillobel, in 1811, painted several watercolours of the people of Rio de Janeiro, which included depictions of a *berimbau* (a musical bow), a *berimbau de quatro arcos* (a *pluriarc*), a *marimba de dedo* (a lamellophone) and a one-stringed fiddle (see figure 3.15., below).



Figure 3.15. Watercolour by Joaquim Candido Guillobel, in *Usos e Costumes do Rio de Janeiro nas Figurinhas de Guillobel* (1978). (Source: Acervo da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro)

In his coloured lithograph, *Sick Negroes* (figure 3.16.), Chamberlain (1822) depicts African slaves in a public square in Rio de Janeiro, and what appear to be free African musicians walking by playing their instruments: one is playing a bow-lute or *pluriarc*,⁶⁶ the other a one-stringed bowed lute. Chamberlain elaborates on the musicians and instruments in the picture: ‘One, a native of Mozambique, [is] playing the rude instrument of his country, called the *madimba*, a sort of violin with a single wire; whilst the other, a Congo Negro, is performing a different tune upon the *sambee* (a *nsambi*) an instrument of his country.’⁶⁷ The image is evidence of the presence of this one-stringed

⁶⁶ The *pluriarc* is an African multiple-necked lute with strings running from the end of each neck (or stick) to a string holder on the belly of the resonator. Each string has its own flexible stick to keep its tension. The strings are tuned by the variable curvature of the sticks. The instrument has a wide distribution as summarized by Kubik (2014: 142-3): it is found in Angola, Namibia and Botswana; West-central and Southwestern Nigeria.

⁶⁷ The foreground figures in Chamberlain’s book were copies of three earlier watercolours by Guillobel (Chamberlain 1974).

fiddle in nineteenth-century Brazil, even though its appearance in musical performances did not survive into the twentieth century.



Figure 3.16. *Sick Negroes* by Henry Chamberlain (lithograph), based on the watercolours of Joaquim Guillobel. (Source: Henry Chamberlain. 1822. *Views and Costumes of the City and Neighbourhood of Rio de Janeiro during 1819-20* (London: Howlett & Brimmer))

Meanwhile, in his book *Voyage Pittoresque et Historique Au Brésil* (1835), French artist Debret presents images of Afro-Brazilian instruments encountered during his time in the country between 1816 and 1832. The instruments he depicts are, from left to right in the image: a harp typical of Central Africa, a one-stringed bowed lute that he calls a ‘violin’, a scraped idiophone, a musical bow, a lamellophone in a big gourd and what apparently is an atabaque, a single-head membranophone of cylindrical barrel shape (figure 3.17.). Debret describes the fiddle as follows: ‘The body is a coconut crossed by a stick that serves as a handle, and which is attached to a single string stretched by a brass ankle rope on which, by the alternating pressure of the finger, they derive two various

sounds with a bow, a kind of small arc.’ Below the sketch of the fiddle, Debret has written the word ‘Mozambique’ (indicated by the arrow in figure 3.18.). According to the description of a violin made with a coconut resonator, the version in Debret’s image differs from the cylindrical resonators of the fiddles played by the Makua people today. If the instrument is in fact related to a fiddle from Mozambique, it could be an illustration of the *kanyembe*, which is made out of coconut shell or gourd.

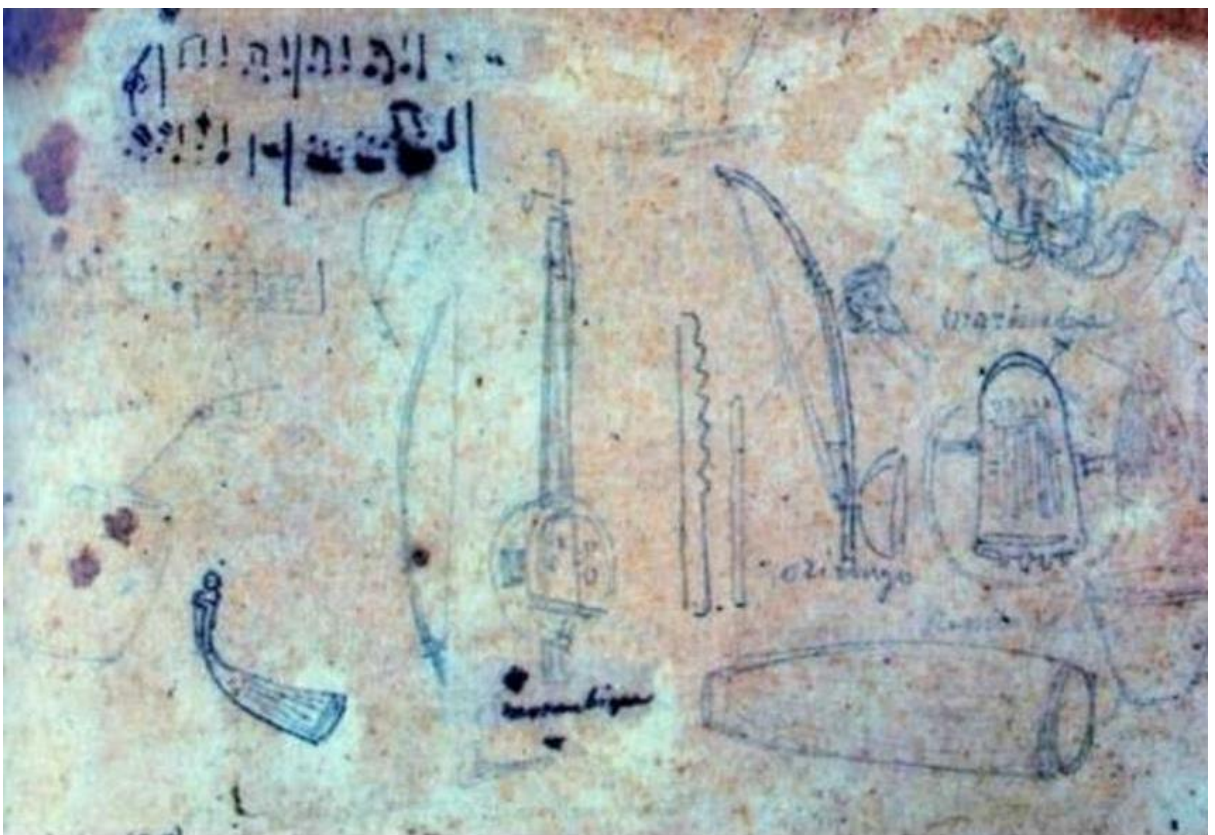


Figure 3.17. ‘Instrumentos e Notas Musicais – estudo’ by Jean-Baptiste Debret (sketch).
(Source: Julio Bandeira and Pedro. do Lago. 2013. *Debret e o Brasil: Obra Completa (1816-31)* (Capivars) p. 447)



Figure 3.18. Enlarged image of the ‘violin’ taken from Debret’s sketch. The arrow points to the word ‘Mozambique’ written beneath it.

The drawings of Debret and Chamberlain are important records of African peoples and their musical instruments in nineteenth-century Brazil. In fact, the very depiction of slaves indicates a certain political stance, ensuring these illustrations stand out from the colonial canon of art that mainly catered to the royalty, nobility, bourgeoisie and a handful of peasant settlers. In contrast to Debret, however, who was part of a French artistic mission to establish a Royal School of Sciences, Arts and Crafts in Brazil, the ethnographic interest of Guilobell and Chamberlain mainly had a commercial purpose. In order to sell their illustrations to publications in Europe, they represented picturesque scenes and ‘peculiar’ customs which they believed would catch the attention of the

general public. This was the main motivation behind Guillobel's illustrations in particular (Chamberlain copied some of his images), and both artists presented essentialised portraits of the lives of the inhabitants of Rio de Janeiro. Rogério Budasz (2014: 13) notes that Guillobel's illustrations are marked by an exoticisation and stylisation of the labouring poor and slaves, 'prettifying' his subjects even as he presented them as 'disempowered'. Despite this, Guillobel's illustrations and those of his contemporaries offer a reference point from which to begin an investigation into the historical trajectory of one-stringed fiddles in the context of the Atlantic slave trade.

One-stringed fiddles are common amongst the Makua, Yao and Makonde peoples in northern Mozambique. Musicians most typically call these instruments *tchakare*, *tchkwèsa* and *kanyemba*; however, it is not possible to confirm that the instrument played in the northern provinces of Niassa and Cabo Delgado in the early nineteenth century was the same as the one that can be found there today. A one-stringed fiddle similar to the Makua and Yao fiddles was registered in 1910 in the region of Lake Niassa (figure 3.19.); although no description of the music or its cultural context accompanies the photograph, its record of the fiddle, the crown of feathers worn by the musicians and the rattles attached to their legs all attest to the attire of the Makua players and dancers (described later in this chapter).



Figure 3.19. Musicians from East Africa (Lake Niassa) with a one-stringed tube fiddle, a rattle and clapsticks. (Source: *Kolonie und Heimat*, 9, ser. 1, 1910)

The fiddles illustrated by Chamberlain and Debret were found in southeast Brazil, and both artists mention that the instruments and the musicians came from Mozambique. During my fieldwork, I visited the province of Niassa in Mozambique in order to interview local fiddle players, and I was able to record the music of the Makua in a region where there is frequent linguistic and social interaction with the Yao people. Figure 3.20. depicts a Makua musician playing the *tchkwèsa*, an instrument with similar characteristics to the one in Debret's drawing. The name given to the same instrument varies according

to the ethnic group: the Makua call it a *tchakare*, the Makua-Meto call it a *tchkwèsa* and the Makonde call the fiddle a *kanyembe*. The Makonde *kanyembe* can be either a wood-cylinder resonator fiddle or a gourd/coconut shell, half-sphere resonator fiddle.



Figure 3.20. Almirante Lichino Bilale playing the *tchkwèsa*. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

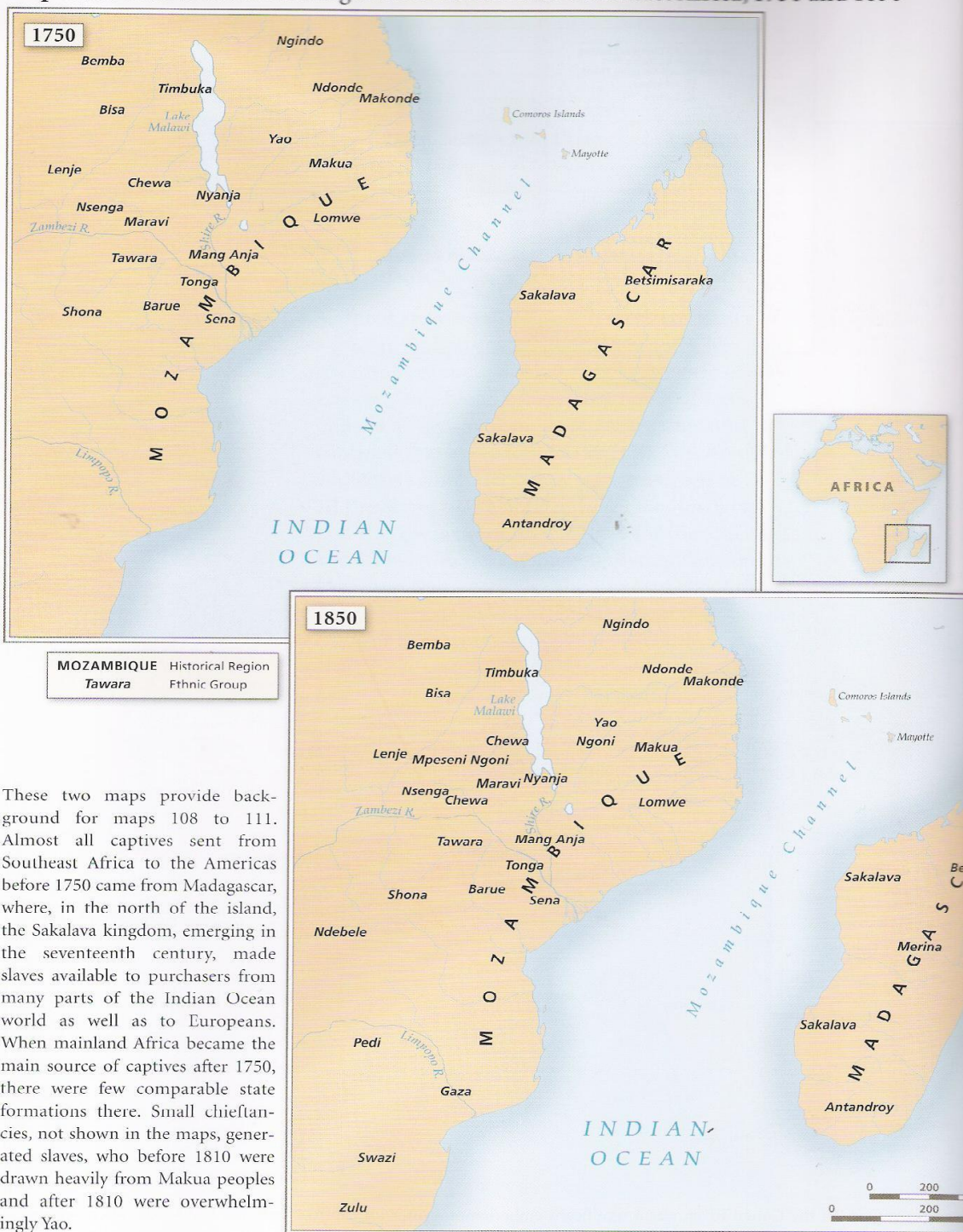
The possible link between these ethnic groups and the musicians depicted in the nineteenth-century illustrations of southeastern Brazil depends on data concerning the departures and arrivals of people from Mozambique to Brazil during the relevant period. Two maps corroborate the possible enforced departure of Makua and Yao peoples to Brazil in the nineteenth century (Eltis and Richardson 2010). The first illustrates the destinations of slaves from Mozambique to ports in the Americas. A large number of East

Africans from Mozambique were sent to the southeastern Brazilian ports of Santos and Rio de Janeiro. Many remained in these areas but others were then dispatched to other parts of Brazil such as southern Minas Gerais and the Paraíba valley. Flávio Gomes' (2012) research examines the classification of enslaved societies in Rio de Janeiro by analysing ecclesiastical sources in order to identify the Africans present in Brazil in the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. For example, the records of deaths in the parish of Candelaria show that East Africans account for a very small percentage of the slaves transported to Brazil in the late eighteenth century (2012: 11). In the nineteenth century, based on different documentary sources, Gomes discovered that the main groups of Africans in Rio de Janeiro were Congolese, Angolans, Cabindas, Benguelas, Caçanges and Mozambicans, among others. By studying parish registers in the period 1801 to 1830, he managed to identify around 17,000 Africans by nation. 'The impact of African demographics on Rio de Janeiro was first evaluated by considering the baptism of adult Africans. East Africans – that is, Moçambiques, Quilimanes, and Inhambanes – accounted for 34.5%' (2012: 15).

These data confirm the findings of David Eltis and David Richardson (2010) and corroborate other sources that reveal the predominance of the trade in slaves from the Indian coast to Rio de Janeiro in the nineteenth century. The majority of Makua and Yao peoples were sent to southeastern Brazil: 'Slaves shipped from Mozambique and other mainland sites were enslaved as far north as the great lakes region of the African interior. Major trader routes funnelled captives and ivory to the coast. The captives were mostly Yao and Makua peoples' (2010: 156). In map 3.2. (below), it is possible to see the area inhabited by the Makua and Yao in northern Mozambique, which extends as far as the Great Lakes area – in this case, Lake Malawi. There was an expansion in the number of ethnic groups enslaved in this region between 1750 and 1850, with the Makua and Yao

providing the main source of slaves after 1750. As Eltis and Richardson (2010: 154) note, '[s]mall chieftaincies, not shown on the maps, generated slaves, who before 1810 were drawn heavily from Makua peoples and after 1810 were overwhelmingly Yao'.

Map 107: Political and Ethnolinguistic Boundaries of Southeast Africa, 1750 and 1850



These two maps provide background for maps 108 to 111. Almost all captives sent from Southeast Africa to the Americas before 1750 came from Madagascar, where, in the north of the island, the Sakalava kingdom, emerging in the seventeenth century, made slaves available to purchasers from many parts of the Indian Ocean world as well as to Europeans. When mainland Africa became the main source of captives after 1750, there were few comparable state formations there. Small chieftancies, not shown in the maps, generated slaves, who before 1810 were drawn heavily from Makua peoples and after 1810 were overwhelmingly Yao.

Map 3.2. 'Political and Ethnolinguistic Boundaries of Southeast Africa, 1750 and 1850'. (Source: Eltis and Richardson 2010: 154)

As Mozambique was the furthest slave-trading region from the Americas, more captives died on voyages from this region – and from the broader area of southeast Africa – than from anywhere else. The marked reduction of East Africans on the inventories in Rio de Janeiro confirm the higher death rate, a reflection of the brutal logic of the slave trade (Gomes 2012: 20). Following the trauma of the Middle Passage, the Makua and Yao peoples then had to face the harsh, if not lethal, economic regime of slavery in the American colonies. While the presence of their musical instruments in Brazil is evidence of resistance, their musical culture had little prospect of surviving in the context of Brazilian slavery. Rather, as a result of the longer crossing from East Africa, fewer people survived, and those who did – once in Brazil – formed new cultural relationships with other ethnic groups.

Chordophones are among those musical instruments that were adaptable enough to be incorporated into the social transformations and cultural changes that took place during this period. The many African ethnic groups that reached Brazil during the colonial era fostered musical sensibilities that were responsible for shaping twentieth-century Brazilian musical genres, from rural to urban environments. These influences came chiefly from the Niger-Congo language groups, mainly from Congolese/Angolan and Mozambican cultures. However, once they were enslaved, the ethnicity of Africans was rarely indicated; instead, the African groups in the diaspora were denominated by their ‘nations’ or ‘countries’ (Thornton 1998: 184).⁶⁸ Typically, African slaves from diverse cultural backgrounds were brought together randomly, forming a demographic imbalance. They were obliged to construct new symbolic references through the appropriation of the cultural codes of other ethnic groups and European cultures. John Thornton (1998: 184) argues that the development of creole identities within the trans-

⁶⁸ For further studies about African nations and African identities in the Americas, see Roger Bastide (1972); Mary Karasch (2000); J. B Farias, C.L. Soares; and F. dos S. Gomes (2005).

Atlantic slave trade emerged from this crucible to form a new culture: 'To be sure, this new culture had African roots, from a sort of least common denominator of the many and varied African cultures that served as its building blocks, but it was built in a context in which elements of the European culture served as linking materials.' Reflecting on Sidney Mintz and Richard Price's (1976) detailed overview of the transmission of African culture to the Americas through the intermingling of diverse ethnic groups, Thornton (1998: 183) comments that 'African culture was not homogeneous enough to constitute a single cultural block; instead, dozens, if not more, independent cultures were involved'. It was through this process of encounters between various African cultures that the Brazilian music genres of the post-abolition period came to fruition. One point of contact was the event that became known in colonial discourse as *batuque*, which refers to dancing, music and religious rites. This practice integrated the different African groups and their musical instruments, resulting in the dynamic creolised cultures of Brazil.

If one-stringed fiddles were therefore still present in nineteenth-century Brazilian society, what is the most plausible cause of their subsequent transformation and disappearance? Social change is usually regarded as the principal force behind musical change. In the nineteenth century, Brazil shifted from a slaveholding colonial regime based on a plantation economy to a post-abolition regime of free labour and urbanisation. According to Kubik (2013), musical practices in Africa also changed dramatically in the twentieth century, exemplified by the decrease in the use of lamellophones. This provides just one example of what specialists on the topic consider a process of 'social modernisation'. Kubik (2013: 81) cites the shift to modern transport, the noise of modern cities and the appeal of European instruments as probable reasons for the disappearance of certain traditional instruments.

Agawu (2003: 8), however, argues that harmony, and consequently harmonic instruments, withstood colonial power in Africa. This process could have had a similar effect in the Americas: in the long process of creolisation, religious syncretism operated to re-signify African beliefs. The many peoples from different ethnic backgrounds sought analogies between their respective deities (Bastide [1960] 2007: 277); nevertheless, divergences occurred when it was not possible to find a counterpart to a deity or religious symbol, even in its syncretic form. In some contexts of fusional syncretism, the constituent of differentiation cannot be identified, particularly if the connection with the original African culture and its collective memory has been lost (Capone 2007: 348). Afro-Brazilian Catholic rituals to some extent enabled the operation and fusion of two cultural codes by following the principle of compartmentalisation (Bastide [1960] 2007). However, music, as a cultural practice exercised through the powerful ritual mechanisms of Afro-Brazilian and Catholic traditions, was an essential part of the syncretic processes.

The reasons for the disappearance of the fiddle in Brazil has not been subjected to systematic study. The causes may be too numerous and complex to enable any precise conclusion to be drawn but they undoubtedly include the rapid spread of Christian conversion, with the subsequent loss of specialist knowledge of these instruments and their particular tonal systems, as well as the emergence of new creolised genres of music, mainly in the urban centres. Kubik (2010) further suggests that a number of simultaneous social and cultural transformations took place after the second half of the twentieth century, with the rise of the mass media, the availability of new technology and the changing nature of commercial exchange, among other contributory factors. In the specific case of African fiddles, however, the most relevant factor affecting the instrument's disappearance was probably the lack of technical knowledge and resources for instrument making. Instruments such as xylophones and bowed lutes, whose

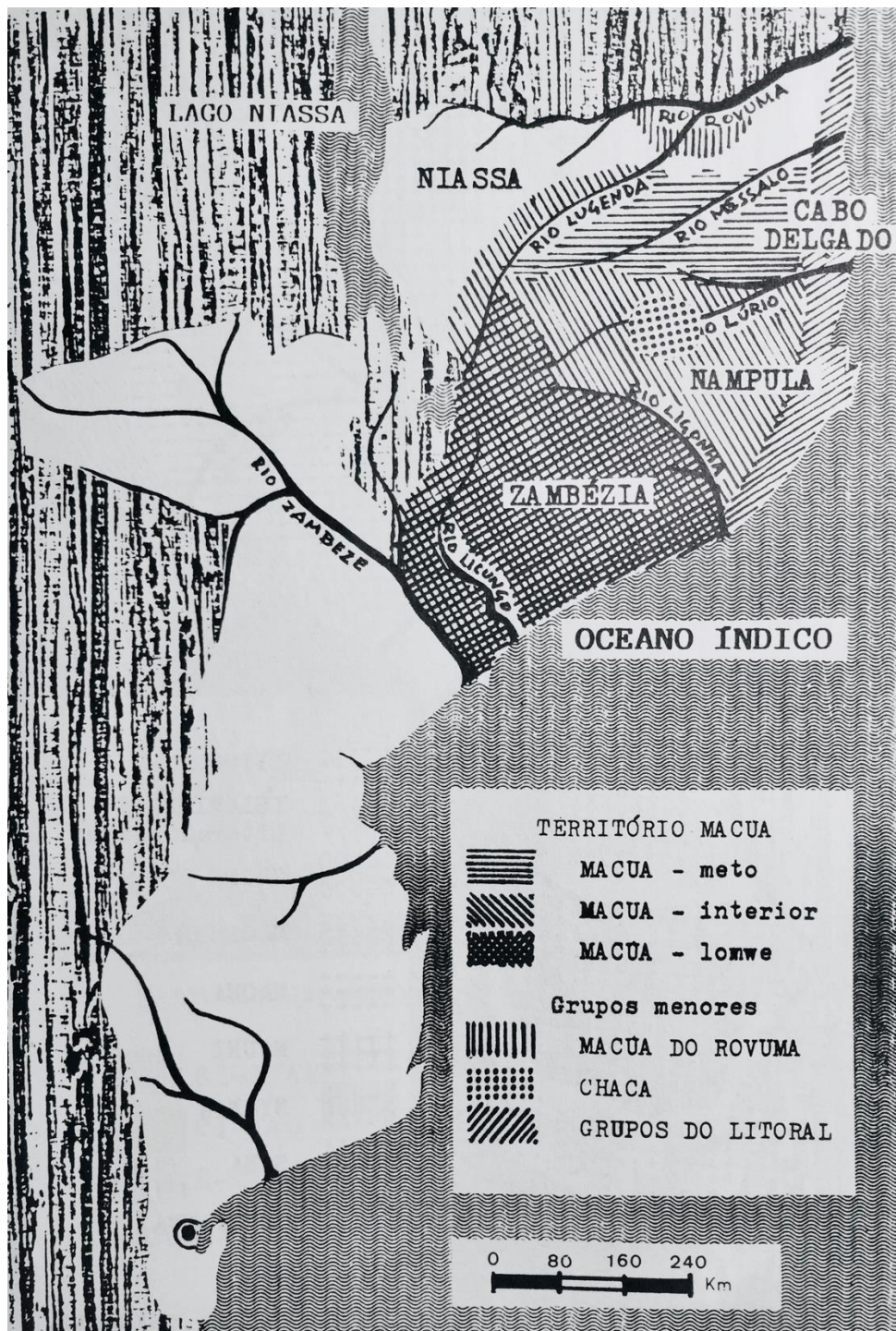
construction involves numerous parts and requires a higher level of technology than other instruments (e.g. single-headed membranophones) were more likely to disappear. This seems a more plausible explanation than the ‘modernisation of society’: the loss technical knowledge can affect the collective aesthetic perception of an entire musical system and its related practices. When people are separated in small groups or as individuals in the diaspora, this aesthetic perception disappears and, with it, the specialist knowledge needed to maintain a tradition, including the knowledge of instrument making, playing techniques, pitch and scale indication, and the instrument’s function in an ensemble or as an accompaniment to vocal melodies. The one-stringed bowed lutes were not incorporated into the syncretic religious practices that flourished among rural black societies in Brazil. When African practices incorporated Catholic symbols, they underwent a process of cultural hybridisation and this led to the creation of hybrid musical instruments to accompany these cults, such as the *rabeca*, a fiddle of Arabic-Iberian origin, which carved out a space in the popular polyphonic syncretic rituals scattered across Brazil.

The fiddle in northern Mozambique: the Makua and the Yao

The Makua peoples inhabit a vast area in northern Mozambique, above the Zambezi River,⁶⁹ and their musical interactions with the Yao have played an integral part in the cultural interweaving of these two groups, most specifically in Niassa province. Map 3.3. (below) illustrates the location of the linguistic groups found in northern Mozambique: the Makua and their respective sub-groups, as well as other ethnic groups. (Although this

⁶⁹ The Makua are an East Bantu sub-division of a linguistic group that reached Mozambique during the spread of the Bantu towards the south. There were probably successive Bantu dispersals rather than one major single expansion. ‘Proto-East Bantu began to expand from the rainforests towards Southeast Africa. The ancestor of the southern cluster separated probably somewhere near the middle Zambezi river. It was followed by proto-Makua in northern Mozambique’ (Vancina 1995: 187).

map was originally published in 1960, there has been little change in the geographic position of these peoples, as can be seen in map 3.4., published in 2008.) The Makua are divided into several linguistic sub-groups, the Meto, Nyanja, Lomwe and Chirima (Macaire 1996: 30), who display a strong cultural unity (Martinez 2008: 73). For example, the ‘Namuli Hill’ foundation myth is common to all dialect groups – Namuli Hill, situated in the Gurué mountains in Zambezia province, is said to be the Makua’s place of origin. Although there are many Makua dialects, their linguistic unity can be discerned in the terminology used for the names of people, mountains and rivers, many of them deriving from animal and plant names, ‘as in all toponymy based on such names’ (Martinez 2009: 38-39). The groups that interact with the Makua include the Yao, who are located in the northwestern region, stretching from Lake Malawi to the Tanzanian border; the Makonde, who can be found at the northeast border, close to Tanzania and the Indian Ocean, in the province of Cabo Delgado; and the Swahili, who dwell in the coastal belt that runs from Tanzania to the northern border of Mozambique. It is important to note that although belonging to distinct settlements in different locations, the distribution of these ethnic groups does not follow the political boundaries established in the colonial era.



Map 3.4. Makua territory in Mozambique. (Source: Martinez 2009: 71)

Contemporary migratory movements have led to the cohabitation of these groups and they are now clustered in and around the province of Niassa, either concentrated in ethnically diverse cities or, to varying degrees, in villages where single groups

predominate. A British lexicon, *Portuguese Nyasaland Vocabularies*, published in London in 1918 for staff in the British Naval Intelligence Division, gives examples of words and sentences in five languages – Nyanja, Yao, Ronga, Portuguese, Makua and Swahili. It refers to Ronga, however, as the only language spoken in southern Mozambique. The area itself was divided between two colonial powers: Nyasaland was a British protectorate (which became Malawi on independence in 1964), while Niassa province was part of the Portuguese colonial regime, which exploited the region through its plantation companies (Newitt 2002).

The one-stringed fiddle can be found among the Makua, Yao, Swahili and Makonde peoples. The Makua call the instrument the *tchakare* or *tchikwèsa*, and their musical ensembles consist of a fiddle and drums. I carried out field research relatively close to Lake Malawi, 30 km from the administrative post of Mitande, and in another area 50 km from the district of Marrupa, interviewing and recording Makua musicians. I was therefore able to add new data, including first-hand descriptions of *tchakare* playing gathered from interviews, audio recordings and images, to the previous work carried out by scholars such as ethnologist Gerhard Kubik (1964), linguist/ethnomusicologist Roger Blench (1984), ethnomusicologist Margot Dias (1986) and anthropologists Pierre Macaire (1996) and Francisco L. Martinez (2009). My intention was not to provide a full overview of the socio-cultural aspects of the Makua, such as those made by Macaire and Martinez; rather, I used my fieldwork recordings to further analyse both Makua fiddle music and the instruments themselves – complementing earlier studies of fiddles in East Africa – in the context of the Lusophone cultures and their post-colonial dynamics.

On the way to Niassa

While I was in the capital, Maputo, I was advised against travelling to Niassa; my intention to go overland provoked even more alarm. Sporadic conflicts between the two

political parties, *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (RENAMO) and *Frente da Libertação de Moçambique* (FRELIMO), had rendered the 2,500-km expanse precarious – a legacy of Mozambique’s troubled history. After the country’s independence from Portugal in 1975, a civil war broke out which lasted for sixteen years, killing over one million people and plunging the country into extreme poverty. The conflict of interests was exacerbated by the Cold War: FRELIMO, a Marxist party, was supported by the former USSR, while the opposition group, RENAMO, was supported by the (unrecognised) state of Rhodesia, at the time ruled by a white minority, pro-apartheid regime. In 1980, a FRELIMO ally won Rhodesia’s elections, forming a black majority government that changed the country’s name to Zimbabwe and suppressed support of RENAMO. However, the regime in South Africa continued to attempt to destabilise the anti-apartheid majority in the region and positioned itself in support of RENAMO.

In his historical analysis of the region, James Ciment (2006) describes how the South African apartheid regime undermined Mozambican politics, affecting its economy over the long term. ‘With its immense resources, the South African government was able to turn the resistance movement into a major force for the disruption and destruction of Mozambique’s economy and society during the 1980s’ (2006: 233). From the period of post-civil-war reconstruction to the present day, the peace in Mozambique has been constantly threatened by the continuing tension between the two opposing parties. As recent attacks had occurred on the roads in the province of Sofala, I was advised to undertake my research among those musicians living in Maputo, where I was assured I would be able to find *tchakare* players. Nevertheless, I persisted with my original plan to visit Niassa. In preparation, I visited the Arquivo do Património Artístico e Cultural (APARC), Mozambique’s cultural heritage archive that holds a free public consultation service. The archivist, Mr Chichawa, provided me with the names of cultural delegates

from Lichinga, the capital of Niassa province. Armed with a permit issued by the School of Communication and Arts at the Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, I was finally authorised to carry out research in Mozambique.

In Lichinga, I met the cultural delegates at the local APARC headquarters. One of these, Assumail Formani, accompanied me to meet officials in other cultural departments who were able to provide further information about the areas frequented by musicians in Niassa. During a meeting with Lichinga's cultural attaché, I gathered information about current linguistic and geographic areas, linking districts with the languages spoken by the Yao, Nyanja and Makua sub-groups such as the Meto. When I asked about the range of instruments in the villages, I was advised not to expect to find many different instruments in the same village; instead, I would have to travel long distances if I wished to cover a wide range of regional instruments. For instance, the marimbas, called *mukwilo* and *dimbila* in Niassa and Cabo Delgado, are found in specific locations where there are no fiddles. These xylophones consist of loose keys, similar to log-xylophones that incorporate grass rolls, banana trunks or logs of wood to serve as supports. Kubik (1964) records that they are also similar to the trough-xylophone he encountered in the Lake Chilwa area, which has no resonator – the sound is produced solely by the vibration of the keys. Others present during my meeting with the attaché made a point of emphasising that this type of xylophone, found in the north, differs from the Chopi instrument called the *mbila* which is constructed in such a way that the keys are suspended, using gourds (normally one to each key) as resonators.

As the focus of my field research revolved around fiddle players and their percussion ensembles, I was directed to two specific villages. Formani took me to another headquarters to meet Lichinga's adjunct director of culture and tourism, Henrique Ali, who provided me with the names of contacts who could introduce me to the famous fiddle

player, Nfani Wathunia. Finally, after discussing the location where it would be most appropriate to establish myself, I decided on two different areas where fiddle players live. The first was the district of Mandimba, close to the border of Malawi. Here, I had to travel by my own means, taking passenger transport consisting of several *chapas* (vans) that start out very early in the morning once all the vehicles are completely full. The long journeys were only interrupted to drop off or pick up passengers along the road and to allow us to purchase food. According to community consultants, many of the villages along the way have been formed relatively recently as people have moved from remoter areas to live along the newly opened roads.

When Kubik (1964: 80) carried out field research in northern Mozambique in the early 1960s, he divided the region into three main areas, according to different musical styles: '*Area A*: Music South of Lake Chilwa. *Area B*: Music of various Makua sub-tribes in the Western Central region. *Area C*: Music of the Makonde people and related tribes in the North-East.' The author considers these three areas as distinct, although he argues that there are similarities between areas B and C. I carried out fieldwork (recording music) in the villages surrounding Mandimba and Marrupa, which corresponds to Kubik's area B, a vast expanse covering a distance of approximately 400 km. Kubik's division was, of course, an 'imaginary' means of considering cultural and musical units that was relevant at the time of his research. The region today, however, is characterised by the cohabitation of different ethnic groups, which encourages cultural exchange between the Makua, Makonde, Yao, Swahili and Nyanja, although the Makua and their sub-group, the Meto, comprise the majority of inhabitants. The language differs little between the communities of the Mitande and the Marrupa, but they do speak different dialects. The musician I interviewed in Mandimba-Mitande was a singer in Makua, Yao and Swahili. We could occasionally communicate in Portuguese, although not enough to cover all the topics of

the interview. In the Marrupa valley, close to the village of Chireka, the musician I interviewed was a member of the Meto, who only sang and spoke in Makua. I managed to conduct the interview with the support of members of the community who translated some of the questions and terms. However, the formation of the *tchakare* musical ensembles is the same in both areas, consisting of three tubular drums (one membrane each), one *tchakare* player and a singer. The *tchakare* is also referred to as a *tchkwèsa* in the village of Chireka, although the instruments differ in the material used to make them, resulting in a slightly different sound.

The tchakare in Niassa

The majority of one-stringed fiddle players are concentrated in central and northern Mozambique. The different ethnic groups employ an array of fiddles, including the *kanyembe*, *tchakare*, *chikwèsa*, *mugore* and *siribó*. Macaire (1996: 405) explains how the one-stringed fiddle, with the interchangeable name of *tchakare* or *takari*, is constructed and played: ‘The string is attached to the neck that passes over a wooden resonator, or a gourd closed by a membrane made of lizard skin. The instrument is played with a bow and is also called *viela*.’ The lizard skin mentioned by Macaire is made from the *ihala* or *halá*.⁷⁰ Figure 3.21. depicts different *tchakare* fiddles, demonstrating the various shapes of the resonators.

⁷⁰ The *halá* or *yese* is a lizard that lives on river banks (Matos 1973: 412).

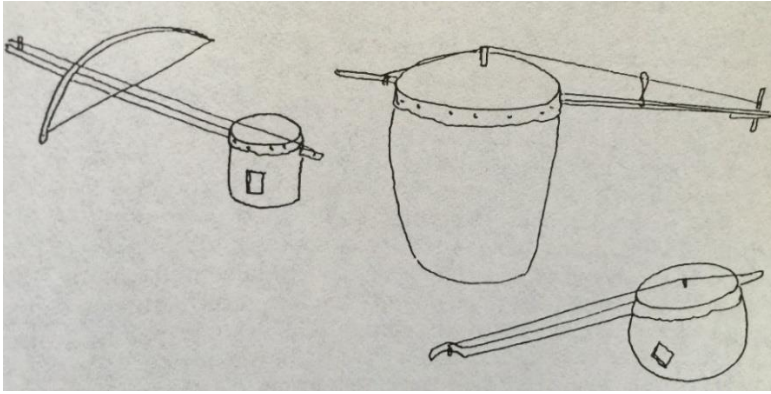


Figure 3.21. Examples of *tchakare* fiddles. (Source: Macaire 1996: 405)

Dias (1986) refers to the bowed, one-stringed lutes of northern Mozambique as *rabecas monocórdicas* (one-stringed *rabecas*) or *violas de pau espetado* (spike fiddles). This instrument, which has a resonator made of coconut shell, is called the *kanyembe* by the Makonde people. Martinho Lutero (1981) describes an instrument played by Makaula Chombo Nhaúla from the village of Mitope, in the province of Cabo Delgado, as a *kanyembe*. According to his description, the instrument is played at initiation rites and funeral ceremonies. Dias, however, in contrast to Lutero, argues that the *kanyembe* is an ‘individual’ instrument, which is played solo among the Makonde and is rarely used in ceremonies. ‘In Newala, which forms part of neighbouring Tanzania, we found that it was associated with instruments such as the bard – a blind Yao, who travelled from land to land earning his living singing stories and telling tales’ (1986: 175). As seen in figure 3.22., the cultural interconnections between the Makonde and the Swahili of northeastern Mozambique have led to the development of similarities between the instruments found in Tanzania and those of the Makonde. The Shirima, another Makua sub-group, refer to the instrument as a *tchakare*, a name which Dias also found references to in works by P. E. Alexandre Valente de Matos (1960).

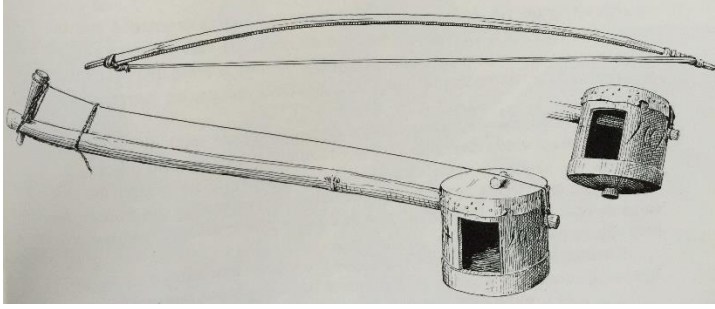


Figure 3.22. A Yao *kanyembe* fiddle from Newala, Tanzania. (Source: Dias 1986: 175)

The one-stringed tube fiddles in the illustration above (figure 3.22.) are played by the Lomwe and the Meto, who call the fiddles *tchakare* and *chikwésa*, respectively. There are also tube fiddles such as the *kaligo*, which is found among the Chewa in Malawi, and the *orutu*, associated with the Luo in Kenya. Blench gives a description of the *kaligo*, which is widely found throughout southern Malawi:

[It has a] heavy, carved, wooden resonator in the form of a squat tube, closed at the base opposite the skin table, but with a large sound-hole in the side of the tube. The string-bearer is cylindrical, and passes through the resonator; its projecting tip acts as a string holder. The single string passes over a bridge and under a slack noose of cord that encircles the string bearer, and acts as a nut. It is then looped around a carved projection at the end of the string-bearer. The string is made of sisal, but is wrapped round with strips of dried maize-leaf at the bowing point. (Blench 1984: 172)

Kubik (1964) also recorded the use of a one-stringed fiddle by the Nyanja ethnic group living close to Lake Chilwa. He describes the tools and procedures needed to tune the fiddle, which is referred to as a *mugole*. In figure 3.23., it is possible to see the tuning loop and indents required to tune the instrument.

The string of the *mugole* is tuned with a tuning loop slung around the upper part of the string and the neck of the fiddle. At the upper part of the neck four indents are cut into the wood, and through one of them the loop is running. In the process

of tuning, the musician would first tune the string roughly, and then adjust the pitch more accurately by moving the tuning loop to any of the four indents. (Kubik 1964: 81)

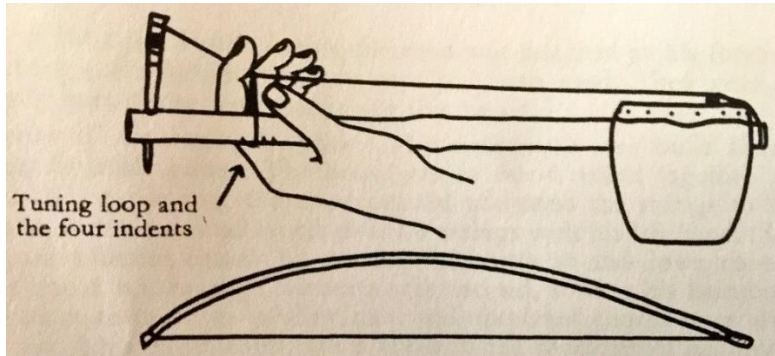


Figure 3.23. A *mugole* fiddle with a tuning loop and four indents. (Source: Kubik 1964: 80)

The Makua performers I recorded also use the *mugole* fiddle tuning loop described by Kubik, although they did not mention the indents to fix the loop in different positions to play the *tchakare* and *chikwèsa*. They change the pitch by simply moving the bridge into different positions. Although there are similarities in the instrument's construction in these areas of northern Mozambique, Malawi and Tanzania, Kubik argues that 'the music is very different from the neighbouring countries [of] Nyasaland and Tanganyika' (current Malawi and Tanzania). According to the him, the *mugole* fiddle was played to accompany songs, and 'the way of singing, particularly in timbre, intonation and the rather rich melodic ornamentation, showed strong Arab influence' (1964: 81). The further mention by Blench (1984: 174) of Arabic influence brings into play the question of the possible Arab origin of other fiddles in Malawi, although he also says, 'it may seem that an Arab origin should be attributed to the *mugole* fiddle, [but] it then becomes more difficult to account for the divergent features of the Malawian *kaligo*'.

Many scholars have noted the great diversity of one-stringed fiddles in Northern Mozambique – the *mugole* of the Nyanja, the *tchakare* of the Lomwe, the *chikwèsa* of the

Meto and the *kanyembe* of the Makonde. Blench (1984: 174) broaches the issue of such variety more directly: ‘It is surprising that such a diversity of terms should have evolved in so limited an area, unless the instrument has long been established. It is also curious that none of these words appears to derive from Arabic or Swahili roots.’ A. M. Jones (1960) proposes a Southeast Asian influence, which other authors have attempted to corroborate but with little convincing evidence.⁷¹ On the other hand, there is historical, religious and linguistic evidence linking the fiddles to Arabic music.

The Arabic influence on the fiddle playing of the Makua and Yao is possibly revealed in the connection between fiddle playing and the language – both spoken and sung – in terms of its ornamentation and intonation, nasal tone and monophonic phrasing (a single melodic line without harmony or counterpoint) which is used in both chorus singing and Islamic expressions. However, when searching for evidence of Arabic influences, it is important to take into consideration the long process of cultural change in Niassa. Islam arrived in Mozambique earlier than the Portuguese, and dates back to the tenth century (Serapiao 1993: 111) or earlier. Historical documentation for this period is scarce, but ‘[a]rcheological evidence suggests that since at least the eighth century, the coastal northern Mozambique was part of the Swahili world, and thus probably shared

⁷¹ A. M. Jones (1960) has hypothesised an artistic relationship between Indonesia and the African continent. The *mbila*, which is a Chopi xylophone constructed on a seven-note equidistant scale over approximately one octave, is one of the material musical references to Indonesia he uses as evidence. Although Jones has attempted to demonstrate evidence of a continuous flux of Indonesian immigration to Africa, his theory caused controversy and fostered a great deal of debate (Hood 1965; Jeffreys 1966; Heins 1966; Blench 1982). Several objections were raised, questioning Jones’s method of analysis on the grounds that he attempts to encompass a huge area of cultural continuity which lasted for centuries from Southeast Asia to West Africa, connecting different ethnic groups and a huge array of xylophones. Some authors indicate that tube-fiddles from the East African coast of Tanzania, Uganda and the DRC (formerly Zaire) and, to some extent, instruments from northern Mozambique are also common in India and Southeast Asia (Sachs 1923; Blench 1984; Dias 1986). Margot Dias, basing her argument on Curt Sachs’ study when offering a description of the Makonde *kanyembe* fiddle, argues that it must have originated in India, Persia, Indochina and/or China (Dias 1986; Sachs 1923). Following Sachs, André Schaeffner (1968) describes wooden cylinder fiddles, bamboo-neck Chinese fiddles and Hindu instruments that are all similar to the fiddles of several African language groups in Nyasaland.

Islamic religious conceptions and practices with their Swahili neighbors' (Bonate 2010: 574).

The Swahili traded along the coast, and the increase in commercial activities encouraged the establishment of a number of small, independent Arab states, such as Quitanoa and Angoche, mainly on the northern coast of Mozambique (Hafkin 1973: 211). The Yao started to trade with these coastal areas from the early seventeenth century (Alpers 1969: 405). The conversion of the peoples of this region to Islam, however, occurred at different moments as the Swahili started to reach inner parts of Makua territory in northern Mozambique in the eighteenth century (Martinez 2008: 35). A later process occurred in the nineteenth century with the intensification of slavery and the trade in ivory between the Swahili and the Yao, and in the northern part of Mozambique, particularly the province of Niassa, Islam became the predominant religion (Peirone 1967: 15). As the slave trade became the overriding economic activity in Mozambique during the nineteenth century, slaves were brought to the coast by the Yao or Makua, and 'Islam travelled back along the trade routes with the Yao' (Newitt 1972: 660).

However, although the consensus is that fiddle playing in Southeast Africa was probably influenced by Arabic music, the fiddles (as objects) were absorbed into new cultural practices, with different aesthetic perceptions and ways of singing and dancing, and were thus reshaped as new cultural material. According to DjeDje (2010: 23), it is important to consider the 'Africanisation' of the instrument: 'A close examination of performance practice reveals that the fiddle in Africa is no longer an Arab instrument. Without a doubt, it is African.' The religious context in Niassa was also a result of the transformation and decontextualisation of its original sources. Traditional African religions, which existed before the arrival of the Arabs, assimilated elements of Islam. The encounter between Islam, which operates at a macrocosmic level, and local African

religions affected their religious practices. ‘African Islam is first of all local Islam and there is no ordained clergy and no international body to regulate doctrine; the worship occurs through community leaders’ (Quinn and Quinn 2003: 6-7). This non-hierarchical aspect of Islam combined with the African worship of spirits, which operates at a microcosmic level, to form specific or local practices at the same time as trade, colonialism and political interests forced people to adopt the canonical religion.

Alan Thorold (1978: 18) holds that ‘[w]ith the growth of trade, with state formation and with imposition of colonial rule, the boundaries of the microcosm broke down and most people became involved in some way with aspects of the macrocosm’. According to some of the community members I consulted, the pre-Catholic and pre-Islamic African religions no longer exist; others, however, insisted that there are several known practices in rural communities that are conducted, with an element of discretion, by those who profess the Islamic and Catholic faith but who continue to partake in traditional practices. For Martinez (2009: 34), whose research included the Makua in the district of Maúá, 103 km south of Marrupa, ‘the majority of the population belongs to the group of traditional African religion practitioners, being practised contemporaneously by believing Christians and Muslims’. In fact, Islam in this region seems to have absorbed many African religious elements while exerting a strong influence on the Makua and Yao peoples. As such, it appears to have impacted traditional social-religious rites in northern Mozambique.

Mandimba – Mitande

During the four-hour van trip from Lichinga to Mandimba, I met Geraldo Herculano, a delegate of the cultural attaché in Mandimba. Herculano, a former member of the military, kindly offered to serve as a guide in the region. Arriving in Mandimba, we visited the town’s cultural centre to speak to Obadia Nimilode, the cultural attaché’s deputy. After I

had explained my research, Nimilode proceeded to call various people in the villages to discover a fiddle player living in the region. These enquiries led us to Nfani Wathunia, who lived 50 km away on the road to Mitande. Luckily, he was at home and agreed to meet me the next day.

One of the cultural delegates at the headquarters, who provided me with a vehicle for one of the trips between Mandimba and Mitande and to the inner village, urged the two participants: ‘Charge him! Because researchers, mostly sociologists, all of them have funds, they always come prepared.’ This reveals the power relations inherent in the encounter between the ethnographer and his/her subjects in the local community, which occurs involuntarily in various ways. In this case, it was my alleged financial condition as a researcher that exposed, as Timothy Cooley (2003: 3) notes, the politics of power and access, particularly the position of power exclusive to the ethnographer in such circumstances. This relationship of power is not directly linked to the foreign traveller and their capacity to access local communities but to their occupation: it alludes to the researcher’s association with powerful institutions that represent authority in these rural communities, especially when they come with government credentials.

Before I left, I was told that I had to secure yet further authorisation from the district council. The head official received me in his office and granted me the necessary authorisation to carry out research in Mandimba. In fact, in each department I visited, I had to show the credentials issued by the Universidade Eduardo Mondlane; without this, I would not have gained permission to do field research. The colonial legacy of a ‘centralized authoritarian bureaucracy’ (Newitt (2002: 188), as well as the legacy of the civil war between the supporters of FRELIMO and RENAMO, is reflected in the hierarchical distribution of power in Mozambique. However, this highly controlled environment also means that the central authorities have a well-organised cultural map of

local artists and their locations: in addition to knowing where musicians live and what instruments they play, these lists allow cultural secretaries to plan traditional music festivals at a district level, encompassing several villages. Such resources play an important role in empowering national identity and investing it with meaning in a country ‘defined by artificially created colonial boundaries’ (Alpers 1974: 40) that is historically highly diverse, comprising more than twenty languages and ethnic groups.

The first societies in the region were established between the rivers that run from the central African highlands to the sea, forming settlements along their banks. ‘The country is thus divided into horizontally stratified regions which throughout its history have repeatedly formed the matrix within which different political regimes have competed’ (Newitt 2002: 186). Disputes between ethnic groups also occur geographically, among those living to the north of the Zambesi river and other groups to the south. There is a keen interest in who will represent the various groups in political positions in the southern Mozambican capital’s central government. This is a sensitive matter that has caused bitter conflicts in the past over the political relationship between the different ethnic groups and the colonial power. The Portuguese dictatorships of Salazar and Caetano portrayed the Portuguese government as an ally of the Makua-Lomwe and depicted FRELIMO as a Makonde movement, intensifying the rivalry and conflict between the two groups. ‘Portugal did not focus on the politics of race but on the politics of ethnicity [...] Under this policy, major ethnic groups were set against each other to the advantage of the colonial power’ (Alpers 1974: 40). However, in the present day, different ethnic groups cohabit the same areas in relative accord, sharing the same social institutions – for instance, in the Niassa cultural centres I visited, people of Makonde, Makua and Yao origin all occupied the various different posts. It appears that in post-colonial times, the focus has shifted from an ethnic-related conflict, centred on

the political opposition between FRELIMO and RENAMO, to the struggle for representation in the central government.

Nfani Wathunia

In a village not far from Mitande, I encountered Nfani Wathunia. The fiddle player met us in the communal courtyard. He spoke Portuguese but explained most of the musical terms in Makua, so Herculano and Alimoja, a Swahili-speaking delegate, offered to translate part of our conversation. The musician revealed that his birth name was Bacar Ali Cuine; Nfani Wathunia, his artistic name, means ‘one who shows the world’. Nfani showed me his *tchakare* and described its shape, the bow, the tuning positions for the bridge, his playing technique, and other features.



Figure 3.24. A *tchakare*, bow and resinous stump. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

When describing the bow, Nfani said the string, around 60 cm long, is made either of horsehair or *rhampa naythungo*, a grass-like fibre known in other areas as *mukuroropwe*. The bow itself is made of bamboo, covered with ornate cloth. The instrument's resonator is fashioned from carved wood, called *mpivi*, and its relative measurements are 18 cm in height, 12 cm in width and 12 cm in depth. The neck is approximately 42 cm long and the single tuning peg has a pinwheel shape.



Figure 3.25. Nfani Wathunia playing the *tchakare*. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

I enquired about the pitch needed to play the *tchakare*: is it always the same or are there several tunings? Nfani uses a vegetable fibre loop similar to the Nyanja fiddle, the *mugole*, described by Kubik. The loop also allows the string to align with the neck of the fiddle with greater ease, facilitating the fingering; it keeps the string closer to the neck and establishes the open-string pitch. The loop is also made of *rhampa naythungo*. Nfani's fiddle, however, did not have four indents on the downside of the neck for tuning; instead of cutting an indent and moving the loop along the neck, he moves the bridge to different positions to achieve various pitches. The bridge is a piece of bamboo, which he changes in order to move it onto the skin's surface. The first position consists of a fully open string with the loop sounded around Bb3 (233.08 Hz). Nfani showed me three positions, from higher to lower pitch, which generate three different tunings: the first has a pitch of approximately a D4 (293.66 Hz), the second around a C4 (261.63 Hz) and the third a Bb3 (233.08 Hz). However, he can also use other tunings with a pitch corresponding to Eb3. To illustrate each pitch, Nfani played other notes in short phrases

– these provide a reference for the song. It works as a scale or a tonal field of reference instead of relying solely on the fundamental note as the only indication of the tonal system.

Nfani's *tchakare* was a tube fiddle with a cylindrical shape. The opening sounding hole was of a rectangular shape in the right side of the resonator; the table membrane, which covers the upper opening, was made from the skin of a snake called a *ncoltwa*; and the string was a twisted wire, which on his current instrument has been extracted from a bicycle tyre.



Figure 3.26. Nfani Wathunia with his *tchakare*. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

Nifani was taught to play the instrument by his older brother, who died some time ago, leaving him the sole musician in the area to play the instrument – although his nephew is learning the *tchakare*, he lives in another district. Aside from playing in his village and surrounding communities, Nfani has performed at traditional music festivals in Maputo

and across other provinces. He not only plays the *tchakare* but also sings and dances with his ensemble, which consists of three percussion instruments: a leading bass drum called an *ikoma iulupale*, played by hand; a middle-sized drum called a *likone*, played with a stick held in the right hand and a bare left hand; and a small drum called a *tchuntchu*, played with a pair of thin sticks. Gazelle (*nahe*) hide is used as a skin for these drums (see figures 3.27. and 3.28.). Henry O'Neill (1882: 199) in his 'journey to Macua and Lomwe territories' recorded that three drums were used to accompany the dancers and singers: one 'deep-toned' drum beaten with the hand and 'two smaller drums beaten with sticks'.



Figure 3.27. *Tchuntchu* and *ikoma iulupale* drums. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

The drums are also used to convene hunting parties (an exclusively masculine activity, normally carried out during rainy periods). According to Macaire (1996), the *mukulukuna*, who specialises in predicting the success of the hunt, plays a specific beat

on the drums. When conditions are favourable, the *mukulukana* will proceed to round up support. A number of religious rituals precede the hunt: dreaming as a means of judging the right time to set out, the division of tasks, and a period of sexual abstinence.



Figure 3.28. Nfani Wathunia’s group percussion session with *ikoma iulupale*, *likone* and *tchuntchu* drums. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

The *tchakare* player ties large rattles, called *maheias* or *maruchulus* in Makua-Meto, which are made of wood and fruit seeds, onto both legs; the sound is particularly pronounced when he dances to the accentuated beat of the bass drum. The fiddler’s typical garment includes a *capulana*, a traditional, ornamental piece of cloth that is common throughout Mozambique. Nfani also wears a skirt made of vegetable fibre, called a *milala*, and a crown of feathers that is referred to as the *xipewa*. His wife occasionally participates in the group as a dancer. Nfani described the music they perform as ‘tales of everyday

community life relating to rituals of birth, marriage, youth initiations and pleas'. The people of the region also engage in the worship of their ancestors whom they consider to be still present and in possession of exceptional and highly effective powers. Martinez (2009: 213-15) comments that '[t]he principal rite for Makua peoples is the traditional sacrifice, made during vital cycles, such as birth, marriage, initiation and death', but he denies previous reports that human sacrifice still takes place. In Nfani's opinion, however, the music they play is mostly for pleasure during communal festivities.

While occasionally incorporating Portuguese words, Nfani sings mainly in Makua, Swahili and Yao. He learnt Swahili when he lived in Tanzania in the 1970s and he confirmed that the country is home to many *tchakare* players: 'I learnt and played there with my brothers.' Nfani, although a Makua, emphasised his cultural kinship with the Yao, mainly through language and music. The Makua, as a large cultural group with many dialects, interact with the Yao and other groups; some claim they possess or have adopted many of the same customs (Whiteley 1954: 350-51).

I requested permission to record a song with Nfani, featuring *tchakare* and voice. First, however, Nfani showed me the severed branch of a tree, a resinous stump that he rubs across the string, explaining that 'this is for playing well, so as to apply the right pressure.' In the first song, Nfani played the *tchakare* while singing in Yao. The pitch he used was the second one described earlier, with the open string and loop at approximately a C4 (261.63 Hz). In order to tune the instrument in preparation for playing and singing at the same time, the fiddler usually first plays phrases such as the one notated in music example 3.8., below. The open string here was closer to a C# than a C. Kubik (1970: 18-19) notes that there is a margin of tolerance in African instruments, with the use of 'elastic scales' to set an approximate pitch and also the mode. The sequence of notes in the phrase, however, cannot be accurately analysed using the concept of the pentatonic scale. The

tonal system appears to consist of a single central tone with relatively short intervals within the range (a fourth) that the fiddler plays: C#-D#-E-F-F#.

Music example 3.8. (track 8)



Nfani then played a second song but this time accompanied by the whole quartet. For this piece, he wore his full costume – the *milala* (skirt) and *xipewa* (crown of feathers). During the performance, he played the *tchakare* and sang and danced (the *takare*), each step coordinated with the *ikoma iulupale* (the lead drum); this lower-pitched instrument guides the dancer, coordinating with the beat of his feet tapping the ground. The lyrics, sung in Makua, recounted a humorous anecdote about an imaginary Muslim, whose hat falls off. He asks his *lhamo* (brother-in-law) to wait while he retrieves it, but the music continues with intensity.

The third song performed by the quartet presented a more complex dance sequence with well-defined breaks led by the percussion section. Nfani's own dance described a half-clockwise circle as he sang and played the *tchakare*. Music example 3.9. is the transcription of a very short excerpt from the ensemble's performance. The score is for three drums: the high one, the *tchuntchu*, above; followed by the middle one, the *likone*; and then the bass, the *ikoma iulupale*, which takes the bottom register. Each drum is notated on two lines to represent the lower sound when the musician beats the centre of the drum (for the bottom line) and the higher sound when he beats close to its edge (the top line). The *maheya* rattles, attached to Nfanis's legs, sound whenever he stamps

the ground. The *tchakare* and the *nsú* (voice) follow very similar notes, mostly in unison. The vocal tessitura and instrument range is once again a fourth (Eb to Ab), with the exception of a Db in bar 6, which could be considered a semitone inflection. The *tchunchu* and *likone* maintain a similar, dense, ostinato rhythm pattern, played fast. The *tchunchu* maintains the pattern with no variation and it is played with two *mukhuwo* (sticks). The *likone* maintains the same pattern but inverts the two successive equal beats, played on a lower scale with one bare hand while the other beats out a rhythm on a single *mukhuwo*. The *ikoma iulupale* (the lead drum) introduces other patterns to match the choreography of the dance. In bar eight, the last dotted quaver of the *maheya*'s and the *ikoma iulupale*'s lines is the exact point at which the feet beat the ground producing the *maheya*'s sound, matching the beat which concludes the phrase of the *ikoma iulupale*. The rhythmic phrase is in bar 7 and 8. Although only the bass notes sound, the player keeps the left hand playing ghost notes. The role of lead drum, with its rhythmic variations, is to support the dancer and to manipulate the rhythm in order to achieve an aesthetic goal in both the music and the choreography of the dance, as Agawu (2016: 184-89) illustrates in his description of 'lead-drum narratives'. Kauffman (1969: 508) notes that perception in music-making is associated with a unity of the senses: here, the dance is the tactile perception of the *tchakare* player as he beats the ground in coordination with the lead drum. This notion is key to comprehending the aesthetic of Makua *tchakare* playing, with its rhythmically displaced melodic lines, as part of the musical ensemble and the choreographed dance performance.

Music example 3.9. (track 9)

$\text{♩} = 98$

Nsu'

Tchakare

Maheya

Tchuntchu

Likone

Ikoma Iulupale

5

During the performance, two women in the audience began to accompany the song in a high-pitched tone (not recorded in the transcription). This singing technique is believed

to give rise to a feeling of emotional exaltation: the singers join in on the spur of the moment, spontaneously expressing their enjoyment, and they often dance while vocalising the high notes in a kind of tremolo. According to musicians and cultural commentators alike, this sort of singing, which encourages community members to participate in the performance, helps create a sense of group identity.

On the first day that I met Nfani, he showed me a set of objects related to his performances: the drums, the *maheya*, the *tchakare* and the costumes for the dance. The *tchakare* music is integral to the whole event and the community itself participates in the performance in various ways, including attending the staging of the piece. Despite this, one-stringed fiddle playing in Mozambique has often been described as a solo performance (Kubik 1964; Dias 1986). However, although there are many solo musicians in Mozambique and Tanzania, including travelling musicians who move from one community to another, it is not clear if playing the *tchakare* with a drum ensemble is therefore a relatively recent trend. Due to the immensity of Niassa province, the few descriptions that can be found in the literature about this fiddle tradition may not have recorded the full extent or range of fiddle ensembles scattered throughout the region.



Figure 3.29. Nfani Wathunia, in full costume, performs with his ensemble before an audience drawn from the community, some of whom participate spontaneously. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

The theme of the last song Nfani performed revolves around money and the family. As Agawu (2016: 96) notes, ‘the fiddle’s repertoire shows the instrument singing and talking, entertaining in song mode, and informing in speech mode. Like the voice and the drum, the one-stringed fiddle is able to travel the full gamut from spoken language to music.’ Fiddlers such as Nfani are the storytellers of the community, transmitting an oral tradition that contains the memory of the community’s historical experiences, including its interactions with other groups in the region.

Nfani also encouraged me to play his *tchakare*. He taught me how to hold the instrument, leaning it against the upper abdomen, parallel to the ground. The position needed to manipulate the bow correctly is obtained by turning the instrument halfway – ninety degrees towards the ground. His position as a left-hander, as I am, means that the

sounding hole or aperture is turned downwards. The fingering mainly consists of using the first, second and third fingers, but the fourth finger is also used to reach a five-note range in stopped notes.



Figure 3.30. Luiz Moretto with Nfani Wathunia's *tchakare*. (Photograph: Geraldo Herculano)

After Mozambique's struggle for independence and its civil war, the theme of peace is unsurprisingly a recurrent one among musicians in Niassa. They express pride in the fact that all the Makua groups and the Yao and Makonde live together in the province without conflict. Catholics and Muslims tolerate each other's different religious and social habits – for instance, those who eat pork and raise pigs ensure that their animals do not stray into the yard of a Muslim house. One of the community members I spoke to emphasised that there is no armed religious conflict between Muslims and Catholics in

Mozambique, and affirmed it was an aspect of the country that he celebrated when he compared it with other countries in which he had lived.

Marrupa – Chireka: Almirante Bilale

On my second research trip in the territory of Niassa, I undertook a seven-hour journey from Lichinga to the district of Marrupa, passing through diverse communities along the way. Marrupa has a low population density, similar to the rest of Niassa province, and the area is predominantly inhabited by people who speak the Makua-Meto dialect. In Marrupa, I met the cultural attaché's educational and cultural officer, Mucoa, who consulted his list of artists in the region, including one-stringed fiddle players. However, before I could arrange an interview with one of these musicians, I was asked to present my credentials to the head office of the cultural attaché, Tiago Mussa, and also to the director, Camilo Marinha, who then granted me authorisation to carry out research in Marrupa. Apparently, there was a *tchikwèsa* player in Chireka, a village 40 km away in the administrative post of Nungo. Even before we reached the village, we came across the *tchakare* player, Almirante Lichino Bilale, cycling down the road with a heavy load on his back. We gave him a lift to the village, and once there, a bevy of children joined us in a spontaneous procession as we made our way to the musician's home.

Almirante welcomed us into the village compound. A young community leader, he was taught to play the *tchikwèsa* by his late uncle. The term *tchikwèsa*, the name given to the one-stringed fiddle in this area, also refers to the music and dance practice performed by *tchikwèsa* players. The district of Marrupa used to be famed for its *tchikwèsa* musicians but their number seems to be dwindling: Almirante is not only the sole musician in his village to play the instrument but also the only one in the surrounding area. Almirante both plays and sings, and like Nfani, is accompanied by a drum ensemble that is similar in make-up to that of Nfani's group in the village close to Mitande. He

explained how his ensemble performs on feast days and to accompany special rituals for rain and plentiful harvests. Yet, despite already possessing a wide repertoire, Almirante still considers himself a *tchkwésa* apprentice, claiming: ‘I usually practice with the *likone* drum, but I am not able to dance because I am still learning the dance steps.’ The clothing used for his performances is also similar to that used in Mitande, including the straw skirt, called a *mikutha* in Chireka.

When we met, Almirante was wearing a *takiyah* (cap), a symbol of his Muslim faith. Although music is forbidden by some strict variants of Islam, African Islam and particularly Islam in northern Mozambique has specific local characteristics (Quinn and Quinn: 2003). For example, in this region, Islam adheres to a tradition of matrilineal descent and inheritance (Macaire 1998; Bonate 2010), as well as encompassing musical practices from older African faiths. Religious practices often vary, and it is not always evident to the outsider when some aspects of traditional religions have been incorporated into the local variant of Islam. Although the region is divided between the three major faiths (the traditional African religions, Islam and Christianity), Christians and Muslims, according to Martinez (2009: 34), also partake in traditional religious practices to the extent that is difficult to garner accurate statistics concerning the numbers in each religious group. For example, the Islam of the Makua has absorbed aspects of traditional African belief systems. I asked Almirante if the *tchikwèsa* is also part of Islamic rites – was such an association possible? He replied no, the music was employed in other religious practices and was not connected to Islamic ceremonies.

Almirante then showed me a *tchkwèsa* that he usually keeps in the *mukhukwa*, a disused warehouse. He makes his own instruments, which are fairly similar to the tube fiddle used by Nfani, with the same construction of the body and peg but with a string of vegetable fibre rather than wire – the resulting tone is as intense but slightly warmer. The

approximate length of the bow is 80 cm, and Almirante uses the resin he extracts from a tree that grows near the village (the *nakarilula*) to give it an adhesive quality, while he fashions the membrane resonator out of *ihala* skin, a salamander that he hunts in the nearby river.



Figure 3.31. Almirante Bilale playing the *tchikwèsa*. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

Almirante's *tchikwèsa* was tuned to around a C4 (261.63 Hz), using the loop to align the string with the neck. He played some four-note phrases to tune the fiddle before performing a solo piece using five notes approximating to C, Db, Eb, F and Gb (music example 3.10., below).

Music example 3.10.

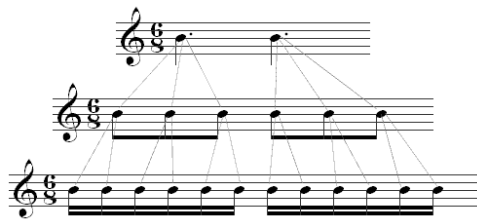


The range of Almirante's *tchkwèsa* is the same as that of Nfani's *tchakare*: a (a perfect and augmented) fourth with minor variations of a semitone or even a quarter of a tone. Music example 3.11. illustrates the notation of the line Almirante played on the *tchkwèsa*, repeating a rhythmic pattern as an introduction to the voice before developing variations that then act as a counterpoint to the vocal part. Each group of two semiquavers on the downbeat provokes a sense of dislocation from the regular pulse the listener expects of the metre; it acts as a divisive rhythm pattern (the sub-division of the dotted crotchet into three quavers is further divided into six semiquavers), as illustrated in music example 3.12. As the open-string pitch is between C and C#, I opted to notate the natural C.

Music example 3.11. (track 10)



Music example 3.12.



The lyrics concentrated on the quotidian concerns of community life. Almirante, for example, sang three songs: the first alluded to the rites of marriage, the birth of offspring and starting a family; the second referred to the scourge of AIDS that has blighted many communities in Niassa; and the third was the tale of a young man who falls in love with a girl from another community but is forced by tradition and social constraints to renounce her and seek a wife in his own community. Almirante also mentioned a sacred tree called the *mutholo*, a common reference in local songs, recounting how musicians often play under the tree to accompany prayers for rain, a fertile harvest or a good marriage, as well as referring to the ritual of leaving food at its foot as offerings to the spirits. Martinez (2010) describes the *mutholo* as the location for traditional sacrifices.

In my last day in Marrupa, the cultural delegate, Mucoa, mentioned another player, a well-known elderly musician, who lived in the mountains a few kilometres to the north. However, the site was difficult to access: it could not be reached by car and had no network coverage for mobile phones. As this would mean spending at least three days out in the mountains, we decided to plan a visit on my return to Niassa in the future. Mucoa also mentioned that, in a week's time, the region would play host to its regular cultural festival which generally attracts a number of traditional music groups from across Niassa. Thus, although the music of the Makua is linked to many different cultural and religious rites, over recent decades it has incorporated a tradition of performances unrelated to religious practices. Arguably, this is a consequence of the nationalist cultural

policy that emerged post-independence and can be related to attempts to unify the different ethnic groups under the banner of Mozambican identity. The staging of traditional festivals serves as a crucial medium for the maintenance of cultural and political interconnections. Nfani is just one remarkable example of this policy – although he lives in the far north of Mozambique, he is constantly engaged in giving performances around the country. He has even been awarded a diploma by the central government, which reads:

The president of the Mozambican Republic grants Bacar Ali Cuine the Merit Medal of Arts and Literature in recognition of his great standing and services to the development and consolidation of the Mozambican nation under law 10/2011 which establishes the system of honorary titles and awards.



Figure 3.32. Nfani Wathunia’s diploma. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

Conclusion: a nationalist agenda

Earlier studies of one-stringed fiddles in northern Mozambique attempted to describe their musical influences and to trace their genealogy, speculating on their possible Arabic or Indonesian affiliations. However, by studying *tchakare* practice in its contemporary form on the ground, this research has revealed the influence of Makua culture and the importance of the instrument's social and political context, particularly when addressing the long period of cultural interactions in northern Mozambique and the sparsity of documentation concerning *tchakare* music during the colonial period. As DjeDje (2008: 23) notes, the focus of study should be placed on the transformations that took place in the instrument upon its arrival in sub-Saharan Africa – that is, its 'Africanisation'. In the various social contexts in the African diaspora – in Brazil, for example – the religious syncretic transformations that arose with the forced displacement of peoples provoked musical changes that may have led to the disappearance of the traditional use of one-stringed fiddles. However, in Mozambique, although the Makua fiddle tradition has certainly been transformed through its contact with Arabic and Portuguese music genres, it has also resisted the politics that characterised both the Portuguese colonial regime and the period of British governance. (Between 1891 and 1926, the British wielded a vast amount of power in the region through the Royal Company of Niassa which controlled the systems of labour and trade (Martínez 2009: 49).) After independence and the civil war, this cultural imposition came to an end and the reconstruction of Mozambique and the Makua territories gave birth to a new nationalist cultural stance. The fiddle tradition and the musical identity it represents was subsumed into the project of modernisation; it was seen as instrumental in the integration of the country's many different ethnic groups into the nationalist agenda.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE RABECA IN A BRAZILIAN QUILOMBO COMMUNITY

Introduction

The Vale do Ribeira in southeastern Brazil is renowned as a region where players of the *rabeca*, a regional fiddle regarded as an icon of the Caiçara people,⁷² abound. A substantial number of studies have been dedicated to the description of the social and musical characteristics of the Caiçara (e.g., Willems 1952; Andrade 1972; Setti 1985; Araújo 2004; Pimentel, Gramani and Corrêa 2006; Diegues and Coelho 2013; Corrêa 2016), but although Afro-Brazilians or *quilombolas* share the Caiçaras' social and cultural setting, contemporary *quilombo* communities only gained legal recognition with the new Federal Constitution of 1988, and their existence has recently been acknowledged based on their cultural uniqueness. Before 1988, the historical quilombos were distinguished as settlements of runaway slaves. After 1988 the contemporary quilombos were still recognised by establishing links to historical quilombos on the basis of land occupation. However, following the last revision of the legislation in 2003, it was established that quilombos no longer need to prove links to historical quilombos in order to be recognized, following the Brazilian Association of Anthropology (ABA) definition of the quilombo as a Black community, not necessarily founded by ex-slaves, which has established practices of resistance, and has continued to maintain and reproduce its characteristic way of life in a certain place (O'Dwyer 2002:23). In the Vale do Ribeira, black communities started claiming land rights based on their cultural difference in the

⁷² The Caiçara, who live along the coast of southeastern Brazil, have developed a lifestyle specific to their coastal environment in the Atlantic Forest, based on subsistence farming, and the practices of fishing and gathering fruit that they inherited from the different indigenous groups who inhabited the area in colonial times. The Caiçara have a mixed indigenous (mainly Carijó), Iberian and African heritage (Diegues 1988: 04). Emilio Willems (1952) describes the Caiçara as a distinct Portuguese-Indian-African-Creole subculture.

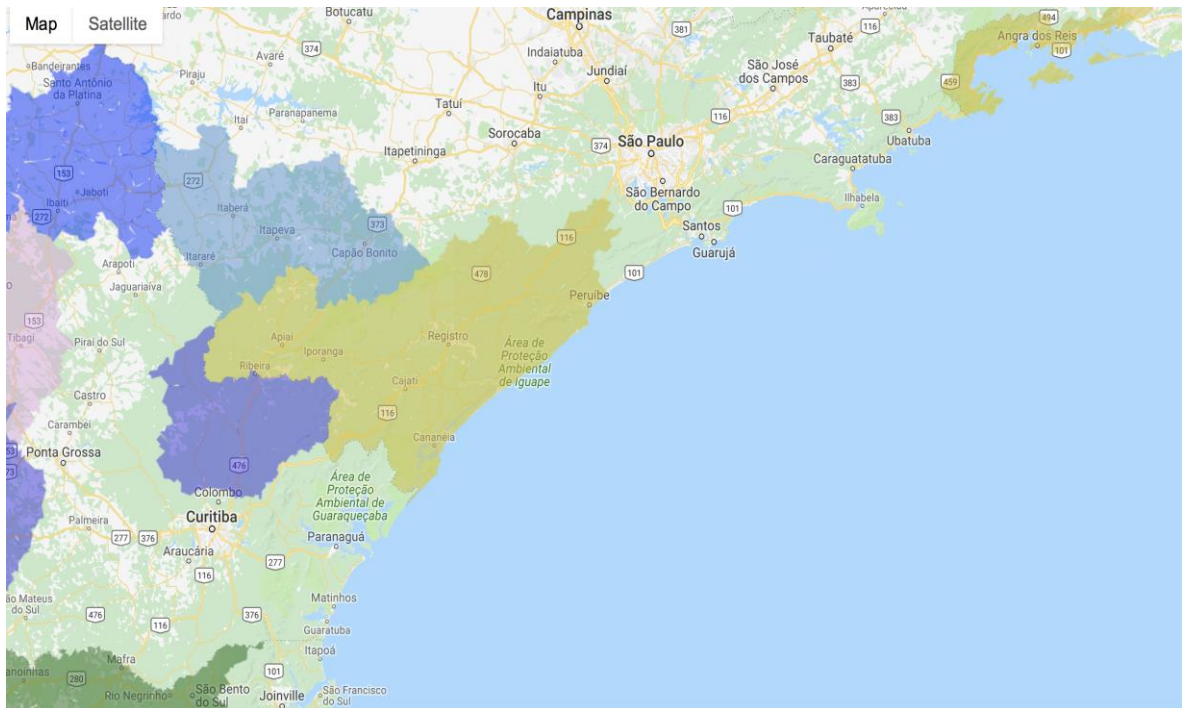
area and consist of previous settlers and new inhabitants who have arrived in the last decades but who share the same characteristic way of life within the communities. This chapter describes *quilombo* fiddle playing through the perspective of an Afro-Brazilian family that has lived in the same rural area for generations. It explores the role of the *rabeca* in the *baile* or *bate o pé* (stomp dance), and particularly its social role in maintaining kinship networks, in festivities (widely known as *fandangos*) and in the popular Catholic practice of the *folia de reis* (the king's revelry).⁷³

This analysis is based on the description of two musicians (both *quilombo* community leaders) and their musical practice, placing it in the context of their traditions. I conducted interviews and also transcribed some examples of musical pieces from recordings I made during my research in the field. The data I collected from these two musicians provides the basic structure of the chapter's narrative, which I present in dialogue with the literature. The first aim of the chapter is to develop a better understanding of this community's music as it is currently practised. The second is to analyse the effects of syncretic religious processes as manifested in *quilombola* musical practices and specifically in fiddle playing: the black Catholicism of the community's *folia de reis*, for example, has incorporated African elements that act as symbols of identity and ethnic reassertion. I focus on the way such events take place within this multicultural environment, leading practitioners to reassume traditions associated with 'quilombo territory' through rituals that have been passed down through the generations. I argue that their sense of belonging has moved beyond the concept of 'cultural identity' to establish new subjectivities as a way of reconstructing their fragmented historical past.

⁷³ This is a ritual familiar to rural dwellers. The core of the *folia* is a set of singers and instrumentalists, accompanied by a clown, also called 'the puppet'. Its members are known as 'revellers' (Brandão 1977: 4).

The Vale do Ribeira

Vale do Ribeira lies in the south of the state of São Paulo and the northeast of the state of Paraná. Its total area is 2,830,666 hectares and the population is 481,224 inhabitants. The area contains numerous environmental protection units. Map 4.1 illustrates the total area (in yellow-green) which includes these protection units and matches the geographical location of the Vale do Ribeira. The coastal area encompasses a number of different ecosystems: a vast river valley and a complex of coastal estuary lagoons, whose mangrove swamps form part of the Serra do Mar (Atlantic Forest).



Map 4.1. The environmental protection area of the Vale do Ribeira in yellow-green, which matches its geographical location. (Source: SIT – Sistemas de Informações Territoriais)

The region was settled by the Portuguese and Spanish following the expeditions of Américo Vespúcio and João Solis, respectively, in the early sixteenth century, who landed on the island now known as Ilha do Cardoso (which includes Cananéia, the southernmost city in the state of São Paulo). The indigenous Carijó people, part of the Guarani linguistic

family (Litaiff 2009), inhabited the region at the time; however, by the seventeenth century, they had all but disappeared. The Vale do Ribeira was also the seasonal home of the Guainá people (from the Jê linguistic group), who visited the area during the winter to fish. The Guarani sub-groups, the Mbya and Chiripa, who currently live in most of the Brazilian southeast coastal region arrived at the beginning of the twentieth century from the inner parts of South America and Brazil; often, they were escaping conflicts with the colonisers and other indigenous groups, but mostly they were in search of ‘Yvy Marae Y’ (‘the land without evil’), a mythical paradise located beyond the ocean (Litaiff 2009: 143-44). There are no specific dates for the arrival of African peoples in the Vale do Ribeira but there are indications they were initially transported there as slave labour to work in the gold mines in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The city of Iguape served as a central slave market, dealing not only in African but also indigenous Brazilian slaves. Many of the rural Afro-Brazilian communities in the region were formed after the period of gold mining ended (Stucchi 2000: 8), relying on subsistence agriculture and the cultivation of rice.

The predominant African groups in southeast Brazil were the Bantu-speaking subgroups from Congo, Angola and Mozambique (Slenes 1992: 55-56). Even after the West African trade was banned in 1815, slaves from these regions continued to arrive in Rio de Janeiro and were then re-exported to southern ports (Gomes 2012: 15); many of these captives were probably sent to São Paulo, to the ports of Iguape and Cananéia. The Bantu-speaking subgroups were known by a variety of names – Angolas, Congos or Cabindas, Benguelas, Bángalas, Cassanges, Dembos, Macúas and Angicos – and the main languages of these peoples in Brazil were Quimbundo, Quicongo and Umbundo (Careno 1997: 57). After the abolition of slavery, the Vale do Ribeira continued to receive frequent clandestine shipments of enslaved peoples as its wild and jagged coastline

deterred inspections by the authorities. Official documents from the time record the clandestine disembarkation of slaves in Iguape (Canabrava 1950: 560; Boccia 1977: 349). One legal document relates how a municipal judge confiscated a ship that had transported African slaves who, once disembarked, were probably taken along hidden routes through the forest. One slave was found the same day and brought before an official enquiry. The court record recounts that many *pretos* (black people) were summoned to act as interpreters during his interrogation, but communication was impossible; no one was able to comprehend his language (Canabrava 1950: 562). Thus, the forced encounter of European, African Bantu-speaking subgroups and indigenous Brazilian cultures was dominated by the power that the Portuguese Crown and its institutions, the Catholic Church and the local colonial authorities wielded over the subaltern cultures. The outcome of these tragic associations was that indigenous peoples were all but exterminated, and those Africans who survived slavery began to form social organisations such as communities of *quilombolas*. Among the many diverse, creolised cultures, it was the Caiçaras who became the predominant inhabitants of this region.

The quilombo communities

The formation of *quilombos* in Brazil was part of a series of complex historical and socio-political events that simultaneously underlined the uneven power relations between the white, black and creole peoples in the colony, and the limits of colonial rule. The successive slave uprisings of the colonial period and the resulting formation of *quilombo* communities were finally given official recognition in Brazil's seventh constitution in 1988: Article 68 declared that reparation for the damage of the Atlantic slave trade was due, and henceforth *quilombos* were to be recognised as specific black social organisations that had grown out of and survived colonialism, and they were to be guaranteed territorial rights.

In contrast to the previous trans-ethnic, martial organisation of Bantu-speaking societies in West Africa, which was focused on the figure of the male warrior, these *quilombola* societies were centred around the family, and as such, they formed an important part of the majority society. Nevertheless, Théo Brandão (1978: 3) notes that in areas that were difficult to access, Africans successfully resisted acculturation, forming independent governments that – to a certain extent – continued the previous social arrangements found on the African continent. However, although such isolated micro-societies existed, they were not the norm. Many *quilombo* communities were established near farms, villages and cities, and they incorporated different ethnic groups, including indigenous people escaping the European colonisers, as well as other persecuted peoples and even traders. João Reis (1996) believes that the *quilombo* was rarely an attempt at counter-acculturation in opposition to the colonial world. Although those who were African-born used the traditions and institutions of their native lands, the predominant factor in these societies was their mix of values and institutions; they used the cultural resources of the different African ethnic groups, indigenous peoples and white society (1996: 19). According to Kabengele Munanga (1997), the Brazilian *quilombo*, if traced back to its origins in the African *quilombo*, represented a symbol of resistance that was open to all oppressed peoples – black, indigenous or white. Indeed, it is claimed that the notion of *quilombo* organisation in Africa originated in the term ‘*kilombo*’, ‘an initiatory society of young Mbundu warriors adopted by the Jaga (or Imbangala) invaders, formed by people of various ethnic groups uprooted from their communities’ (Reis 1996: 3). Thus, the interests of the persecuted peoples involved in these illegal social formations were not tied to ideological models of segregation; rather, ‘[t]heir practices and strategies developed within a transcultural model, in order to form stable and rich personal identities that could not be structured within the limits of their culture’ (Munanga 1996: 63).

With the reclamation of the term *quilombo* and its association with contemporary black rural communities, new legislation was necessary to recognise land ownership in the different context of the last few decades. According to Eliane O'Dwyer (2002), the notion of *quilombo* land rights is not based on archaeological evidence of temporal occupation or on proof of biological heredity, as the *quilombos* were not isolated groups with a strictly homogeneous population. Neither did these communities always spring from insurrectional or rebellious movements. Rather, they consisted, above all, of groups that developed daily practices of resistance through maintaining and reproducing their characteristic ways of life and consolidating their hold on their territory (2002: 18). Indeed, it is still the case today that *quilombos* can integrate people from 'outside' with no claim to genealogical kinship with the community's 'original' families; they continue to be social organisations capable of accepting members from different ethnic groups and forming communities that share the same political interests. If, in the past, they were not simply communities of people who had fled their oppressors but also representative of independent black organisation, nowadays they are also inhabitants of a legally recognised territory, striving to achieve an economic balance between traditional subsistence farming and the pressures of an increasingly urban economy, whose parameters they must negotiate in order to survive.

However, the process of official recognition of these communities has taken more than a century. This has been due to the constant pressure emanating from the large agricultural landowners in the region, who threatened to prevent *quilombola* representation in the chamber of deputies. Even today, much *quilombo* land still awaits the establishment of legal boundaries, in anticipation of its recognition by the federal

government. According to the website *Quilombos do Ribeira*⁷⁴ (2011), the 1988 constitution took an important step towards recognising that *quilombo* holdings are communal properties, but since that date only sixty-five of the many communities in the area have received official documents of recognition. For the region's *quilombo* organisations, recognition of their land rights and access to vital areas of cultivation are crucial issues. Beyond the continuing problems of wealthy speculators and illegal land traders who have occupied and sold off portions of *quilombo* land gained through misleading practices and fraudulent contracts, there are problems related to environmental practices. *Quilombos* are capable of responding to the demands of new environmental legislation due to the smaller scale of their local production which encourages collective organisation with a relatively egalitarian politics. In terms of deforestation, subsistence agriculture does not affect large areas of the forest and is generally sustainable, in contrast to the large-scale plantations of monocrops that have a high environmental impact. But although their traditional agricultural practices have, to some extent, proved environmentally friendly, as they work in relative harmony with the natural ecosystem of the Atlantic Forest and participate in sustainable development projects, many communities have still been forced from their lands by the impact of environmental legislation.

In the Quilombo do Morro Seco, some of the characteristics of *quilombos* described above appear in the narratives of the older inhabitants, who also point to the scant presence of relatives inhabiting the same land, a fact that encouraged the formation of rural brotherhoods. Thus, even if they do not possess written records, or if the records that once existed have not been maintained by the local authorities (in some cases, such

⁷⁴ *Quilombos do Ribeira* is a website created by the *quilombo* communities of the Vale do Ribeira with the support of the Instituto Socioambiental ISA (Socio-Environmental Institute ISA) <<http://www.quilombosdoribeira.org.br/>> (accessed 23 April 2013).

documents, particularly those pertaining to issues of African migration, were destroyed), these communities have oral narratives which transmit important socio-cultural knowledge, giving a chronological cadence to events. These narratives comprise oral chronicles that implicitly acknowledge the historical interrelationship between the different peoples who formed this local culture. For example, in terms of their musical heritage, they mention the Portuguese in their descriptions of the origins of certain dances or lyrics, refer to Africa when defining a particular sound or rhythm, and sometimes recall how an instrument or technique is derived from Brazil's indigenous peoples.

The Caiçara people

In terms of the Caiçaras' musical heritage, *rabecas* are not standardised instruments; tuning can also differ between each micro-region of the Vale do Ribeira and within different musical practices, depending on the instrument maker's inventiveness. Despite the variations, however, musicians belonging to the various groups are able to communicate with each other, exhibiting their musical preferences through their choice of repertoire when accompanying dances and processions such as the *fandango* and *folia de reis*. This process can be described using Edward P. Thompson's (1991) concept of 'customs in common'. In earlier centuries, the term 'custom' carried much the same meaning as what is now called 'culture' – custom was seen as a person's 'second nature' (1991: 2). Although Thompson uses the concept to describe the culture of working people in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it is employed here to describe a set of community practices belonging to the Caiçara people, such as festivities, dances, choreography, fishing, hunting and farming. These practices are constantly referred to as 'remaining traditions' which have continued from the colonial period to the present day.

The coexistence of old practices in a modern society resonates with David Treece's (2013: 14-15) observation that 'in Brazil the traditional and the modern are lived

and felt as different temporalities simultaneously'. Thompson's reflections are also relevant in their treatment of folklore as not only a form of resistance against progress and urban modernisation, but also as a contrast to the reform of popular culture imposed by the dominant classes through state institutions. In the case of the Caiçaras, the pressure on their customs links directly to the potential loss of their land and to social modernisation. According to Kilza Setti, the Caiçaras have had to adapt to the constant threat of illegal occupation by agents of large real-estate concerns and by land speculators, mainly from the urban centres:

Stripped, thus, of their old values, either through embracing something 'new' that has been imposed or that has been presented as the only possible way, the Caiçara keep recomposing their life, blending the old and the new, the known and the strange, a true universe of fragments, as if an artist joined opaque and shiny materials on a canvas, compact and diluted, in themselves opposite and contradictory textures, but which together make sense. (Setti 1985: 18)

The *rabeca*, often regarded as a squeaky fiddle with a rough sound and no clear, standardised tuning, which is played in the *folia* processions and at local dances, also recalls Thompson's (1992) account of 'rough music'. The Brazilian tradition of *folias*, a creolised practice that takes place outside of state-organised and official church ceremonies, express a certain mocking, deviant ethos that contrasts with the civic rituals.

Forms of rough music and *charivari* are part of the expressive symbolic vocabulary of a certain kind of society – a vocabulary available to all and in which many different sentences may be pronounced. It is a discourse which (while often coincident with literacy) derives its resources from oral transmission, within a society which regulates many of its occasions – of authority and moral conduct – through such theatrical forms as the solemn procession. (Thompson 1992: 6)

Popular rites, like street processions, and the dances and drumming broadly referred to as

batuque, which was originally practised by slaves, were absorbed into popular Catholic rituals during colonial times. Despite the distinction between elite and popular culture in nineteenth-century and post-abolition Brazil, the cultural interaction between ballroom music and street and rural musical practices was a formative process. However, despite absorbing influences from nineteenth-century court music, the music of the *Caiçara* people remained markedly linked to their natural environment and their way of life:

The association between fishing and agriculture, the importance of ‘*complexo farinha de mandioca*’ [cassava flour is a staple food], individualized social relations in a larger group and in the nuclear family through combined efforts, reciprocity in everyday life, little importance given to the official religion and a lack of any notion of formal authority, are among the main features of the *Caiçara* culture. (Diegues 2006: 15)

This ‘lack of any notion of formal authority’ can be related to the fact that these social organisations were often formed in resistance to the colonial regime, and incorporated indigenous peoples, different African ethnic groups, Brazilian creoles and persecuted white Europeans. The *quilombos* and the communities of indigenous peoples fleeing colonial occupation may have had a distinct political, decentralised organisation. There is also the fact that the settlers in the Portuguese colonies have often been regarded as less hierarchically or racially stratified than those in other European colonial empires: the authorities encouraged the absorption of African and indigenous people into colonial society as a way of maintaining power. This policy was bolstered by the Portuguese metropolis in order to increase its imperial domain. We should remember, however, that Brazil was one of the last countries to abolish slavery and is even today still struggling to implement social policies to empower people of African descent and indigenous peoples.

In addition to this, the encounter of the European and African with the Guarani peoples during the colonial period proved to have a major influence on the formation of

Caiçara culture. The Carijó, or Carijó-Guarani, were the ancestors of the Guarani who inhabit the region today (Litaiff 2009: 43). They are the Guarani sub-groups, the Mbya and Chiripa, who arrived in the Vale do Ribeira in the early twentieth century, and their influence is a factor that needs to be taken into account when analysing the cultural dynamics of the region. One indication of the exchange of cultural influences is the Mbya *rabeca*, an instrument of similar construction and material to that seen on the album *Xondaro*, recorded by Guarani Mbya groups from the indigenous villages of Itapuã in Iguape, Urui-Ty in Miracatu, and Itapu Mirim in Registro.⁷⁵ Caiçara culture absorbed indigenous agricultural, fishing and hunting techniques, including the cultivation of cassava as a subsistence crop, as well as their descriptions of places and of wildlife, and their raft-building skills (Diegues 2006).

As Caiçara societies lacked the religious-state structure of most European and African societies, they were regarded as people who lived without a central authority or body of law. According to Carlos Brandão:

To earlier missionaries and other colonizers they seemed to be ‘people without law’: peoples and cultures without the idea of a god to fear, without anything more than vague names given to some phenomenon of nature. The very notion of [the] sacred seemed to be unknown to the Tupi-Guarani. (Brandão 1990: 58)

Many different indigenous peoples’ conception of authority was of a system of relationships that arose from their magical-religious traditions or from warfare; they did not perceive it as a ‘central power’ based in their tribal organisation. The collective way of life in Caiçara societies allowed their members to organise their social rules within the family and during political and religious rites, despite not possessing any ‘formal’ authority.

⁷⁵ *Xondaro, Abaçáí Cultura e Arte*, Governo do Estado de São Paulo, Compact Disc, 2014.

Brandão notes that the Guarani, in their attempt to find their fabled ‘land without evil’, became nomads. They had no conception of pursuing salvation through the worship of a single god; instead, immortality was encapsulated in the idea of a land that the author describes as:

[A] place of absolute abundance conceived of as a time of achievement for people who hunt; corn grows alone and arrows spontaneously reach their targets... Opulence and leisure are infinite. However, there is no work; dancing and drinking form an exclusive occupation. (Brandão 1990: 15)

The contact between the Guarani, the Catholic Church and Afro-Brazilian religious cults did not work in favour of acculturation; rather, according to Brandão, it had the opposite effect – it fuelled the persistent desire to reinvent the religion of the coloniser to accord with tribal beliefs, asserting the permanence of these beliefs.

European, indigenous and African narratives show how the *quilombo* communities scattered throughout the Vale do Ribeira became a stronghold of Caiçara culture. Their religious rites and dances are a result of the historical reconstruction of their own subjectivity under the pressures of a violent syncretic process in the colonial era. Catholicism and the devotion to its saints were important aspects in the construction of the collective identities of these rural brotherhoods, and this enabled the diffusion of a new, syncretic Catholicism throughout Portuguese America (Reis 1991: 59). With the recent recognition of *quilombola* land rights, Caiçara identity has been emancipated through their ownership of the land, and is manifest in their cultural practices and religious rituals. Their music in particular reveals the syncretism between Catholicism and African rites.

Quilombo communities form part of Caiçara social life. Their artistic manifestations and their practices, such as collective work or *mutirão*, are related to local

merrymaking, dancing and choreographed musical performances. The *mutirão* is an event which brings the community together to share the work on the plantations, bring in the harvest, cast the fishing nets and even build houses or boats. The host responsible for the *mutirão* usually offers to throw a party with live music and food for all his fellow workers engaged in the collective task. It is a communal moment of joy, where people can socialise with other communities from the broader area. The celebratory atmosphere is expressed in the form of a dance party, called a *baile* or *bate pé*, which takes place after the work is completed. The Caiçara use the term '*fandango*' to refer to these musical events.

The *folias*, on the other hand, are processional rituals originating on the Iberian Peninsula that have been perpetuated in Brazil up to the present day. In the *quilombo* communities of the Vale do Ribeira, people regularly perform the *folia de reis*. The *foliões* (*folia* members), who include the community leaders, play a significant role in strengthening the *quilombola* form of popular Catholicism and, as indicated by Suzel Reily (2002: 2), its moral principles, which emphasise solidarity and mutual obligation. During my field research in the region, I had the opportunity to interview two *quilombo* community leaders, both musicians, who – according to their own description – maintain the emphasis on the musical repertoire of the *folias* and refer to dance events as *bailes* (dance parties). Such events occur not just as a result of community religiosity but because their particular religious cosmology relates music more to popular Catholic rituals than to *fandango* practices. Added to this, however, these musicians are keenly aware of their African heritage and frame their sense of belonging with oral family histories relating to their African descent. As a consequence of this consciousness, their approach to similar practices among the Caiçaras operates not as a denial of common

elements but as an awareness of their own distinct African heritage within the broader culture of the area.

Bonifácio Modesto Pereira

Culture is not a hobby. Culture is a habit of mind [of] a people who exercise it, take on the responsibility as men, and as women. Culture is a human being which can think – that’s it, isn’t it? Culture comes from cultivation and the way in which we [express it] through art, creation. (Bonifácio Modesto Pereira 2013)⁷⁶

Morro Seco, a rural area in the mountains, is nestled within the Atlantic Forest. The first time I visited the Quilombo do Morro Seco, I began my journey from the town of Iguape as I was searching for routes that covered the *quilombos* in the Vale do Ribeira. I happened to speak to someone selling bananas on the sidewalk who told me it would be worth going to Morro Seco; however, she warned me that it could be difficult to arrange, especially at the weekend when there was no public transport. Morro Seco is located 60 km from Iguape, and the last 18 km stretch is along a country road which can only be traversed by conventional vehicles during dry periods. The road winds over bridges and among hills, which open out onto stunning vistas of large areas of forest. According to the inhabitants of the area, Morro Seco itself was originally known as ‘Capoava’, a deforested, open clearing where escaped slaves fled and made their home. When I finally reached the *quilombo*, I saw a tall man standing outside the very first house. After

⁷⁶ Bonifácio Modesto Pereira was one of the local consultants in this field research. He is a *rabeca* player and a community leader in the Quilombo do Morro Seco.

introducing myself and asking about musicians in the community who played the *rabeca*, he invited me to talk to his father, Bonifácio, who lived next door.⁷⁷



Figure 4.1. Bonifácio Pereira playing the *rabeca*. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

Bonifácio Modesto Pereira welcomed me warmly into his home and asked me the purpose of my visit. After I had explained my research, he told me: ‘This is a matter relating to the cultural heritage of the *quilombo*.’ He later concluded an hour of detailed narrative by mentioning, as I had hoped, the musical elements of the culture. He placed the historical events of the region in an economic context, from the time of exploration for alluvial gold to the period when Iguape became a hub for the export of rice. He also described the construction of the Valo Grande, a channel linking the Ribeira river to the sea. The river’s

⁷⁷ In the *New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments*, the *rabeca* or *rebeca* is described as a ‘Portuguese fiddle’. ‘In Brazil, it is used at popular religious feasts, and in secular and dramatic dances, but since the 1920s it seems to have lost its former importance’ (Sadie 1984: 184).

strong currents progressively eroded its banks, silting up Iguape's harbour, and this prevented the large ships exporting the rice from docking, leading to the city's economic decline. The channel's construction also damaged the fragile ecosystem of the area – the production of rice was based on regular flooding – and this altered the composition of the soil and consequently its agricultural quality.

Bonifacio, a highly politicised representative of his community, explained some of the difficulties it has faced in its battle for the legal recognition of its land. Since the 1970s, Bonifacio himself has tried many times to get the situation addressed in the courts. However, a series of disheartening events, such as one solicitor who disappeared with the funds and another who failed to attend the proceedings, forced him to abandon the attempt to gain recognition through a judicial decision. In the early 2000s, the possibility of gaining land rights through a *quilombo* federal statute emerged – these rights were conceded to lands as long as they were maintained strictly as collective properties. According to Bonifácio, the history of his family is entwined with the land and its usage. Combined with its socio-cultural background, the community's characteristic way of life fulfils all the necessary requirements to have the land recognised as a *quilombo*. His grandfather, who was more than likely an escaped or freed slave, arrived there as a single person, but now, as Bonifácio mentions, there are twenty-two families in the area – that is, around eighty-six individuals. *Quilombos do Ribeira* notes:

[The area] contains much of the Atlantic Forest's natural and cultural beauty; rivers and sandbanks, woods which cover the mountains and plains, where inhabitants remain dedicated to their traditional culture activities [and] where we find dance, cuisine, cooking utensils used locally (basketry and braids), bowls and carvings, among other things. (*Quilombos do Ribeira* 2011)

During our conversation, I showed Bonifácio a music video that I had found on YouTube,⁷⁸ featuring a solo *rabeca* player. I asked him if he knew the musician. He thought for a moment and then replied, ‘This is my brother playing on the *rabeca* which I own.’ On the topic of musical practices in the community, Bonifácio mentioned the *reisado*, also called the *folia de reis*, a ceremonial event which takes place between 24 December and 6 January each year. In Bonifácio’s opinion, ‘the *folia de reis* is, overall, a [semi-]religious ritual brought from Portugal in the colonial period’.⁷⁹ Musicians, singers and dancers take part in *jornadas* (journeys), performing as they walk from home to home throughout the community. Although it revolves around the biblical story of the Nativity and the three kings or wise men, the theme can also involve events from everyday life, including scenes of love and war. A processional rite, the participants partake in parties and conduct ‘visitations’, covering large distances in order to bless families, receiving food and drink in return. Its choreography enacts the biblical journey of the three wise men.

The *folia de reis*, part of a tradition of folk Catholicism, whose syncretic rites combine elements of Iberian and African cultures, still exist throughout Brazil. These practices, which include the *congada*, *moçambique* or *folias*, emerged during the colonial slave era and contributed to the growth of syncretic religious rites and socio-political activities which, in Brazil, fall under the rubric of ‘popular Catholic rituals’. Performed as processions, these kinds of carnivals of devotion were initially established in thirteenth-century Europe by order of the Catholic Church in an effort to gain the support of the lower classes. José Tinhorão describes the composition of the Corpus Christi procession:

⁷⁸ < <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOB0STi7UyU> > (accessed 12 February 2013).

⁷⁹ Interview with Bonifácio Pereira, 8 September 2013.

[It comprised] the most unique variety show set for public-street viewing until the eighteenth century in Portugal. It was formed by [the] popular classes thanks to the [membership] of various craftworkers and, as a procession, was expanded further democratically. This was done, not only by reference to ethnic and religious minorities such as Jews, Moors, and Gypsies, but through the physical presence of Africans brought to Portugal as slaves. Since the first decade of the sixteenth century, such slaves had been integrated into Lisbon society through the black church, Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos. (Tinhorão 2012: 15)

The procession's African elements were due to the influence of people living in the major slave-trading cities of the Iberian Peninsula who came from diverse cultural backgrounds in Africa; as Tinhorão mentions, there had been a large sub-Saharan African presence on the Iberian Peninsula since the sixteenth century.

In the colonies, the church-based cult of Nossa Senhora do Rosário was initially a catechetical imposition, supported by the Portuguese Crown and the Catholic Church as a way of incorporating Africans and Afro-Brazilians into Portuguese and Portuguese-Brazilian society, emerging as a brotherhood of the Homens Pretos. The black church provided social spaces outside of the bi-stratified arena of masters and slaves in which congregations could draw together blacks, *mestizos*, enslaved and freed men (Levi 2006: 40). This was one of the ways in which syncretic Afro-Brazilian religious rituals such as the *congada* and *folia de reis* emerged.

Over the centuries, these theatrical rituals incorporated dance and music, feeding into popular rituals and fostering new African and Brazilian 'geographies'. A new *modus operandi*, driven by the colonial authorities, was established in order to construct new social and cultural meanings to compensate for the 'cultural loss' of involuntary migration. Thus, the enslaved peoples interacted with at least two different cultural systems: the coloniser's and their own. Roger Bastide (2007 [1960]) points to the way in which the African mentality was radically transformed and Christianised to the point

where African deities were identified with Christ. ‘The ritual syncretism would then be explained by an earlier assimilation of collective representations involving a shift from one social stratum to another’ (2007 [1960]: 276). According to Diegues (2006: 17), along Brazil’s São Paulo coast, the *folia de reis* emerged ‘purely in a local sense and was carried out by the residents themselves, without the supervision of any religious entity’. The African matrix created through the rural *irmandade* (brotherhood) of the Brazilian *quilombo* apparently became ‘diluted’ by its own syncretism and continuous ‘cultural miscegenation’. However, these religious practices were not just a result of catechetical assimilation but of a replacement of cultural codes with religious symbols. This happened inside the colonial regime, where integration was a necessity despite the existence of political restrictions imposed on blacks and *mestizos*. In present-day *quilombo* communities, some informants report an absence of collective memory related to African societies and cultures; until the official recognition of *quilombos*, many of their members were not necessarily aware of their African heritage, possibly due to a lack of political unity.

In this context, it is interesting to note that Bonifácio considers the São Gonçalo festivities to be the most quintessentially Portuguese of all the dances and music performed in Morro Seco. São Gonçalo is a Portuguese saint commonly regarded as the ‘holy matchmaker’ and patron saint of fertility. Caiçara people usually pray to him for good weather during the agricultural *mutirão*. In the accompanying ceremonies, they dance in two columns in front of an altar, accompanied by *violeiros*⁸⁰ and singers who perform beside an image of the saint holding a viola (a regional five-string guitar). The

⁸⁰ This is a general way of referring to traditional viola and guitar players, or any other musicians involved with such performances.

dance also features foot stomping and clapping. Thus, in Brazil, São Gonçalo also became the patron saint of *violeiros*.

The fandango-rufado

The interview with Bonifácio then focused on the musical genres performed in the *quilombo*, expanding the topic to include the *fandango-rufado*. He emphasised that the *quilombola* treatment of this genre focuses on its singular form, which he describes as part of an African-derived, dance-oriented musical practice. The *fandango* is the most popular genre in the region of Lagamar, which sits between the cities of Iguape and Cananéia, in the southern of state of São Paulo, and Paranaguá in the northern state of Paraná. As this study aims to reveal through musical examples, the *fandango*, like the *folia da bandeira* in the region, is a creolized musical practice of African and Iberian influences in dance, rhythmic patterns and instrumentation. The *rabeca*'s etymology, for example, is most likely to be found in the name for the Arab fiddle, the *rebab*. Veiga de Oliveira (1982: 225) believes that 'the provenance of the *rabeca* is North Africa with the Arab *rebab* or *rebec*, which was brought to Portugal probably in the eighth century'.

The *fandango* itself is a Spanish dance that is widespread in Portugal, specifically in the provinces of Ribatejo, Douro Litoral, Beira Alta and Alentejo (Ribas 1983).⁸¹ Tomaz Ribas is one of the scholars who considers the *fandango* to be a recreational dance. It is generally thought that it was brought to Brazil by migrants from the Azores in the eighteenth century, but it acquired different names in different regions, and in the southern part of the country, it developed into other musical practices and styles, incorporating Afro-Brazilian rhythmic patterns. In Brazil, *fandango* musical ensembles

⁸¹ 'In Ribatejo, Beira Litoral and the border lands of Minho and Beira Baixa, and in some regions of Alentejo and Algarve, the border is where the best *fandango* dances can be found. In Ribatejo, people dance to the sound of the accordion. However, in Ferreira do Zêzere, in the hills of Tomar, in Moção and in Borba, it is danced to the sound of the guitar. In the Mirandese lands (Tras-os-Montes), it is a circle dance' (Ribas 1983: 93).

usually consist of two violas, a *rabeca* and a *pandeiro* (a Brazilian tambourine) or *adufo*, and occasionally include a *caixa* (a *folia* drum); however, the instrumentation can include a *violão* (a modern classical acoustic guitar), a *cavaquinho* or a mandolin, depending on the region or the preference of the group. The dance Bonifacio refers to as the *fandango-rufado* or *batido* is performed with alternating hand clapping and foot stomping with robust wooden clogs,⁸² a practice that is also called *bate pé*. It varies in its musical rhythm according to the micro-region or community where it is practised as do the musical structure, the melodies and also the themes of the lyrics. There are sets of variations in the musical and verse structures and in the dance movements; the specific structures that characterise a certain genre of music or dance are generally referred to as *marcas* or *modas*. Within the *fandango* genre, each *moda* can alternate between clapping and tap dancing, beating specific rhythmic phrases on the wooden floors.

The tapping *modas* or *rufadas* (percussive dance) require that the dancer has previous knowledge of the choreography, and their set of variations. In general, they are danced in a circle and the men clap and tap [their] feet. Often in a [...] wheel, one of the men takes the role of teacher – the master of the room – and his tapping will serve as a reference for the other tap dancers. (Gramani and Corrêa 2006: 21)

The *fandango* was also very popular as a ballroom dance in the nineteenth century, and as such, was practised by different social classes. It was therefore, to a great extent, accepted by the dominant class of slave owners. However, the *batuque* drumming and dance practices, which included the *fandango*, were performed only by slaves and poor whites, and the practice began to be discriminated against when Brazil's economic

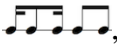
⁸² 'In the region of São Paulo, where the city of Cananéia is located, the word *fandango* is roughly synonymous with dance, and it brings together a number of different choreographies, even waltzes. Here, they distinguish the "*fandango bailado*" to the "*beaten fandango*" which is characterized by the foot stomp, which was initially prohibited' (de Andrade, 1959: 116).

elites started to adopt European bourgeois habits, rejecting local popular culture. They considered it raucous party music – as they did most other drumming and dancing practices that fell under the term ‘*batuque*’. According to Magnus Pereira, the *fandango* was regarded as having a libidinous and lascivious character, and its practice was restricted in several communities, where the style was accused of corrupting local customs, and it was occasionally banned:

At least in Paranaguá, you can be sure that the *fandango* and the *batuque* consisted of the same thing. The dance of black people was specifically the *jongo* (a sort of samba). The term ‘*jongo*’ does not appear in the legislation of any other borough. However, in almost all cases, alongside the ban of *batuque* or *fandango*, commands were made to forbid the gathering of slaves with *atabaques* (Afro-Brazilian drums) for the purpose of dancing and singing. Such differentiation suggests that in other municipalities there was no distinction between *fandango* and *batuque*. (Pereira 1996: 165)

In the colonial period, the *fandango* formed part of other drum and dance events capable of assembling slaves, freed Africans, poor whites and *mestizos* to perform in the *senzalas* (slave houses), in the yards or on the city streets.

Foot-stomping rhythms

Like other Afro-Brazilian music and dance genres, the *moda-rufado* (foot-stomping dance) presents a ‘characteristic Brazilian syncopation’, the rhythmic pattern mentioned in the introduction, which is XX.XX.X. or , as I illustrate in the musical transcriptions below. In the following examples, I have transcribed two different rhythmic patterns during which the dancers strike the floor with both feet or with each foot in turn. First, I show the pattern (music examples 4.1. and 4.3.) and then its division between the

two feet (music examples 4.2. and 4.4.). The dancers perform the linear rhythmic patterns by beating each foot alternately or together.

Music example 4.1.



Music example 4.2. (track 11)



Music example 4.3.



Music example 4.4. (track 12)



These transcriptions of rhythmic patterns were based on the examples provided by Bonifácio and his brother, Hermes, in Quilombo do Morro Seco, but I was able to match the patterns to other live performances and recordings made during the *Festa dos Navegantes* (Seafarers' Festival) in the town of Cananéia. Bonifácio pointed out that the rhythmic patterns change according to the *moda* (the song or musical piece). Each *moda*

is defined by a particular name and introduces different themes, rhythmic patterns, verse structures and aspects of dance (Corrêa and Gramani 2006: 21).

Bonifácio considers the *moda-rufado* similar to the *cateretê*.⁸³ He believes that this is part of the *moda celendi* which, he says, ‘*veio de lá*’ (‘came from there’) – that is, from Africa. As with the *fandango*, the *cateretê* or *catira* can be observed in the dances of rural regions in southern Brazil. The *cateretê* is a religious practice but it could also be considered secular as tap dancing or foot stomping is one of its main characteristics. In the *moda-rufada*, each couple perform well-defined dance movements and the men beat out the rhythmic phrases that characterise each *moda*.

Addressing the topic of performance, Bonifácio remarked that his ensemble has a repertoire of up to twenty-three musical pieces, each taking around twenty minutes: ‘We play a song for around five minutes while people are dancing. Then we change and play another one and another until we run the course of twenty minutes.’ The group in the *quilombo* consists of a *rabeca*, a viola and a classical guitar. In the *folia de reis*, they use two *rabecas*, a viola, a classical guitar and two triangles. When performing the *fandango*, Bonifácio mentioned that they have many *moda-rufada* and ‘each one has a different melody and is accompanied by a dance style. They are compositions that our parents left to us in order to enjoy our time. When we perform, everybody comes to see [us] and dance.’

⁸³ The *cateretê* is a dance found in southeast Brazil, mostly in the rural areas. The dancers face one another in two rows. In her description of *cateretê*, Maria Giffone (1973: 60-1) points out that ‘the dancers do not sing but they hit their feet, clap hands and follow the changes. They seek to “overstep the strings of the viola”, striking equivalent manoeuvres with the feet and doing so with precision. The stomp dance is always accompanied with the whole sole of the foot, except on rare occasions. When it comes to improvisation, dancers are agile, with their palms, constructing a beautiful collage.’

Bonifácio considers the *folia de reis* more sacred than *fandango* dance music. At this point in the interview, I asked him what he believed is the main difference (despite some similarities in terms of musical instrumentation) between these two practices. He answered in this way:

The *folia de reis* [revelry] is sacred. We perform it entirely during Christmas time. In many places, we arrive praying the rosary; we play the music, then say goodbye. So, it is a more religious event than the *baile* or *fandango*. *Fandango* is exclusively to dance to and to accompany a party, where we can keep dancing all night long. However, it is not *forró* [another Brazilian dance]. We call it *bate pé* [foot-stomping dance] or *moda-rufada* and *moda miúda* [short song]. Each of the *modas* has a name: for example, *tirana grande*, *tiraninha*, ‘*nhanilha*’ *de oito*, *engenho novo*, *lhundu*, *saracura*, *pica-pau*, and so on. Each one has a kind of dance, like the *cesariana* or *rica senhora*.

Since there is a huge variety of *modas* or *marcas*, with different choreographic movements associated with the rhythmic patterns, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to also analyse all the various aspects of the dance, lyrics and choreography.

The role of the rabeca

During my second visit to Bonifácio we maintained the focus of our conversation on the music, the songs and arrangements, the tuning of the *rabeca* and the function of the voice in the *fandango* and *folia de reis*. When asked about the role of the *rabeca* in the ensemble, he replied: ‘There are three singers in the *folia de reis*: the *folião* [the ‘reveller’ or main singer], the *baixão* [the lowest voice] and the *tipe*. The *tipe* is the one who sings softly. So, to accompany these three voices, we play the melodies on the *rabeca*.’ In the *quilombo*’s *folia de reis*, it is the *folião* who directs the verses, either singing solo or initiating the question-and-answer sequence with the chorus. The *baixão*, meanwhile, is a lower voice that usually sings a third or a sixth from the main voice, and the *tipe* is a

thin, shrill voice, normally a falsetto (it can be a male or female voice), that ‘generally [...] sings an octave above the main voice as each phrase comes to an end, thus ensuring its tonal tessitura’ (Setti 1985: 181).⁸⁴ The *tipe* is an important element in Portuguese music: in his analysis of this type of vocal tradition in the music of female singers from the region of Minho in northern Portugal, de Oliveira (1966) describes how the high-pitched voice also delineates the ornamentation of the song and emphasises the ends of phrases.

The *rabeca*, which accompanies the voices, has a specific mode of construction: its making involves choosing a particular *caixeta* tree (*tabebuia cassinoides*) belonging to a species native to the Atlantic Forest. The instrument is shaped out of a large plank of this soft, white wood. This type of *rabeca* is called the *rabeca de coxo* (trough fiddle), a one-piece back-and-ribs fiddle that has a distinct top and back, depending on how they are joined to form the whole body. A similar process is carried out with the *guapuruvu* (*schizolobium parahyba*), a massive tree with distinctive yellow flowers: a craftsman can carve a whole raft from a single piece of the enormous trunk.

The existence of a variety of fiddles and violas made out of wood from trees native to the Atlantic Forest is suggestive of the effects of creolisation in which the original European violins and guitars were transformed into hybrid instruments. ‘Hybridity’ is a concept proposed by Nestor Canclini (2015: 19) who defines it as ‘those socio-cultural processes within which structures of subjectivity and power, which exist separately, merge to generate new structures, subjectivities, objects and practices’. This specific fusion of musical elements, which occurred in Brazil due to its mix of European, African and indigenous cultures, is expressed in the music of the *folias*. We still see this happening in the Vale do Ribeira. Hybridisation in this context serves as a crucial explanation of

⁸⁴ For a detailed analysis of *Caiçara* vocal music, see Kilza Setti (1985: 178-210).

how seemingly immutable musical practices and their cultures were ‘transplanted’ to Brazil, where they went through a process of adjustment; however, this was not simply a juxtaposition of cultures but a creolisation of the instruments and musical practices.

The *rabeca* is considered an emblematic Brazilian fiddle that is widely used in rural music (Murphy 1997) and in theatrical dances originating from northeastern Brazilian genres such as the *cavalo marinho* and *coco*. In his ethnographic journey to northeastern Brazil in 1928 and 1929, ethnomusicologist Mario de Andrade (cited in Linenburg 2017: 101) recorded that the *rabeca* was a central part of many popular music genres, including the dance drama, the *bumba meu boi*, which is one the most widespread genres in the country, and which in some northeastern areas is associated with the *folia de reis* during the Christmas festivities. In a different context, Luiz Fiaminghi (2008) analyses the emergence of the *rabeca* in the concert music of Brazil. Composer Eduardo Gramani first established the cultural significance of the *rabeca* as an instrument in its own right and not simply as a mere deviation from European violin making and its standards of construction. He used the *rabeca* to renew the contemporary classical musical repertoire: for example, Fiaminghi and the ensemble Anima gave European medieval and pre-Baroque music and its instrumentation new form by recreating Brazilian popular oral traditions, emphasising the ‘ritualistic elements’ that were common to the pre-modern era in Brazil.

Museu Vivo do Fandango (Pimentel et al. 2006) provides a comprehensive account of *fandango* practice in the estuarine region of Iguape-Cananéia-Paranaguá on the southeastern coast of Brazil. The study provides a survey of *fandango* practitioners in this region (in communities inhabiting areas of the Atlantic Forest), including *fandango* clubs, instrument makers and travelling *fandangueiros* (*fandango* players). An album showcasing musicians from various localities was released alongside the book, and the

book itself is replete with the personal stories of the musicians and their groups, addressing in detail *fandango* as a musical practice of the Caiçara people. In the same region of the Vale do Ribeira, but in the *quilombo* community of Morro Seco, I also employed a distinct methodology for the study of fiddle playing, exploring *rabeca* playing and its social context from the perspective of the *quilombola* musicians.

As a *rabeca* player himself, Bonifácio spoke in his interview about the practices in the *quilombo*, which he believes do not differ greatly from others in the region. He maintains this opinion based on previous performances of the *folia de reis* and *fandango* he has been involved in, when his community joined others during the *mutirão*. In songs with *rabeca* parts, Bonifácio refers to the voices as ‘*as duas*’ (the two) or ‘*as três*’ (the three), drawing attention to the two melodic lines played on the *rabeca*. Both types of *rabeca* used in the region are three-stringed instruments which play two melodies using double stops or one melody with frequent use of bourdon through open strings. A four-stringed instrument can also be used but the first string must be tuned in unison with the second one. Asked if he would give an example, Bonifácio demonstrated by playing the melodies on double stops, clarifying that these are employed as two lower notes and can function as a bourdon on the low third string to support the group singers by giving them a pitch reference.

As with the vocal music, the instrumental music may have been introduced at a time when the Catholic Jesuit order had a greater presence in Brazil. The fiddle practice contains some of the characteristics of polyphony, such as the instrumentation and tuning standards, drawn from European Renaissance and pre-Baroque periods. The greatest expansion of the Jesuits in the Portuguese colonies occurred during the seventeenth century and this coincided with the increase in Brazil of musical instruments of European provenance. Marcos Holler (2010) lists the musical instruments found in colonial

institutional inventories in the Americas, revealing the scarcity of fiddles. Holler (2010: 57) argues that it is not possible to determine whether the construction of string instruments reflects the influence of the Jesuits or not. Although there is a lack of correlation between string instruments and the *rabeca's* dissemination in Brazil, the music of the *folia de reis* and *fandango* reveals some similarities with the early European sacred music that the Jesuits played in Brazil. Christopher Page (1987) notes that the modal melodies and the modal bourdon in medieval fiddle or *tirana* music has a frequent occurrence of fourths and fifths. In the *folia de reis* and *fandango* of Morro Seco, the *rabeca's* tuning patterns also combine fourths and fifths, which Page (1987: 128-30) calls 'heterophonic tuning', mixing different intervals in a similar way to medieval fiddle playing. In Brazil, there is a plethora of diverse *rabecas* used by the Caiçara, the Guarani and other northeastern musicians, revealing a range of cultural influences, but their exact provenance is shrouded in uncertainty.

Following more of an imaginative than a historically documented narrative, the *rabeca* arrived in Brazil with the Portuguese settlers in the sixteenth century, and since then it has remained isolated from urban and industrialized regions and, instead, has continued as part of the musical practices among small coastal communities. (Fiaminghi 2013: 2)

It is difficult to determine if the *rabeca* is a popular hybrid recreation of the European violin, a transformation of the Portuguese *rabeca* from the regions of Minho, Douro and Beira Litoral, or a direct re-creation of the Arab *rebab*, which was introduced to the Iberian Peninsula by Moorish settlers, as noted above.

When I asked Bonifácio what he thought were the influences that affected the dances and music in the *quilombo*, he replied: 'The dance events here are a mix of dances found in the region.' This set of dances is performed mostly during the *mutirão* in the neighbourhoods of Morro Seco, Rio do Braço, Guabiruva, Biguá, Salva-vidas, Ribeirão


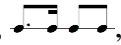
Vermelho and Palmeiras. The neighbourhoods gather together to participate in the *mutirão*, and after the communal work, the night is reserved for dancing the *bate pé* or *fandango*. According to Bonifácio, of all the districts involved, none of them were considered as *quilombo* communities until recently – not even Morro Seco. This means that their cultural memory is not yet systematised enough to achieve their political demands for recognition of their rights to land ownership and autonomy. As Bonifácio recounted:

Only after I read about these practices did I see where [they] came from. Then, I discovered that some parts of this set of dances came from Portugal, such as the *são gonçalo*. The *batuque* came from Africa and others carry Brazilian indigenous influences such as the *cateretê*. I haven't spoken about *balanço* [swing], have I? To play this *moda* on the *rabeca*, I need to tune to a different key.

Bonifácio then began to tune his fiddle and to play for me. I transcribed the piece, called 'Balanço' (the *rabeca* part in music example 4.7.).

Music example 4.5. (track 13)

The musical score for 'Rabeca' is written in 2/4 time with a tempo marking of quarter note = 92. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score consists of five staves. The first staff is the main melody, starting with a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes A4, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The second staff is a lower melody, starting with a quarter note G3, followed by eighth notes A3, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3. Both staves feature numerous triplets and syncopated rhythms. The piece ends with a double bar line.

The title of this *moda*, ‘Balanço’ (‘Swing’), is suggestive of its character as a dance. It is interesting to note the swinging, dancing feeling of the ‘characteristic syncopation’ and *habanera* rhythm patterns which are divisions of the *tresillo* (Sandroni 2002: 106-7). Both the characteristic syncopation, , and the *habanera* rhythm pattern, , give the piece its *balanço* character, as is clearly shown in bar 5. This is represented in triplets, as is the lower melody in bars 7, 11, 28, but the effect is the same as the *habanera* figure above. The syncopated rhythmic patterns in bars 8, 12, 16 and 20 have the effect of the characteristic syncopation or *cinquillo*, although it is written with different figures. The two melodies are played in the *rabeca* solo. The predominant intervals between the two are fourths and fifths, similar to those Page (1987) notes in European medieval fiddle playing. Although the use of thirds is also frequent, it occurs normally in the middle of

the phrases, as in bars 8, 12, 20, 24, 27, 28 and 30. The intervals of fourths and fifths are more emphasised at the beginning and end of the phrases, or in descending periods. This usual employment of fourths and fifths in the repertoire of the *folia de reis* corroborates Bonifácio's mention of the lower tune giving a reference for the pitch when accompanying singing parts in the piece, sometimes functioning as a bass line or occasionally as a bourdon.

In the Brazilian imaginary, *fandango* is an Iberian musical genre. This view was formed mainly through descriptions of the characteristics of Portuguese dances. An anthropological report commissioned by the Brazilian government states that the *quilombola* claim that the *fandango* is of African origin 'does not correspond with the truth' (RTC – Itesp 2006: 36). The report indicates that this so-called 'error' has its origin in the *quilombolas*' desire to preserve their cultural heritage. Although recognising that this emerging sense of cultural identity is positive for the future of the *quilombo* communities, the report does not take into consideration the cultural influences of European, African and indigenous peoples that can be found in the Brazilian *fandango* as played in these *quilombo* societies, which embody the creolised transformation of the music. In his descriptions of the dance called the *lundu* in early nineteenth-century Brazil, Johann Rugendas also mentioned another dance performed by couples which could have been the *fandango* (cited in Stevenson 1968: 22-3; Fryer 2000: 117). It appears that during the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the *fandango* was already 'Africanised', incorporating the *umbigada* and foot stomp, for example. It also contributed to the choreography of the *lundu* (Fryer 2000: 117-19), and the rhythmic patterns described above were chiefly Afro-Brazilian rhythms derived from the time-line patterns of African music (Floyd 2017: 69). This factor gives weight to the arguments of those *quilombo* inhabitants who claim the *fandango* as African. In fact, while there are predominant

aspects in the dance, choreography and instruments that point to an Iberian genealogy, aspects of the rhythm are common to other Afro-Brazilian music genres.

The tuning of the rabeca

In distinction to the *quilombo* of Morro Seco, the *rabecas* in the region of Iguape accommodate four strings. Music example 4.6. (below) illustrates the tuning used for the *reisado* ritual in Iguape and the neighbouring communities of Juréia.

Music example 4.6.



Further south, in the county of Cananéia and in some areas in the state of Paraná, *rabecas* have three strings. Despite its location, situated in Iguape district, Morro Seco's *quilombo* musicians have been playing the three-stringed instruments for generations. Bonifácio describes two different tuning patterns for this type of *rabeca*: the *afinação por baixo* (a lower pitch), which is used in the *folia da bandeira*, and the *afinação alta* (a higher pitch), which is used when playing in the *reisado*. The tuning used when performing the *bandeira do divino* is formed of two consecutive fifths.

Music example 4.7.

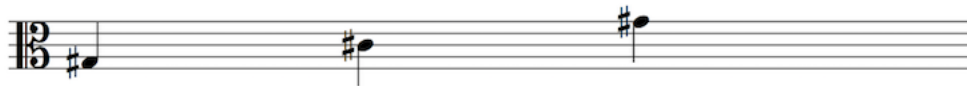
Afinação por baixo:



The tuning adopted to perform the *reisado* is a fourth followed by a fifth and is called *afinação por baixo*.

Music example 4.8.

Afinação por cima:



An analysis of these tunings reveals that the pitch is lower than the international standard pitch of A 440 Hz. According to these musicians' aural references, the pitch is approximately a semitone lower than the standard pitch – for instance, F#-C#-G# is a lower semitone tuning of G-D-A. In fact, both Bonifácio and his brother, Hermes, tune their instruments by ear, as they have perfect control over their perception of the intervals without need of a tuner or *diapason*. If, as appears likely, the sonority of the *rabeça* is linked to that of older instruments dating back to the European Renaissance, the perception of musicians trained in these traditions is based on the tuning (of around A 416 Hz) standard in Renaissance and Baroque music (Haynes 2002). Turning to the Iguape *rabeça*, this four-stringed instrument is tuned in consecutive open strings as a perfect fifth, a perfect fourth and a perfect fifth. According to Florêncio Franco (2013),⁸⁵ a *rabeça* maker and musician in Vila Nova, Iguape, the local *rabequistas* (*rabeça* players) use the same tuning as described above to perform the *folia de reis* and *fandango*: D-A-D-A. As Fiaminghi argues, by connecting the sound of the northeastern *rabeça* with medieval music, the tuning patterns mix fourths and fifths with the use of double stops

⁸⁵ Franco plays belongs to a family of musicians which has performed the *fandango* in the village of Vila Nova since he was young. He makes fiddles and many other instruments in a traditional way. According to his personal history, he was born in the Jureia (a well-preserved green area with mountains, beaches, rivers and forest) but was forced to leave twenty years ago by new environmental legislation, following the creation of a national park in the area.

played simultaneously as two melodies, with one occasionally functioning as a bourdon. This is very similar to the description of the music performed on the *rabeca* in the *folia* and *modas* of Morro Seco. Every piece played by Bonifácio and Hermes that I listened to and recorded was mainly performed on double stops. As part of the Brazilian universe of musical hybridisation, the *rabeca* of Morro Seco is often used to appropriate timbral and modal expressions that may have affiliations with European medieval music – a strong possibility given medieval music’s influence on the instrumentation and notation of the Renaissance and Baroque periods. In an attempt to understand how the musicians in Morro Seco set the different tunings, I asked Bonifácio how he established an aural reference for the pitch.

Luiz: *Do you tune the rabeca by ear? Is there no need for a prompt from another instrument or a tuning fork?*

Bonifácio: Our learning process, since our earliest lessons, is to identify the tuning on open strings. In time, we got used to the exact pitches.

Luiz: *With whom did you learn to play the fiddle?*

Bonifácio: My teacher was Antonio Laurindo. I was twelve when I started playing the fiddle. Many others played the fiddle, like my brother, Hermes. When I was young, my life was made up of studying and working in the fields. I didn’t attend any schools; I achieved that accomplishment at home, as an autodidactic learner. I have a room back there which is my library. To me, today’s education [is] only [at] the level of conditioning: it serves to train people but not to educate them. This is why youngsters are losing such habits. They usually know how to surf the internet, how to press keys, copy and paste; I mean, they know how to do what is already done. Now, what is true education? It is learning to make your own way [...] But they are not able [to], are they? Culture is for anyone who is interested; it is within the realm of simplicity, which is humankind’s greatest virtue.



Figure 4.2. Bonifácio Pereira playing his new four-string *rabeca*. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

Bonifacio's criticism of today's education system is that it represents a form of 'conditioning' rather than autonomous learning, and is therefore oriented around aims that his generation do not understand. However, even when he mentions the internet (which represented a huge leap forward for the inhabitants of Brazil's rural areas), describing it as a vehicle to merely access information that already exists rather than a means of creative discovery, it is evident that the technological distance between the generations is not the only point of conflict. Bonifacio's anxiety evokes the reaction that took place in eighteenth-century Europe against what Thompson (1991: 1-2) refers to as 'pressures to reform popular culture from above'. Thompson gives the example of the way the introduction of literacy was used to displace oral transmission. The championing of folklore emerged in resistance to this type of cultural modernisation, although in this context folklore was itself studied from a top-down perspective, analysing the practices

and rituals of the ‘lower classes’, and as such it would later be institutionalised in studies of popular culture and ‘tradition’.

In rural Brazil, attempts to ‘reform’ the popular culture of oral transmission became the norm in the latter part of the twentieth century. In the experience of *quilombo* dwellers, urban influences now permeate their way of life, changing it from within their own families. Many feel threatened by such external forces – particularly the urbanisation of their spaces, a process that endangers their customs. Those who have left the *quilombo* to live and work in the cities, but who maintain frequent contact with their rural community, become cultural mediators between the two worlds. As Mike Featherstone (1991) notes, when musing on the fragmented narratives of the postmodern city, the introduction of new sensitivities affects the culture but in different ways in different social spaces: for example, in the case of a rural community, there is not the same highly stratified distinctions between the classes or differences between high and low culture that is found in the city. ‘Modernisation’ is a process mostly related to changes in lifestyle. This can be seen in the lack of interest younger members of the *quilombo* appear to display towards traditional instruments: the new ensembles have replaced the *rabecas* and violas, performing the Catholic rites on the electric guitar and bass guitar instead. Bonifácio also mentions the difficulties involved in maintaining the performances of the *folia da bandeira* and the dance parties associated with the *mutirão* due to the migration of many of the younger members of the *quilombo* to the urban centres.

Bonifácio does not fit the stereotype of a rural inhabitant in Brazil – he is an insightful, articulate *quilombo* leader, able to analyse and verbalise the cultural history of his people. In fact, despite his lack of formal education, he has previously served for a term as a councillor in the town of Juquiá. His narrative is rich, with plenty of vivid examples of life in a rural area and full of his love of music, and he was more than happy

to be interviewed by someone interested in the music he performs. His understanding of his instrument goes way beyond the repertoire and incorporates the tuning, lyrics, musical forms and their relation to tradition. It was also interesting to see how he situates the music in terms of a legacy that is passed on by each generation in the community, usually through apprenticeships which teach the younger members the conventions of the musical performances. This is how Bonifácio himself learnt his practice from older members of the *quilombo*.

Bonifácio therefore gained his musical knowledge through aural transmission; it was passed down to him. During our long interview, however, he also demonstrated the extensive knowledge that he had acquired on his own. He recounted how he was trying to stimulate a new, conscious formation of the memories held in common by the members of his community during the formal recognition process of the *quilombos*, with the eventual goal of inspiring the younger generations and encouraging them to be more aware of their own heritage, including their musical practices. He was particularly concerned that he and his brothers would not be able to teach the *rabeca* to someone from the community who would guard and develop their musical legacy. He stressed that he was old and tired, and it was a source of regret to him that his sons did not want to learn how to play.

Hermes Modesto Pereira

When I told Bonifácio that I was interested in meeting his brother, Hermes Modesto Pereira, he explained where the house was by describing it as lying ‘just beyond the bamboo grove’. I soon got lost and realised that ‘just beyond’ meant ‘twenty minutes walking’. I remembered that, in rural areas, people have a different sense of distance.



Figure 4.3. Hermes Pereira playing the *rabeca*. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

During my first visit to Hermes' house, he invited me to sit in his backyard, under the shade of a *palmito*.⁸⁶ In contrast to his brother, Bonifácio, Hermes immediately embarked on his narrative from a musical standpoint. He told me that he was a *rabeca* player but that his instrument was in poor condition at the moment: 'Someone came here and made me a *rabeca* without the bass bar. As a consequence, the top of the instrument collapsed – I told him that this could happen.' He was also once offered a violin as a present but he remarked that although he managed to play it, 'the *rabeca* has more in common with our region and belongs to our culture'. Hermes also indicated his aesthetic preferences when performing the *folia de reis* and the *baile* or *fandango*, including the instrument's specific sound and tuning, and the skill of the ensemble in reproducing the texture of the voice, the viola, the *rabeca* and the percussion, as well as the rhythm of

⁸⁶ The Vale do Ribeira produces a large amount of edible *palmito*, due to the climate of the Atlantic Forest.

bate pé itself, matching the sound of the instruments with the choreography of the dance. He described his aesthetic understanding of a well-performed *folia da bandeira* by recalling a particular performance:

With the *caixa* [drum] keeping the rhythm and the *rabeca bem afinada* [a well-tuned *rabeca*] [accompanying] the voices, [we were] walking all day – can you imagine the flag shining in the sun? When our performance is of a high standard we excite all the villages around. In the last one, each time we passed in front of the chapel, people gave us a lot of money. I was playing a good-sounding *rabeca*, with a [timbre] that corresponded with the ensemble in the best way, like this *rabeca* I have today.

In relation to his musical repertoire, Hermes mentioned a number of *modas*, in particular the *tirana grande*, which he believes is the most difficult musical piece performed in Morro Seco. He explained that they used to play the *tirana grande* in the *folia da bandeira* and in the *mutirão*, during the dance parties that followed the communal work. On such occasions, they often played the *bate pé* dance, inciting some of the men to tap dance, beating the wooden floor with their clogs in time to specific rhythmic phrases. During the *tirana grande*, they initially set the rhythmic phrase by clapping, guiding the instruments' tempo and rhythmic patterns. The men and women first dance in pairs but this quickly changes as they line up and form a figure of eight. This is the moment to clap hands and begin the stomp dancing.

Luiz: *Do you continue to perform in the same way that you learnt from your forebears? I mean, does the way of playing the modas remain the same?*

Hermes: Yes, we have kept the same way but we aren't able to do so as coherently as before. Other *modas*, which are different to the *tirana grande*, such as the *são gonçalo*, the *engenho novo*, the *naninha de oito* and the *balance*, are easier to perform. In our parents' generation, people used to dance here, and we learnt it from them. But all performances were suspended for twenty years. In 1998, we

returned with a group, including new, younger members of the community. However, currently, it is very difficult to keep performing because the young people have gone to work in the city. When we want to host a *bate pé*, we need to call people from the city— all my children, my nephews come here. Last time, we organised eighteen people, the majority were young members. Our parents had a repertoire of twelve hours, but we cannot use it anymore. Today, we perform what our ancestors called *moda miuda*, where we dance from midnight to dawn. The *fandango rufado* is [normally] performed from 8pm to midnight. Last year we practised a lot, so when it was time to go to perform outside of the community in towns like Iguape, Registro or São Paulo, the group was at a high level. It was successful [because they were] very well-trained performers.

Luiz: *What is the plan when you perform the folia da bandeira with the group this year? What are the proceedings when you perform outside the quilombo in the cities?*

Hermes: This December, we will perform the *reisado*. When the opportunity arises, we will play in other cities. In the rural sector, we perform when the weather is good; otherwise, it gets complicated. Now, we have a new wardrobe that has been made for us. Among the costumes are mantles and a crown, all very well made. However, this equipment can get heavy when we want to perform all night long – but we do it anyway. When we used to go to the east, to the neighbourhood of Lageado, Cerrote or Guarapiruva, we walked along the forest path. We would wake up there by the last settlements, 18 km away, then we had to return, dead on our feet, and we would only get to sleep at nine in the morning. In the afternoon, we would start again, visiting many [of the] communities in this area.



Figure 4.4. A *reisado* group with Hermes Pereira playing the guitar and Bonifacio Pereira on the *rabeca*. (Photograph: Expressões Culturais do Quilombo Morro Seco)

Luiz: *Where do you think your musical practices came from and who taught your parents?*

Hermes: We gave continuity to this practice – we did not start it but we continue it. There are three things in this community that we do not know: the first one is when *folia* and *bate pé* came here; the second is who were the people responsible for bringing these practices; and the third is where the *folia* and the *bate pé* come from. Our parents performed them, but they also did not know when they started to be played here. [The music] was transmitted through the generations. My father was born in the nineteenth century and he performed it with his [parents]. For instance, the *bate pé* is our dance festivity. There is no specific moment to perform it; you can start whenever you want. In our parents' time, they performed it a lot because the *mutirão* was also very common as they were farmers and they cultivated the land regularly. Their way of life was more natural and closer to that of the indigenous populations and African slaves. When he was a child, [my father] used to cut sugarcane in order to offer it to people in the *mutirão*. The last actual *mutirão* [took place] here in 1960. In the past, those who had a harvest to [bring in] asked people in the community to help with the task.

During the tasks that Hermes describes, the owner of the harvest used to offer the workers lunch and dinner, followed by a *bate pé*. According to Hermes, this used to happen so frequently that it was almost an obligation to dance and have fun. Today, the *quilombo* hosts a collective *mutirão*, where the produce of the harvest is shared among the inhabitants (the food is consumed by the community itself, but it is also traded beyond the *quilombo*). The *quilombo* members therefore describe musical performances as related to the everyday activities that accompany the annual cycles of nature and the cultivation of the land: activities such as carpentry, fashioning products out of vegetable fibres, sowing and harvesting take place at specific times of the year and are all accompanied by musical rites. As Hermes notes: ‘When Christmas comes around and we start to receive signs, [from the] insects and cicadas, we remember that it is time to host the *reisado*.’ Hermes’ knowledge of his community’s history, transmitted to him through its oral traditions, has helped him maintain his sense of connection with the different context his father inhabited. For his father, it appears that music had been more intrinsic to the life of the community and had run very deep in the *quilombo*’s everyday experiences.

On my second visit to Hermes, we again sat under the tree in his backyard. He had been building a new house in his backyard for years but had still not moved into it, remaining in his old house with his wife and daughter. His two sons, who work and live in the city, were also present. At one point, Hermes entered the house and returned with a new *rabeça* made in the village of Ariri, most likely by the local *rabequista*, Zé Pereira. The instrument was a *rabeça de cocho* (a trough *rabeça*), a one-piece back-and-ribs fiddle. In this type of instrument, the top, ribs and neck are carved from one block of wood, forming a single part, and the back is attached to it. In fact, it was the first time I had seen an instrument where the back is the detachable part; usually, with this kind of

instrument, it is the top of the fiddle that is separate from the whole body. Indeed, the *rabecas* and bows in this region take many different shapes, as the dimensions are far from standardised, which is the reason why I have decided not to describe the different *rabecas* in detail. However, figure 4.6. gives an idea of how a three-stringed *rabeca de cocho* and its bow appear.



Figure 4.5. A three-stringed *rabeca de cocho* – Quilombo do Morro Seco. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

Figures 4.6. and 4.7. depict a four-stringed *rabeca de cocho* made in the region of Juréia.



Figure 4.6. View from above of a four-stringed *rabeca de cocho* – Quilombo do Morro Seco. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)



Figure 4.7. Front view of a four-stringed *rabeca de cocho* – Quilombo do Morro Seco. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

Hermes then tuned his new *rabeca* and performed the ‘Toque da Bandeira’ (‘Song of the Bandeira’) – a composition of this type is called the *chegada* (arrival). In the *reisado*, the musicians perform particular songs at three specific moments: first, when

they go to visit the host, they play the *chegada*; second, at the moment of arrival in front of the house, they start to play a piece known as the *entrada* (entry), anticipating the moment when they step inside; and third, when the group leaves to journey to another house, they play the *despedida* (farewell). Hermes elaborated:

In the *reisado*, we start to sing in front of the host's house. After we finish, we pause and then we rest, chat a little, and finally we start to play the *despedida* [farewell]. However, inside the house, we play the same piece that was being performed outside, when we were walking, but this time we add a voice.

The *folia da bandeira* or *folia do divino* is performed in two different parts. The group starts to play the instrumental performance, *tocando e batendo caixa* (on the *rabeca*, viola, guitar and the snare drum or *caixa de folia*) as they approach the host's house. Only once they are inside the house does the singing commence. Below is a transcription of the *toque da bandeira*, which is used to summon people to the flag procession.

Music example 4.9. (track 14)

Rabeca

♩ = 100

5

10

15

20

25

29

This is a transcription of my interpretation of the piece, which I managed to play by using the same tuning pattern as Hermes' instrument to tune my own rabeca, and by learning the song by ear. The music uses what Page (1987) calls 'heterophonic tuning' (instead of involving consecutive fifths, in the same way as the violin, it employs fourths and fifths)

and is played on a three-stringed instrument using tuning known as *afinação por baixo* (lower pitch). The score illustrates the texture produced by using the double stops and parts which emphasise the fundamental tone of the harmonic series (Fiaminghi 2013: 5).

Throughout the piece the open strings work as a bourdon to the main melodic voice. Although in this *folia* the bourdon changes from the tonic G to the dominant D, the first and fifth tonal degrees are not always stressed and the minor seventh degree characterises the modalism (in this case, the Mixolydian effect from b10 to b17 and in b29). The transcription is a semitone higher than it sounds in order to simplify the notation, but the pitch would be appropriate at A 415 Hz. The dance character of this *folia* performance is reflected in the *rabeca*'s playing by the dislocation of the upper and lower mordents (written as triplets) of the different beats in the ternary time signature, affecting the metric accentuation of the measure. The triplet falls on the first beat (b2, b3, b4, b10, b11, b13, b29, b30 and b31), on the second beat (b3, b5, b7 and b17) and on the third (b9, b11, b20, b23, b28 and b30), or it occurs twice in the bar (b3, b11 and b30) or consecutively from beat three to beat one (b9 to b10 and b28 to b29).

As Hermes proved to be extremely knowledgeable about his chosen instruments, I asked him to perform something other than the group of rhythmic patterns associated with the *caixa de folia*. He invited me to attend mass on Sunday morning, proposing that afterwards he could play the *caixa* (double-framed drum) for me in the churchyard. Hermes played all the patterns used in the *folia da bandeira*, using his voice as a guide, singing the main vocal part of the *folia* and the line of the *rabeca*. He claimed that the *caixa* 'is the most difficult instrument in the *folia da bandeira* because the player has to keep the rhythm and tempo [while] singing and playing on specific passages. The problem is to find the right player able to do this.' I have transcribed here another *despedida* in

Hermes played the *caixa* with two drumsticks while singing a rhythmic accompaniment. The predominant rhythm patterns played on the *caixa* are the characteristic syncopation (XX.XX.X), the *habanera* (X.XX.X) and the *tresillo* (X.X.X). It is interesting to note how the player changes from the *habanera* pattern to the *tresillo* from b12 to b13. This short piece reveals the extent to which the *folia de reis* is affected by aspects of the Afro-Brazilian rhythms that were incorporated into popular Catholic rituals in this part of Brazil. According to Suzel Reily (2002:42), the eight-pulse timeline of the *tresillo* is probably an influence of slaves and *forros* (freed slaves) from northeast Brazil ‘who were brought to work in southeastern coffee-growing regions during the nineteenth century’.



Figure 4.8. Hermes Pereira playing the *caixa de folia*. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

Music and religion

The main examples that Bonifácio and Hermes used in their narratives to describe their musical practices were the *folia da bandeira* and the *reisado*. Their sense of communal belonging was palpable in their stories of these rituals of everyday life. The quality of the interaction of the *quilombo* with other communities also surfaced in the encounters that occurred during the *folia da bandeira* procession. This adds weight to Welson Tremura's analysis:

For many Brazilians living in remote areas, the *folia de reis* tradition is the core vision of their worldview and of their understanding of life. Their isolation from mainstream national Brazil has given them a special understanding of their world, influenced mainly by daily chores and a bucolic life style. (Tremura 2004: 18)

The village church contributes to this sense of community; it is a space where members can socialise, host dance parties and make collective decisions about their land. The ballroom, used for rehearsals, and the depot where the musical instruments are stored are both located in the churchyard. Despite the centralised nature of the Catholic Church, it does not nominate a priest to preside over these rituals. This is a key factor contributing to the consolidation of the *quilombo* and its members as musical-religious subjects: the *quilombo* is configured as a hierarchical subjectivity but one without a centralised power. As musicians and community leaders, individuals such as Bonifácio and Hermes play a hierarchical role in the *quilombo*; they are involved in the coordination of the religious and musical rituals, in the political and economic decisions of the community, and in the organisation of agricultural activities. This role contains a dynamic of power and patronage that is not associated with economic position but with political and religious leadership in a society in which musicians are able to establish a respected 'personal stance or position' (Waterman 1990: 6-10).

However, now that the *quilombo*'s territory has the opportunity to become legally recognised, its members have found that they occupy a new, more challenging environment. Collective memory now operates as a negotiating 'weapon' within the new political framework, and this demands a set of different skills in order to deal with matters such as national legislation. Both the musicians interviewed here described collective memory as an important agent in the reconstruction of their identity as African descendants – a designation that also fulfills the requirements for their legal recognition. 'Identity' here is manifested in the *quilombo* community's rich cultural heritage, which operates as a social structure with its rites and traditions, and which has now been oriented anew by the potential recognition of their land. Stuart Hall (2003) critiques the 'essentialist' notion of 'identity' as generally adopted by historical and cultural discourses. Rather, he considers black Caribbean identity as framed by two axes or vectors which operate simultaneously: the vector of similarity and continuity, and the vector of difference and rupture. The particular Afro-Brazilian historical experience of colonisation, slavery and cultural fragmentation is a local manifestation of the specificity of the Lusophone empire. In this case, the recall of a cultural identity should offer, to some extent, a sense of unity or historical continuity, particularly as it has been encouraged by the legal recognition of *quilombos* and their cultural heritage. However, in the new political climate of legally approved land confiscations and the *quilombos*' resistance to the constant economic pressure on their lands, new subjectivities have emerged to deal with these external demands.

The fact that families such as those of Bonifácio and Hermes still keep the collective memories alive is testimony to the long period of resistance by *quilombola* communities in the Vale do Ribeira. One tangible comparison between the Caribbean and Brazil is provided by the Jamaican experience. The encounters between African peoples

from different ethno-linguistic groups fostered syncretic religious rites expressed in their diasporic musical traditions. Just as Hall refers to African religions as being profoundly formative in Caribbean spiritual life, the conjunction of African religions and European Catholicism in Brazil is also fundamental to the spiritual life of Afro-Brazilians. Despite the incongruous relationship between a monotheistic religion and polytheistic rituals, Hall says:

[These] gods live on, in an underground existence, in the hybridized religious universe of Haitian voodoo, pocomania, native Pentecostalism, black baptism, Rastafarianism, and the black saints of Latin American Catholicism. The paradox is that it was the uprooting of slavery and transportation and the insertion into the plantation economy (as well as the symbolic economy) of the western world that unified these peoples across their differences, in the same moment as it cut them off from direct access to their past. (Hall 2003: 237-38)

Similarly, the presence of black saints in Latin American Catholicism provides evidence of religious syncretism involving the assimilation by local, African-derived religions, such as Candomblé, Batuque and Umbanda, of elements of European Catholicism. Brazilian society is as multicultural as that of the Caribbean; however, these claims to ‘belonging’ and the establishment of new subjectivities should be treated as ‘dynamic productions that are never completed and are constantly producing and reproducing themselves’ (2003: 239).

In the Brazilian context, it is already well established that religious syncretism is not the sum of representative figures in Afro-Brazilian popular Catholic rituals (Bastide 2007 [1960]; Souza e Mello 2008). In fact, Catholic saints were not absorbed by those of a Bantu-speaking socio-religious background; rather, according to Marina de Mello e Souza (2008: 262), ‘the saints – images of Catholic cults – absorbed the meanings and roles associated with the images and objects used in traditional Bantu religions’. Two

examples of black Catholic saints in Brazil are St Benedito and St Efigênia, who appear in syncretic cults such as the Congada for Nossa Senhora do Rosário. In the Quilombo do Morro Seco, all the members of the community identify as Catholic. Their religious narratives originate in the oral traditions preserved in their songs, poetry and discourse, and they are part of the *folia* repertoire and the mass that is organised by *quilombo* members. A noteworthy feature in such Catholic cults is the figure of the priest, personified by a representative member of the community – in this case, Hermes. The *rabequista*, who often serves as an individual representative of the *quilombo*, not only granted me an interview and gave me a performance on the *rabeca*, but also invited me afterwards to attend mass (which he celebrated) in the village church, followed by a party.



Figure 4.9. Hermes Pereira celebrating mass. (Photograph: Luiz Moretto)

By way of verifying the authenticity of this practice, it is necessary to turn to certain rules in the official Catholic Church that refer to the ‘extraordinary ministry of communion’, which give (either temporarily or permanently) a ‘person of faith’, who is in charge of the mass, the religious authority to distribute communion. What is remarkable is that,

beyond the religious aspect, the main function of the ritual in this community is geared towards this same person, the lead *rabeca* player, revealing the centrality of the *rabeca* as both a social and hierarchical symbol.

Although the Catholic Church considers popular Catholic rituals such as the *folia da bandeira* and *congada* as unofficial, for the participants these rituals sustain the fragile division between sacred and profane practices. They regard the *reisado* and *folia de reis* as sacred rituals and the *fandango* as a secular event. It is through the different levels of permissiveness or, alternatively, censure that community members develop an understanding of the tenuous relationship between the sacred and profane within the context of each ritual. For example, one individual reported that he is not against the habit of drinking *cachaça* (a spirit made of sugarcane) during the religious processions, nor does he disapprove of the use of alcohol at gatherings where the *fandango* is performed; however, he is generally critical if someone behaves inappropriately – for instance, he took issue with someone from another community who used to drink *cachaça* and reach the end of the ritual covered in mud and wrapped in the flag.

In the *quilombo* community, the concept of ‘Africa’ only exists in the memory of its members and through shared oral narratives. The practices associated with *folia da bandeira*, or even the *congada* and *moçambique*, are to some extent a link to the lost past of African societies and their kingdoms. The Catholic practices of the colonisers provided a means of mediating the cultural transition between the African continent and the Americas.

The Africans were compelled to integrate in one way or another into the societies in which they now found themselves. New alliances were made, new commonalities were perceived and new identities were constructed upon different foundations such as ethnic and religious similarities or around the spheres of work and home. (Souza 2003: 256-57)

However, the memory of the *quilombo* members is maintained through the ‘aural tradition’ of their music, to use a term coined by Bruno Nettl (2005). There is also a relationship between forms of written tradition, such as the lyrics of the *folia*, and forms of aural tradition, such as its rhythmic patterns and melodies. The practices of the *folia da bandeira*, like the *congada* and *moçambique* in other areas, act as dynamic narratives of connection, generated from this lost historical past, that contribute to the collective cultural memory.

Conclusion: musical change

There is visible decline in the number of *rabeca* players in the Vale do Ribeira. One issue that has contributed greatly to the current disquiet felt by musicians of the older generation is the disappearance of the dance parties where *fandangos* are performed. For example, the musicians of Quilombo do Mandira, another community in Estrada do Ariri, a district of Cananéia, have lost their last fiddle player. In an interview with a *fandango* group from Mandira, the lead musician, Arnaldo, declared: ‘The live music was all we had, including music to celebrate our dance parties. There was no radio or recorded music. Even during the carnival, we performed the *fandango* live as our dance. Today, the youngsters do not want to learn anymore.’ Arnaldo mentioned that his *fandango* ensemble disbanded after the death of Angico, the *rabeca* player, as no one currently knows how to play the *rabeca* in their area.

The evangelism of the new Pentecostal churches is in part responsible for the decreasing number of players. Arnaldo mentioned the challenging situation provoked by the arrival of the Pentecostals. These new churches are among the many factors affecting the Caiçara communities’ way of life, alongside urbanisation, real-estate speculation and the creation of new nature reserves (Diegues and Teixeira Coelho 2013: 96). Those converting to evangelical Christianity are discouraged from performing the *fandango* and

the *folia da bandeira* as the church's regime accords these genres little respect. The conversion to other religious practices creates social and political divergences among communities, corroborating Bonifácio's and Hermes' concerns regarding the difficulty of maintaining *folia* practices. The evangelical churches appear to have assumed the role that was previously executed by the colonial authorities and the Catholic Church, but it is now operating from inside the communities, with individual members divided between the different collective subjectivities currently practised in contemporary Brazil.



Figure 4.10. The *fandango* group from the Quilombo do Mandira. (Photograph: Felipe Varanda)

In terms of the musical rituals, the experience of the Quilombo do Morro Seco reveals the existence of what could be described as 'fragmented traditions'. The knowledge needed to perform the *folia* and the *fandango* exists only in the memory of its elderly inhabitants. The practice of the *folia* relies on the *quilombo* leaders interviewed here, who are both over seventy years old; there are not enough *rabeca* players, musicians and singers to extend the practice into the next generation. In general, my interviewees

described their traditions as close to disappearing, due to the passing of group members and the emergence of new social practices influenced by recorded music. In some circumstances, recorded music is replacing the dances, live performances and religious rites. These processes have led to debates about musical change, transformation and disappearance. It is difficult to discern whether a tradition is disappearing or is in the process of metamorphosis or revival, assimilating elements of new 'external' traditions. Alan P. Merriam (1964: 9) comments: 'Music does seem to be tenacious, though varying social and cultural situations clearly influence the degree to which this is possible.' One of the examples Merriam highlights is the experience of Africans in the Americas. 'In Brazil, where the first African slaves were imported about 1525, African music continues in strength and, indeed, does so in urban areas where we could expect greater change to take place' (1964: 9). However, the *fandango* and the *folia de reis*, old Afro-Brazilian traditions, seem to be disappearing in the Quilombo do Morro Seco. It was also clear, during my fieldwork, that the community's interaction with the urban world is starting to transform the music inside the *quilombo*. Many of its members work in the towns of the Vale do Ribeira and beyond, and they bring back with them new influences, especially the sort of electronic music they hear via the mass media, which they then feed into the dance parties. Thus, although African music has proved its enduring strength over the centuries in Brazil, it is not possible to predict whether the musical practices of the *quilombo* will disappear or simply be transformed. In general, however, *quilombo* members still hope to continue their musical rituals, including employing these traditions in the cause of gaining legal recognition for their ownership of their land.

CONCLUSION

Luso-Afro-Brazilian cultures boast an array of dynamic fiddle-playing traditions. Although each is specific to its locality and social context, they all have their memory in the same history: they are a fundamental part of the modern creole cultures that were moulded by Portuguese colonialism in Africa and the African diaspora. The anti-colonial resistance to European institutions such as the Crown, the state and the Catholic Church operated mostly through the sort of ‘creative creolization’ (Baron and Cara 2011) revealed in the fiddle music’s mixture of European and African elements. The fiddle, as cultural material, was one of a number of objects that mediated this collision of cultures. As such, fiddles could be called ‘instruments of agency’ (Bates 2012), located in the ‘between place’ (Bhabha 2004) of cultural contact and transformation (Ortiz 1995 [1947]; Kartomi 1981), due to their role in dance practices and syncretic religious rituals. The colonial hostility towards African socio-cultural structures of language, tradition and belief did not favour the flourishing of African art and aesthetics, and therefore most of the cultural traditions carried by enslaved peoples from diverse ethnic groups across the continent did not continue in the diaspora but were re-signified in the new creole cultures. In these diasporic contexts, fiddles embodied this transformation into hybrid forms (Canclini 2015) that expressed new cultural phenomena.

The African cultural practices of the slaves and creole peoples could only be maintained in defiance of the threat of coercive prohibition. As a consequence of cultural imposition, some of their music and instruments disappeared, along with their cultural and symbolic meanings; others, however, were absorbed into the new religious syncretic rituals and creolised practices. From the perspective of the coloniser, the idea of an African philosophy, art and aesthetics did not exist (Murungi 2011) and instead stereotypes emerged, fetishising aspects of African music thought of as ‘sensual’,

particularly ‘African drumming’ (Agawu 1995). This study, however, has used the notion of rhythm not only in terms of drumming but also in relation to the phrasing in fiddle playing, to body movement, choreography and stomp dancing, and to ‘labour activity’ (Hamilton 2007) to rethink rhythm as part of an aesthetic phenomenon. It has explored the attribution of aesthetic notions to African fiddle playing by analysing the *perception* of this aesthetic experience in the narratives of the musicians themselves (Kauffman 1969; Hamilton 2007). This emic approach to the ethnographic research allowed the narratives of the fiddle players and community consultants an epistemological autonomy, and thus exposed the politically subversive and critical meanings of the creole musical cultures of the Portuguese-speaking world. These forms of resistance to colonial authority and to cultural colonisation, manifest in the reinvention of traditions and rituals, have become, in contemporary societies, decolonising strategies of ‘thinking and doing’ (Mignolo 2011).

This thesis has analysed three types of instruments and their respective performative cultures in their local contexts: the violin in Cape Verde, the *rabeca* in a *quilombo* community in Brazil, and the family of one-stringed bowed lutes, which spread from continental Africa and survive today as a living tradition in Mozambique and as a revived and transformed tradition in Cape Verde, although they have disappeared in Brazil. The narratives concerning these instruments are intimately connected with the historical cultural dynamics of transnational slavery and colonialism. Fiddling practices that resisted being subsumed by modernity are symbolic of the way African traditions have been reinvented beyond and across the boundaries of colonialism. In creolised forms, fiddle practices can still manifest notions of ‘Africanness’ in terms of the practical and symbolic interconnections between the instrument, the musician’s body and their social environment. As such, I argue that fiddle playing operates as an agent of the

assertion of autonomous identities (both individual and collective) in the diverse socio-cultural contexts of the modern Luso-Afro-Brazilian world.

The Kriolu violin: local and overseas circuits, transnational identities

In Cape Verde, the European violin was incorporated into and re-signified in the Kriolu music culture. The autochthonous rhythms of the archipelago – for example, those of the *coladeira*, *morna*, *contradança* and *taláia báxu* – shaped the style of its violin playing and established a Cape Verdean fiddle-playing aesthetic. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European ballroom dances such as the polka and mazurka were given new form in a characteristic Kriolu violin style by the Cape Verdean musical ensembles and their instrumentation. As they are a conscious part of an oral and aural tradition, the fiddle players interviewed in Cape Verde referred to the violinists they learnt from, either personally or through listening to live performances, recordings and radio shows. Their major reference point was the renowned Cape Verdean violinist, Antoninho Travadinha, who recorded two albums in the 1980s, and who gained a measure of international recognition by performing and recording his music in Europe.

The internationalisation of Cape Verdean music, which became more pronounced after independence in 1975, started to shift the colonial racial ideology which had operated to justify slavery and colonialism since the very formation of the country and which persisted until the fall of military dictatorships in Portugal. The contemporary diasporic networks of Cape Verdeans living in the United States, Europe and continental Africa (among other areas) maintain their cultural connection to the archipelago through music, which helps to mediate socio-cultural identification and affectivity (Cidra 2008). The symbolic cultural imagery embodied in the Cape Verdean violin is realised in practice by Cape Verdean musicians through their specific style of fiddle playing. This very subjective style is described in accounts as possessing the characteristics of dance

music, with techniques such as slow glissandos, syncopated rhythms and contrametric accentuations (Kolinski 1973), all expressing *sodade* and *morabeza*, terms referring to the Kriolu peoples' identity, nostalgic forms of affection for a diasporic community – as can be seen in the lento tempo of the *morna* genre and its motifs of departure and broken love. However, this nostalgia is also accompanied by the receptiveness of Cape Verdean music to the incorporation of foreign cultural influences.

One-stringed fiddle connections

The one-stringed bowed lutes which spread from continental Africa to the diaspora were objects that possessed a cultural agency. The players of these instruments were forcibly displaced peoples who had experienced slavery and colonialism, and who lived under political systems that instituted prohibitions and laws designed to crush any remaining elements of African socio-cultural structures. As a consequence of these cultural ruptures, some fiddle traditions disappeared; others, however, were revived or reinvented in the new Luso-Afro-Brazilian creolised cultures (Hill and Bithell 2014).

The *cimboa* from Cape Verde, due its physical characteristics and its ensemble playing, suggests possible cultural affiliations with African linguistic groups from Upper Guinea – the ethnic groups, the Mandinka, Wolof and Fulbe, were a formative influence on Cape Verdean society (Carreira 2000). The *cimboa*'s size, resonator hole and bridge made of gourd bear resemblances to those of the fiddles of Upper Guinea (which today includes the modern nations of Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia) described by Jacqueline DjeDje (2008). I speculated in this thesis that the Kriolu *cimboa* was a recreation of the Gambian Fulbe *nyanyeru* or *riti*. Indeed, the Cape Verdean pro-independence movement, mainly fostered by Africanists and intellectuals, turned the *cimboa* and the genre of *batuku* into cultural symbols of resistance to the colonial regime. More than any other instrument and genre in Cape Verde, the *cimboa*

and *batuku* embody the Kriolu culture's African heritage. The fiddlers, Mano Mendi and the late Nhó Henrique, who figured in Chapter Three, were referred to as the masters of the *batuku* and *fição* traditions in Cape Verde, but after this last generation of *cimboa* players passed away, the tradition itself started dwindle. Nevertheless, there are current *cimboa* players who are attempting to maintain the practice, albeit in new forms: for example, *cimboa* maker and player Pascoal Fernandes has re-contextualised the instrument, casting aside rigid notions of authenticity and incorporating *cimboa* music into other Cape Verdean musical genres.

The *cimboa*, as an object with cultural agency, was historically instrumental in mediating the cultural encounter in Brazil between a *cimboa* player of Cape Verdean heritage and a Brazilian musician, initiating a revival of one-stringed bowed lute practice in the country after its disappearance in the nineteenth century. According to the oral narratives of the southern Brazilian island of Florianópolis, Brazilian musician Gentil do Orocongo learnt to play the *cimboa* from a neighbour, a descendent of a Cape Verdean who had settled on the island after his cargo ship was wrecked on its shores. Gentil do Orocongo's transformations in the playing of the *cimboa* reveal its decontextualization as the product of a social process (Ronström 2014). In its new cultural setting, the instrument's name changed from *cimboa* to *orocongo*, probably due to its similarity to the Afro-Brazilian one-stringed musical bow known as an *orocongo*, although they are in fact different types of instrument. It was a change in context in terms of both place and time, and this drove changes in the instrument itself. As it was no longer part of *batuku* (as it was in Cape Verde), the *cimboa* or 'orocongo' was physically transformed to suit the aesthetic choices of the fiddler when he performed Brazilian regional genres such as the *boi*, *reisado* and *ratoeira*. Although Gentil do Orocongo has since died, the knowledge of how to make and play this instrument has not necessarily died with him: recordings

and accounts of his practice exist that would allow researchers and musicians to keep the tradition alive or to revive it. However, a detailed study would be needed to establish whether and in what socio-cultural contexts Gentil do Orocongo's knowledge of the one-stringed fiddle has been continued, or whether it is disappearing.

The African fiddles disappeared from nineteenth-century Brazil and the causes may be several - including the loss of technical knowledge as discussed in this study. While colonialism and its consequences were hostile to African socio-cultural structures, creolisation and the re-invention of traditions acted in opposition, constantly articulating political counter-discourses. From the nineteenth century, the best evidence linking one-stringed bowed lutes in Brazil to Mozambique are artistic records of the instrument. In Mozambique, *tchakare* and *tchikwèsa* playing are living practices among the Makua and Makua-Meto and the Yao. These two groups were transported from Mozambique to the southern ports of Brazil during the later period of the slave trade in the nineteenth century (Eltis and Richardson 2010): it is documented that they were disembarked in the southern port of Rio de Janeiro (Gomes 2012). As the East African cultures have been less studied in Brazil, very little is known about their influence on Brazilian music. As Chapter Three showed, among the few records of one-stringed fiddles in the country are the illustrations of nineteenth-century European artists: for example, the reference 'Mozambique' appears in sketches of the instrument by Jean-Baptist Debret and in a coloured lithograph by Henry Chamberlain (who reproduced the illustrations of Joaquim Candido Guillobel). Although there is a gap of over two hundred years between the attribution of the fiddles in these illustrations and those played by the Makua and Yao in northern Mozambique today, this study hypothesised that the linkage has some veracity and used it to investigate and gather more data about East African music and its connections to Brazil. However, more research must be carried out to address the Mozambique-Brazil legacy. The

association between the nineteenth-century fiddles in Brazil and contemporary Makua and Yao tchakare practices stills lack empirical data.

The modern fiddling practices of the Makua described in Chapter Three were taken from the testimony of Makua and Makua-Meto *tchakare* and *tchkwèsa* players interviewed for this research. The socio-cultural dynamics of the encounter of the Makua, Yao and Swahili peoples with different languages and religious systems (for example, the encounter between traditional African religions, Islam and Catholicism) were driven not only by the Atlantic slave trade but by the colonial powers that ruled the region – both the Portuguese and the English governed this region in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The effects of European rule are still present in the political boundaries which have defined Mozambique as a nation and in its consequent struggles to unify diverse ethnic groups under a single national flag. The nationalist agenda has incorporated the music of Makua fiddle players, using it to embody the politics of appeasement and unification. This is frequently a principle concern of centralising powers, who are generally eager to aggregate the music of diverse ethnic groups as symbolic of a unified nation, often showcasing the country's multicultural nationalism in music festivals.

Fiddling in a *quilombo* community: land and identity as affirmative politics

The Brazilian bowed stringed lute, the *rabeca*, is an instrument that contains a distinctive regional significance for the musicians of a particular Brazilian *quilombo* in the Vale do Ribeira, southeastern Brazil. Chapter Four illustrated how the *rabeca* is an essential part of the rituals of the *folia de reis* and the dance festivities known as *fandango*, and described it as an instrument performed by the *quilombo*'s community and religious leaders. The syncretic musical practices seen in the popular Catholic ritual of the *folia da bandeira* form the core of the *quilombola* worldview (Tremura 2004) and moral principles (Reily 2002), and comprise the glue for a network of everyday communal

activities of mutual support such as the *mutirão*. The music of the popular religious processions and secular festivities connect the neighbouring communities in regional networks. These characteristic ways of life have also provided the members of the *quilombo* with the necessary evidence to put forward political demands for autonomy and the legal recognition of their land rights. As a former maroon (escaped slave) community, the *quilombo* members have affirmed, through their collective memory of their African heritage, notions of their characteristic ways of life that are closely associated with their agrarian economy, syncretic religious practices and their music.

The musical pieces, which were analysed using the narratives of the musicians themselves as well as through transcriptions of their music, revealed the syncretic aspects of these popular Catholic and creolised musical systems. The rhythm of the fiddle phrasing and drumming contain the *tresillo* and *habanera* patterns, in off-beat syncopation, characteristic of other Afro-Brazilian music, combined with elements of European Renaissance and pre-Baroque tuning and playing. These rhythmic combinations are similar to the creolisation processes that occurred in the musical formations of the diaspora, connecting Brazil and Cape Verde. The polyrhythmic textures of African ensembles and time-lines disappeared, but a few patterns continued as the standard pattern in Candomblé music (Lacerda 2013), including the *tresillo* and its derivations. The musical practices themselves generated these transformations in differing ways, according to their specific cultural contexts, but in a similar process of socio-cultural formation – these creolised cultures were all formed through the encounter of forcibly displaced African ethnic groups with Europeans in the context of Portuguese colonial rule. The rhythm of fiddle phrasing and its associations with dance music, however, allude to the diverse aesthetic perceptions of the fiddle players themselves. These perceptions may involve aspects of cultural symbolism and practice, such as the

fact that the Makua do not dissociate the instrument, the *tchakare*, and the dance, *takare*, from each other or from the drums or the dance steps that match the accentuated beats of the master drum.

Unperceived aesthetics and disappearing traditions

Given that any consideration of the aesthetic was omitted from colonial descriptions of African music, the aesthetic attributions in this study's cross-cultural approach depended on the narratives of the fiddle players themselves and their perceptions of their own practice. Allowing these micro-narratives epistemological autonomy revealed that, despite their diverse cultural settings, these perceptions are connected to the appropriate timbre and tuning of the fiddle, as well as to the drumming, to the body movements, gestures and choreography of the dance, and to daily work activities (as in the *mutirão*).

The most rural areas were the ones that reported a decreasing number of fiddle players able to maintain the instrument's significance in the social chain of musical events and rituals. Although the transmission of fiddle playing in these areas has been revived to some extent by urban influences, new technological resources and recorded music, according to the musicians' own narratives, the aurally transmitted practices that resisted colonialism are now disappearing under the pressures of state-imposed modernisation, as occurred in other contexts, for instance, in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with the reshaping of popular, working-class culture (Thompson 1991). At the same time the economic demands of the music market from the twentieth century onwards expanded the possibilities for local traditions to conquer new spaces within the 'world music' field, while standardization elsewhere in the music market has meant that some fiddle traditions are already in a fragmented state or are considered 'endangered traditions'. The reason that musical traditions either disappear or are revived in a different form are diverse: they include the loss of specialist knowledge in making and playing an

instrument or profound social changes such as large-scale religious conversion (as reported by musicians and music scholars alike).

Until recently, learning to play the fiddle was based on particular cultural perceptions and on specific methods of transmitting the musical tradition. In such a scenario, change occurs through the systems of transmission, which now include learning either through aural methods such as listening to recorded music or visual ones such as following online tutorials. This new *modus operandi* not only transforms the method of learning but also the practice and eventually the material heritage itself – the fiddles – which, as with any system of music, may assimilate aspects from different cultural backgrounds. As noted by Walter Benjamin in *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (2008:08), the reproduction of a work of art by technological means ‘removes the thing reproduced from the realm of tradition’. This helps us to rethink the experience of the inhabitants of the *quilombo*. Recorded music, whether on disc or on the internet (a new factor in the equation), changes the process of transmission in fiddle practice and thus in religious and dance events. Although the tradition of aural transmission continued over the centuries, it is now undergoing a drastic transformation, in part due to the predominance of recorded music and online reproduction. New generations harbour new desires for other musical aesthetics and other instruments and methods outside of their own culture. This has occurred in fiddle practices in the diverse contexts of Cape Verde and Brazil, and has led to the incorporation of other styles and instrumentation which differ from those of previous generations. In continental Africa – in inner Niassa, for example, where the internet has started to reach isolated towns and villages – it may only be a matter of time before the practices of one-stringed fiddle playing, such as that of the *tchakare*, begin to experience an equally profound change, adopting other aesthetics and more metropolitan forms of expression.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The definitions in this glossary mainly refer to the musical practices in each of the socio-cultural contexts analysed in this thesis and therefore may not be either complete or applicable to broader contexts in the Luso-Afro-Brazilian world. Also, it was not possible to associate all the socio-cultural terms for plants and animals with a binary zoological or botanical nomenclature (the scientific binominal nomenclature).

adufe/adulfo: A square or rectangular frame drum used in Portuguese and Brazilian music genres. It is usually made out of a wooden frame mounted on a goatskin.

arco: A fiddle bow

atabaque: Any of several tall, single-headed Brazilian drums of tapering, barrel or goblet shape, with ropes for tightening the head, that are played with the hands and are associated especially with Candomblé and *capoeira*.

badio/badiu: Originally a Kriolu pejorative term meaning vagrant (*vadio* in Portuguese) attached to freed Africans living on the margins of slave society. Today, the word has been resignified in a positive way: it is now associated with the self-reliance and freedom of spirit and expression attributed to the descendants of slaves.

baile: A ball or popular dance event.

barnelo (*grewia villosa*): A small tree from the arid zones of Africa.

baixão: The lower voice in the *fandango* and *folia de reis* of the Vale do Ribeira. The *baixão* usually sings a third or a sixth from the main voice.

bate o pé: A term referring to the stomp-dance *fandango* or *fandango rufado* practised in some communities in the Vale do Ribeira.

batuko: One of the most ancient music genres in Cape Verde. It originated in the rural areas of Santiago and is a cultural manifestation of music and dance, with women as the main participants.

batukadeiras: Women who perform the *batuku*.

berimbau: An Afro-Brazilian single-string musical bow, a key musical instrument of the combat game/dance of *capoeira*.

boi/bumba meu boi: A dramatic dance found in many regions of Brazil, the legacy of Portuguese and Azorean immigrants, combining elements of faith, celebration, art, devotion to the Catholic saints and a belief in Afro-Brazilian religious entities and legends. It is an interactive pantomime that tells the story of the death and resurrection of an ox, and in southern Brazil (Paraná and Santa Catarina) is referred as *boi de mamão*.

braço: Fiddle neck

buli/boli: Kriolu for gourd

buraco: Hole

búzios: A small edible sea snail. The shell is used as a wind instrument in Cape Verdean *tabanka* processions. In Brazil, the smaller shells are used for myriad material and spiritual ends, and are very common in divination in Afro-Brazilian religions (*jogo de búzios*).

batuque: A diverse manifestation associated with the drumming, dancing, singing and religious celebrations of African slaves.

cabaça: A gourd

cachaça: A distilled spirit made of fermented sugarcane juice, very popular in Brazil.

caixa: A double-headed cylindrical drum found in many Portuguese-speaking countries and associated mostly with music and religious processions.

caixa de folia: A double-headed cylindrical drum used to play the *folia de reis*. It is played with the hands or with two sticks striking the upper skin.

caixeta (*alchornea triplinervia*): A block of wood

candomblé: An African-American religion based on Yoruba, Fon and Bantu traditions, practised mainly in Brazil and based on oral traditions, without a scriptural guide. It is believed that the *orixás* (gods) are made manifest in the believer's body during the ceremonial music and dance.

capoeira: An Afro-Brazilian music and dance combat game, with a theatrical character, that was developed under slavery. The participants form a circle around a pair of combatants performing dance-like movements. It also incorporates spiritual goals.

capulana: A type of a sarong worn primarily in Mozambique but also in other areas of southeast Africa.

catuto: gourd

carrigo/cana brava (*schoenoplectus lacustris*): A grass/reed with sharp leaves.

cateretê/catira: A Brazilian rural dance. It is danced in two rows, one of men and one of women, to the sound of clapping and stamping, and is accompaniment predominantly by two violas (regional guitars).

cavalo marinho: A theatrical dance performance accompanied by the *rabeca*, *zabumba*, *ganzá* and *pandeiro*. It is mostly performed in Pernambuco in northeastern Brazil.

cavaquinho: A small-necked box lute, with four courses of single strings, belonging to Portuguese guitar family.

chegada: The first of three important phases in the *folia de reis*, when the ensemble of musicians arrives at the host's home.

chitata/ shitata/shityatya: A Shirima and Makonde lamellophone.

chocalho: The generic term for rattles made of different materials and varying in shape and size but mainly consisting of a gourd with dried seeds inside or a metal sphere with pellets.

cimboa: A Cape-Verdean one-string bowed lute made from a gourd.

choro: An instrumental genre of Brazilian popular music from Rio de Janeiro. It traditionally consists of one or more solo instruments (flute, mandolin, clarinet, etc.) accompanied by a *cavaquinho*, acoustic guitars and a *pandeiro*. It is considered to be the result of Brazilian musicians' exposure to European musical styles, and is essentially the polka mixed with African rhythms, mainly the *lundu*.

coco: A Brazilian folk dance, found especially in the north and northeast, whose elements point to African and Amerindian origins. It is commonly accompanied by clapping or by a drum and a rattle,

takiya/cofió/cofió: A Muslim skullcap worn by the Makua in Mozambique.

coladeira: A music genre from Cape Verde, possibly with African-American influences or, due to its sensual and rhythmic background, a revival of African music practices. The lyrics have satirical connotations, with social criticism and jokes. The ensemble may vary but usually constitutes of a guitar (called the viola or *violão* in Cape Verde), a *cavaquinho*, a solo instrument (violin, clarinet, or trumpet), a singer and percussion.

congada/congado: An Afro-Brazilian dramatic dance, performed in honour of the Catholic saints, which mainly re-enacts the coronation of a Congolese king. It is associated with the cult of Nossa Senhora do Rosário, the brotherhood of the Homens Pretos.

contradança: A fast-paced dance in which couples form long lines with key changes during the performance. It has its origin in British folk dances but also has French-Canadian influences. It became popular in Europe in the seventeenth century and French navigators took it to the Atlantic islands and the Americas. The fiddle plays the main role in the musical ensemble.

corneterus: A person who plays the *corneta*, *buzio* or *konxa* in the *tabanka*, a musical procession in Cape Verde.

cravelha: Tuning peg.

creolidade: A very complex way of understanding the heterogenic racialisation and internal differences among black African and creole mulattos in Cape Verde before independence. In postcolonial terms, as creolisation, it represents an attempt to re-signify a racial term for cultural diversity and racial intermixing as a national cultural identity.

despedida: The third and last important stage of the *folia de reis* procession when the musical ensemble leaves the host's house.

dimbila: A Makonde (northeastern Mozambique) xylophone. The base consists of two hard stems of wood or banana tree trunk with the keys on top.

fandango: A traditional musical practice of rural people in Brazil. The Caiçara refer to *fandango* as specific musical events with choreographed stomp dances and songs called *modas*. In earlier practices it was associated with labour activities (the *mutirão*). The *fandango* ensemble consists of three instruments: the viola (a ten string in five courses

regional guitar), the *rabeca* (a three or four-string bowed lute) and the *adufe* or *adufo* (a square or circular two-headed frame drum).

fandangueiros: *Fandango* performers

fandango rufado: A specific rhythm of *fandango* with clapping or stomp dances.

feira dos navegantes: A syncretic Afro-Brazilian ritual of the churches of Nossa Senhora do Rosário and Nossa senhora dos Navegantes. It is a fluvial procession celebrating the patron saint of navigators.

feira junina: The June festivities of popular Catholicism. It combines praising the saints with a celebration of rural life, and features specific clothing, food, music and dance.

finação: A musical form of oral poetry in which the singer declaims improvised verses in a spoken rhythm accompanied by the beat of the *panos* and by the *cimboa*, as in *batuku*. Its origin lies in the poetry common to the *badios* of inner Sao Tiago island.

folia da bandeira: A flag of revelry. Each *folia* (ensemble of musicians) has their own flag, and during the *folia de reis*, *foliões* from diverse communities come together with their groups and flags.

folia de reis: One of the most syncretic of African-Catholic festivals, which celebrates the three kings of the Nativity story during the Christmas season. Each *folia* has its own ensemble of musicians and performs in local communities, visiting family homes.

folia do divino: A *folia* sung in honour of the Holy Spirit.

folião: A member of the *folia de reis*, but also a member of any popular music or dance ensemble in a carnival.

forró: A traditional dance for couples that originated in rural northeastern Brazil. During the 1950s, it moved south into the major cities, including Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo.

funaná: A music and dance genre of the Kriolu culture from Cape Verde. It is an upbeat of binary metre originally played on the *gaita* and *ferrinho*. The vocalists improvise verses with lyrics about everyday life, which often include social criticism, reflections on life, or descriptions of idyllic situations.

gaita: A musical instrument, like the various accordions, that is a member of the free-reed family, typically with buttons on both ends. In Cape Verde, it is very common in *funana*, which uses mostly diatonic instruments.

goge/goje: The most common names for the single-string fiddle of the savanna area of West Africa. There many other terms, according to the ethnic group: for instance, the *goge* is used by the Dendi, Burum, Hausa, Kambari, Kamu, Waja and Yoruba and the *goje* or *gonje* by the Nago, Yoruba, Dagbamba, Djerma, Songhai, Zaberma, Gwari and Yoruba. The instrument consists of a half-calabash resonator on to which is nailed the skin of a monitor lizard. The table has a circular hole on one side.

ihala/halá: A lizard that lives on river banks in Niassa. The Makua people use its skin for the table of the *tchakare* fiddle.

ikoma iulupale: A Makua cylindrical single membranophone.

jongo: An Afro-Brazilian popular tradition which incorporates music, dance and poetry. It is played with many different drums, often the *tambu*, a cylindrical single-headed drum, especially in the central and southern regions of Brazil.

kaligo: A one-string bowed lute that spread to Malawi and eastern Zambia during long-distance trade in ivory and slaves by the Yao and Bisa in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is usually constructed with a long stick pierced through a gourd resonator.

kanyembe: A one-string bowed lute found in the central and northern provinces of Mozambique.

kolá/kolá san jon: A Cape Verdean popular festivity held to celebrate St John in the month of June. It incorporates music, dance and choreography. The instruments used are: *tambores*, two-skin drums struck on the upper skin with two wooden drumsticks in a duple metre; *apitos*; and different types of edge-blown aerophones (tin whistles). The features of the dance differ according to each island.

kora: A Mandinka long-necked harp lute. A long hardwood neck passes through a large gourd resonator covered by a leather soundboard. It is usually a twenty-one-string instrument with a notched bridge.

kriolu: Also known as Cape-Verdean creole, this is a Portuguese-based creole language that is the native language of virtually all Cape Verdeans and is used as a second language by the Cape Verdean diaspora.

ladinização: A term used by some scholars to describe a complex cultural process in which enslaved peoples from Africa learnt European norms and protocols, often in order to take advantage of and survive in the brutal environment of the slave plantations without losing their own cultural backgrounds.

lhamo/mulamo: Brother-in-law in the Makua language.

likone: A Makua single-membrane cylinder drum.

lundu: An Afro-Brazilian music and dance genre with its origins in the African Bantu and Portuguese cultures. Along with the *modinha*, it became the most important salon genre in Portugal and Brazil.

maheia: A Makua rattle made of wood and seeds attached to a dancer's legs.

mandioca: The Brazilian name for cassava in Brazil, the third-largest source of carbohydrates in the tropics after rice and maize.

mazurka: A Polish folk dance in moderate triple metre.

mbangwe: Makonde and Yao zither. A rectangular wood table on which runs the strings in parallel (mainly five-stringed instruments) is inserted to a gourd through a hole that works as resonator.

mestizo/mestiço/mestiçagem: Initially, during the colonial period, this was a pejorative term used to distinguish people of mixed heritage from those with full European ancestry.

It had semantic implications that stemmed from the field of biology. Today, *mestizaje* is used mostly by Latin-American scholars and social movements as a way of understanding the power relationships between the different ethnic groups, describing their resistance in a positive way.

milala/esàya: A Makua straw skirt made of vegetable fibres, which is used in the *takare*.

mikutha: The Makua-Meto term for the *takare* dancer's straw skirt.

moçambique: A form of music and dance very common in Minas Gerais and São Paulo states, performed predominantly by Afro-Brazilian dancers dedicated to the cult of St Benedict (they call themselves 'companies of Moçambique', and perform their dance during the Congadas).

moda/marca: Caiçara terms that refer to the songs and dances of *fandango*.

morabeza: The receptiveness of Cape Verdeans to foreign cultures; also representing how they would like to be welcomed.

morna: A Cape-Verdean music genre mainly characterised by its poetic, melancholy ballads, primarily in minor keys, played at slow and medium tempos.

mpivi/mwiri: A type of wood used to make the *tchakare* in Mozambique.

mugore/mugole: A one-string bowed lute played by the Nyanja people.

mukhukwa: A Makua-Meto suspended warehouse made out of wood and straw.

mukulukuna: A person skilled in predicting issues concerning the hunting season in Makua culture.

mukwilo: A Makonde loose-key xylophone.

mutholo: A sacred tree of the Makua-Meto people.

mutirão: A voluntary taskforce that takes part in collective work on behalf of the community, harvesting and building houses. It used to be very common in rural areas of the Vale do Ribeira.

nàhe: A gazelle hunted by the Makua, whose hide is used as a drum membrane.

nakarilula: A piece of wood whose resin is used as adhesive on the bow of the *tchkwèsa*.

ncoltwa: A snake hunted by the Makua who use its skin as a *tchakare* table.

nsú: Voice in the Makua language.

nyanyeru/ nyanyur: The Fulbe and Tukulor name for the one-string bowed lute made from hemispherical gourds of different sizes.

orixás/orisha: Also spelt *orixa* or *orisa*, this refers to any of the deities of the Yoruba people of southwestern Nigeria. They are also venerated by the Edo of southeastern Nigeria; the Ewe of Ghana, Benin and Togo; and the Fon of Benin (who refer to them as *vodun*). They are also deities of African religions in Brazil (Candomblé and Umbanda).

orocongo/orucongo/oricongo: An Afro-Brazilian bow associated with West and Central African music.

orutu: A one-string fiddle originating in the pre-colonial societies of western Kenya, especially amongst the Luo.

palmito (*euterpe edulis*): A vegetable harvested from the many wild, single-stemmed palm trees found in the Atlantic Forest.

pandeiro: A single-membrane frame drum of Moorish origin played in the Iberian Peninsula, Latin America and North Africa, which is very common in *capoeira*, *chorinho* and samba ensembles in Brazil.

panos: A woven length of cloth used to beat the *batuku*'s rhythmic patterns. It is usually worn around the waist as a sash, and was originally produced from cotton on narrow hand looms of Mande origin.

polka: A lively dance from Bohemia, danced in couples, which spread throughout Europe and the United States in 1844 in what was referred to as 'polka mania'. It is believed that the dance developed in Prague around 1830 as an expression of native Bohemian culture during the Czech national revival.

ponte: A Portuguese term for the bridge of a fiddle.

quilombo: In colonial Brazil, this was originally a maroon community organised by escaped slaves as a way of resisting slavery. *Quilombos* were located in inaccessible areas, but also close to villages and towns, and usually relied on farming and raiding. In contemporary times, *quilombo* also refers to Afro-Brazilian communities, not necessarily founded by ex-slaves, that have resisted the erosion of their traditional practices and characteristic ways of life.

rabeca/rabecada: A bowed stringed lute from Portugal and Brazil. In the latter country, it appears in diverse shapes, sizes and tunings with three, four or five single strings and usually a short neck. It is used in popular religious feasts, and dramatic and secular dances, and has experienced a revival in the last decades, being incorporated into concert music and mainstream urban Brazilian music genres.

rabeca de caco de bli: A Cape Verdean four-string bowed lute with a resonator made of gourd and table covered with goatskin.

rabeca de coxo: A particular type of Brazilian bowed lute in which the neck, table or back form a single piece and the table or back is glued to form the whole body.

rabecas monocórdicas: A Portuguese name for one-string bowed lutes.

rabequista: A person who plays the *rabeca*.

rabo-de-cavalo: Horsehair

ratoeira: A game, dance and musical genre of oral tradition. Its narratives refer to love, relationships and everyday activities. The practice helps to strengthen the memory of their Azorean ancestry amongst the community in the coastal areas of Santa Catarina in Brazil.

rebab: An Arab bowed stringed lute which spread via Islamic trading routes to North and East Africa, the Middle East, East Asia and Europe.

rebec: A medieval European bowed stringed lute with its origins in the Arab *rebab*.

rhampa naythungo/mukuroropwe: A grass-like plant fibre.

samba: This is both a Brazilian style of music and a type of dance with its roots in Africa and African religious traditions transported to Brazil via the West African slave trade. The word 'samba' is thought to come from the West African word *semba*, meaning an invitation to dance, and is possibly connected to religious and community celebrations. Although it was brought to Rio de Janeiro by immigrants from the Bahia region of Brazil, it soon became the music of Rio itself. People in the poorer neighbourhoods would band together in *blocos* to celebrate Carnival.

samba rural: A regional variant of samba, more common in São Paulo. In the *samba rural*, the typical accompanying ensemble includes a *bombo* (a large two-membrane bass drum), a snare drum, a tambourine, a *cuíca* (a friction drum), a reco-reco (a *güiro* type of scraper) and a guaiá (a rattle).

sambuna: One of the phases of *batuku*: it is the song that opens the whole performance.

são gonçalo: A Portuguese music and dance festivity in celebration of São Gonçalo, held on 10 January.

siribó: A Nyanja form of a one-string long-necked bowed lute. It is played by wandering troubadours, some of them blind or crippled, who sing ballads, epic poems or humorous and satirical songs.

sodade: A kind of Kriolu nostalgia for an 'imagined community' in Africa or Europe and an expression of yearning for those who left for the diaspora.

toque da bandeira: This is a summons to join the flag procession during the *folia de reis*, as part of the catholic ritual journey that ends on 6 January. During the journey, a musical ensemble visits different houses playing music in exchange for food and drink.

tabanka: Mutual aid and religious societies in Santiago, Cape Verde, and their activities. On designated saints' days, *tabanka* members assume the roles of members of colonial society, from kings and queens to slaves, and parade through the town using props, costumes, *búzios* (shell cornets), drums and whistles.

takare: A Makua dance (*ekomá*) associated with *tchakare* playing.

talaia baxu: A Cape Verdean music genre from the island of Fogo performed on the violin, *gaita*, viola and *chocalho*. It is probably a variant of the *funaná* genre. The lyrics are satirical and refer to socio-cultural subjects.

tambor/tambores: A two-membrane drum, usually struck on the upper skin, which spread through Portugal, Cape Verde and Brazil, where it has diverse regional names.

tamborerus: A Cape Verdean group playing *tambores*.

tchakare/tchkwèsa: A Makua one-string bowed lute found in the province of Niassa and played by the Makua and Makua-Meto peoples.

tchuntchu/masha: A Makua high-pitched, single-membrane drum played with two sticks. It is usually of a small dimension: an open goblet drum on a base.

terreiro: The name for a sacred place in the Afro-Brazilian religion Candomblé where religious rituals are enacted.

terrero: Originally the yard where the *batuku* was performed in rural areas of Santiago in Cape Verde.

timbila/mbila: A Chopi xylophone of equi-spaced heptatonic scale. Its instrumental practice in large polyrhythm ensembles is associated with the *timbila* dance and carries a symbolic national meaning in Mozambique.

tipe: A type of falsetto male or female voice in the *fandango* and *folia de reis* ensemble. It generally sings an octave above the main voice, emphasising the end of the phrases to strengthen the tonal tessitura of the ensemble.

tom tom: According to oral narratives and travellers' descriptions in Cape Verde, this is an extinct drum that was in use until at least the nineteenth century.

torno: A *batuko* dance characterised by a pronounced swinging of the hips known as '*da cu torno*'.

txabetas: The percussive beating of the *panos* (rolled-up loincloth) and clapping which maintain the characteristic rhythm pattern of *batuko*.

umbanda: A syncretic Afro-Brazilian religion that blends African traditions with Catholicism, spiritism and Brazilian indigenous beliefs.

umbigada: An Afro-Brazilian dance associated with different dances, such as the *batuque*, *samba* and *jongo*, in which the partners dance navel to navel, rubbing their abdomens together. The bodies of the dancers may or may not touch but it is frequently translated as 'belly bump' or 'belly blow'.

viola: A regional guitar with five courses of double strings. The Caiçara viola is made from the *caixeta* tree and is played in the *fandango* and *folia de reis*.

violeiro: A musician who plays the viola.

xipewa: sA Makua feather crown, part of a dancer's costume.

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Brazil

Bonifácio Modesto Pereira (*rabeca* player) September 2013, January 2014, August 2014, Quilombo do Morro Seco, Vale do Ribeira, São Paulo

Hermes Modesto Pereira (*rabeca* player, percussionist), September, December 2013, August 2014, September 2015, Quilombo do Morro Seco, Vale do Ribeira, São Paulo

Florêncio Franco (*rabeca* maker/player), September 2013, January 2014, Vila Nova, Iguape, São Paulo

Arnaldo Mandira (regional *viola* player), September 2015, Porto Cubatão, Vale do Ribeira, São Paulo)

Jango (João Teixeira) (regional *viola* player), August 2015, Quilombo do Mandira, Vale do Ribeira, São Paulo

Cape Verde

Djô da Silva (producer), December 2014, Praia, Santiago

Kim Alves (violin player/multi-instrumentalist), Praia, Santiago, December 2014

Nhó Nani (violin player), December 2014, Praia, Santiago

Pascoal Fernandes (*cimboa*/guitar player), December 2014, São Domingos, Santiago, December 2014

Francisco Sequeira (radio archivist), Mindelo, São Vicente, December 2014

César Costa (violinist), Mindelo, São Vicente, December 2014

Pedro Guilherme (guitar and *cavaquinho* player), December 2014, Ponta do Sol, Santo Antão

Gertrudez Évora (relative of violinist Nhô Kzik), December 2014, Ponta do Sol, Santo Antão

Breka (violinist), December 2014, Praia, Santiago

Mozambique

Nfani Wathunia (*tchakare* player), November 2015, Mandimba/Mitande, Niassa

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APPENDIX 1

List of violinists in Cape Verde (Source: Manuel J. Tavares. 2005. *Aspectos Evolutivos da Música Cabo-Verdiana* (Praia: Centro Cultural Português) pp. 162-168).

VIOLINO

Nome	Localidade	Ilha
Cesário Alfama	Platô - Praia	Santiago
Mimí Alfama	Platô - Praia	Santiago
David Prates Silva (português)	Platô - Praia	Santiago
Ivo Cortês	Platô - Praia	Santiago
Fernando Quejas	Platô - Praia	Santiago
Tony Sá Nogueira	Platô - Praia	Santiago
Djonça Farol	Platô - Praia	Santiago
Juvenal da Cruz	Platô - Praia	Santiago
Manelinho Bala	Platô - Praia	Santiago
Belarmino (Nhu Pupú)	Platô - Praia	Santiago
Matojá	Ponta Belém - Praia	Santiago
Chico Bruto	Ponta Belém - Praia	Santiago
António Pedro	Fazenda - Praia	Santiago
Manozinho	Achada Grande	Santiago
Didi Mareco	Achadinha	Santiago
Cazuquinha	Bairro	Santiago
David	Paiol	Santiago
Pedro Amadeu	Achada Santo António	Santiago
Djoquim de Tareza	Achada Santo António	Santiago
Quim de Djonzinho	Achada Santo António	Santiago
Djirga	Achada Santo António	Santiago
Léo Beatriz	Várzea	Santiago
Nicolau Andrade	S. Domingos	Santiago
Afonso	S. Domingos	Santiago
Ulisses	S. Domingos	Santiago
Arlindo Dória	Caiada - S. Domingos	Santiago
Dimingo Cumanzinha	Pedra Badejo	Santiago
Bernardino Andrade	Pedra Badejo	Santiago
Loté Nha Mélia di Barro	Pedra Badejo	Santiago
Djonça Loté	Pedra Badejo	Santiago
Djonça Canequinha	Benécha - S. Miguel	Santiago
Chico Miranda	S. Miguel	Santiago
Fortunato	Tarrafal	Santiago
Pílca di Nhu Benjamim	Tarrafal	Santiago
Puxim Mendi	Pingo Chuva - S. Catarina	Santiago
Aristides Tavares (pai Norberto)	Assomada - S. Catarina	Santiago
Norberto Tavares	Assomada - S. Catarina	Santiago
Nenezinho Barreto	Assomada - S. Catarina	Santiago
Olimpio Varela	Assomada - S. Catarina	Santiago
Benjamim	Assomada - S. Catarina	Santiago
Gildo Lubrano	Ribeira da Barca	Santiago
Benjamim Vieira Lopes (Praia)	Cabeça Carreira	Santiago

Chêché	Vila do Maio	Maio
João de Deus	Vila do Maio	Maio
Ismael	Vila do Maio	Maio
Joãozinho de Mina	Vila do Maio	Maio
Totche de Sílvia	Vila do Maio	Maio
Isaac Pinheiro	Vila do Maio	Maio
Naná de Quita	Vila do Maio	Maio
Betona Raquel	Vila do Maio	Maio
Bine di Nha Moça	Morro	Maio
Nico Maninha	Morro	Maio
Arturinho de Bine	Morro	Maio
Dondjel Ramos	Calheta	Maio
Joaquim Nhanhánha	Calheta	Maio
Pantchico	Calheta	Maio
Djina Testada	Calheta	Maio
José de Heitor	Calheta	Maio
Nhonhonzim Fortes	Calheta	Maio
Mulato Joana Chixe	Calheta	Maio
João de Gôto	Calheta	Maio
Dêque Máma	Calheta	Maio
Manel de Xána	Calheta	Maio
Alberto Nhonhonzim	Calheta	Maio
Damião Correia (Saltos)	Calheta	Maio
Dôle de Gôto	Calheta	Maio
Quelvino José de Heitor	Calheta	Maio
Lugí de Nelinho	Calheta	Maio
Djudju di Lota	Calheta	Maio
Codê	Morrinho	Maio
Regino	Morrinho	Maio
João de Deus (Filho Codê)	Morrinho	Maio
Firme Chamana	Morrinho	Maio
Simplício (Filho Codê)	Morrinho	Maio
Filipe Andrade	Cascabulho	Maio
Manelim	Pedro Vaz	Maio
Julião de Bia	Pedro Vaz	Maio
Tavares di Mana	Pedro Vaz	Maio
Djon di Feia	Pedro Vaz	Maio
Pascoal	Pedro Vaz	Maio
Nascimento	Pedro Vaz	Maio
Tote Rama	Alcatraz	Maio
Joaquim de Porfica	Figueira Horta	Maio
Tote Sabelinha	Figueira Horta	Maio
Ravuga de Sabelinha	Figueira Horta	Maio
Joãozinho de Deolinda	Figueira Horta	Maio
Anatólio	Ribeira D. João	Maio
João Severo	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Noel Fortes	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Herculano Vieira	Sal Rei	Boa Vista

Dança Vieira	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Guto Vieira	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Tói Tio Sidone	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Idino Évora	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Chol Évora	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Kuín	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Silvestre	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Manim	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Xote de TACV	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Pedro Manín	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Santos	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Bejame	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Benjamim Lima	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Taninho Tchubinha	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Adriano Tchubinha	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Calal de Cá Tchubinha	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
João de Gáu	Sal Rei	Boa Vista
Isídro	Rabil	Boa Vista
Clemente Brito	Stancha	Boa Vista
Tchutche	Stancha	Boa Vista
Alfredo Xís	Stancha	Boa Vista
Tanóze	Stancha de Baixo	Boa Vista
Aristides Pereira	Fundo das Figueiras	Boa Vista
Patrício Pereira	Fundo das Figueiras	Boa Vista
Constantino Pereira	Fundo das Figueiras	Boa Vista
Alfredo de Chiche	Cabeça dos Tarafes	Boa Vista
João de Eufémia	Cabeça dos Tarafes	Boa Vista
Djô Máximo	Cabeça dos Tarafes	Boa Vista
Chiquinho	Cabeça dos Tarafes	Boa Vista
Ti Leão	Cabeça dos Tarafes	Boa Vista
Simão de N'tóne Chic Joana	João Galego	Boa Vista
Marino Silva	Santa Maria	Sal
Patone	Santa Maria	Sal
Luizim de Chote	Santa Maria	Sal
Ti Rocha	Santa Maria	Sal
Clemente Brito	Espargos	Sal
João Gót	Espargos	Sal
Miguel de Josefina	Espargos	Sal
Luís Ernestina	Alto S. João	Sal
Cula Chiquinha	Ribeira Funda	Sal
Djuca TACV	Morro Curral	Sal
Roberto	Fajã	S. Nicolau
Pedro Gregório (Praia)	Fajã de Baixo	S. Nicolau
Tomás de Nha Bia Cacai	Fajã de Baixo	S. Nicolau
Raúl	Conte-Fajã	S. Nicolau
Manuel Fanhôse	Conte-Fajã	S. Nicolau
António Custódio	Lombo Pelado	S. Nicolau
Adão Ramos	Morro Bráz	S. Nicolau

Jaime	Morro Bráz	S. Nicolau
Egídio Brito	Ribeira Funda	S. Nicolau
Matias	Ribeira Funda	S. Nicolau
António Tói	Ribeira Prata	S. Nicolau
Da Cruz	Ribeira Scadjau	S. Nicolau
Cula de TACV	Água das Patas	S. Nicolau
Maním Almeida	Campim	S. Nicolau
Djim Tói Quinha	Campim	S. Nicolau
Tói Quinha	Campim-Norte	S. Nicolau
Armando Zeferino	Praia Branca	S. Nicolau
Paulino Vieira	Praia Branca	S. Nicolau
Santos Vieira (Pai de Paulino)	Praia Branca	S. Nicolau
Pletch	Praia Branca	S. Nicolau
Tchénta	Praia Branca	S. Nicolau
Djêi	Covoada	S. Nicolau
Tchinín	Covoada	S. Nicolau
Mocinho	Cabeçalim	S. Nicolau
Baltazar Lopes (S. Vicente)	Caleijão	S. Nicolau
José de Tane	Caleijão	S. Nicolau
Nhô Silvério	Rabona	S. Nicolau
Júlio Gueide de Zás	Rabona	S. Nicolau
Mané P'xêi	Vila de Ribeira Brava	S. Nicolau
Antone Clatanóse	Vila de Ribeira Brava	S. Nicolau
Ráu de Mané P'xêi	Vila de Ribeira Brava	S. Nicolau
Tói Rodrigues	Vila de Ribeira Brava	S. Nicolau
Matias Suarime	Vila de Ribeira Brava	S. Nicolau
Jon Gôte	Vila de Ribeira Brava	S. Nicolau
Chico Djodje	Estância de Bráz	S. Nicolau
Manelim	Estância de Bráz	S. Nicolau
Mané Cai	Estância de Bráz	S. Nicolau
Jaime	Estância de Bráz	S. Nicolau
Zé de Antónia Mana	Juncalinho	S. Nicolau
Chiquinho de Quino	Talho	S. Nicolau
José Manuel	Hortelã	S. Nicolau
Da Cruz	Hortelã	S. Nicolau
Djon	Queimadas	S. Nicolau
João de Naná	Queimadas	S. Nicolau
Heitor Ramalho	Ribeira das Patas	S. Nicolau
António S. Nicolau (Praia)		S. Nicolau
Armando Tchitcha	Ribeira Bote	S. Vicente
Muxim de Salamaça	Salamaça	S. Vicente
Báu	Míndelo	S. Vicente
Antonim Ambróse	Míndelo	S. Vicente
Totoi Talef	Míndelo	S. Vicente
Baptista (Pai de Báu)	Míndelo	S. Vicente
Djack do Carmo	Míndelo	S. Vicente
Joãozim de Cinema	Míndelo	S. Vicente
Tututa Évora (Sal)	Míndelo	S. Vicente

Jorge Cornetim	Mindelo	S. Vicente
Fidjím Barber	Mindelo	S. Vicente
Félix Monteiro	Mindelo	S. Vicente
Nhó Simão	Mindelo	S. Vicente
Francisco da Silveira (Port.)	Mindelo	S. Vicente
Valentim - Vul	Mindelo	S. Vicente
Mané Tchitche	Mindelo	S. Vicente
Muxim Querena	Madeiral	S. Vicente
Mané Querena	Monte	S. Vicente
Antonim Travadinha	Janela - Paúl	Santo Antão
Muxim de Monte (S. Vicente)	Paúl	Santo Antão
Tatá	Paul	Santo Antão
Jacinto Estrela	Penha de França - R. Grande	Santo Antão
Vitorino Lima	Ribeira Grande	Santo Antão
João Evangelista Lopes	Ribeira Grande	Santo Antão
Ney d' Bia	Ribeira Grande	Santo Antão
Fausto Medina	Ribeira Grande	Santo Antão
Frank Cruz	Ribeira Grande	Santo Antão
Lela Coutinho	Ribeira da Torre	Santo Antão
José Luis Jesus	Tarafal - Ribeira Grande	Santo Antão
Malaquias Costa	Corvo - Ribeira Grande	Santo Antão
Antone Filipe	Corvo - Ribeira Grande	Santo Antão
Muxim Querena	Garça	Santo Antão
Fernando	Garça	Santo Antão
António Parada	Chã d' Pedra	Santo Antão
António Costa	Fontainhas - Ribeira Grande	Santo Antão
Nhó Kzic	Fontainhas - Ribeira Grande	Santo Antão
Pipi	Fontainhas - Ribeira Grande	Santo Antão
Amário	Fontainhas - Ribeira Grande	Santo Antão
João Manuel Branco	Salada de Mocho	Santo Antão
Armando Notias (Pai)	S. Filipe	Fogo
Armando Notias (Filho)	S. Filipe	Fogo
Tói di Fogo	S. Filipe	Fogo
Quim di Fidjinho	S. Filipe	Fogo
Djonsinho di Santinha	S. Filipe	Fogo
Chote Nhango	S. Filipe	Fogo
Breca	S. Filipe	Fogo
Djedje di Maninha	S. Filipe	Fogo
Toín	Santa Filomena - S. Filipe	Fogo
Adriano	Santa Filomena - S. Filipe	Fogo
Leonel	Fonte Aleixo - S. Filipe	Fogo
Quim Palito	Fonte Aleixo - S. Filipe	Fogo
Manuel Ricardina	Mosteiros	Fogo
Djedje Matias	Mosteiros	Fogo
Quinha	Mosteiros	Fogo
Belarmino (Benfica - Praia)	Mosteiros	Fogo
Linquim	Atalaia	Fogo
Mané di Taláia	Atalaia	Fogo

Raúl di Morgado	Feijoal	Fogo
Julinha	S. Tomé	Fogo
Augusto Cego	Galinheiro	Fogo
Nhonhó	Galinheiro	Fogo
Eduardo Bangainha	Tongom	Fogo
Djonzinho Bangainha	Tongom	Fogo
Nhó Raul (Ribeira Barca)	Renque	Fogo
Nhu Nány	Pé de Monte	Fogo
Artur Centeio	Miguel Gonçalves	Fogo
Caetano di Nina	Monte Largo	Fogo
Luís de Raúl	Monte Largo	Fogo
Bossuet	Monte Largo	Fogo
Henriques Alves	Monte Largo	Fogo
Jaime Lora	Nhuco - Curral Grande	Fogo
Mané de Póléta	Montabráz - Curral Grande	Fogo
Tói (Pai de Salomão)	Curral Grande	Fogo
Djonzim di Poleta	Curral Grande	Fogo
Nóy Mamá di Teca	Curral Ochôm	Fogo
Pretinho	Curral Ochôm	Fogo
Chico Miúda	Chico Lópi - Curral Grande	Fogo
João de Chico Miúda	Chico Lópi - Curral Grande	Fogo
João Donote	Campana	Fogo
Nhonhó de Pipita	Campana Báxu	Fogo
Djonzinho de Agostinho	Campana Riba	Fogo
Nhó Papá	Fonte Aleixo - S. Filipe	Fogo
Luís de Fogo	Fonte Aleixo - S. Filipe	Fogo
Luís de Tudinha	Fonte Aleixo - S. Filipe	Fogo
Djon de Manel Onofre	Salta Gato - Cutelo	Fogo
Ady (Achada Grande)	Maria Gomes	Fogo
Beto	Cova Figueira	Fogo
Madeuze	Cova Figueira	Fogo
Vicente Mané di Tchica	Cabeça Monte	Fogo
Artur d'Ana Nha Regina	Cabeça Monte	Fogo
Mané Nha Lópi	Ribeira de Ilhéu	Fogo
Tchalé	Ribeira de Ilhéu	Fogo
Tchalezinho	Ribeira de Ilhéu	Fogo
Róssi	Ribeira de Ilhéu	Fogo
Nhu Nany (Sal)	Sanhá - S. Filipe	Fogo
Ramiro Mendes	Polankon	Fogo
Álvaro (Angola)		Fogo
Agusto Abreu		Fogo
João de Corvo		Fogo
Joãozinho de Dina	Chã das Caldeiras	Fogo
Nóy	Ponta Verde	Fogo
Djodje Mima	Penteada	Fogo
Mané de Quim	Penteada	Fogo
Djóny di Nhó Baím	Penteada	Fogo
Ivo de Andelina	Penteada	Fogo

Adelino de Mamazinha	Penteada	Fogo
João Mané d' Onofre	Penteada	Fogo
Bréca	S. Jorge	Fogo
Ramiro de Djonsinho	Tchã	Fogo
Alberto de Prentcha	Passági	Fogo
Alez de Quita	Passági	Fogo
Djon Preto	Monte Grande	Fogo
Brancu Tchintchim	Queimada Guincho	Fogo
Nhonhó	Santaninha	Fogo
Parco	Cova Joana	Brava
Raúl de Pina	Cova Joana	Brava
José Medina	Mato Grande	Brava
Josezinho	Pé de Rotcha - Nova Sintra	Brava
Lelinho	Pé de Rotcha - Nova Sintra	Brava
Mocho Alfama	Nova Sintra	Brava
Quim de Brava	Nova Sintra	Brava
José de Brava	Nova Sintra	Brava
Padre Teteche	Nova Sintra	Brava
Toco	Furna	Brava
Álvaro Furna	Furna	Brava
Nelinho (Praia Baixo)	Furna	Brava
Djédje	Furna	Brava
Ivo	Nossa Senhora do Monte	Brava
Djicai	Nossa Senhora do Monte	Brava
Belmiro	Mato Grande	Brava
Djidjinho	Mato Grande	Brava
Djack	Mato Grande	Brava
João Baptista	Lém - Vila	Brava
Dino	Lém - Vila	Brava
Nelinho Carpinteiro (Maio)	Lém - Vila	Brava
Franck Nha Bibí	Lém - Vila	Brava
Bécha	Cova Rodela	Brava
Lilan'	Cachaço	Brava

APPENDIX 2

List of Cimboa Players in Cape Verde (Source: Manuel J. Tavares. 2005. *Aspectos Evolutivos da Música Cabo-Verdiana* (Praia: Centro Cultural Português) pp. 174).

CIMBOA

Nome	Localidade	Freguesia
João Rodrigues	Trindade	N. Senhora da Graça
Miguel Tavares	Ribeirão Chiqueiro	S. Nicolau Tolentino
Mano Mendi	Ribeirão Chiqueiro	S. Nicolau Tolentino
Lelé Mendi (Lelé Preto)	Mendes Faleiro Cabral	S. Nicolau Tolentino
N'tóni Denti D' Oru	Mercado	S. Nicolau Tolentino
Chalino Gomi	Fonte Ana	Santa Catarina
Joaquim Fonfon	Palha Carga	Santa Catarina
Valentim	Assomada	Santa Catarina
Olímpio Varela	Assomada	Santa Catarina
Lantóni	Achada Galego	Santa Catarina
N'tóni Lópi	S. Miguel	S. Miguel Arcanjo
João de Gongon	S. Miguel	S. Miguel Arcanjo
Nhu Henrique	Colhe Bicho	Santo Amaro Abade
Alberto Nhonhonzim	Calheta do Maio	N. S. da Luz - Maio
Mário de Bonga	Calheta do Maio	N. S. da Luz - Maio