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In recent times, a plethora of private ventures targeting individuals who seek to investigate their ethnic origins have developed. While the bio-engineering technology associated with these ventures are increasingly being used in nefarious ways\(^1\), these endeavors confirm both the human need to understand our own origins, much as they implicitly recognize the extensive flows of human migration processes, be they forced or otherwise. Migratory flows of people across geopolitical spaces has for centuries been the orchestrated pathways and economic catalyst for the “development” of western societies (Rodney & Davis, 2018, Bennett, 2016). While it is true that the neoliberal age is often characterized by the free flow and movement of capital (Klein, 2008, Harvey, 2007, Chomsky, 2017), current migratory flows can in many ways be seen as the inevitable results of profound disturbances endemic to the prevailing social and economic order. The ferocious and dissolute excesses of the “de-regulated” economic model are evidenced in the depravity of tiered existences that produce on the one—hand the catering of chocolate covered desserts costing $25,000\(^2\) while simultaneously engendering ethically moribund policies that imprison children at southwestern border while attempting entry into the very country whose macro social and economic policies create dire destitution and precarious conditions in their countries of origin.

The centuries-long racialized depletion of human labor force through the machinations of slavery that strategically engineered the underdevelopment of Africa while providing this economic force for the development of the west, in some spaces occurred concurrently with free flows of migration that often stemmed from policies of structured colonial neglect of the colonized and the vicissitudes of the environment (Correia e Silva, 1996). Ironically, as Gottlieb highlights in her current piece, even while the blossoming of Cabo Verde as an occupied archipelago was nascent in a social exclusion that would force the mixing of slaves, Jews, Christians, animists and Muslims, Cabo Verde’s role in the racialized slave trade brought into being one of the first globalized societies of humanity.

The diasporic presence of the Cabo Verdean people across the world today is due to the interplay between this colossal human tragedy that was slavery/slave trade and the continuing unquenching need to resist and thrive by exploring the possibilities contained in “imagined communities”\(^3\) (Anderson, 1983) both in Cabo Verde and in the diaspora.

On December 4, 1818, in an official correspondence to then Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, the honorable Samuel Hodges, U.S. Consul General in Cabo Verde communicated his distress at having a ship manned by renegade Americans flying British colors who after skirmishes with crews from other U.S. vessels anchored in port, engaged in “plundering the vessels of all of their money and other valuable articles found on board and threatening with destruction the vessel and crew…(S. Hodges, personal communication, December 4, 1818.)” The fact that the exchange occurred on the soil of Cabo Verde and that legalized slavery in the U.S. would only come to an end at the conclusion of the U.S. Civil War

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1. [https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-02545-5](https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-02545-5)
3. (Anderson, 1983)
in 1865, highlights the multi-faceted U.S. exchanges with the archipelago nation. In fact, historical archives point to the presence of Cabo Verdeans in the U.S. as early as the late 1700’s, with some participating in the Revolutionary War (and of course every war since).

The formation of the Cabo Verdean diaspora in the U.S., while reflecting merely a sliver of the global migratory processes that have impacted the people and history of Cabo Verde, is particularly interesting in that it is very much tied to national policies and crises on both sides of the Atlantic. While Correia e Silva (1996) highlights the duality of natural climatic conditions (lack of rain & drought) and state structured neglect (famine/hunger) as two of the principal catalysts for the continued migration of Cabo Verdeans to the U.S., others such as Pereira (2019) have through rigorous academic research provided evidence of the reciprocal nature of that engagement. As Pereira (2019) highlights, solidarity networks between the people of the U.S. and the inhabitants of the islands were particularly effective in times of hunger, and certainly, and more importantly, went beyond official channels of engagement with churches leading the way in providing needed resources to mitigate the effects of hunger on the islands in times of crises. Similarly, in times of intense economic hardships in the U.S., such as was the case during the economic depression of 1929, many Cabo Verdeans who had been in the U.S. for generations returned to the islands with whatever resources they possessed since these would provide a more secure buffer in Cabo Verde. In this sense, migration, for Cabo Verde and the people of Cabo Verde has always had and continues to have a multi-layered impact.

The present edition focuses on a broader range of a number of little-studied historicities that comprise the overall narrative of migratory movements that have overtime created the people of Cabo Verde. The edition begins with Gottlieb’s thought-provoking study of the patterns of Jewish Identity formation amongst Cabo Verdeans, the author juxtaposes the framework of Critical Race Theory and Clifford Geertz’s notions of “models” in understanding the multiple ways in which Cabo Verdeans come to understand and inhabit (to varying degrees) Jewish identities.

In complementing Gottlieb’s study of the assuming of Jewish identity (ies) by Cabo Verdeans of Jewish descent, Marco Piazza, through rigorous methodological processes traces the historical development of Jewish communities in Cabo Verde focusing on the particularity of the Cristão-Novos and their precarious new socio-political position which as Piazza argues, “actually endows them with a sensitivity towards those who are made the object of exclusion and discrimination”. While laying a firm foundation for the understanding of the historical processes through which the Cristão-Novos adapt and resist in the process of becoming in Cabo Verde, Piazza underscores the importance of the ambiguities which this group carried as a marker of their own positionality but also a source of strength in affirming new identities.

The edition then re-centers the multi-dimensionality of the migratory experience by examining the intersectionality between ideological dispositions and transnational formations. Abel Djassi Amado critically explores the discourses and actions that allowed the Cabo Verdean diasporic communities in the U.S. to experience varying degrees of allegiance to the independence movement. Bringing forth a deeper understanding of the ideological tensions resulting from a contested revolutionary struggle, Abel Djassi Amado de-constructs the myth of homogeneity of experience and in so doing posits alternative narratives.

The edition ends with a brief look at a “circular diaspora” through the analysis of David Almeida. Through a critical lens, David Almeida analyzes the experiences of graduate students returning to Cabo Verde after an extended study experience in the United States. In his analysis, Almeida clearly and articulately reflects on the significance of identities and narratives
constructed by these graduate students as well as the impact of the “hidden curriculum” in forming in them dispositions conducive to transformative social engagements. Through this important work, Almeida opens a space of inquiry that reaches beyond functionalist understandings of the official curriculum as the sole model of ontological awareness.

The history of migration for the Cabo Verdean diaspora is on-going. It is continuously re-imagined, re-authored and re-shaped with each traversing of the terrain of the spaces of the imagined community. The articles contained herein contribute to the greater understanding of these processes.

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References


Negotiating Afro-Jewish Identity in the Cabo Verdean Diaspora

Alma Gottlieb

Abstract:
In this paper, I explore how diasporic Cabo Verdean-Americans with Jewish ancestry (especially those living in the New England region of the U.S.) experience their racially and spiritually mixed (and doubly or even triply stigmatized) identity. Being African in (racist) North America presents enormous challenges. Being Jewish in (increasingly anti-Semitic) North America presents different but somewhat parallel challenges. To account for unexpected identity crossings, I combine critical race theory with a Geertzian approach to understanding social worlds. In chronicling the experiences of Cape Verdeans who embrace divergent components of their multi-layered racial and spiritual heritage, I consider whether Cabo Verdeans might present an unexpected “model for” a multicultural/multiracial/multi-faith America.

Key words: Cabo Verdean diaspora; Afro-Jewish identity; Judaism; southeastern New England; critical race theory; interpretive anthropology.
Introductory Thoughts

For readers of this journal, it will, likely, be uncontroversial to observe that being African or Afro-descended in the contemporary United States presents enormous challenges. The nation’s historical foundations in racism via the near-genocide of the native population, the nefarious trans-Atlantic slave trade, and the building of the nation’s economy on some 2.5 centuries of enslaved labor, have combined to create a grim legacy that continues to cast a long shadow.

Being Jewish in contemporary America presents challenges that have different historical foundations but somewhat parallel experiential realities. Across different eras of U.S. history, anti-Semitism has erupted with varying levels of force. In the current era, anti-Jewish sentiment has risen sharply, with anti-Semitic incidents occurring in spaces ranging from synagogues and graveyards to street scenes and college campuses (Rosenblatt, 2020).

Moreover, although the U.S. famously refers to itself (if not entirely accurately, given the population of Native or First Nation peoples) as a “nation of immigrants,” the past decade has seen a surge in anti-immigrant sentiment, solidified in 2016 by the election of a president who opened his campaign with a xenophobic platform.

How do people living in America today experience these challenges in their everyday lives when they bear both subject positions of being Black and Jewish at once, whether as U.S.-born Americans or as immigrants? What motivates people to retain and embrace this combined subject position in the face of double discrimination? And, how might the answers to these questions illuminate social theory about race, religion, and identity as we understand these components of the human experience?

The lives of Cabo Verdeans in the U.S. offer compelling windows into a complex and somewhat unexpected ethno-religious identity that rewards attention. In this article, I endeavor to avoid over-generalizing by addressing the question of how some Cabo Verdeans have come to hold varying forms of an Afro-Jewish identity. I summarize and highlight here the findings of a long study I am developing in much greater detail elsewhere (Gottlieb, n.d.).

In trying both to account for their diverse experiences, and to see how those experiences might, in turn, speak to social theory, I will bring into conversation two theoretical approaches that normally inhabit distant corners of the scholarly world—critical race theory, and a slice of cultural anthropology known as interpretive anthropology, as developed by the American anthropologist, Clifford Geertz. Critical race theory offers us essential insights into the racialized foundations of life around the globe in the past half-millenium, with a special emphasis on economic and political institutions playing out across historical eras. For its part, interpretive anthropology offers us theoretical and methodological tools for understanding how people and communities see and experience their daily life worlds. Braiding together these two perspectives may produce a rich understanding of complex subject positions occupied by contemporary Cabo Verdeans in New England who have Jewish heritage.

Cape Verdeans with Jewish Ancestry: Then

The obvious first question, however, takes us to origins. How do some contemporary Cape Verdeans come to have Jewish ancestry in the first place?

The history of relations between Jews and Africans south of the Sahara—heretofore, a
largely neglected topic—has just begun to attract significant attention in the past decade or so.\textsuperscript{1} The Cape Verdean case occupies a special place in this historiography, for reasons I sketch briefly here.

In precolonial times, early generations of sailors from both Africa and Europe had discovered the Cape Verde islands. However, from everything scholars can learn from historical and other records, the archipelago comprising ten islands off the coast of Senegal was devoid of any enduring human population at the time that Portuguese sailors chanced upon it in the mid-15\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{2} Portugal immediately claimed these uninhabited Atlantic islands for their rapidly growing empire and set about populating them. The first generations of occupants included several categories of Portuguese (and some other Europeans). Among these were Iberian Jews, as increasing anti-Semitism in both Portugal and Spain made the islands a viable option for some Jews fleeing oppression.

Not quite 40 years after the islands’ rediscovery, King Ferdinand II and Queen Isabella I issued an Edict of Expulsion (a.k.a. the Alhambra Decree), expelling all Jews from their territories (specifically, from Aragon and Castille) (see Plate 1). Soon

\textsuperscript{1} A scholarly organization dedicated to the subject (\textit{International Society for the Study of African Jewry}) has now held four international conferences gathering both scholars and others for stimulating talks, some of which have been published in edited collections (e.g., Brettschneider, Bruder and LeRoux, 2019. Other recent books on Jews in/and Africa include: Brettschneider (2015); Bruder (2008); Hull (2009); Lis, Miles, and Parfitt (2016); Mark and Horta (2011); and Miles (2014).

\textsuperscript{2} Early Phoenician sailors, as well as Lebou sailors from the nearby coast of Senegal, had previously discovered the islands. However, no archaeological or other evidence yet exists that would suggest any long period of continuous occupation.
afterward, Portugal’s King Manuel reluctantly followed suit, as a condition of marrying Ferdinand and Isabella’s daughter—without which marriage, he risked Spain invading Portugal.

Even if they converted to the state-mandated religion of Catholicism, Jews who remained in either of these Iberian nations would be subject to persecution. Church and state united in a legal institution that came to be known as the Inquisition. Trials by this body included multiple forms of extended torture, sometimes culminating in being burnt alive.

Following the expulsion edicts, and continuing over the next two centuries or so, Iberian Jews and their descendants escaped the multiple risks to their lives by seeking safe spaces around a globe whose maritime routes were dramatically expanding, partly thanks to new navigational technologies. These refugees were not a monolithic group. They included practicing Jews, as well as Jews who had converted to Catholicism to evade the punishment of the Inquisition. Called “New Christians” (or Cristãos novos), the latter group was, itself, heterogeneous, and included those who converted in all sincerity as well as those who converted in name only, to escape persecution. Jews and former Jews with all these varying identifications scattered around the world, where they became known as Sephardim, or Sephardic Jews—Jews from Sepharad, the ancient Roman-era Jewish name for the Iberian peninsula.
One of the earliest but, to date, least-known destinations of all these groups of refugee Jews was the newly-discovered Cape Verde archipelago. Along with other co-nationals who left their homeland for their own reasons, some Jews fleeing growing anti-Semitism in Portugal and Spain found their way to the islands of Cape Verde, which were attracting new populations. The early Jewish settlers engaged in a variety of economic activities—including linguistic translation, trade in small goods, administration, and banking. Some—probably a small minority—of these early Jewish and “New Christian” residents also engaged in the expanding traffic in humans.

In this outpost of the North Atlantic, Jewish refugees joined European Catholics and Africans (who, no doubt, included both animists and Muslims). Most of the Africans were kidnapped by Europeans (both Catholics and Jews) and brought as enslaved peoples from the mainland to the islands (while a much smaller number of West Africans arrived voluntarily, as traders). Although many of these enslaved Africans were further punished by being transported across lethal seas in the growing trans-Atlantic slave trade, some remained enslaved on the islands. There, they often had children with (and sometimes married) Europeans on the islands—again, both Catholics and Jews. Some of these unions linking African men and Europe must have been forced; others may have been at least somewhat consensual (keeping in mind the limited options to enslaved women). With complex relations ranging from love to violence (and sometimes both), these multiple groups in effect forged the first multi-faith, multi-racial population of the modern world, of the sort that some observers have dubbed “creole.”

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3 For a discussion of the genetic evidence highlighting the likelihood that these unions linked African women and European men (and not the reverse), see Sandra Beleza et al. (2012), p. 2.
4 The term is used widely among Cabo Verdeans in referring to their identity. Linguists sometimes balk at this usage, as the term has specific meanings in linguistics that do not translate seamlessly to contexts beyond language. For extensive conversations about this delicate issue, I am indebted to Fernanda Pratas, a linguist who specializes in the Cape Verdan language.
The multiply-mixed population by no means epitomized a utopia: divisions of race and class immediately obviated such a scenario. Indeed, the society that developed from these heterogenous groups quickly became socioeconomically and racially stratified, with lighter-skinned peoples occupying positions of greater wealth, authority, and freedom than their darker-skinned counterparts (Baleno, 2001; Carreira, 1983).

Power also exerted itself through religion. Back in Iberia, the increasingly powerful, Church- and state-sponsored Inquisition exceeded its home borders, permitting Catholicism as the only state-sponsored religion on the Atlantic islands. The colonial metropole sent spies from Lisbon to the islands to find any overtly practicing Jews; any secretly practicing Jews; and any “New Christians” who claimed to have converted fully to Catholicism but whom neighbors suspected of secretly remaining Jewish (Santos and Soares, 2001, pp. 485-488). The spies arrested some individuals and sent them back to Lisbon, to be tried for “heresy” in the Inquisition’s courts (Green 2007b).

“By the 17th century,” the historian Tobias Green writes, “the cristãos novos [or ‘New Christians’] were the predominant European social group in Cabo Verde.” But despite their demographic position—or, perhaps, because of it—they found themselves unable to publicly practice any form of Judaism, nor claim any form of Jewish identity. What had lured them to chase their dream of a space of spiritual safety on remote islands of the Atlantic quickly revealed itself as yet another space of danger where it was impossible to maintain Jewish ritual practices.

Indeed, as remained the case in Iberia, “passing” as Christian proved a life-or-death challenge for former Jews in Cabo Verde. Those “New Christians” lucky enough to escape being denounced (by neighbors, co-workers, or others) to spies must surely have felt terrorized enough by the threat of denunciation that they would have felt motivated at least to conceal, if not entirely renounce, most Jewish practices, and keep up public appearances as practicing Christians. If they failed to maintain a fully convincing charade, the consequences could be drastic. Being denounced to the Inquisition might well have meant being sent back to Lisbon for endless interrogations—perhaps accompanied by torture, perhaps ending in murder by public burning.

Nevertheless, “passing” could only be partial, given the enforced label of Cristão novo (“New Christian”) that publicly marked their difference and rendered them perpetually vulnerable to denunciation, as long as the Inquisition remained a viable institution. Moreover, some Jews managed to clandestinely hold on to daily habits that would have felt comfortable from their prior lives (or those of their parents or grandparents) as practicing Jews. These included dietary restrictions, such as avoiding eating pork; and ritual practices such as lighting candles every Friday night to ritually welcome the beginning of the Sabbath, the weekly day of prayer and reflection dedicated to God, as marked by practicing Jews. The daily habits retained by some Cape Verdeans also included life-cycle practices such as adorning newborns with a bracelet or anklet containing a six-pointed star (sometimes called the “star of David” or, in Hebrew, magen David) (Pelaia, 2019). Other “New Christians” and their descendants continued to observe key Jewish funeral customs, such as covering mirrors; wrapping corpses only in flimsy shrouds, and/or placing them in simple wooden boxes rather than elaborate coffins; burying cadavers soon after death; and hosting mourning visitors for seven days (“sitting

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6 On the global reach of the Inquisition’s courts, and its inhumane, public burnings of people condemned to death (auto-da-fés), see Green (2007a).
Whether or not they engaged in all, some, or none of such traditional Jewish practices, many “New Christians” continued to intermarry among themselves across many generations. Others married “Old Christians,” while still others married Africans who had been forced by the Portuguese colonial rulers to convert to Christianity. By the time the Inquisition courts were formally disbanded as an institution in Iberia—in 1821 in Portugal, and in 1834 in Spain—their effects had become so pervasive that Cabo Verdean society had long become explicitly Catholic. Even so, a deep—if increasingly invisible—foundation in Judaism underlay this society, with its multi-faith origins. That historical foundation may well have remained evident to practicing Moroccan Jews who decided to emigrate to Cabo Verde after Portugal revoked the formal apparatus of the Inquisition.

Starting in the early 19th century and continuing into the early 20th century, large numbers of Jews left their hometowns in several cities of Morocco that contained large and lively Jewish communities. Fleeing persecution against Jews in Morocco that escalated through this period for a variety of reasons, these refugees found their way to several international destinations—among them, Cape Verde, where they added a fresh era of Jewish influences to local society. Considering these two “waves” of migration—the early stage from Portugal, followed by the later stage from Morocco—Jews have remained a significant, though largely hidden, part of the Cape Verdean story ever since the islands became continually inhabited by humans. As the pre-eminent Cabo Verdean writer, Gernano Almeida, once told me:

Well, all the Jews in Cabo Verde have died. But many, many Jews came to the islands and married Cabo Verdeans, and had children with Cabo Verdeans. So, although they’ve all died, they mixed with us, and they are part of us. What are the implications of this half-millenium of decisive but largely concealed Jewish influence for contemporary Cabo Verdeans both on and off the islands? How do Cabo Verdean-Americans with Jewish ancestry understand and negotiate their remarkably mixed religious heritage, and how does that intersect with their racially mixed identity?

Cape Verdeans with Jewish Ancestry: Now

The first observation to be made is that Cape Verdeans themselves hold a range of knowledge about the Jewish history of their islands and, indeed, of their own families. Most of those whose Jewish ancestry dates from the more recent Moroccan migration stream are aware of this ancestry, from oral history passed down in their families over the past century or so. On the islands, people who live near these families are, likewise, typically aware of the Jewish history of their neighbors. As it happens, much of the Moroccan Jewish migration stream ended up on one island in particular—Santa Antão—and virtually all residents of that island are aware of the Jewish presence surrounding them. A sign for the town named Sinagoga (“synagogue”) leaves

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7 On the “push factors” in Morocco throughout the 19th century that drove Jews to emigrate, see, for example, Schroeter, 1988, pp. 209-28; on the “pull factors” of Israel and France as destinations for large numbers of Moroccan Jewish refugees, see, respectively, Boum (2013, pp. 87-108) and Arkin (2014, pp. 43-55).

8 Conversation with Alma Gottlieb (Mindelo, São Vicente, Cabo Verde), April 4, 2007; translation from Portuguese into English by Alma Gottlieb.
no mistake about their historical presence.

The first democratically elected prime minister of the newly independent nation, who governed from 1991-2001--Carlos Wahnon Veiga---happens to be the great-grandson of Isaac and Rachel Wahnon, Jews who migrated to Cabo Verde from Morocco in the 19th century. Carlos Wahnon Veiga’s public presence has, furthermore, brought wide recognition to the existence and role of Moroccan Jews in Cape Verde.\footnote{Carlos Veiga is now a member of the opposition party, MpD (Movimento para a Democracia). He recently announced his retirement from his current position as Cape Verde’s ambassador to the U.N. in consideration of run for election as president in his home country (Infopress, 2019).}

Plate 3

*Sign for the town of Sinagoga, Santa Antão (photo by Richard Lobban)*
Verdean woman ("Marie") now living in the U.S. told me:

I didn’t even know there were Jewish [people] in CV until 1990 [when she was in her mid-20s], when democracy came. The first democratically elected president was Carlos Veiga. He surprised everyone by saying he had Jewish ancestry. That was the first and only time I ever heard of Jewish [people] on Cape Verde.

In studying Marie’s genealogy, I thought it likely that she had early Jewish ancestors dating from the Inquisition, but, as with most such descendants, she was unaware of any possible connection. With Jewish or “New Christian” ancestors who became fully incorporated into the dominant Catholic ethos of the islands within a few generations of arriving on the islands many centuries ago, most descendants of those Jews currently remain unaware of that component of their distant ancestry.\(^\text{10}\)

How might such lack of awareness have been perpetuated? To avoid persecution in their new homeland, generations of Jewish parents must have felt compelled to raise generations of children with decreasing knowledge of their religious heritage. “Passing” as a Christian turned into living the life of a Christian. Within several generations, we might say, the deception became internalized.

\(^{10}\) In later generations, some of these former Jews abandoned the Catholic church and embraced new denominations of the Protestant church introduced into the islands.
As Luís Faria told me:
There are certain things [Jewish practices] that could have been a signal [of Jewish ancestry], but they weren’t talked about— it’s one of those things. Maybe the old ones [earliest Jewish ancestors on Cabo Verde] would not talk about certain things [Jewish practices] because of being afraid of being persecuted . . . so it just stayed taboo . . . the first ones [Jewish or “New Christian” migrants from Iberia] . . . [it’s] not that they didn’t know of these practices, but . . . if they exposed themselves, then they would run the risk of being persecuted.

Given the pressures—along with the length of the intervening time since events so distant from living memory—it becomes understandable why few living descendants of those early refugees identify today with their long-ago Jewish ancestors.

Yet, if many Cape Verdeans remain unaware of this component of their history, others are now finding themselves surprised, intrigued, and sometimes delighted, to discover this early stage in their families’ lives. Using the classic qualitative research methods of cultural anthropology, over the past fourteen years, I have been conducting fieldwork with hundreds of Cape Verdeans, both on and off the islands, who are now finding their way back to their Jewish origins. The epicenter of this group is in southeastern New England.

In Boston, a large community Seder celebrating the Jewish holiday of Passover has annually attracted some 200 people—half Cape Verdeans, half American Jews—

![Plate 5](image)

*The annual community Passover Seder in Boston now attracts 200 people—by design, about half Cape Verdeans, half American Jews (photo by Alma Gottlieb)*

for the past 14 years. Each Seder table typically accommodates five Cape Verdeans and five American Jews, seated according to color code. Guided conversations at each table produce new pathways for discovery.
Increasingly, Cape Verdean guests began claiming two identifying sticker colors as they discovered previously unknown Jewish ancestry, until the event’s organizers finally introduced a third color for a newly recognized category of participant: “both Cape Verdean and Jewish.”

What happens after they discover those origins remains variable. For the sake of convenience, we might divide them into three groups, although this Venn diagram reminds us that the groups overlap.
Some Cape Verdeans (represented in the top circle) end up vaguely acknowledging Jewish ancestry, including learning of the Jewish origins of some of their or their families’ daily life habits. These might include, for example, avoiding pork, putting six-pointed stars around newborns’ ankles or atop Christmas trees, or lighting candles on Friday nights. However, people with this orientation make no serious effort to change their lives toward more conscious and systematic Jewish practice or identity.

Others (represented in the bottom/left circle) develop specific knowledge of their Jewish ancestry and make some effort to incorporate this knowledge into their lives. For example, they may display ritual paraphernalia such as menorahs for the Jewish holiday of Chanukah, or read books about Jewish history. Men may try on the traditional Jewish head covering or skull cap called the kippah (Hebrew) or yahrmulke (Yiddish). But they may otherwise continue embracing a Christian identity (whether Catholic or, for some, Protestant).
However, other people start rethinking how to identify their religious affiliation—they may begin to refer to themselves as “Jewish Catholics” or “Catholic Jews.” Some marry American Jews, bringing further Jewish influence into their lives, especially if they have children with these partners.

A smaller group (represented in the bottom/right circle of the Venn diagram) find themselves moved to make serious efforts to incorporate their knowledge of their Jewish ancestry into their current lives and embrace forms of Jewish practice. They may start celebrating Jewish holidays at home; they may consider training their children for the classic Jewish coming-of-age ritual known as a bar/bat mitzvah at age 12 or 13; they may encourage their older children to visit Israel on a subsidized “birth right” trip.11

An even smaller number of Cape Verdians in the U.S. has undergone formal conversion to Judaism, becoming active members of temple communities. Two Cape Verdians I have interviewed (one in Rhode Island, the other in the Netherlands) are exploring means to gain dual citizenship in Israel. Another Cape Verdean in Rhode

11 The non-profit organization, Birthright Israel, states that its “mission is to give every Jewish young adult around the world, especially the less connected, the opportunity to visit Israel on an educational trip. . . . Birthright Israel seeks to ensure the future of the Jewish people by strengthening Jewish identity, Jewish communities, and connection with Israel via a trip to Israel for the majority of Jewish young adults from around the world. Our hope is that our trips motivate young people to continue to explore their Jewish identity and support for Israel and maintain long-lasting connections with the Israelis they meet on their trip.”
Island underwent formal conversion to Orthodox Judaism and is a key member of his congregation (see Plate 11). Elsewhere, I profile the unique biographies of these and other Cape Verdeans who have forged this intense level of engagement in reclaiming their Jewish ancestry (Gottlieb, n.d.).

With anti-Semitism indisputably on the rise both in the US and globally, why have increasing numbers of contemporary Cabo Verdeans begun acknowledging, exploring, and sometimes practicing, a Jewish ancestry of which they had either previously remained unaware, had knowingly overlooked, or had even actively denied? Given the current political climate in the U.S., with top leadership enflaming social divisions and emphasizing geocultural borders (rather than connections), the efforts by many Cabo Verdeans to continue embracing divergent components of their multi-layered racial and spiritual heritage is notable.

In the book developing from this project, I probe a range of reasons behind this against-all-odds trend (see Note 10). Briefly, the reasons encompass a variety of factors that have converged to produce a unique moment that speaks to Cape Verdeans with Jewish ancestry. Perhaps most obviously, technology and education now converge to allow unprecedented access to knowledge via the Internet. Informational sources now abound, including social media.
Many Cape Verdeans now enjoy researching their family histories online, often with great sophistication, including engaging in genetic testing. Indeed, a Facebook group specifically devoted to Cape Verdeans researching and discussing their genetic profiles has grown rapidly to include some 6,500 members, as of this writing. Whether through genetic testing, online chats, library or archival research, or any other means of inquiry, Cape Verdeans sometimes discover Jewish ancestry of which they previously had either vague or no knowledge.

Sociological factors also account for greater awareness of Jewish ancestry. In southeast New England, Cape Verdeans now have increasing contact with Jews in their workplace, in their own or their children’s schools, and in community spaces. They may also become aware of Jewish ancestry via contact with other populations from former Portuguese spaces such as Brazil, where notable numbers of people are now actively recuperating their Jewish past. Such contacts sometimes motivate Cape Verdeans to inquire more systematically into their lineage, in search of previously unknown Jewish forebears.

Historical circumstances also contribute to an increasing knowledge of Jewish heritage. During the period encompassing and immediately following World War II, Cabo Verdeans who were aware of their Jewish ancestry—especially, those with relatively recent Moroccan Jewish migration stories—felt understandably reluctant to divulge that heritage. As the most dramatic effects of Hitler’s threat came to fade, these Cape Verdeans began feeling more comfortable publicly acknowledging the Jewish component of their lineage. In the U.S., starting in the 1950s, strengthening voices and movements for social justice on many registers—including post-Holocaust rejection of religious discrimination against Jews—may, likewise, have helped to account for the increasing interest among Cabo Verdeans in pursuing their Jewish ancestry.

Consider this excerpt from a conversation I had (in Portuguese) with “Orlando Benros,” a Cape Verdean man living in Lisbon:

AG: When you were a teenager, this was at the time of the Second World War. And, at that time, when the war ended . . .

[Quando estava adolescente, estava na altura de Segunda Guerra Mundial. E, no momento que a guerra terminou…]

OB: I remember it perfectly. There was a big party.

[Lembro-me perfeitamente--houve uma grande festa.]

AG: What happened?

[O que acontecia?] 

OB: A party—shouting . . . in São Vicente. Because there was a telegraph machine there—Telecome, Western Union Telegraph—in a very large building full of people. . . my father spoke English . . . and we followed everything on the radio every day. The news every day. And, on the day that the war ended: well, there was a big party.

[Festa, a gritar . . . em São Vicente. Porque, havia esta telegrafe--Telecom, o Western Telegraph--num prédio muito grande cheio de gentes. . . o meu pai era anglofono . . . e seguíamos todos os dias na rádio. Todos os dias as noticias. E, no dia em que acabou a guerra--é pá, houve uma grande festa.]

12 Website of the Facebook group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/438321819686279.
AG: But they never spoke about the problem of the Jews during the war?

[Mas nunca falaram de problema de judeus durante a guerra?]

OB: No. We knew that they were killing Jews—we knew, we knew. We knew that it was dangerous. Because if Hitler had invaded Africa and taken Cabo Verde, we knew that we were Jews... Everyone was afraid. My father was (afraid.) We must have had relatives in Italy. We had an aunt in Italy. I don’t know what happened to her... We could have had someone who died—I don’t know. [Otherwise,]... we only knew people in Cape Verde. Those who were there, my grandfather, the uncles—we knew them because they were there. Now, our fear that my relatives had of Hitler winning—if Germany had won the war—people were afraid, because there were—they knew what would happen. We knew everything. We were afraid of them.

As this conversation suggests, the zeitgeist of historical eras strongly colors the extent to which knowledge of a vulnerable identity remains hidden or emerges in the public eye. Orlando Benros suggested to me that he was one among many elderly Cape Verdians who concealed their Jewish ancestry in the 1940s and ‘50s and beyond, and noy only because the terror of World War II was immediate, but also because invoked earlier tragedies wrought on Jewish lives by the Inquisition.

As the painful memories of the Holocaust fade, more Cape Verdians in New England have begun to feel comfortable acknowledging their Jewish heritage. I have not yet heard of any anti-Semitic backlash against this group, nor of any racism from white Jews. Two Cape Verdians who have undergone formal conversion to Judaism have become active in synagogues that have all, or mostly, white congregations. Both these men have told me about earlier incidents in their lives in which they were subject to racism by white Americans. It is all the more notable, then, that they insisted to me that they have been fully embraced by their congregations. Perhaps they enjoy membership in this largely white community as a safe space of refuge from the racism that surrounds them elsewhere.

The trend of Cape Verdians increasingly acknowledging, and sometimes embracing, their Jewish ancestry that I have summarized briefly here is decidedly strongest in the U.S. However, it is also gaining some momentum among the diaspora in Europe, and in Cabo Verde itself. Discussion of this theme in these other homeland and diasporic spaces must be left for another forum.
Concluding Thoughts

Critical race theory would suggest that their mixed-race status would incline Cabo Verdeans to feel especially aware of their racialized position, particularly in a hyper-racialized society such as the U.S. Especially among youth, awareness of the price paid for blackness in a racist society is keen, and many young Cape Verdeans across both the U.S. and Europe indeed identify as “black.” However, many other Cabo Verdeans consider themselves “mixed”—an increasingly common category in the U.S. that appears, for example, on government, school, and medical forms requesting ethnic and racial identification. Predating this new official category, an awareness of racial mixing long lay at the heart of Cape Verdean-ness. I would like to suggest that awareness of racial mixing that dates back to the inception of the society may also help explain why many Cape Verdeans increasingly embrace religious as well as ethnic mixing, as well. As one Cape Verdean woman once told me: “Well, Cape Verde is the United Nations! We’ve got everything in us!” (June 20, 2014). Although “Carolina’s” charming metaphor elides the racism that still exists within the Cape Verdean community, it also points to a discursive emphasis on mixing that is notable, and widespread among Cape Verdeans.

Inspired by Carolina, I would like to end with a provocative suggestion drawing on a theoretical framework proposed by the American anthropologist, Clifford Geertz. Some years ago, Geertz made a distinction that many scholars of religion have since found useful. He wrote:

The term “model” has . . . two senses—an “of” sense and a “for” sense—and though these are but aspects of the same basic concept they are very much worth distinguishing for analytic purposes. In the first, what is stressed is the manipulation of symbol structures so as to bring them, more or less closely, into parallel with the pre-established nonsymbolic system, as when we grasp how dams work by developing a theory of hydraulics or constructing a flow chart. The theory or chart models physical relationships in such a way—that is, by expressing their structure in synoptic form—as to render them apprehensible; it is a model of "reality." In the second [“model for”], what is stressed is the manipulation of the nonsymbolic systems in terms of the relationships expressed in the symbolic, as when we construct a dam according to the specifications implied in an hydraulic theory or the conclusions drawn from a flow chart. Here, the theory is a model under whose guidance physical relationships are organized: it is a model for "reality" (1973, p. 93).

Later in the same essay, Geertz expands dramatically on the significance of this distinction:

The perception of the structural congruence between one set of processes, activities, relations, entities, and so on, and another set for which it acts as a program, so that the program can be taken as a representation, or conception—a symbol—of the programmed, is the essence of human thought (1973:74).

In other words, Geertz is arguing that being able to construct a “model for [not of] reality” is a key capacity, rooted in symbolic thinking—perhaps, originally, via religion, but no more confined to religion. Indeed, insofar as it distinguishes human thought from other species’ cognitive processes, according to Geertz, this ability to construct “models for” reality is what makes us human.13

13 For a discussion summarizing some critiques of Geertz’s position, ending with a spirited defense of the utility of his basic point he makes about “models” (both “of” and “for”), see Schilbrick (2005).
With that in mind, let us return to Cape Verde. The historian Tobias Green has written: [T]he presence of people of Jewish descent helped to shape the Caboverdean economy and modes of exchange; yet the idea of the Jew was equally, if not more, important, as helping to shape the perception and thereby the reality of the creolizing societies that evolved.\(^{14}\)

Here, Green is suggesting that religious mixing goes to the heart of Cape Verdean society from its inception.

If Green is right, then a Geertzian approach, melded with critical race theory, may even lead us to suggest, with all humbleness, that in these times of division, Cabo Verdeans might present an unexpected “model for” a multicultural, multiracial, and multi-faith America. This suggestion is all the more extraordinary given the intellectual (and sometimes physical) violence committed long ago by the Inquisition with the aim of annihilating all religions beyond Portugal’s officially sanctioned Catholic church—not just Judaism, but also Islam, as well as all local (“animist”) religions practiced by the first generations of Africans brought to the islands.

If an “Afro-Jewish” identity is not yet a category known to many, it is an identity that is rapidly evolving. The sociologist Laura Limonie (2019) has recently proposed something analogous in understanding the experiences of Latinx Jews in the U.S. As she observes, identity categories are never fixed, much as racialized thinking might inaccurately claim that they are rooted in biology. Rather, as social constructions, identity categories are, by definition, inevitably subject to dynamic changes in response to changing social landscapes.

I am not suggesting that Cabo Verdeans in the U.S. epitomize a utopian community in which all social divisions have been extinguished. Internal racism, as well as class divisions (largely built on educational disparities), still exist among Cabo Verdeans, sometimes producing crime within the community, and overlaid by new intergenerational differences exacerbated by divergent immigrant experiences across cohorts of migrants. Nevertheless, the extent to which many Cape Verdeans are now embracing both a multi-racial and a multi-faith identity is notable. And its impact is expanding.

Last year, the Cape Verdean consul invited the Boston group that produces the annual Joint Cape Verdean-Jewish Seder to export the event to Cape Verde. No one yet knows what such an event might look like, but already, the event’s Cape Verdean and American-Jewish organizers are brainstorming. An inaugural large-scale, community Seder in Cabo Verde in either 2021 or 2022 is now being envisioned. In this year of COVID, an online Seder uniting Cape Verdeans in the homeland with those in the diaspora, along with Jews in the U.S., is already in the planning stage.

\(^{14}\) Green (2007b, Ch. 4, p. 102).
Boston, November 12th, 2019

Dear friend Joe,

As you may know, the Government of Cabo Verde, in July 2017, classified as National Historical and Cultural Heritage (PHCN) the collection of Jewish heritage in Cabo Verde.

The idea behind this resolution is to pay tribute to the important presence of Jewish people in our history which goes back to the period of settlement. This presence is still visible in physical milestones, namely cemeteries, and in family names.

We are very proud of this presence, as well, of all presence, that contribute to generate this globalized nation in the Mid-Atlantic.

In this regards, I respectfully, challenge you to consider, co-organizing with appropriate authorities in Cabo Verde the Passover in Cabo Verde. As a Consulate General, we make ourselves available to facilitate this process, to make this dream come true.

Best regards,

Hermínio Moniz

[Consul General]

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Plate 12

Letter from the Cabo Verdean Consul General to the organizer of the Annual Jewish-Cabo Verde Seder in Boston

In short, given the contemporary rethinking of a unique historical profile, the multiple braids of population groups that combined to produce the people now called Cape Verdeans begs for attention. A combination of critical race theory and interpretive anthropology might be just what is needed to do justice to this singular group.
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In this article, some personal names of Cape Verdean interviewees are pseudonyms.
The Cape Verde Jews: an Identity Puzzle

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Abstract
The American historian and epistemologist Hayden White said that «there can be no ‘proper history’ which is not at the same time ‘philosophy of history’» (1973, p. XI). But it could also be argued that one cannot make history of philosophy or history of ideas without working on historical data. The data on which I would like to draw attention in this contribution are seemingly reducible to a small thing: they refer to a micro-history that has left few traces, some tombs, surnames, oral memories, and a couple of toponyms. In these pages I will try to show how emblematic this micro-history is to the Cape Verdean identity, the ‘caboverdianidade’ (‘Cape Verdeanness’), and how it can be so concerning identity in general. This micro-history is that of the Jewish presence in Cape Verde, on which I will provide some historical data and interpretative perspectives.

Keywords: Cape Verde, Jews, cristãos novos, Identity, Cape Verdeanness.

1. Some historical data
The expulsion of the Jews from Spain and then from Portugal, at the end of the fifteenth century, was marked by the phenomenon of forced conversions of many Jews, who became Christians in order not to be expelled. More precisely, in Spain the phenomenon of forced conversions preceded the expulsion by a century, as it began in 1391 (Yerushalmi, 1981, p. 6). In Portugal it was King Manoel I himself who, at the time he decreed their expulsion, induced the mass conversion of the Jews, who were then called cristãos novos (‘New Christians’) so as to distinguish them from the other Christians, now called cristãos velhos (‘Old Christians’) (Green, 2009, p. 110). Many of those converted in Portugal in 1497 were coming from Castile and had sought refuge in Portugal after the Catholic Monarchs expelled Jews in 1492. Those who did not intend to convert and preferred to remain faithful to their religious tradition had to leave the Iberian peninsula and emigrate to more welcoming lands, in particular by heading towards the port cities of Atlantic Europe (Correia e Silva, 1995, p. 8). In addition to those who remained Jewish in all respects, many cristãos novos also emigrated at that time, attracted by the commercial prospects opened by international trade and the desire to live in territories where they could freely return to profess their original cult (Gottlieb, 2019, p. 52). After the establishment of the Inquisition in Portugal in 1536, the cristãos novos left the country to escape the violence of the persecutions (Yerushalmi, 1981, p. 8). In fact, they were suspected of judaizing, that is, of having converted only on the surface – in order to remain in their countries of residence – while secretly professing their old worship. Just before, the Portuguese crown also turned to the reservoir of cristãos novos individuals to be forcibly sent towards overseas territories as settlers.

Among the destinations of the cristãos novos who ‘deliberately’ left the Iberian peninsula were the islands of Cape Verde. However, for the Sephardic Jews who fled, this destination was
probably not as attractive, since they knew that there would be no local Jewish community to welcome them, as well as no organized cult. Now, the *cristãos novos*, were attracted to such a remote place deprived of any Jewish community for two main reasons: the greater chances to continue to judaize in a hidden way, as crypto-Jews, and the attractive prospects of trade opened by triangular traffic. This is demonstrated by the fact that the sources speak above all of *cristãos novos* rather than *judeus* (*Jews*) (Baleno, 1991, p. 151) although some documents refer to them with the expression *gente da nação/gente de nação* (*people of the nation*, that is, ‘people of the Jewish nation’) (or *homens da nação/homens de nação*, ‘men of the Nation’, that is, ‘men of the Jewish nation’: see Carreira, 2000, p. 177), which refers directly and explicitly to their Jewish identity. The latter expression is used especially in reference to traders with the Guinean coast from European ports, who certainly recognized in the *cristãos novos* of trading partners more reliable than others (Torrão, 1995, p. 74; Santos & Soares, 1995, p. 487; it should also be considered that in the second quarter of sixteenth century the slave traders from Castile were almost all *conversos*, the Spanish equivalent of *cristãos novos*: Gil, 2001, p. 49-51). The *cristãos novos* exploited their own diversity – due to the special jurisdiction to which they were subjected, which forbade them a whole series of offices and duties - to specialize in commerce and, in fact, in Portugal one of the ways to refer to them was the expression *homens de negócios*, that is, «men of affairs» (Yerushalmi, 1981, p. 16).

Those who settled in the archipelago were *cristãos novos*, as it is also demonstrated by the fact that the surnames of these people, with some exceptions, are generally surnames that the Jews have assumed in order to cancel their origins by recycling themselves as Christians (see below). In some cases, as mentioned above, their emigration to Cape Verde was encouraged since the end of the fifteenth century by the Portuguese monarchy, looking for settlers to be sent to the islands, with no need for authorization between 1507 and 1515, after the terrible 1506 pogrom in Lisbon (Green, 2006, p. 68; Baleno, 1991, p. 151). And after tensions arose with the local majors, the measures taken to limit and regulate the stabilization of the *cristãos novos* in the islands were ineffective, so their influx was constant during the sixteenth century (*ibid.*, p. 164, 170) and their presence remained consistent around the middle of following century, as attested by the documents of the time (Cohen, 2002, p. 91). Although they were far from the center of the kingdom, the *cristãos novos* were nevertheless always in danger of being reached by the eye of the Inquisition, even in the archipelago and on the coast of Guinea, where many of them engaged in trade. Perhaps, they also considered themselves freer to profess their old cult there than in the confined space of the islands (see Santos & Soares, 1995, p. 401, 486). After all, in the 1580s, the Inquisition proposed twice to make official visits to the islands… (Silva, 2004, p. 159). And it is certain that in the sixteenth century in Ribeira Grande (today’s Cidade Velha, that is the ancient capital, on the island of Santiago), there was a ghetto, which at the time was located in a street that was still called Calháu during the eighteenth century (Carreira, 2000, p. 287).

In the history books one can find little more, at best the hypothesis that the *lançados*, that is, the merchants who threw themselves inside the territory of Guinea to do business (see Berry, 1998, p. 41-42; Mendes, 2004, p. 143), were in many cases *cristãos novos*. This hypothesis actually supported by evident documentary data (see Baleno 1991, p. 169; Torrão, 1991, p. 247, 254-255; Cohen, 1995, p. 196), so much so that the Inquisition around the middle of the sixteenth century estimated that the *cristãos novos lançados* were around two hundred (Torrão, 1991, p. 255). These merchants and adventure-seekers often mingled with the Africans, embraced their local rites (Santos & Soares, 1995, p. 486), joined their women and had children
with these, as in a famous case in which one of them married a king’s daughter and became very powerful (Green, 2006, p. 212).

Today, some typical (but not exclusive) surnames of *cristãos novos* remain in the Cape Verdean population, like all surnames related to the plant and animal kingdom, such as the Cabral (‘she-goat breeder’), the Coelho (‘rabbit’, according to some instead of surname Cohen), the Lobo (‘wolf’), the Pinto (‘chick’), the Carvalho (‘oak’), the Figueira (‘fig tree’), the Oliveira (‘olive oil seller’), the Pereira (‘place with pear tree’ to designate Spain, also called ‘Perera’), the Pinheiro (‘pine tree’), the Rosa (‘rose’), and the Silva (‘bush’), or some surnames related to cities or places, such as the Leão (from ‘Leon’ in Spain) or Lima (from ‘Ponte de Lima’ in Portugal) (Faiguenboim, Valadares, Campagnano, 2003). But also other surnames still widespread today in the archipelago, such as Henriques, Mendes, or Rodrigues, were frequent among the *cristãos novos* (*ibidem*), and also among those inhabited the islands, as evidenced by the documentation cited in these pages (above all: Green, 2006, 2009). Incidentally, this does not mean that those who today bear these surnames descend biologically from *cristãos novos*, because it must be taken into account that their ancestors might have been enslaved by European slave traders and have been obliged to adopt such surnames from their owners (Gottlieb, 2019, p. 58, note n. 33).

After centuries, we find again Jews in Cape Verde, that is Sephardic Jews from Morocco, who settled in the islands around the middle of the nineteenth century, after a massacre of 400 Moroccan Jews in the city of Tetouan. Next to the Jews from Morocco (particularly from Tanger, Tetouan, Rabat and Mogador, the latter now being Essaouira), others Jews arrived at that time from Gibraltar, Algiers and Tunis, to settle in Cape Verde; they had the British nationality for the most part (Correia, 2015, p. 16). In this case it is correct to speak of Jews in all respects. Again the choice of Cape Verde is determined by political and economic conditions: on the one hand, the abolition of the Inquisition in the Portuguese Empire (1821) and on the other interesting commercial prospects opened by Treaty on Trade and Navigation between Great Britain and Portugal in 1842 (*ibid.*, p. 17). The various clauses of the Treaty included freedom of worship, which allowed for people to celebrate rites in designated places, and to bury their dead according to the ceremonies of their own religion (*ibidem*). It was also suggested that the emigration of Moroccan Jews was favoured by the consequences of the Spanish-Moroccan War of 1859-1860, which had led many Jews to seek refuge elsewhere (Serels, 1997). It is the combination of these three factors that pushed Jews to settle in a place without a community and where the conditions to found one or several of them were then given. The tendency to assimilate that characterizes Judaism in the western world in the nineteenth century and that it goes hand in hand with the establishment of civil rights for centuries denied to Jews in all Europe, together with the scarcity of women emigrated along with these traders and entrepreneurs mainly from North Africa, push them to join with local women, giving rise to a mixed descent in the islands, and to move away from the Mosaic religion rather quickly. In 1872 in the island of Santo Antão, for example, only 12 Jews out of 54 practiced their religion (Correia, 2015, p. 19). They are, among other, the Benholiel (later also: Benoliel), the Brigham, the Wahnon (later also: Wahnnon), the Bendavid (later also: Ben David), the Benros, the Cohen, whose descendants still live on the islands, even though within two generations they have assimilated and have ceased to practice Jewish rites.

As of today, the only remnants of this Sephardic presence consist in a few Jewish cemeteries, toponyms, surnames, and family memories. But there are no Jewish practitioners on the islands. Regarding cemeteries, these were of two types: separate or attached to public cemeteries. In the first case, we know the three cemeteries on the island of Santo Antão, in Ponta
do Sol (whose authorization dates back to 1894: *ibid.,* p. 108), Penha de França and Paul, and that of Pico da Rixa in Sal-Rei, on the island of Boavista. In the second case, there are attached areas in the municipal cemetery of Praia, on the island of Santiago (whose authorization dates back to 1865: *ibidem*), in the cemetery of Tabuga, near Vila da Ribeira Brava, on the island of São Nicolau, and in the cemetery of Chã de Cemitério, in Mindelo, on the island of São Vicente. As for the toponyms, we remember Sinagoga on the island of Santo Antão or Covo de Judeu in Brava. Cemeteries and places of Jewish memory are increasingly at the center of recovery and enhancement projects: in June 2017 the Cape Veridian government declared these as “National Historic Patrimony”, and projects for the recovery and restoration of burials have been promoted, as well as archive research and interviews with descendants of Sephardic families, such as those carried out in the framework of the Cape Verde Jewish Heritage Research Project (see at https://capeverdejewishheritage.org/cape-verde-jewish-heritage-project-inc/).

2. Four points of view

Faced with this micro-history, some points of view have stabilized over the years, so to speak.

The first and most widespread reads this historical presence as one of the various components of a mixture of people and cultures. It is the position expressed in an exemplary way by the novelist Germano Almeida, who said in an interview: «Well, all the Jews in Cabo Verde have died. But many, many Jews came to the islands and married Cape Verdeans, and had children with Cape Verdeans. So although they’ve all died, they mixed with us, and they are part of us» (2007, in Gottlieb, 2015, p. 34).

The second point of view emphasizes the strategic role of the Jew, who is capable of adapting to any context and in the case of the *cristãos novos*, is also inclined to mix with the local population and to blend in. It is the model of the ‘chameleon Jew’ who, if it were not for the faith and rituals he observes, would be indistinguishable from the rest of the population. An ambiguous model, which was used in the past by the Jews themselves against their detractors to demonstrate the potential for integration of their own people, as does Isaac de Pinto, a Dutch Sephardic Jew, who wrote an apology of the Jews arguing with anti-Jewish stances by Voltaire (see Sutcliffe, 2000).

The third point of view is probably the most difficult to accept, because it alludes to an uncomfortable reality: the crypto-Jews or *cristãos novos* represented one of the white components in the slave trade and this represents a stain to hide; it also partly explain the scarcity of studies on the phenomenon at least until recently (see Green, 2006, p. 25, 97, 128). Just as Christians must ask the Jews for forgiveness for centuries of persecution – as the papacy has partially done in 2000 with Pope Wojtyla – so the Jews should ask the blacks for forgiveness for making them suffer during the colonial age what they had suffered even from the Christians. It is a brave position, expressed in a touching way by the French philosopher and psychoanalyst Éliane Amado Lévy-Valensi in a conference held in the early 1960s and in which the reference to the current era is Apartheid in South Africa and the framework of her speech is the great theme of forgiveness (Amado Lévy-Valensi, 1965). The author explains the racism by the white Jew toward the black with the illusion of the first to find in the second someone who is more different from the majority than himself (Ombrosi, 2010, p. 348). But making the Jew a paradigm of humanity itself, elsewhere the author considers the racist Jew an inauthentic Jew, since «the heart of the true Jew feels and discovers suffering wherever it is» (Amado Lévy-Valensi, 1962, p. 563). Amado Lévy-Valensi anchors her psychosocial analysis in a theological
matrix rooted in the message of the Old Testament and in the «maximal justice» that is implied in it and that coincides with the same «charity» (ibid., p. 590-591).

The fourth point of view consists in a sort of proud revaluation of the ancient Jewish roots of the Cape Verdean people: it claims that the Jewish contribution to the construction of Creole culture starts from the analogy between Jews and Africans as victims of persecution, in the light of historic awareness of the tragedy of the Shoah and the end of the colonial ruling. This also happens because of the general climate of affirmation of the particularities and ethnic identities that originated in the last decades of the twentieth century, when even in Cape Verde the interest for the ancient Jewish traces began to grow, as evidenced by some articles published in the Belgian magazine «Los Muestros», partly written in the ancient Judeo-Spanish language and subtitled «The Sephardic Voice» (i.e. Massart, 1994; Serels, 1996, Castiel, 1997). It is a point of view that has gone so far as to generate a sort of invention of identity, that of those who proclaim themselves «CaJu», that is, both Catholic and Jewish (Gottlieb, 2015, p. 45-46). This proposal was recently made by intellectuals of the young Cape Verdean generations, descendants of Sephardic families who emigrated to Cape Verde in the nineteenth century, who moved in a transnational cultural space that has a privileged reference in the USA, and who are dedicated to genealogical research, boasting of the Jewish ancestry of their families (i.e. see at http://thecreolagenealogist.com; Gottlieb, 2019), and working in partnership with The Friends of Israel and Cape Verde Association (AMICAEL), based in Praia from the nineties of the twentieth century and devoted to the preservation of Jewish memory in the archipelago.

In parentheses and without any polemic vein, family traditions are not dictated only by biological factors (as it turns out in some cases almost unforeseeable: see towards the end of this blog page: https://thecreolagenealogist.com/2012/04/), but by arbitrary selections stratified over time (Zerubavel, 2003). Also, the presence of genetic affinities with one group or another in a given population is not an automatic reflection of a cultural heritage. The results of a recent study which shows an irrelevant trace of the presence of Sephardic Jews in the genetic makeup of a sample of Cape Verdeans (Beleza et al., 2012) certainly cannot undo the amount of historical data contained in the documentary and bibliographical sources reported in these pages! The history of cultural influences is a more complex plot than a family tree and for this reason, research on human DNA must be intertwined with that of historians and other scientists in order to create complex interpretations, as the population genetics itself suggests (Cavalli-Sforza, Menozzi, Piazza, 1994). In other words, just as a surname does not necessarily mean a biological offspring, a biological offspring does not necessarily correspond to a family inheritance.

For this reason as well the scenario is perhaps even more intriguing…

3. To be cristão novo…

Let’s go back over the centuries. Today it is difficult for us to understand what a cristão novo had to feel in his or her relationship both to Judaism and to the Christian world, which had him or her becoming accustomed to being confused and which could drag him or her before the Inquisition at any time. From the few remaining documents it is nevertheless clear that if on the one hand the cristãos novos were directly involved in the slave trade and for at least a century and a half they represented an essential component of the slave economy, on the other hand they were constantly subject to retaliation by the cristãos velhos, who perceived them as a threat to their interests and did not hesitate to denounce them to the Inquisition to stem their economic power. In fact, cristãos novos were constantly victims of attacks or boycott by cristãos velhos and there are several documented cases. For instance, Diogo Barasa, a civil servant of the
registry in Santiago, was wronged by Francisco Pereira, who tried to remove him from his office with the authorities in 1559, by referring among other things to his condition of cristão novo. Another case is that of the d’Afonseca brothers, in 1542 (Cohen, 2002, p. 88, 131-132). Either way, they also made a career in the administration of the islands, precisely by virtue of the positions acquired as merchant or rendeiro (i.e. tenants) (see ibid., p. 89, note n. 89). For instance, the goldsmith João Rodrigues Freire was accused five times before the Inquisition and object of denunciations of Judaizing activities among others. After thirty-three years since the first dangerous accusations he manages to get a prestigious position as escrivão dos contos do Almoxarifado (Scribe of the Accounts of the Royal Exchequer) in 1663 (Green, 2009, p. 111-113).

For at least two centuries the cristãos novos are thus on the edge of social exclusion and their often successful attempts to obtain coveted positions does not deprive them of the awareness of the precariousness of their status; it actually endows them with a sensitivity towards those who are made the object of exclusion and discrimination. This is demonstrated by the fact that they were able to limit the excesses of Portuguese politics by defending the mulattoes and the blacks and putting themselves in danger in front of the Crown's power. They could even become models to imitate and emulate, as in the case of the populations especially of the coast of Africa, where the cristãos novos as lançados were proselytizing the religion of Israel (Green, 2006, p. 195): their motto could be ‘Become Jew if you want to be rich’!

But they also became victims of the Inquisition, so much so that the 1582 rebellion in Fogo against the promoters of the Inquisition under the management of Felipe I was led precisely by the cristãos novos, who considered themselves to be personally threatened (Barcellos, 1889, p. 157). Throughout the seventeenth century they remained closely guarded by Inquisition, although Cape Verde was still one of the safest places to hide and mingle among the people, as evidenced by some judaizing cristãos novos who were persecuted in South America – where, especially in Brazil, many cristãos novos had fled (see Novinsky, 1995, p. 515) – and took refuge in the islands in order to escape the Inquisition (Green, 2006, p. 304). The complaints to the Inquisition were also motivated by commercial reasons: in this way the cristãos velhos tried to get rid of skilled rivals in trade with the excuse that pagan rites were being done in synagogues set up at home, as in the case of the governor Jorge Mesquita de Castelo Branco who denounced Manoel Henriques and Pedro de Bairros (ibid., p. 287).

Recent investigations have established that between 1536 and 1821, 546 complaints were filed with the Inquisition about the islands, of which 233 were related to the crime of «Judaism» (Silva, 2004, p. 163, 166). «The denunciations for belief in the mosaic cult were based on three basic factors, namely to be cristão novo, to be silent in the observance of Catholic rites or to show disrespect for Christian belief, and finally to adopt explicit practices of Jewish worship» (ibid., p. 168).

In spite of this, the cristãos novos did not hesitate to pass on another group considered ‘weak’, that is the blacks, the stigma of exclusion, suggesting that the cristãos novos by definition cannot be white-skinned... (see the exemplary case of the petition of some residents of Santiago reported in Green, 2009, p. 116). All this suggests a chiaroscuro image of the cristãos novos, who in their attempt to defend themselves from the policy of exclusion that marked social relations in the archipelago for centuries, are both victims and victors, persecuted and persecutors, solidarity people and traitors, as could be done for the other discriminated social groups (mulattoes and blacks), which slowly formed the Creole identity of the islands, an identity not only biological but also and above all cultural.
4. Conclusions with an unknown Italian source

Recalling these events, what I would like to emphasize here is that talking about Cape Verde Jews is generally inappropriate because too restrictive. It may be valid for the group that arrived from Morocco directly or via Gibraltar in the mid-nineteenth century, but not for the phenomenon that I have tried to recall and that has marked the history of the islands practically from the beginning.

We are talking about a complex and composite reality because the cristãos novos on the one hand are certainly not all of them Judaizers and on the other hand, those who were could not openly manifest themselves as Jews (see Carreira, 2000, p. 76). However, it is a numerous reality, as evidenced by several documents, partly known partly less known, such as following testimony of an Italian traveller.

According to the Florentine merchant Galeotto Cei, who lands in Santiago towards the end of August 1539 and remains on the island for three weeks, where he buys 40 slaves, the archipelago was inhabited essentially by three groups: the governors of the island, the Portuguese, and the slaves. In describing the second group, he specifies that these are individuals sent there by force to confinement by the royal authorities, in order to avoid crowding the prisons and at the same time to supply overseas territories with settlers. In short, a «foam of all the rascals», who «marry with those Ethiopian black slaves, or with mulattoes, who are the daughters of white man and black woman, of whom there are many». «Gentleman» is only one who resides «in government for the king». And when he returns to the composition of the Portuguese group, he concludes: «these islands are populated by stragglers and new Christians, all founded on deception» (Cei, 1992, p. 3). It follows that for Cei the white component, of Portuguese origin, is at least half made up of cristãos novos. This fact is confirmed eighty years later, when, in 1619, a document drawn up by the Jesuits indicates in order of numerical importance: Creole mulattos, cristãos novos, clerics from Portugal and cristãos velhos. Those Jesuits were actively involved in slave trafficking and trading with the cristãos novos until 1640 (Green, 2009, p. 109).

Creolization, that is, the formation of Creole culture in Cape Verde, is therefore imbued with Jewish traits: the cristãos novos creolize, marry like the cristãos velhos, and perhaps even more than them, the mulatto and the black women. And they find in the African matrilineal system (widespread in Senegambia and in Kaabu: Barry, 1998, p. 28-29) a cultural feature compatible with the typically Jewish one!

At the origin of the miscigenation that produced the Cape Verdean population and the Creole identity stands the fundamental contribution of the component of the New Christians and their 'impure' identity: as in Russian dolls, white people from Portugal were not all Old Christians, but they carried with them all ambiguities related to their Jewish origins.
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ABSTRACT

In this paper, I argue that anti-colonial politics in the late colonial period of Cape Verde had an important diasporic content. During the 1960s, Cabo Verde began a long, increasingly violent effort to attain independence from Portugal (finally achieved in 1975). Diasporic Cabo Verdeans in the US responded in surprisingly variable ways to the political resistance claiming their national homeland. In this paper, I focus on responses by two political groups that emerged as central in the Cabo Verdean diaspora: the PAIGC-USA Support Committee and the Juridical Congress of World Cape Verdean Communities. I argue that these two groups constituted a political reification of important socio-ideological cleavages that emerged within the global Cabo Verdean community from the 1960s. The fall of Portugal’s fascist regime (Estado Novo) in 1974, and the subsequent independence agreement with the African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cabo Verde (PAIGC), crystalized these political differences. The zenith of intra-community, politico-ideological conflict corresponded to the Juridical Congress’ declaration of independence of Cabo Verde—in reaction to what many viewed as a grab for power by the PAIGC. In short, at a key moment in Cabo Verdean history, diasporic citizens exercised critical agency in seeking to influence, and even shape, the volatile political landscape in their homeland.

Keywords: PAIGC-USA Support Committee; Juridical Congress of World Cape Verdean Communities; Diaspora Politics; Cabo Verdean Independence Politics.
Introduction

On December 18, 1974, the Government of Portugal and the African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cabo Verde (PAIGC) signed what became known as the Lisbon Agreement, which initiated a process for Cabo Verde to achieve independence from Portugal seven months later (on July 5, 1975). The independence agreement translated into the de jure political predominance of the PAIGC and the silencing of political forces that opposed the views of that liberation movement. By the end of 1974, the Union of the Peoples of the Islands of Cabo Verde (UPICV) and the Democratic Union of Cabo Verde (UDC)—the two parties that engaged in direct competition with the PAIGC during the second half of 1974—were simply wiped out of the political chessboard.¹ In the months leading to the formal proclamation of the independence of Cabo Verde, the epicenter of opposition politics against the PAIGC shifted from Cabo Verde to Cabo Verdean communities abroad, chiefly in the United States.

The PAIGC’s ascension to power on the islands crystalized the socio-political split among Cabo Verdean diaspora, with clearly discernible groups engaging in either an alliance politics or an opposition politics vis-à-vis the homeland.² In the mid-1970s, two important political formations were the key actors in the politics of national independence of Cabo Verde among Cabo Verdean-Americans, namely the PAIGC USA-Support Committee and the Juridical Congress of World Cabo Verdean Communities. Apart from ideological differences, the leadership of these two political groups represented the socio-political fragmentation of the community in the late 1960s and 1970s. Cabo Verdean community was a fragmented community along the issues of social classes, racial and ethnic identity, and generation.

In this paper, I want to advance three main points. First, Creole diasporas extend to their host country their homeland’s socio-identitary disputes and imaginings.³ That is to say, socially fragmented diasporic communities are likely to fashion diverse—if not mutually antagonistic—political projects for their homeland. Second, diverse sections of the diasporic community develop distinct political projects. Third, organized factions of the diaspora resort to a myriad of political instruments and strategies to connect with foreign, international and transnational actors in order to legitimize and further entrench their own political views and perspectives.

³ I use the term “Creole diaspora” in reference to the recent history of immigration of Creole peoples throughout the Atlantic World. Creole diaspora, as such, different-generations of peoples living and settling abroad from Cabo Verde, the key group under study, Jamaicans, and Haitians, to cite the best-known cases. In other words, the term applies to fragments of creole societies living abroad. Their creole condition, historically at the intersection of African and European civilizations, allow them to easily navigate in cultural landscape of Western world as well as to negate essentialized identity imposed onto them. Thus, for instance, both Cabo Verdeans and Haitians in the United States often reject their identity attachment to the African-American community. On this matter see, Marilyn Halter, Between race and ethnicity: Cape Verdean American immigrants, 1860-1965 (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1993); Regine O. Jackson, “The Uses of Diaspora among Haitians in Boston,” in Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora, ed. by Regine O. Jackson (New York and London: Routledge, 2011), 137. Though the term Creole diaspora might give the sense of a monolithic social experience shared by these creole societies, the reality is the opposite. Thus, one can find the cases of recent or modern diaspora (Cabo Verdeans) and incipient diaspora (Jamaicans and Haitians), if one uses the typology proposed by Gabriel Sheffer. For more on this, see Gabriel Sheffer, Diaspora politics: at home abroad (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 75.
Theoretical Framework

In a study of diaspora politics concerned with social behaviors and institutions created by diasporic citizens who aim to shape and alter political outcomes in their homeland, it is helpful to start by addressing the concept of diaspora. “Diaspora” is essentially a contradictory concept, as the term entails both dispersion and unity: it refers to the international spread of human communities that, at the same time, sustain a principle of symbolic or real unity through emphasizing common ancestry and national origin.4 Like any other sociological entity, diasporas are imagined communities.5 Political and social actors, chiefly those who command both cultural and material capital, may develop and disseminate a variety of narratives, discourses, and perspectives to explain and sustain the essence of that community. Diaspora communities imagine themselves in respect to their homeland, with which they maintain direct or symbolic relationships. In this regard, Michel Laguerre distinguishes between an “active” diaspora, whose members maintain actual ties to the homeland, and a “passive” diaspora, whose members develop only symbolic ties with the homeland.6 Within the same diasporic community, one may encounter sub-groups that maintain different kinds of ties and contacts (real or symbolic) with the homeland. In spite of the difference between these ties with the homeland, these different subgroups of a diaspora may remain engaged in a constructive discourse with their homeland—and among themselves.

The term ‘diaspora,’ which derives etymologically from Greek (speiro = to sow, and dia = over) was initially applied to the Jewish social condition of historical dispersion from Palestine.7 Since the twentieth century, the term has been stretched to include the experiences of other national and ethnic groups dispersed in different countries. The concept of diaspora entails the notion of organic and substantial connection, real or imagined, with the homeland.8 Homeland, like other forms of collective identity, is not static; different sections of homeland society often engage in a debate on what constitutes actual national identity. Dominant perspectives—and their challenges—on national identity migrate along with migrants. Diaspora views on the identity of the homeland structures and influences their political attitudes and actions towards their homeland.

Diasporas, as argued by Paul T. Zeleza, are basically discourses, insofar as they form a catalog of narratives about self and homeland.9 Reaffirming their socio-identitary uniqueness within the context of the hostland entails the development of a discourse on the homeland. In such an endeavor of producing a narrative on the nation/homeland, diaspora groups symbiotically interact and clashes with views on the homeland produced by their fellow public intellectuals and activists both in the homeland and hostland. The concept of nation may,

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likewise, be considered a “tradition of argumentation,” as John Shotter has argued.\textsuperscript{10} As for the notion of the collective self, several different and contradictory perspectives prevail. And, as for the tradition of argumentation, like most other social and cultural products, that travels along with migrants and settles among diasporic communities. Dominant perspectives on collective social identity in the homeland are adopted and crystalized by those in the diaspora who maintain strong linkages with that homeland.

In the enterprise of imagining a diasporic community, cultural and political entrepreneurs may interact and negotiate with a myriad of social groups and communities from at least three different geocultural spaces: the homeland; the mainstream sector of the host society; and marginalized groups of that host society. Most obviously, both direct contacts and symbolic ties with the homeland inform how diasporic groups imagine themselves and their nation. Events in the past constrain and limit the choices in the present, creating, thus, a path dependence. Times of political crisis present opportunities to break political and social path dependence; as such, these moments may permit new visions of the nation to arise. Such altered conceptualizations of the homeland may result from a myriad of factors, ranging from social class, generation, direct or symbolic contact with the homeland, and contact with excluded groups of society, to assimilation into the mainstream community of the host nation. Diaspora politics connects both the homeland and the host country through formal organizations, which are basically political tools through which “diasporic politicians’ stress both the welfare of the community and their attachment to homeland affairs as an important incentive of their political participation in the hostland political process.”\textsuperscript{11} In other words, through community-based and/or broader political organizations, diasporans seek to influence political outcomes in the homeland. Put differently, diasporic citizens engage in long-distance nationalism. Ultimately, while living away from their homeland, diasporans’ strategic political engagements focus on producing particular political outcomes in that homeland.

Despite the foregoing generalizations, it is important to emphasize that diasporas are not monolithic socio-political entity. Although their members derive from the same homeland and often share a combination of values and symbols, ranging from language and culture to other critical social elements, diasporic communities are fragmented; different social cleavages, such as social classes, generation, and even region from the homeland whence groups come, tend to create fractures; often, these divisions become politicized.

In contemporary times, diasporic citizens typically develop a myriad of organizations and networks, through which they base their cultural and political activities.\textsuperscript{12} These organizations constitute significant political tools, conferring a number of advantages to their members, ranging from the pooling of resources to being a mark of political modernity. These diasporic political organizations have three audiences in mind. First, they engage in internal communication, as they seek to represent what they perceive to be the view of the community they belong. In a way, these organizations tend to see themselves as a microcosmic representation of their community. Second, they seek to engage with the host country’s government and/or its political leadership. As they are rarely able to shape policies through electoral politics or conventional political participation, given their numerically size, diasporans

\textsuperscript{11} Laguerre, \textit{Diaspora, Politics, and Globalization}, 3-4.
\textsuperscript{12} Ben Rafael, “Diaspora,” 843.
often resort to a strategy of ethnic lobbying as the vehicle through which they might influence policies. Beyond these local efforts, the last audience of these organizations is the homeland.

Diasporic communities engage in a dynamic process of imaging the nation. As diasporas are not sociologically monolithic, their different segments advance different—and sometimes contradictory—interpretations of the nation. When a given narrative of the nation becomes dominant, sections of the diaspora that do not endorse such an interpretation mobilize many types of resources—human, material, and symbolic—to disseminate a counter-narrative, designed to undermine and subvert the perceived dominant narrative about the nation. Through political organizations and actions, including ethnic lobbying before different levels of the host nation’s government, different components of the diaspora will seek to influence the debate on the nation and its political future.

**On the Cabo Verden Diaspora in the United States**

Although the literature on the Cabo Verden diaspora is quite rich and robust, studies on the Cabo Verden diaspora and/or immigration tend to be carried out almost exclusively by anthropologists, historians, and demographers. These studies tend to emphasize the cultural aspects of the diaspora and/or to trace the history of its origin and development. Few studies yet exist on Cabo Verden diaspora politics: perhaps because few political scientists have written on the relations between Cabo Verden and its diaspora, scant attention have been to the role that the latter has played in defining and shaping politics in the former.

The historical process of diasporization of Cabo Verden people developed in relation to distant geographies, namely the Portuguese colonial empire (of which the islands were a constituent part until their independence in 1975), along with the wider Atlantic world. Colonial policies, coupled with harsh natural and climatic conditions, compelled Cabo Verdenians to seek life alternatives elsewhere. From the mid-nineteenth century, the Portuguese colonies of São Tome and Principe, Angola, and Guinea-Bissau were the main destinations to Cabo Verden migration. Since the late nineteenth century, and particularly during the early twentieth century, thousands of Cabo Verdenians migrated to other destinations, such as Brazil, Argentina, the United States, Senegal, and, later, other Western European states such as France, Italy, United Kingdom, and the Netherlands.

Almost a century ago, Albert Jenks wrote that in cataloguing the history of immigration to the United States, the history of Cabo Verdenians constituted its “curious chapter.” In fact, the presence of Cabo Verdenians in the United States has been traced back to the late 1600s or early 1700s, beginning with the trans-Atlantic whaling industry. However, mass migration of Cabo Verdenians to the United States expanded significantly in the late nineteenth century, peaking in

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14 Carreira, *The people of the Cape Verde Islands*; Batalha and Carling, *Transnational archipelago*.


16 Carreira, *The People of the Cape Verden Islands*.
the 1910s and 1920s. As Deidre Meintel has pointed out, the late nineteenth century and the first quarter of the last century constituted a period of intensive transnationalism, with some twenty thousand Cabo Verdeans entering the US in the first two decades of the twentieth century, alone. 17

Cabo Verdeans were probably the first Africans to voluntarily mass-migrate to the United States. In fact, the notion of voluntary migration to the US has been a dominant trope among Cabo Verdeans and Cabo Verdian-Americans, often presented as a sign of collective distinctiveness and source of pride. 18 Migration to the United States has occupied a central place in the group’s collective subconscious, and many public intellectuals have connected the Cabo Verdian diaspora with the socio-economic and cultural advancement of Cabo Verdeans more generally.

For a variety of reasons, migration from Cabo Verde to the United States declined significantly from the 1920s onwards. New immigration policies in the United States during the late 1910s and early 1920s made it difficult for the islanders to move to the United States. The period from the 1920s to the 1960s corresponds to what Deidre Meintel calls “the retreat of Cabo Verdian transnationalism.” 19 During this period, contacts with the homeland became scarce and the Cabo Verdian community in the New England turned into itself. The few contacts that existed were carried out mostly through trans-Atlantic trade via packet ships. As historic homeland, Cabo Verde became a symbolic entity, a distant place whence the ancestors came.

By the 1960s, the key sites of presence of Cabo Verdeans in the United States were southern Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Towns and cities such as New Bedford, Wareham, and Boston (in Massachusetts), and Providence and Pawtucket (in Rhode Island), became hubs of Cabo Verdian communities in the United States. While excluded by the mainstream Anglo-Saxon society as well as the local Portuguese communities, most Cabo Verdian immigrant communities in New England also rejected any type of identification with African-Americans. “Creole” social identity was carefully deployed as a tool to distinguish them from African Americans. Identity labels such as “Bravas,” “Black Portuguese,” and later “Cape Verdian,” were devices deployed to highlight social differences and distance between the immigrants of Cabo Verde and African-Americans—in spite of the fact that many among Cabo Verdeans shared phenotypic characteristics with African Americans. 20

Second- and third-generation Cabo Verdian-Americans were more attuned to the civil rights movement of the U.S., and the overall political environment and discourses of the 1950s/60s. The quest for equality and de facto citizenship resonated with many Cabo Verdeans, who experienced similar socio-economic and political plights to those of African-Americans. The context of the civil rights movement and the development of the more radical Black Power movement greatly shaped political behaviors and attitudes of young Cabo Verdeans. The social atmosphere of the civil rights movement and more radical Black activism of the late 1960s and early ‘70s influenced young Cabo Verdian-Americans in two main ways. First, at the level of identity politics, many began to accept and even proudly display Blackness. Second, the political

17 Meintel, “Cape Verdian Transnationalism,” 31-33; Halter, Between race and ethnicity, 38; 41.
18 Halter, Between race and ethnicity; Raymond Anthony Almeida, Cape Verdeans in America: Our Story. (Boston: The American Committee for Cape Verde, Inc. 1978).
19 Meintel, “Cape Verdian Transnationalism.”
atmosphere in the United States of the 1960s contributed to ethnic revival among a variety of ethnic groups that make up the social fabric of the country. Like other groups, Cabo Verdean-Americans began to imagine Cabo Verdeness—now named, *Caboverdeanidade*—as a condition of their singularity. In the decades following the end of the Second World War through the 1960s, political engagement among different segments of the Cabo Verden community in New England oscillated between a politics of acquiescence and a more contentious politics. As anticolonial armed struggle erupted in the former Portuguese colonial empire in Africa, the Portuguese regime developed a sophisticated and well-orchestrated public diplomacy designed to conquer the hearts and minds of Americans, Portuguese-Americans, and Cabo Verden-Americans. In the senior generation of Cabo Verdens, the Portuguese government found valuable allies to disseminate a message promoting unity of the empire. In the late 1960s, as an indication of the ideology of a pluricontinental and pluri-racial Portuguese Nation, the Portuguese government invited Belmira Nunes Miranda, Attorney Roy Teixeira Sr., and Judge George Leighton—three well-known and respected members of the Cabo Verden community in the United States—for a tour of two key spaces in the empire, Angola and Mozambique. These personalities became *interlocuteurs valables* for the empire and used their social and symbolic capital to disseminate a message emphasizing the unity of the Portuguese nation—hence, arguing against independence—across its colonial empire. For instance, Belmira Nunes Miranda, the only woman who accompanied the group, wrote for several months for the local community newspaper, *The Cape Verden*, reporting on the wonders of the empire. By contrast, the next generation imported and adapted to social strategies, discourses, and organizations developed in the context of the civil rights movement. In fact, many young Cabo Verdenes joined and even led some radical Black American organizations. For instance, Salah Matteos, a second-generation Cabo Verden-American, became involved with the organization led by Malcolm X in the first half of the 1960s and, through that organization, became aware of the ongoing armed struggles for independence in Africa. Frank “Parky” Grace, a second-generation Cabo Verden-American, led the Black Panther Party chapter in the city of New Bedford, Massachusetts. Manuel T. Neves, the founder and editor of *The Cape Verden*, indicated his annoyance over, and displeasure with, the fact that many young Cabo Verden-Americans had adopted the language and symbols of Black Power movement. Yet, civil rights and Black Power movements were one of the main avenues through which Cabo Verden ethnic and diaspora

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23 Personal Communication with Sallah Matteos, November 5, 2019.


politics developed. For its part, the Portuguese government’s official position was to limit, if not completely nullify, the political influences of the Black Power movement among Cabo Verdean-Americans. In a letter to the editor that he published in *The Cape Verdean* in 1971, the Portuguese General Consul (Jorge de B. A. Freitas) argued that “Black Power is the movement of Black Americans—and Cabo Verdians are Luso-Americans.”

In short, the presence of Cabo Verdians in the United States has a long history. In the United States, Cabo Verdians have come to understand that their ideas about race, informed by the Portuguese racial ideology, did not match those prevalent in the United States, where the dominant racial ideology is that of a binary (white v. non-white), significantly distinct from the idea of racial continuum practiced in Portuguese empire. Older generations of Cabo Verdians tended to cling to this racial ideology and rejected any type of identification with African-Americans. By the 1950s and ‘60s, the new generation of Cabo Verden-American, born and raised in the United States, began to accept and adopt their blackness.

**Diaspora Politics of National Independence: Organizations, Actors, and Ideologies**

In the months following the April 1974 Carnation Revolution in Lisbon, which brought an end to the 41-year right-wing dictatorship called the *Estado Novo*, a vibrant and heated political debate about the nation ensued among Cabo Verdians both at home and in the United States. Several socio-political groups were formed, each advocating for a different understanding of what would constitute the Cabo Verden nation and its destiny, in light of the ongoing process of decolonization of the Portuguese colonial empire. The idea of diaspora leads to the assumption of it being a monolithic social entity, when in reality it is rather a diverse and eclectic collection of groups, with each holding its own understandings and imaginings—sometimes, internally contradictory—of the homeland, its culture, its future, and its destiny. As argued by Cape Verden-American anthropologist G. S. Gibau, Cabo Verdians in the US are fragmented, characterized by identity conflict. By the late 1960s and early ‘70s, Cabo Verden-Americans’ social differences produced a strikingly diverse set of perspectives on the essence and future of the homeland. These diverse perspectives manifested themselves through the formation of two main political groups: the PAIGC-USA Support Committee, and the Juridical Congress of World Cape Verden Communities.

Founded in the late 1950s, the African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cabo Verde (PAIGC) was a political organization made up of Cabo Verdians and Guinean-Bissauans engaged jointly in the politics of national liberation of their two then-Portuguese colonies in West Africa. In the early 1960s, as it became clear that Portugal resisted dismantling its colonial empire peacefully, the PAIGC developed an intense political campaign to mobilize Cabo Verdians and Guineans both at home and abroad.

The idea of establishing a cell and/or a support committee of the PAIGC in the United States dates back to the beginning of the armed struggle for national liberation. In the early 1960s, the leadership of the PAIGC began to cultivate relationships with Cabo Verdians residing in the United States. A small number of Cabo Verdians in the United States, who met regularly to discuss the prospects of Cabo Verden independence in light of the ongoing decolonization in

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28 Gibau, “Diasporic Identity Formation.”
Africa, contacted the headquarters of the PAIGC in December 1961. A few months later, the party appointed Pedro Pires, then the leader of the PAIGC bureau in Dakar, Senegal, as the contact person with the Cabo Verdean diaspora in the United States. From 1961-63, there were regular exchange of letters and other forms of communication between the PAIGC and members of the Cabo Verdean diaspora in the United States. In 1962, during a visit to the United States, the leader of the PAIGC, Amilcar Cabral, met with Cabo Verdians and proposed a political organization called the Associação Hesperitana to serve as an auxiliary member of the movement he led. However, this effort did not result in any concrete political linkage.

Ten years later, a small group of young Cabo Verdean-Americans, led by Salah Matteos, founded the PAIGC-USA Support Committee. Like many of his companions, Matteos, had political training in the context of the U.S. civil rights movement, and through his active participation in the radical struggle for dignity and equality of African-Americans. As Amilcar Cabral himself recognized early, the struggles of African-Americans and colonized Africans have long been connected. Through his early engagement in the former, Matteos became aware of the struggles for African liberation. In 1972, Matteos travelled to West Africa to join the liberation struggle in Guinea-Bissau. The PAIGC leadership advised him to return to the USA and form a support committee. That idea had support from Cabral, who, in his last visit to the United States, argued for the necessity to create a PAIGC Support Committee.

The PAIGC USA-Support Committee was an organization independent from the party’s political structures: the members of the support committee did not constitute party cadres or members. Rather, they were essentially committed sympathizers to the party’s ideology and cause. In the history of the PAIGC, there were other support committee created that aggregated immigrant communities (e.g., the support committee in Côte d’Ivoire in 1963). The Support Committee purported to function like a transmission belt between the party leadership and the diaspora community. The main task of the organization was to engage in campaigns of mobilization and information, so as to instill political awareness among Cabo Verdean Americans of the ongoing struggle for national liberation that was taking place in Guinea-Bissau. In late 1973, the PAIGC-USA Support Committee began to publish No Pintcha (Bissau-Guinean Creole for “let’s move”), a newspaper that served as a vehicle to disseminate news from the PAIGC, updates on the ongoing liberation struggle in Guinea-Bissau and Cabo

29 Correspondence from Dulce Alves to Aristides Pereira, 26 December 1961, Fundação Mário Soares / DAC - Documentos Amílcar Cabral, http://hdl.handle.net/11002/fms_dc_38444 (2020-10-25)
31 Correspondence from Roy Teixeira to Aristides Pereira, 1 November 1963, Fundação Mário Soares / DAC - Documentos Amílcar Cabral, http://hdl.handle.net/11002/fms_dc_36485 (2020-10-25); Correspondence from Roy Teixeira to Amilcar Cabral, December 2, 1963, Fundação Mário Soares / DAC - Documentos Amílcar Cabral, Disponível HTTP: http://hdl.handle.net/11002/fms_dc_36840 (2020-10-25)
35 Matteos, “The Cape Verdians and the PAIGC,” 46.
Verde, and political news from the community in the United States. *No Pintcha* was a trilingual newspaper featuring articles, opinions and other pieces in Cabo Verden Creole, Portuguese and English. *No Pintcha* ultimately became a forum for the promotion of the political ideals of the PAIGC, chiefly that of national independence and the political unity between Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau.

Additionally, the Support Committee was instrumental in mobilizing resources, both symbolic and material, from different sections of mainstream American society. For instance, Salah Matteos, the chair of Mobilization and Organization Section of the PAIGC-USA Support Committee, led a campaign before the United Church of Christ (UCC) in May 1974; that convention which took place in Hyannis, Massachusetts, resulted in the UCC recognizing the Republic of Guinea-Bissau as an independent nation.36 Beyond this explicitly political goal, the support organization’s work also addressed other key issues, ranging from education and social awareness, demonstrations and rallies against Portuguese interests, to contacts with other organizations in the United States.

Furthermore, the PAIGC-USA Support Committee was socially and politically integrated in ethnic politics and coalition-building. Leaders of the committee were either members of and/or worked closely with III Pyramids, Inc., a multi-ethnic coalition of non-governmental organization founded by Cabo Verdeans, African-Americans, and Native Americans in 1969. The PAIGC USA-Support Committee also engaged in coalition-building with other mainstream progressive groups. Its leader, Salah Matteos toured US universities to campaign on behalf of the PAIGC struggle in Africa. Taking advantage of its connection with other progressive organizations, in 1973 the PAIGC USA-Support Committee secured a substantial grant ($18,000.00) from the Episcopal Church, through its General Convention Special Program.37 In the first half of the 1970s, the PAIGC-USA Support Committee was instrumental in creating one of the most durable myth abouts Cabo Verdeans in the USA, namely that the size of the community was about 300,000.38

Just as the PAIGC gained momentum and seemed unstoppable in its quest to gain power in Cabo Verde, in early 1975, a new political organization was created by Cabo Verden-Americans: the Juridical Congress of World Cape Verdean Communities. Two socio-political factors explain the dynamic process that led to the formation of this second group: the December 18 Agreement between the Government of Portugal and the PAIGC, and a trip by a Cabo Verde-born Portuguese diplomat (Aguinaldo Veiga) to the United States.

The December 18 Agreement, which marked the fall of the Portuguese dictatorship, was itself linked to the anti-colonial war in Guinea-Bissau, coordinated by the PAIGC. In August 1974, Portugal recognized Guinea as an independent nation. Following this development, Portugal and the PAIGC began to discuss possible modalities for Cabo Verde to, likewise, achieve independence. On December 18, 1974, Portugal and the PAIGC reached a political agreement in Lisbon. While the Lisbon Agreement did not translate into a direct transfer of power from Portugal to the PAIGC, it was, nonetheless, a significant political victory for the party, insofar as other Cabo Verden political parties, such as the Union of the Independent

Peoples of Cabo Verde (UPICV) and the Democratic Union of Cabo Verde (UDC), had not made it to the independence talks. A new government of transition was appointed by the independence agreement, and it included representatives appointed by the PAIGC.

Many Cabo Verdeans, both at home and in diaspora, distrusted the PAIGC. The somewhat radical political line of the party included a number of principles that alienated many Cabo Verdeans. First and foremost, the PAIGC meant an ideological rupture with how the social identity of Cabo Verde had been constructed by the nation’s literati since the early 1900s. A dominant trope shared by the islands’ writers and poets was the assumption that Cabo Verde was fundamentally linked to the culture and civilization of Europe in general, and Portuguese in particular. Baltazar Lopes da Silva, the epitome of the generation of writers that became known as the “Claridosos,” writes of Cabo Verde as a “romance experience in the tropics.” Against this Western-based interpretation of Cabo Verdean social identity, Amilcar Cabral, the leader of the PAIGC, suggested what he termed “African regionalism.” In this model, the people of Cabo Verde were culturally African. Such an identity statement had political implications, as it removed Cabo Verde from the sphere of Western influence and instead made a case for it to be included in the concert of African states. Another central principle of the PAIGC—which constituted, at the same time, a key political objective—centered on the political unification between Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau. In fact, this idea had been codified in major documents of the party since its inception in the late 1950s and early ‘60s.

Beyond this specific goal, the PAIGC espoused a leftist, radical political ideology that included elements of Marxist thought. During the liberation struggle, the PAIGC developed strong linkages with the Communist states, which provided valuable material, diplomatic and political support. Portugal was a member of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a military alliance that included most of the Western European and North American States. As such direct support for the nascent state seeking independence from Portugal was never forthcoming from the Western states. Indeed, to the Portuguese regime, the PAIGC was no more than a puppet organization in the service of international communism—the Soviet bloc.

The independence agreement with the PAIGC meant the victory of a particular interpretation of Cabo Verdean identity. Many Cabo Verdeans saw the PAIGC as a catalog of things that they despised and/or rejected, ranging from pan-Africanism and political unity with Guinea-Bissau to international Communism and anti-liberal democracy. Many believed that Guinea-Bissau would eventually join the ranks of communist regimes; for this reason, the fear of a communist takeover in Cabo Verde was another main reason that many Cape Verdians rejected the idea of political unification with Guinea-Bissau. Especially for Cabo Verdean elites living in the diaspora, the PAIGC was basically a stooge of Soviet imperialism, and they worried that independence with PAIGC in charge of the new government would translate into a Communist regime taking hold on the islands.

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A further factor concerned global diplomatic relations. At a time that the Cold War was entering into its post-\textit{détente} phase, Cape Verdean opponents of the PAIGC hoped the anti-Communist argument could have helped win political support from the US government. In fact, according to XX, the official line of the US government in 1975 was that “we don’t want a base [in Cabo Verde], but we don’t want the Russians to have it either.”\textsuperscript{42} It was against these perceptions that the Juridical Congress was eventually formed by a small number of conservative Cape Verdean lawyers living in the United States.

A second major factor that drove the founding of the Juridical Congress was the arrival of the Portuguese diplomat, Aguinaldo Veiga, in the United States. Born in Cabo Verde, Veiga made his career in the Portuguese imperial bureaucracy. In 1961, he was part of the Portuguese diplomatic delegation to the United Nations. During a visit to the United States in 1961, Veiga met some elites of the Cabo Verdean diaspora living in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.\textsuperscript{43} Following the crumbling of the dictatorship in Portugal, in October 1974, Veiga published a short book about the politics of independence in Cabo Verde.\textsuperscript{44} The book was a rejoinder to the PAIGC ideological line, criticizing those who argued for “total and immediate independence” for Cabo Verde, whom he called “impatient Cabo Verdeans.”\textsuperscript{45} Furthermore, Veiga bitterly criticized the idea of a post-colonial unification between Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau--a project he considered contradictory, as it would lead to “independence in dependence,” as he characterized this model.\textsuperscript{46}

By the end of 1974, with the independence agreement reached, national debate changed from whether or not to seek independence, to what kind of national independence to embrace. Like many other political actors who were initially opposed to the idea of national independence, Veiga, began to focus on ways to preempt the PAIGC-led quest for independence from establishing a new government. Already, the PAIGC seemed to have an almost unstoppable momentum in its dynamic process of occupying the seat of power in Cabo Verde. To challenge that momentum, in December 1974, Veiga moved to the United States with a mission to swing the Cabo Verdean-American communities away from supporting that seeming likelihood. Veiga decided to move to the United States because of the size and relative prestige he believed the Cabo Verdean community in the United States had. For him, the Cabo Verdean community in North America was large and powerful enough “to speak up for the natives in the islands.”\textsuperscript{47}

The Juridical Congress Unilateral Declaration of Independence

In early February 1975, Aguinaldo Veiga met with Roy Teixeira, Belmira Nunes Lopes, Joseph Andrade and Ben Goncalves met in Sacramento, CA. There, the group discussed the idea of creating a new association.\textsuperscript{48} They decided to form an organization named the Juridical Congress of World Cape Verdean Communities. The name was carefully chosen to reflect two predominant characteristics of the organization. On the one hand, the leadership of the

\textsuperscript{43} “Vote in Islands ‘Now’ PAIGC. Struggle for Independence to be decided by International Court,” \textit{The Cape Verdean}, June 1975, 1; “Roy Teixeira ferido num desastre de viação,” \textit{Diário de Novidades}, November 6, 1961, 1.
\textsuperscript{44} Aguinaldo Veiga, \textit{Construamos Cabo Verde Independente} (Luanda, Angola: na, 1974).
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 5.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., 9.
\textsuperscript{47} “Cape Verdean Support Group Meet in Boston, \textit{The Cape Verdean}, March 1975, 3
movement rested in the hands of lawyers. On the other hand, the organization aimed to attract representatives of Cabo Verdean diasporas from around the world.

On February 22 and 23, the Juridical Congress held a conference at the Sheraton Hotel in Boston. The conference was led by five lawyers, aided by an advisory body of twenty people (seventeen men and three women). Reports indicate that over 2,500 people attended the meeting—it was, to date, the largest event ever held of Cabo Verdeans in the United States.49 The meeting produced a “Resolution” that consisted of ten different points, which can be organized under the rubric of five different themes: (a) a declaration of “total and immediate independence” from Portugal (I); (b) the illegality and unconstitutionality of the prior Independence Agreement reached between Portugal and the PAIGC (II and III); (c) the denial of Portuguese sovereignty, and the claim that if Portugal maintained armed forces stationed in Cabo Verde, that would constitute an “invasionary force” (IV and V); (d) an assertion that both the PAIGC and Guinea-Bissau were enemies of the people of Cabo Verde, hence the transitional government in Cabo Verde was illegitimate (VI-VIII); and (e) the predominance of the attorneys within this political organization (IX-X).

The conference centered on three main topics: first, legal deconstruction of the Lisbon Agreement, signed on December 18, 1974; second, the resolution of a motion calling for the independence of Cabo Verde; and, finally, the organization of a government-in-exile. The conference centered on the legal deconstruction of the independence agreement with the members of the congress arguing but ultimately approving, a motion that declared the Independence Agreement between the Government of Portugal and the PAIGC legally void. This argument was based on the notion that one of the contracting parties in the agreement, the PAIGC, lacked legitimacy and mandate from the people of Cabo Verde. The final resolution stated that the PAIGC was “a foreign political group that never was elected, chosen, or accepted by the Cape Verdian [sic] people.”50 For the Juridical Congress, the PAIGC was a foreign political organization originating and based in Guinea-Bissau. The notion of the PAIGC being a foreign body was something previously defended by Veiga, weeks before the meeting. In an open letter to the United Nations, Veiga had protested the PAIGC’s foreign activities in Cabo Verde.51 In fact, the Resolution of the Juridical Congress classified the PAIGC as “an invasionary force and an enemy of the People of Cabo Verde.”52

Following the legal nullification of the Lisbon Agreement, the Juridical Congress voted to “proclaim and herewith effectively declare the total and immediate independence of the archipelago of the Cape Verde.”53 The Juridical Congress’s unilateral declaration of independence, though without any real political implications for Cabo Verde, was part of a strategy of preempting the PAIGC’s political takeover and subsequent redefinition of the nation.

Lastly, the Resolution of the meeting called for the establishment of a government-in-exile that would seek recognition from friendly states around the world. The Congress granted the “jurist doctors, Roy J. Teixeira, Antonio J. Cardozo, Roy J. Teixeira, Jr., Harry I. Fernandes,

52 “With 2,600 Delegates Cheering, the Juridical Congress Passed the following Resolutions on February 22 and 23,” The Cape Verdean, April 1975, 1 (italics added)
53 “To the Cape Verdeans of the World,” The Cape Verdean, April 1975, 6.
and Aguinaldo Veiga” the mandate to speak on behalf of Cabo Verde and its people. As a visual representation meant to powerfully symbolize the constitution of a new government in absentia, the Juridical Congress also approved a new symbol of the state—a flag—which was then blessed by a Cape Verden Catholic priest present at the conference (Reverend Father Benvindo Leitao).

Beyond these instrumental political goals, the Juridical Congress aimed to fundamentally define the socio-political identity of Cabo Verdeans both at home and abroad. Against the Pan-Africanist views on the identity of Cabo Verdeans, which was gaining traction in the 1970s, the movement sought to return to the Eurocentric approach to Cabo Verdeaness. This attempt was hardly uncontroversial. In fact, many Cabo Verden-Americans saw the meeting as an unwelcome attempt to strengthen a Eurocentric emphasis of Cabo Verden identity. Yvonne Smart is one participant who disagreed with the platform. At the meeting, she perceived a basic identity conflict between a “Eurocentric” and “Afrocentric” emphasis. As a Cabo Verden-American associated with the Black Empowerment movement of the time, Smart and others attending the meeting, rejected the Juridical Congress leaders’ views. Smart described her group’s emphasis quite simply: “we were Afro-centric.”

The meeting did not go unnoticed by the PAIGC-USA Support Committee. On the first day of the meeting, the group brought some one hundred bodies, who protested outside the Sheraton Hotel on a cold, winter day. The protest included speeches by the leaders of the organization, including Salah Matteos. The PAIGC-USA Support Committee also issued a written statement that classified the meeting as an attempt of diasporic elites to safeguard their material interests, as well as to sow confusion and division within the Cabo Verden community.

In the following months, as the process for independence began to take shape in the homeland, both groups of Cabo Verden-Americans devised a number of different political strategies to either strengthen or weaken the position of the PAIGC in Cabo Verde. Part of the strategy followed by the Juridical Congress included ethnic lobbying before members of federal legislative and executive bodies. Thus, in April 1975, Aguinaldo Veiga and Roy Teixeira, Jr., traveled to Washington, D.C., where they met with representatives from several congressional offices from New England states, California and Florida.

Meanwhile, in Boston, the two groups focused their attention on winning support from local representatives of the Cabo Verden diaspora. In order to better learn about the situation, Senator Edward Brooke called for a meeting with the representatives of the two organizations and other stakeholders on April 18, 1975, in his office in the JFK Building. During the meeting, Brooke mentioned that the U.S. Congress had appropriated some five million dollars to Cabo Verde. The representatives from the Juridical Congress responded by suggesting that the distribution of the aid be trusted to an impartial agency such as the Red Cross. For their part, the PAIGC-USA Support Committee wanted to learn about the official position of the U.S. government vis-à-vis independence, but Senator Brooke did not provide much information. Overall, the meeting was a political defeat for the Juridical Congress insofar as their strategy of linking the PAIGC to the Soviet Union failed miserably. The idea that the PAIGC-Lisbon Agreement was an indication of its satellite status vis-à-vis the Soviet Union was rejected by

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54 “With 2,600 Delegates Cheering,” The Cape Verden, 1.
55 Phone Interview with Yvonne Smart, November 12, 2009.
56 Overbea, “Cape Verdeans.”
Senator Brooke, who mentioned that even the U.S. government had its own agreements with the Soviet Union.58

At this point, the first post-independence election was approaching. In this politically momentous climate, the strategy of the Juridical Congress shifted toward more toward international law. The leaders’ idea was to take their case before an international court.59 Veiga argued that the upcoming election in Cabo Verde had no legitimacy, and that the independence of Cabo Verde had to be confirmed in the Hague.60

The Juridical Congress had both a negationist and a constitutive agenda. On the one hand, it negated the legality, legitimacy and constitutionality of the independence agreement between Portugal and the PAIGC. Through its resolutions and speeches by its leaders, it became clear that the group’s objective was to seek the nullification of that independence agreement in an international court. On the other hand, the Boston conference supposedly invested a new sovereign state, with a government in exile and the sorts of key political symbols, such as a flag and a coat of arms, that are expected as part of modern statehood.61

After the formal independence of Cabo Verde, the Juridical Congress managed to maintain its political activity for another year or so. By the end of 1975, however, many members grew disappointed with the Juridical Congress. In a penetrating editorial in December 1975, Manuel Neves, whose reporting in the early months of that year. Had clearly been biased in favor of that organization, condemned the Juridical Congress, noting that “nothing has been accomplished.”62 The organization became dysfunctional, with mismanagement of funds and distrust eventually leading to its political insignificance and eventual dissolution.

In fact, by the end of 1976, both the organizations I have been discussing here had vanished from the diasporic political scene—though for opposite reasons. The PAIGC-USA Support Committee disappeared because it had fulfilled its mission. By contrast, the Juridical Congress disappeared because it was unable to generate support for its members’ quest to challenge the PAIGC’s leadership in achieving independence and statehood of Cabo Verde. By the late 1970s, few members of the Juridical Congress maintained their opposition to the post-colonial regime in Cabo Verde. They maintained an engagement in opposition politics by joining forces with other dissenters, leading to the formation of another association, the Cabo Verdean Independent and Democratic Union (UCID).

Conclusions

Independence politics in the homeland have an effect among diasporic citizens. In the modern world, those citizens may use a myriad of strategies and institutions to shape political outcomes in their homeland. Among Cabo Verdeans in the United States, two main political organizations were formed at a critical moment in the homeland’s political life. The PAIGC-USA Support Committee was restricted to the diasporic sites of southern New England (New Bedford and Boston areas) and maintained mostly symbolic connections with the homeland, as

58 “Brooke meet [sic] with Cape Verdeans,” The Cape Verdean, May 1975, 1.
59 “Vote in Islands ‘Now’ PAIGC. The Struggle for Independence to be decided by International Court”, The Cape Verdean, June 1975, 1.
60 “Dr. Veiga,” The Cape Verdean, June 1975, 5.
61 The approved flag is curiously similar to the autonomy flag of the Azores from the late 1800s. the flag, in a rectangular form, is vertically divided in two parts, dark blue and white. There are two columns of five stars each representing the ten islands of Cabo Verde. In between these two columns of stars, there are
its leaders were born in the United States and had no direct contacts with Cabo Verde. By contrast, the Juridical Congress was a coalition of Cabo Verdean elites from more dispersed diasporic sites ranging from New England to California—though it never attracted diasporic communities from beyond the US.

At the sociological level, the leadership of these two political organizations represented two distinct social categories of Cabo Verdeans in the United States. The PAIGC-USA Support Committee was led by young, high-school-dropout, second-generation Cabo Verdean-Americans who had close links with African-Americans and their struggle for social equality. The PAIGC-USA Support Committee adopted ideological stances of Pan-Africanism and imagined Cabo-Verdeanness in relation to blackness and Africanity. For its part, the leadership of the Juridical Congress consisted of highly educated Cabo Verdean-Americans, many of whom were born in Cabo Verde (Aguinaldo Veiga, Roy Teixeira) and had material interests in the islands (Roy Teixeira). The Juridical Congress maintained the traditional colonial discourse of Cabo Verde as a *mestizo*, “creole” society in which the vestiges of African culture have long been diluted, as argued by the Cabo Verdean intellectual, Baltazar Lopes da Silva.63 This group was convinced that focusing on cultural and/or political connections to Africa would be tantamount to committing cultural genocide of the Cabo Verdean people.

Unexpectedly, these dramatically opposed ideological and social distinctions translated into divergent political projects for the homeland. For the older generation associated with the Juridical Congress, political independence represented. By contrast, for the young generation affiliated with the PAIGC-USA Support Committee, political independence under the aegis of the PAIGC represented a political victory of an African people against European colonialism.

The intense debate and campaigns regarding the political independence of Cabo Verde served to stir the community in the search of its self. Several other community organizations were created, or old ones became redesigned, to focus on claiming the uniqueness of Cabo Verdean identity. These organizations engaged mainstream political institutions with the goal of altering the perception towards the community as well as to give the community a voice in how it is perceived. For instance, through the work of the Cape Verdean Educators Collaborative, the Cape Verdean language became recognized as a ‘living foreign language,’ and thus a medium for bilingual education.64 Similarly, the laborious lobbying and political activities conducted by the Cape Verdean Veterans Association of New Bedford ultimately resulted in the census of 1980 recognizing ‘Cape Verdean’ as an ancestry classification.65

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63 Silva, “Uma Experiência Romântica nos Trópicos; Fernandes, A diluição da África.
64 Pires-Hester, A study of Cape Verdean-American ethnic development, 146.
65 Ibid.
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Incidence of Return Migration: International Students from Cape Verde

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Introduction

Jacquelino V., a City Councilman for Youth and Culture from the small island nation of Cape Verde, left his home country, traveled to the United States for an extended period of time, studied at a large University in Massachusetts, and earned a degree there. “People in Santa Cruz see me as a role model because I went to the U.S. and studied at Bridgewater”, Jacquelino told researchers. “Bridgewater State University has a great reputation here.”

International students like Jacquelino have, over recent decades, become a highly visible presence on the campuses of colleges and universities across the United States, and academic institutions are proud of the international students who study there, highlighting on reports, in recruiting literature, and alumni news venues the number of international students on campus and the various countries from which they originate. In addition to providing diversity and other academic and intellectual positives, these students reportedly lend depth to in-class discussions and give an important and often very different point of view than that provided by students native to the host country (Sato & Hodge, 2015). Oosterbeek & Webink, (2009) have speculated that the trend for students to leave their home countries for international study will continue to grow, will increase the human capital of all students involved, and is certain to create international networks that will lead to a better understanding of different cultures and greater global unity.

Many factors have contributed to this rise in the number of students studying abroad. Gribble (2008) has noted that the undersupply of universities in many developing countries has resulted in an inability to satisfy the rising demand in those countries for post-secondary education and the human capital required to move those countries forward. Historical and cultural ties influence the ease with which transnational education can occur, and many international students are choosing to study abroad in countries where there exists a former colonial relationship, or a historical relationship that, while perhaps more economic than colonial, has been in place for centuries. However complicated, these relationships ease the complexities of foreign study, often allowing students to gain benefit from a familiarity with the language and culture of the host country (Dumont, 2006). Cultural beliefs have led families and students in many developing countries to expect that foreign study will confer professional and business advantages upon those able to take advantage of it, the rising capacity in communication technology around the world has made studying abroad more accessible, and the growing willingness of foreign universities to provided students from developing countries with academic scholarships and grants for living and studying abroad continues to make transnational study financially more cost effective. (Gribble, 2008; Dumont 2006).

Portes (2009) explains that with this increasing emphasis on globalization, the idea of transnational study has become even more attractive, providing international students with not only opportunities to improve their skills, education, and experiences abroad, but also allowing
them to contribute to their home country through remittances, cultural exchanges, and especially, newly acquired knowledge. Bloch (2017), however, adds, “[t]he benefits of highly skilled migration for sending countries will depend, in part, on whether migration is permanent or cyclical and whether diasporas maintain their transnational links over time and space.” (p. 1511)

This idea of cyclical or circular migration is an important one. Since Adams’ (1968) early work around what has become known as “brain drain”, authors and researchers have studied the effects of students studying, working, and permanently remaining outside of their home countries. Recent authors continue to warn of concerns around the loss of these newly educated and/or experienced international students who study internationally but do not intend to return home (Bratsberg, 1995; Soon, Jan-Jan, 2012; Grecu & Titan, 2016), noting the many profoundly negative consequences linear migration has on the source country.

Fortunately for these source countries, however, this form of linear migration, that is a unidirectional and final movement of individuals from a developing country to a developed country is, as other models begin to grow in popularity, becoming a less predominant model of migration. Constant & Zimmerman (2011) write that while migration has historically been seen as this type of permanent move from one’s home country to a more developed one, other types of migration are being increasingly undertaken by individuals seeking experience and education outside their place of birth. Constant & Zimmerman define these different types of migration as repeated or circular migration, a type of migration where migrants continually move back and forth between their home country and another; and return migration, migration from one’s home country to another, (most often a more developed country), where they live for a period of time, work, visit relatives, attend school, earn high school diplomas or college degrees, and finally return to live and work in their home country. Return migration results in a permanent return to the country of origin, where migrants re-establish themselves and their lives, applying their newly acquired skills, cultural awareness, experience and knowledge to bettering conditions back home.

The Current Study
Located in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, U.S.A., Bridgewater State University (BSU), with over 10,000 students studying in graduate and undergraduate programs, and more than 70,000 alumni, strongly supports international teaching, learning, and university partnerships. Because of the high number of Cape Verdeans living within BSU’s service region, and close individual ties between Cape Verde and many administrators, faculty, and students at BSU, in 2006, Bridgewater State University (then Bridgewater State College) decided to help establish the University of Cabo Verde in the capital city of Praia, on the island of Santiago, in the Republic of Cape Verde. Shortly thereafter, Bridgewater State University signed an international partnership agreement with the University of Cabo Verde (UniCV), and since 2008, BSU has been awarding scholarships to Cape Verlean undergraduate and graduate students from the University of Cabo Verde to attend and engage in academic study at Bridgewater State University. Some of these Cape Verlean international students have taken part in undergraduate exchange programs, some have earned Master’s degrees in education from BSU, some have earned M.A.T.’s in Teaching English as a Second Language, and others have earned Bachelor’s and more advanced degrees in business and other academic areas.

Given the level of commitment and cost required of both institutions (i.e. BSU and UniCV) to develop and maintain the above scholarship programs, and because no formal follow
up on these Cape Verdean international students has ever been conducted, a study examining the impact these scholarships may have had on the life and vocations of these alumni was undertaken. The overall goals of this study were to assess the success of these scholarship programs, to examine aspects of sustainability, and to recommend change or continuance of the current constructs, in order to advance a discussion on the quality, effectiveness, and impact of the current scholarship programs offered by Bridgewater State University to students from the University of Cabo Verde, including specific program strengths and suggestions for improvement.

**Rationale:**

Bridgewater State University records indicate that between 2008 and 2017, when the scholarship program was temporarily halted, 18 students from Cape Verde received scholarships for BSU’s one-semester undergraduate exchange program and 34 received scholarships and graduated with Master’s degrees from a variety of BSU graduate programs. While a very small fraction of these individuals have remained in the U.S. to continue their studies or seek permanent employment and/or residency, 92% of these scholarship recipients have returned permanently to Cape Verde and are pursuing a professional agenda in their home country.

No systematic follow-up studies on these scholarship recipients have been completed since their graduation from BSU and their return to Cape Verde, including documentation of the profession in which they’re currently engaged; where in Cape Verde they’re currently working; whether their experiences at BSU have improved their own individual or professional life-space; whether global engagement and academic learning at BSU has had a positive impact on their careers and/or their lives or the lives of other Cape Verdeans; and especially, whether these students have actualized what they learned at Bridgewater State University to impact economic, educational, or social conditions in Cape Verde.

As noted, transnational educational protocols with the Republic of Cape Verde are intended to capacitate graduate and undergraduate students with the skills and knowledge required to transform the national context. Through such protocols with the University of Cabo Verde, Bridgewater State University has received and trained dozens of candidates in a wide variety of areas, ranging from computer science, to education, to public management. Through answers to the questions below, gleaned from the data obtained via returned surveys, focus group discussions, and visits with graduates in their professional roles, this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the impact and effectiveness of BSU scholarship programs for individuals from Cape Verde. In doing so, answers to the research questions below will actively contribute to the betterment of the transnational protocols that exist between Bridgewater State University and the University of Cabo Verde.

Based upon the above, a review of the literature, and the information needed by the two universities, the following research questions were created:

1. When students from Cape Verde applied to one of the Bridgewater State University scholarship programs, what was their intent, to set up a professional career in the U.S. after graduation or to return to Cape Verde and establish a professional career back in their home country?
2. Do students from Cape Verde who complete graduate and exchange programs at BSU feel the process for applying to one of these programs was easy, confusing, or extremely difficult?

3. Do students from Cape Verde who complete graduate and exchange programs at BSU feel the transition process from Cape Verde to the U.S. is easy, confusing, or extremely difficult?

4. To what extent have graduates and exchange program completers of the various Bridgewater State University programs found the education they received at BSU to be effective in producing new knowledge?

5. What specific skills or topics of knowledge learned during their program at BSU did graduates and exchange program completers find particularly helpful when they returned to Cape Verde?

6. What new opportunities have been generated for graduates and exchange program completers as a result of their participation in BSU’s transnational educational protocols?

7. To what extent have graduates and exchange program completers been able to implement knowledge acquired during their BSU studies in their professional positions in Cape Verde?

8. What professional challenges were encountered by graduates and exchange program completers upon returning to Cape Verde?

9. How have graduates and exchange program completers been able to use their new knowledge, given the opportunities and/or constraints extant in Cape Verde?

Procedure

In order to examine the above questions, a list of all students from the University of Cabo Verde who participated in any scholarship program at Bridgewater State University from 2008-2017 (not just those who return-migrated), including their home addresses in Cape Verde and their current email addresses and/or CV cell phone numbers was obtained. These individuals were sent an email describing the study and its importance, along with an attached survey for them to fill out and return. In addition, volunteers were solicited to form a focus group, to meet face-to-face and help “flesh out” the responses to items on the survey. Six individuals from the graduate and undergraduate exchange programs volunteered to serve as focus group members.

Researchers then traveled to Cape Verde for one week to meet with the focus group and connect with, in their professional roles, as many of the scholarship recipients as possible, to ask pertinent questions around specific BSU program strengths and weaknesses, and to record (if any exist) their professional accomplishments after graduation.

For simplicity, subjects in the study have been identified only by their initials.
**Results**

Survey Questions and Responses (from a survey return rate of 27% (14/52)

_When students from Cape Verde applied to one of the BSU scholarship programs, was their intent to set up a professional career in the U.S. after graduation or to return permanently to Cape Verde and establish a professional career back home?_

Survey findings indicate the vast majority (over 90%) of responding graduates and exchange program completers planned _from the beginning to return_ to Cape Verde after the completion of their studies at Bridgewater State University and to establish a professional career back home.

_Do students from Cape Verde who complete graduate and exchange programs at BSU feel the process for applying to one of these programs was easy, confusing, or extremely difficult?_

The data here splits evenly between respondents, with 50% indicating the process was easy, due to the hands on assistance they received from BSU and/or UniCV, and the other 50% indicating that the process was confusing, because they received little or no substantive support and/or guidance from UniCV. Interestingly, the more recently the graduates and exchange program completers applied to the scholarship programs, the more likely they were to indicate little or no substantive support and/or guidance from UniCV. Graduates and exchange program completers most often mentioned the process for providing necessary documents to BSU as being the clearest part of applying to BSU’s programs and the process for obtaining a visa as the most confusing.

_Do students from Cape Verde who complete graduate and exchange programs at BSU feel the transition process from Cape Verde to the U.S. is easy, confusing, or extremely?_

Most respondents indicated that because of the support they received from Bridgewater State University, the transition process from Cape Verde to the U.S. went smoothly, mentioning specifically BSU’s orientation process, the opportunity to connect and live with Cape Verdean classmates, and being met at the airport by BSU representatives as reasons. Approximately 30% of the respondents indicated the transition process was confusing, citing as the main reason, a lack of information from UniCV.

_To what extent have graduates and exchange program completers of the various BSU programs found the education they received at BSU to be effective in producing new knowledge?_

All respondents (100%) indicated that their program of studies at BSU was positive, with graduates and exchange program completers indicating that the scholarship program expanded their global experiences and greatly improved their English language skills. Other positives noted by respondents included improving their skills as students, adding to their professional development, and helping them build more professional academic research abilities.

_What specific skills or topics of knowledge learned during their program at BSU did graduates and exchange program completers find particularly helpful when they returned to Cape Verde?_

When responding to this question, graduates and exchange program completers understandably noted gained-knowledge that fell within the domains of their various programs. Those in teaching programs (which were the majority of students returning surveys) indicated new knowledge and skills acquired as: “new teaching approaches”, “effective use of the library”, “use
of technology in the classroom”, and “differentiated instruction”. Those in other programs indicated such new knowledge and skills gained as “the importance of field study”, “organizational behavior”, and “human resource management”. All respondents indicated newly gained knowledge and skills in “relating to different cultures” or “learning to adapt”. Overwhelmingly and most interestingly, all respondents indicated the most helpful knowledge gained and skills learned in their programs were things like, “teamwork”, “goal setting”, “critical thinking”, “open-mindedness”, “confidence”, and “leadership”, all part of what educators refer to as the hidden curriculum (Wren, 1999), i.e. things that students ultimately learn from taking part in an educational process, but are not necessarily directly intended by program instructors.

What new opportunities have been generated by graduates and exchange program completers as a result of their participation in BSU’s transnational educational protocols?

Respondents indicate that since graduating or exiting as exchange students from BSU programs they have obtained various professional positions, including a Cape Verde military instruction officer, part time and full time professors at the University of Cabo Verde and Cape Verde’s Institute of Pedagogy, translators, becoming the founder of a private English Language School, a director of the English Language Institute at the University of Cabo Verde, authors of a national English language textbook for 5th graders, the director of marketing for Coca Cola, two city counselors, and others.

To what extent have graduates and exchange program completers been able to implement knowledge acquired during their BSU studies in their professional positions in Cape Verde?

All but two graduates and exchange program completers noted that they have been able to implement knowledge acquired during their BSU studies in their professional positions in Cape Verde. Respondents noted that they used specific tools and skills to improve their job performance. They mentioned specifically that they’ve been able to introduce new programs in communication and education, new teaching methodologies in secondary and university classrooms, and grow as a professional, securing better jobs as a result of their studies at Bridgewater State University.

What professional challenges were encountered by graduates and exchange program completers upon returning to Cape Verde?

Respondents noted that the challenges they faced when they returned to Cape Verde fell into two categories: a lack of resources to help implement the changes they wanted to introduce and the reluctance of managers, administrators and/or colleagues to accept change.

How have graduates and exchange program completers been able to utilize their new knowledge, given the opportunities and/or constraints extant in Cape Verde?

As noted, graduates and exchange program completers responded that while change can sometimes be difficult, using what they learned at Bridgewater State University, combined with vision and professional persistence, growth, change, and positive movement forward can occur in Cape Verde.
Professional-Role Visit and Interview Responses

As a final component of the project, in order to flesh out information from the surveys, researchers met individually with graduates of BSU’s Master’s Degree scholarship programs for Cape Verdeans to discuss the above data, to discuss BSU/UniCV scholarship programs in greater detail, and to observe first-hand what these graduates have accomplished as professionals living and working in Cape Verde. While these individuals granted permission for their information to be revealed for this study, for the sake of simplicity, they will be identified as PB, LL, JV, RF, HM and ZV. A description of their professional roles at the time of the study and some individual comments from them are presented below.

PB: After graduating with a Master’s Degree from BSU, PB returned to Cape Verde and taught English at Amilcar Cabral Secondary School in Assomada, Santiago, Cape Verde. From there, he became an English Language professor at the University of Cabo Verde, eventually helping to establish and being appointed director of UniCV’s Dana Mohler-Faria English Language Institute. During the interview, PB indicated he owed his success in building a successful and important career to what he learned at Bridgewater State University.

LL: After graduating from BSU and at the time of the study, LL was teaching in the English Language Department at the University of Cabo Verde. She has worked closely with the aforementioned Dana Mohler-Faria English Language Institute and indicated to interviewers that she has used what she learned in her Master’s Degree program at BSU to improve her university teaching, including integrating the Dana Mohler-Faria English Language Institute into the courses she teaches at the University of Cabo Verde. In addition, LL joined with two other BSU graduates, HM and ZV, to write and publish a 5th grade English Language textbook, commissioned by the Cape Verde Ministry of Education. LL also planned two 1-week workshops for CV teachers on Formative Assessment and Differentiated Instruction, two important topics she learned about during her studies at BSU. During her interview, LL noted that since graduating from BSU she is working “to change the teacher-centered approach (that is widely used in Cape Verde).” She told interviewers, “I want to get close to (my students) so I can understand how they work, how they think, their background… so I can make the material comprehensible and understandable to them.”

JV: JV earned his Master’s Degree at BSU, taught briefly at UniCV, and was appointed City Councilman for Youth and Culture in the region of Santa Cruz. As a Councilman, JV was charged with bringing new ideas and opportunities for youth to a region of 26 communities and approximately 30,000 people. JV noted that some of the best things he took from his education at BSU were what he called “transferable skills”, i.e. skills like leadership, the importance of community, and the importance of developing activities for youth. He is most proud of his accomplishments in the area of youth housing and the development of a youth center that provides space where teenagers can go during their free time to use computers, to work on homework, to get job training and to find out about work opportunities. JV remarked during his interview, “I like getting my hands dirty… with the people, so as to make things happen. I believe that is the influence of Bridgewater. Making things happen, getting your hands dirty and working as a team.”

RF: Similar to JV, after completing his Master’s Degree in Education at Bridgewater State University, RF taught at the University of Cabo Verde and was afterwards appointed as City Councilor for Work, Infrastructure, and Transportation, in the region of Assomada. At the time of the interview, RF had been in that position for only 1.5 years and had already more than doubled the number of building projects completed and in progress. He credited BSU for giving
him knowledge and skills in what he calls “Servant Leadership” and in an interview with researchers he mentioned how Bridgewater State University’s motto “Not to be ministered unto, but to minister” has become the driving force behind his administration, in a government where, he said, “the opposite is often the case”. He noted specifically how his entire Bridgewater experience instilled in him the importance of group decision making, active listening, and modeling, “all of which favor human relationships, group dynamics, and positive accomplishments.” RF told interviewers, “I took the leadership skills I observed at Bridgewater and when I accepted this position, I used them as my foundation, favoring ‘people work’ over ‘paperwork’.”

ZV: Upon returning to Cape Verde, ZV was an English language translator and taught as a professor of English at the University of Cabo Verde. Later, she opened a private school whose mission is to teach English to the community. The school, the English Language Learning Institute of Cape Verde, addresses the English language learning needs of the entire community, including children, teenagers, and adults (website: ellcv.cv). As noted above, ZV joined with LL and HM to write and publish a 5th grade English Language textbook, commissioned by the Cape Verde Ministry of Education.

**Specific Recommendations for Bridgewater State University and the University of Cabo Verde:**

The findings of this preliminary study show that Bridgewater State University’s relationship with the University of Cabo Verde and BSU’s offering of graduate degree and undergraduate exchange programs to students from UniCV is clearly building capacity, and the results indicate that these scholarship programs to Cape Verde students should continue, though some slight changes in policies, procedures, and intended outcomes might be considered.

One of the first suggestions proffered by graduates and exchange program participants is that the two universities, UniCV and BSU, show potential applicants the benefits of applying for these programs at BSU, especially in terms of the impact returning graduates of the programs have had on Cape Verde, its institutions, and its communities. They suggested that UniCV and BSU clarify the goals of the relationship, as well as the specific roles of each institution, roles for which they should somehow be held accountable.

The focus group requested that Bridgewater State University help the graduates and exchange program completers establish a Cape Verde chapter of the BSU Alumni Association. Focus group participants asked for help from BSU on this, specifically around the process by which alumni associations ought to be formed, how they should ultimately be structured, and the requirements for establishing an international alumni association. In addition, the focus group recommended that an increased variety of BSU programs be offered to incoming students from Cape Verde: in teaching, English language learning, business, finance, and other areas of specific importance to Cape Verde and its people.

Program graduates and completers suggested the University of Cabo Verde attempt to be more informative and involved in the scholarship program than they have in the past and that UniCV consider creating a knowledgeable and involved Liaison Office for students applying to study abroad, especially those studying at BSU. They recommended the University explain up front that while the potential for working at UniCV might exist for some after they complete their degrees at Bridgewater State University, graduates should not depend on that happening, and should prepare themselves to work in a professional capacity elsewhere. The focus group
suggested UniCV work to develop and provide to potential applicants a list of professional positions available in Cape Verde that are not in teaching or school administration, but exist in other vocational or professional domains. They also recommended that the University of Cabo Verde work to assist new graduates in obtaining these jobs.

Conclusion

As noted above, BSU has, since 2008, been awarding scholarships to Cape Verdean undergraduate and graduate students from the University of Cabo Verde to attend, engage in academic study, and graduate from Bridgewater State University. To date, 52 Cape Verdean men and women have received scholarships, attended semester abroad programs, and graduated with degrees from BSU. The results of the current study show these scholarship programs as being demonstrably successful, and support their continuance, with minor adjustments as described above.

In addition, two outstanding conclusions emerged from the research: specifically, the importance of the “hidden curriculum” (Semper and Blasco, 2018; Wren, 1999) and the strong desire of scholarship program completers to return to Cape Verde and build and implement a life-long professional agenda there, instead of in the U.S.

Hidden Curriculum

In their article on the implicit inclusion of the hidden curriculum in courses and other experiences in higher education, Semper and Blasco (2018) define hidden curriculum as “what is implicit and embedded in educational experiences in contrast with the formal statements about curricula and the surface features of educational interaction” (p.482). Beyond content, college students learn ways to get along socially, to interact with others, to think, to respond, to lead at times and to follow at others, to collaborate, to weigh ideas and to come to conclusions. These are most often unacknowledged, sometimes subliminal, and not directly taught. Scholarship and program completers surveyed and interviewed for this study repeatedly mentioned hidden curriculum constructs as some of the best “take-aways” from their time spent at Bridgewater State University.

All subjects indicated newly gained abilities in “relating to different cultures” or “learning to adapt”. Others noted from their time at BSU they internalized the importance of teamwork, goal setting, critical thinking, open-mindedness, confidence, and leadership. One participant told researchers, “Some of the things I took note of in the U.S. that I liked a lot… first there was the issue of punctuality… but also commitment to your work… and this is something that I learned and brought back with me.” (JV)

Intent to Return to Cape Verde

While some publications note involvement between the United States and Cabo Verde going back to the 1600’s, according to the United States Department of State (2019), the United States and Cabo Verde began to establish close connections with each other during the growth of the whaling industry in the 1700’s. Whaling ships intersected with the islands of Cabo Verde in search of supplies and workers, and many Cape Verdeans left Cabo Verde in the employ of those ships, emigrating permanently to the U.S., and building lives and families there. This tradition of emigration has continued into the 21st century, with Cape Verdeans concentrating primarily in
the states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and resulting in a New England Cape Verdean diaspora that has been said to rival the Cape Verdean population on the islands themselves. (United States Department of State, 2019)

According to the Boston Planning and Development Agency (Bostonplans.org, 2017), 65,000 Cape Verdeans live within a 50-mile radius of Bridgewater State University, primarily in BSU’s service region cities of Boston, Brockton, Taunton, and New Bedford. The centuries-long historical connection discussed above, along with this high concentration of country men and women within a short drive of each other, would seem to be a strong attractant for permanent migration, keeping newly educated and degreed Cape Verdeans within the boundaries of Massachusetts. Writing about transnational migration, Levitt & de la Dehesa (2003) explain reasons for this, noting in the final analysis that “Heightened globalization enables some and pushes other migrants into maintaining strong ties to their countries of origin even as they are incorporated into the countries that receive them” (p. 3). The literature demonstrates that Cape Verdeans and Cape Verdean Americans in the BSU service region hold powerful bonds with both the U.S. and Cape Verde, held together by history, tradition, food, music, language, and more, making one finding of this study, i.e. that 92% of the responding graduates and exchange program completers planned from the beginning to return to Cape Verde after the completion of their studies at Bridgewater State University and to establish a professional career back home as particularly important.

Bratsberg (1995) describes the migration model of Borjas (1987, 1992) which predicts that those migrants most likely to stay in a host country will be determined by the value placed on learned skills in the source country as compared to that in the host. If the source country values skills at an even greater level than the host country, international students are more likely to return home. Bratsberg’s (1995) own study found that differences in economic and political conditions in source countries explains why international students may be more likely to return to their home country, that is, if it values highly their investments in education. Subjects in this current study indicated they felt that their achievements would be greatly valued in Cape Verde.

Juditte Nascimento, then Reitor at the University of Cabo Verde told researchers, “(One BSU graduate) at this moment is developing a program with African partners, all because he has these skills which he acquired there at BSU and has brought back to Cape Verde. (Another), who was one of the students who attended BSU, she developed an interesting program, that was originally a radio program, called UNICV KIDS. She brings children from various entities, including agencies that care for at-risk youth, and during the summer, she develops a summer program for children. (What she learned at BSU) has had a significant impact.”

When asked why, after receiving a Master’s Degree at Bridgewater State University as an international student, he returned home to Cape Verde to begin his professional life, Jacquelino V., who we met at the beginning of this article, replied, “A lot of people have asked me, ‘Why didn’t you stay in the United States?’ I said, ‘I want to make a difference. I can make a difference here (at home). In the United States I would be just one more person. Here in Cabo Verde, especially in my community… I will make a lot of difference.’”
List of Works Cited