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ENDING SLAVERY IN CABO VERDE: BETWEEN MANUMISSION AND EMANCIPATION, 1856-1876

Lumumba H. Shabaka*

Howard University, USA

Abstract:

This article explores the ending of slavery in Cabo Verde by using the Committee of Protection of Slaves and Freed-person. Rather than just following the directives from Lisbon, it shows that local leaders were reluctant to establish the institution and cautiously approached the abolition of slavery in the colony. Nevertheless, enslaved Africans and their descendants fully exploited the new laws to gain nominal freedom. Like other parts of the Atlantic world, being freed was a state between manumission and emancipation, because there were struggles over payments, 'rights' for the manumitted individuals and mandatory seven years services were required by law.

Key Words:

Slavery, West Africa, Cabo Verde, Emancipation, Manumission.

Although manumission in Cape Verde started as early as the late fifth century, the *Junta Protectora dos Escravos e Libertos* (Committee for the Protection of Slaves and Freed Peoples), a legal apparatus to end slavery in Cape Verde, was established only in 1856.¹ It was a legalistic, gradual

*. Lumumba H. Shabaka is an Assistant Professor in the History Department at Howard University, with a Ph.D. in African History from Michigan State University, 2013. His research interest is social and cultural history of pre-colonial West Africa, slave trade and slavery.

1. António Carreira, *Cabo Verde: formação e extinção de uma sociedade escravocrata (1460-1878)* (Porto: Imprensa portuguesa, 1972); António Brásio, *História e missiologia: inéditos e esparsos* (Luanda, Angola: Instituto de Investigação Científica de Angola, 1973); Toby Green, 'Building Slavery in the Atlantic World: Atlantic Connections and the Changing Institution of Slavery in Cabo Verde, Fifteenth-Sixteenth Centuries', *Slavery & Abolition*, 32:2, 227-45.

process in which local abolitionists seemed almost absent, and the process focused on the remuneration of slaveholders.² Apparently, the *Junta* was presided over by powerful men, perhaps mostly *brankus* (whites) and *mestiço* (mixed), who possessed slaves, rendering them far from impartial in deciding the fate of slaves and freed persons.³ On September 4, 1857, the Praia City County Administration listed the population of the town of Praia as the follows: 221 Europeans; 1,302 'indigenous'; and 472 slaves out of 1,995 inhabitants.⁴ Cape Verde was the first racialized Atlantic slave society.

Europeans tended to assume the highest echelons of power in Cape Verde, including being slaveholders. Thus, the *Junta's* descriptions of the stories and complaints must be read with skepticism without dismissing all the stories, such as the sketches of the plight of slaves, otherwise these marginalized people would remain nameless and voiceless in the annals of Cape Verdean history.⁵ The baptismal records, book of slave registry, and the *Boletim Official Governor Geral de Provincia de Cabo Verde* (Official Bulletin of the Province of Cape Verde), and the *Junta's* deliberations allows some micro-history and biographical outlines that enable a better understanding of macro-structural developments, which is new to the study of slavery in Cape Verde.

In this article, the focus is on the creation of the *Junta* and the social consequences for slaves, freed people, and slaveholders. First, an introduction of the establishment of the *Junta* is provided. Second, then the article explores the issues of the manumission of minors promulgated by a new law, which required baptismal and godparents to purchase their godchildren's freedom. Third, the social effects of the *Junta* is interrogated, particularly the issues of manumission, inheritance, and complaints. Fourth, the article examines the issues of crime, punishment, and

2. For the perspective of Portuguese Empire about abolition see, João Pedro Marques, *Sá da Bandeira e of im da escravidão: Vitória da moral, desforra do interesse*. (Imprensa de Ciências Sociais Series. (Lisbon, Portugal: Instituto Ciências Sociais, 2008); Marques, *The Sounds of Silence, Nineteenth-century Portugal and the Abolition of the slave*, trans. Richard Wall (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006); Seymour Drescher and Pieter C. Emmer, *Who Abolished Slavery? Slave Revolts and Abolitionism. A Debate with João Pedro Marques* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010); João Filho Lopes, *Abolição da escravatura: subsídios para o estudo* (Praia, Cape Verde: Spleen, 2006).

3. This is not to imply that only whites and *mestiços* were slavesowners;

4. *Boletim Official do Governo Geral a Provincia de Cabo Verde* (BOCV), Numero 18, 1857, 91, Praia, Instituto de Arquivo Histórico Nacional de Cabo Verde (IAHNCV). The reference to Praia would refer to only the Plateau, which is the main business district area of Praia today.

5. Cláudio Alves Furtado, 'Raça, Classe e Etnia Nos Estudos e Em Cabo Verde: As Marcas do Silêncio', *Afro-Ásia* 45 (2012): 143-71.

exile as they related to slaves and freed people (*liberto*), although it also included freeborn individuals. Within the abolition strategy of the Portuguese Empire, Cape Verde's strategy for ending slavery was similar to the gradual and legalistic abolition of slavery in Angola, São Tomé, and other Portuguese possession, particularly with the omnipresent specter of the British Empire exerting pressure on the Portuguese Empire to end the slave trade. Initially, Portugal reluctantly accepted the abolitionist pressure of Britain, because of their debt to the latter's support, when France invaded Portugal, causing the monarchy to flee to Brazil in 1807. Suspicious that the British, colluding with the French, invoked the abolition of the slave trade, at least in the Upper Guinea Coast, to gain another foothold in West Africa, such as with the case of Bolama, Portugal was cautiously hesitant to loose any colonial territory.⁶ Economically, Portuguese was too weak to quickly abolish slavery, but British encroachments further exacerbated and threatened its feeble colonial grip. Moreover, the exiling of 'criminals' to Upper Guinea followed patterns to that of other Portuguese possessions, such as Brazil, São Tomé, and Angola, as well as Portugal itself.

Creation of the *Junta*

On 1 March 1856, António Maria Barreiros Arrobas, general governor of Cape Verde, noted that the Ministry of Trade of Marine and Overseas enacted the Decree of 14 December 1854, which was to promote the freeing and protection of slaves and freed persons in the overseas provinces.⁷ In order to verify the manumission of slaves, the Decree stipulated that slaveholders must register a title for their slaves.⁸ This would create the only substantial slave census for Cape Verde.

On 12 November 1856, in Praia, Barreiros Arrobas, governor general of Cape Verde, demanded that 'all the authorities' of his government cooperate with the 'solicitations' made by the interim president of the *Junta* to comply with the Decree.⁹ As the architect of the Decree, Bernardo de Sá Nogueira de Figueiredo (but commonly referred to as Sá de Bandeira), in December 1856, reaffirmed that the *Junta* was created:

6. Filho, *Cabo Verde Abolição da Escravatura*, 35-43; Philip J. Havik, "'A Commanding Commercial Position': The African Settlement of Bolama Island and Anglo-Portuguese Rivalry (1830-1870)" in *Brokers of Change, Atlantic Commerce and Cultures in Precolonial Western Africa*, ed. Toby Green (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 333-77.

7. BOCV, numero 185, 1856, 793-4.

8. BOCV, numero 187, 1856, 815.

9. BOCV, numero 200, 1856, 919.

with special coffers, to apply manumission for infants age 5 (or younger) along with baptism and payment of 5,000 réis to the slave owner in compliance with Article 30 of the Decree; help slaves; promote freedom of slaves; calculate each semester a disposable amount for next the semester to apply for manumission; they should make semiannual reports in compliance with Article 44 by providing detailed accounts of cases of manumission.¹⁰

The state imposed a tax of 200 réis on each freed slave, regardless of age or sex, although individuals age 50 and older were exempted.

Another focus of the law was to control the movement of slaves and end internal slavery in the archipelago. There were a series of decrees *10 December 1836, 25 July 1842, 21 February 1851, and finally, 17 March 1852), which basically stated that families that owned slaves could travel intra-island, but only with two slaves per family, and only with the consent of the slave owner. Entering and departing the different islands, the slaveholder's family had to provide title of the slaves. In March 1857, Arrobas notified the local authorities that the ordinance of the Ministry of Marine and Overseas, no. 44 (10 March 1857), 'prohibited the entry of slaves to the island of São Vicente,' whether from other islands from Cape Verde or the *pontas* [estates] of Portuguese Guinea.¹¹ Although slavery and the entry of slaves were prohibited there, manumission records reveal that slaves were liberated in São Vicente, which meant that some slaves did enter the island. São Vicente was the last of the inhabited islands to be settled, beginning in the late 1700s. The justification for barring slavery and entry of slaves was that São Vicente had been selected to become the new capital and form a new economy based on supplying coal (and functioning as a telegram center) to passing European ships, particularly the British.

Enacting these laws, however, would prove difficult, especially in the initial phase, because making the *Junta* functional was a gradual process, and the appointments and nominations of officials became bureaucratic problems. On 14 September 1858 and 3 July 1860, Pedro Marciano de Freitas Abreu, acting deputy crown attorney and agriculture, was nominated to be secretary of the *Junta*.¹² On 19 December 1861, Carlos Augusto Franco, general governor of Cape Verde, said that Abreu's first position was 'incompatible' with the other two nominations. In the meantime, Abreu's replacement was Carlos Augusto.¹³

10. BOCV, numero 11, 1857, 50-1.

11. BOCV, numero.177, 1855, 746.

12. BOCV, numero 50, 1861, 229.

13. He should not be confused with the governor of Cape Verde, Carlos Augusto Franco.

Even after appointing a presiding officer for the *Junta*, on 3 December 1863, Governor Franco proclaimed that the establishment of the *Junta* was not functional, despite the Decree of 1856.¹⁴ Franco said that this was a great “public failure” and that the local administration did not fulfill the mandate of the Royal Decree. Franco said that the *Junta* should be operational within two months. In part, the difficulty in implementing the Decree was due to reluctant officers and noncompliant subjects.

On 25 February 1859, for instance, the administration of the island of Maio noted that freed slaves resisted providing the mandatory seven years of service.

The Administration of Municipality of Maio noted that the Ministry of Marine and Overseas stipulated that freed slaves under Article 29 and the only paragraph of the decree of 14 December 1854 that slaves who obtained their freedom by the general law charter must serve mandatory seven years of service in conformity with the regulation of 25 October 1853.¹⁵

There was a clarification of the law and Decree, which stated, ‘Besides slaves belonging to the state, and in the provinces, slaves under the custody of the local chambers/municipalities and charity organizations (*Misericordias*), upon obtaining freedom, they must also serve the state or corporations.’¹⁶ The corporations were private entities not controlled by the state, such as properties of slave owners, which included slaves. Perhaps, these seven years of service or apprenticeship for freed slaves to their former owners created a dependency and paternalistic relation between the two sides. In Post-emancipation period, some slaves adopted their master’s surname and remained very close to the family, maybe, due to survival strategies.¹⁷

During the nineteenth century, the laws became clearer on slave treatment. The Decree of 16 January 1837 stipulated that sub-delegates of ordinary judges did not have jurisdiction to rule on matters pertaining to slaves fleeing their master to abstain from performing their obligations,

14. BOCV, numero 1, 1864, 1.

15. *Secretaria Geral do Governo* (SGG) Cx. N.º 576, P-04, avulso. Correspondência Recebida do Junta Protectora dos Escravos e Libertos, Fevereiro-Dezembro 1857, 7 peças (avulso): originais e cópias manuscritos; Praia, Instituto de Arquivo Histórico Nacional de Cabo Verde (IAHNCV).

16. BOCV, numero 199, 1856, 910.

17. For lingering relationship between former slaves/their family and master’s family see, Américo C. Araújo, *Little Known, The European Side of Cape Verde Islands: A Contribution to the Knowledge of a People* (New Bedford, MA: DAC, 2000), 175;177–8.

but issues related to farming was the responsibility of the court judge.¹⁸ However, with the creation of the *Junta*, these issues would eventually be resolved though with slow-pace and favoured the slave-owners.

Freeing Slaves via the Womb and Baptism

The Law of 25 and 25 July 1855 declared that children of slave women born in Portuguese overseas possessions were free.¹⁹ The Ministry of Marine and Oversea notified the *Junta* to comply with the law of 30 June 1856, which concerned the manumission of slaves and children of slave women, by September 1857.²⁰ Sá de Bandeira emphasized that it was via baptism and payment that the children of slaves would be manumitted. The Decree of 14 December 1854, Article 6, title 2 stated that slaves that 'belonged' to churches were also free.

Although Church records show that children of slave mothers were being baptized before this law was enacted, the incentive was now linked to the mother's womb, i.e., slave child must be age 5 or younger, were eligible for manumission via baptism but with compensation due to the slave owner. Hence, baptism alone did not mean a slave child would be released from bondage or repatriated to his or her kin group. The law of manumission was based on remunerating the slaveholder. The local Church and the State continued to collaborate, just like when both sanctioned slavery, and now they were working together to gradually abolish slavery, which Marques coins *tolerationism*.²¹ At the beginning of colonization of the Cape Verde with Catholicism as the official state religion, baptism meant becoming part of a new community with a new identity (i.e., African slaves were christened with a Christian name).²² Now, it was being used as moral rhetoric to end their enslavement and create a new bourgeois colonial order.

The important people in the baptismal records were the godparents, who usually provided payment for the manumission. The notion of kinship as relates to godparents in these baptismal acts is not straightforward, but the godparents' significance becomes apparent as some names reappear

18. BOCV, numero 204, 1856, 945.

19. BOCV, numero 203, 1856, 939.

20. SGG, Caixa (Cx.) N.º 576, P-04, avulso.

21. Marques, *The Sounds of Silence*, 1-3; 22-7.

22. António Correia e Silva, 'A sociedade Agrária, Gentes das Águas: Senhores, Escravos e Forros', in *História Geral de Cabo Verde*, 2nd ed., vol. II. Coordenação, Luís de Albuquerque and Maria Emília Madeira Santos (Lisbon, Portugal: Centro de Estudos de História e Cartografia Antiga, Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical; Praia: Direcção Geral do Património Cultural de Cabo Verde, 1991), 313.

in baptismal manumission cases. Although there is a clear Catholic dimension, godparents should not be seen exclusively from a Catholic perspective, but rather in terms of fostership and kinship groups that were common in Upper Guinea.²³ In the secular realm, godparents served as part of a social network, and cemented social bonding and mutual aid. Thus, the following stories of slave children's baptism represent the new initiative of abolition of slavery in Cape Verde with godparents playing a decisive role.

The Church was an important institution in ending slavery in Cape Verde and propagating the ideal identity of the masses. In January 1853, in the *Nossa Senhora da Graça* (Our Lady of Grace) Church in Praia, M. Carmo, a female slave of Gregorio Xavier, had a baby boy named Joaquim.²⁴ On 3 April 1853, Joaquim was baptized and his godparents, Francisco João Pereira and Antonia Gonçalves Pereira, paid 10,000 réis for his 'freedom [*liberdade*] and manumission [*alforio*].' The sum was twice the amount for the prescribed manumission of children; however, this was before the creation of the *Junta*. Perhaps *liberdade* was to remove the mandatory apprenticeship and *alforio* included mandatory service.

Some cases demonstrate baptism of a slave child linked to manumission without providing any details about compensation, but clearly identified the godparents as an indication of compensation. In the Lady of Our Grace Church in Praia, on 16 April 1856, Olimpia, slave of Gilberto da Silva, baptized her daughter Bernandina, who was born in 1855.²⁵ With the agreement of the slave owner, the godparents, Bernardo José da Silva and Theresa Cacilda Medina 'freed' Bernandina, but it does not state the amount paid. For instance, on 14 February 1856, Domingas de Affonseca, slave of Marcelino Antonio do Affonseca, gave birth to a boy named Valentin. In February 1856, his godparents, Valentin Tavares Correia and Maria José Ferreira, baptized him, enabling his manumission. Perhaps the mother named her son after the godfather. In a similar case in March 1856, Jusana, slave of Antoni Francisco Costa, gave birth to Luisa. In June 1856, his godparents, João Cabral Franco and Guiomas Leopodina Abreu, baptized Luisa, resulting in his manumission. However, the *Junta* also made payment: the law stipulated that if the godparents could not remunerate the slaveholders, the *Junta* would. Although some slave owners did grant freedom without payment, baptismal records indicate that compensation was the most common path towards 'freedom.'

23. Philip Havik, *Silences and Soundbytes: The Gendered Dynamics of Trade and Brokerage in the Pre-Colonial Guinea Bissau Region* (Munster, Germany: Lit Verlag, 2004), 86.

24. SGG, Cx. N.º.1, Peça N.º.2, Conservatória dos Registos Centrais, folha (f.) 3.

25. SGG, Cx. N.º.1, Peça N.º.2, Conservatória dos Registos Centrais, 37.

Other cases were implicit about payment by either godparents or the *Junta* by noting that slave children were manumitted in 'accordance to the law,' i.e., baptism and remuneration. On 19 January 1857, in the same church in Praia, Isabel, slave of Henrique José d' Oliveira, baptized her daughter Mariana.²⁶ The baptismal record stated that the child was freed in accordance with the law, which meant that her godparents, Antonio Diogo and Maria das Dores Nascimento d'Oliveira, both natives of Portugal, paid the required amount.²⁷ In addition, in 1857, Lourenço Antonio de Lima and Henriqueta Pereira da Fonseca freed their goddaughter, Elena, a daughter of Arcangela who was a slave of Valentim Tavares Corrêa, in the same manner via baptism. Another example is from May 15, 1857: Maria Fonseca, who was a slave, gave birth to Amelia and with baptism on July 26, 1857, her baby was 'freed in accordance with the law' by her godparents Jozé Joaquim and Rita Gomes.

Other cases illustrate that godparents paid for manumission because local authorities received a receipt for the transaction. For instance, in January 1859, Domingas, a slave of Luis Antonio Fortes, gave birth to Paulo, whom she baptized in May 1859 at the church in Praia.²⁸ That the 'receipt' of payment presented to Luis Antonio Fortes by Luis Mendes Lopes in accordance with the law testified to Paulo's manumission. His godparents, Pílinio Mendes and Maria Mendes Lopes, who were both from Praia, paid 5,000 *réis*, the amount stipulated by law. In addition, in July 1861, Maria de Conceição, a slave of Pedro Luiz Cordeiro, had a baby girl named Henriqueta, and her godparents, Antonio João Menezes and Maria Purgueira de Jezus, paid Cordeiro 5,000 *réis* with baptism to manumit her in January 1862.²⁹

In September 1862, Maria Felicidade, a slave of Major Crato, gave birth to Carolina, who was baptized. Crato received 5,000 *réis*, and Carolina was freed in October 1862.³⁰ Major Jozé Xavier Crato was a prominent member of the military and a slaveholder. In May 1869, Major Crato freed some of his other slaves, but the document does not indicate who paid the remuneration, if any, for Francisco, Francisco dos Santos, Marçallo, Policarpo, Luiz Antonio, Joaquim Pedro, Theodoro, Caetano, Felicidade, Antonia, Joanna, Violante, Lucio, and Eugenia.³¹

Other acts of manumission did not indicate that any godparents, compensation, or reference to 'the law,' which suggests that slave owners

26. SGG, Cx. N.1, Peça N. 2, Livro de 1855, f.46.

27. SGG, Cx. N.1, Peça N. 2, Livro de 1855, f.46.

28. SGG, Cx. N. 1, Peça N. 2, Livro de 1855, f.76.

29. SGG, Cx. N.º 1, Peça N.º 2, Livro de 1855, f.130.

30. SGG, Cx. N.º 1, Peça N.º 2, Livro de 1855, f.145.

31. BOCV, numero 38, 1869, 226.

granted manumission on their own volition, but this was the most unlikely path towards ‘freedom.’ In May 1858, Banlha/Ganlla, a slave of Manoel Saches Freire, gave birth to a boy, Christened José.³² In June 1858, José was ‘freed in the act of baptism with the consent of his owner.’³³ Likewise, in May 1862, Maria da Graça, slave of Luis João Pinto, gave birth to Eugenia. By receiving a baptism in August 1862, her slave owner manumitted Eugenia. Neither case acknowledged any godparents or reference to ‘the law.’ Unless the *Junta* recompensed the slaveholders, the latter gratuitously freed their slaves. Below, in table 1, is a sample of slave children manumitted in 1863.

Table 1. Manumitted Child Slaves Recorded in City of Praia of Santiago, 1-30 March 1863.

Number Of Slave Holders	Number of Registered Freed Persons	Male	Female	Amount of Emolument for each slave	Observations
70	126	65	61	500 réis	Amount Retained by the Junta: 31,500 réis

Source: *Boletim Oficial do Governo Geral da Provincia de Cabo-Verde*, N.º 14, 1863, 76.

Manumission and Ambivalent Freedom

‘Freedom’ was an ambivalent notion, because manumission did not mean the end of service to the owner or the state. In the Atlantic world, it was usually an apprenticeship of seven years, which was to inculcate the bourgeois notion of work and citizenry, because freed slaves tended to work for self-sustenance. The meaning of citizenship and freedom was still tied to religion, race, class, and social origin. In January 1863, the *Junta* stated that it should use the money in its coffers to free slaves, because slaves were petitioning for assistance on a daily basis, but the *Junta* also was cognizant of its budgetary limitation in order to have money for other expenses.³⁴ Privately owned slaves could purchase their freedom, but state-owned slave were automatically manumitted. Freed slaves

32. SGG, Cx. N.º 1, Peça N.º2, Livro de 1855, f.66.

33. SGG, Cx. N.º 1, Peça N.º2, Livro de 1855, f.66.

34. SGG, Cx. N.º 576, P-09.

carried a *carta de liberdade* (freedom letter) to prove their new status. Conflict and tension ensued due to price dispute for manumission and when *libertos*, freed slaves, had to perform the mandatory seven years of service. Slaves also filed petitions about harsh treatment and refused to do work, and slaves attempted to benefit from the new legislations by interpreting the new laws to their advantage. Finally, the government also emancipated some slaves when the *Junta* and individual efforts were not enough, particularly regarding special cases.

In March 1859, the *Junta* demonstrated the difficulty in complying with the Ordinance of the Ministry of Marine and Oversea (*Ministerio da Marinha e Ultramar*). The case involved ten freed slaves that were to serve as sailors (*marinheiros d' Armada*) under the commander of the Sado War Brig (*Commandante do Brigue de Guerra Sado*).³⁵ In accordance with Article 29 of the Decree of 14 December 1854, the local administrator of the island of Maio (*Concelho de Maio*) stipulated that the freed slaves should follow this order. In Maio, Manoel Loff, a *liberto*, pulled out a knife and demanded his freedom rather than becoming a sailor. The local authorities of Maio deemed Manoel Loff's reaction as menace to the social harmony of the island and submitted a petition to the *Junta*. *Libertos* contested this type of freedom, which was an apprenticeship. The local authorities of Maio sent Manoel to Praia, the capital, on the schooner *Abelha* for deliberation by the *Junta*, claiming that his act disturbed 'public tranquility.'

In May 1858, the reverend bishop of Cape Verde presided over a complaint by Pedro Semedo Cardozo that his *liberto*, Antonio, 'refused to work.'³⁶ The *Junta* stated that *libertos* may be reluctant to work, but that the law obligated them for continued service. Once manumitted, *libertos* were sometimes sent to another island to complete their service. For instance, in 1868, the *Junta* mentioned that some freed slaves were sent to Sal, which included Cecilio, a *liberto* of Pedro Semedo Cardozo.³⁷

The colonial government implemented 'public works' by conscripting members of the lower classes. In July 1864, on Maio Island, the colonial state used slaves for 'public works' because their owners could not sustain them during the 'crisis,' i.e., the chronic drought and famine in the archipelago.³⁸ However, 156 slaves were 'excluded' from this work, because former slaves 'complained' that their slave owners abandoned them anticipating the rainy season (*as aguas*). The *Junta* emphasized the potential

35. SGG Cx. N.º 576, P-04, avulso.

36. SGG, Cx. N.º 576, P-05.

37. SGG, Cx. 576, P-12, avulso.

38. SGG, Cx. N.º 576, P-08.

for 'robbery' by and of depraved slaves. Given the owner's negligence for food provisions during famine, slaves rebelled by using violence to survive.

The *Junta's* greatest complaints concerned disputes over the price of manumission, because slaves were anxious to take advantage of the law to quickly secure their freedom. Lucas Augusto, a slave of Libania Amarante Augusto, exemplifies the struggle for adequate compensation. In December 1864, the *Junta* considered Lucas Augusto's petition regarding the price of his manumission. Libania requested 20,000 réis for freeing Lucas, who apparently found this too expensive.³⁹ The *Junta* resolved the quarrel, but as a *liberto* he still had to agree to the seven years of mandatory service to his former owner. From Praia, the *Junta* sent Lucas Augusto to Sal.⁴⁰ Perhaps the *Junta* paid for the remaining amount, and Lucas worked in Sal collecting salt, which was one of the main exports of that island. There were several prominent slaveholders and disputes over price, and I will provide details about these cases. For instance, a prominent woman slaveholder was *Dona* Maria de Santa Frederico.

Prominent Woman Slaveholder: *Dona* Maria de Santa Frederica

In São Nicolau Tolentino Parish, part of Praia County in Santiago, *Dona* Maria de Santa Frederico was a prominent woman. In the Lusophone Atlantic world, people used the title *dona* to indicate respect for women of high status. *Dona* Frederico had at least twenty-one slaves. A baptismal record of São Nicolau Tolentino notes that she was 'the fourth in filiations of all the parish.'⁴¹ Perhaps *Dona* Frederico was a Church enthusiast, but she was also very concerned with the material goods of life.

In December 1868, the *Junta* had a hearing concerning a petition made by Paulo, a slave of *Dona* Maria de Santa Frederico, in a dispute regarding the price for manumission.⁴² Eduardo José Rodrigues Fernandes, secretary of the *Junta*, who owned at least two slaves, had written to the judge of São Nicolau Tolentino Parish (Maria de Santa Frederico's residency at Agoa de Gato fell under that jurisdiction) to uphold or dismiss the amount of 40,000 réis, which the *Junta* deemed fair.⁴³ In 1868, in São Nicolau Tolentino Parish, Joaquim Pereira de Carvalho was the justice of the peace

39. SGG, Cx. N.º 576, P-09.

40. SGG, Cx. 576, P-12.

41. SGG, Cx. n.23, peça 2, Registo Civil da Praia, 156.

42. SGG, Cx. N.º 576, P-04, f.9.

43. BOCV, Numero 38, 1869, 226; SGG, Cx. N.º 576, P-04, f.11.

(*juiz de paz*) and José Antonio Frederico and Francisco de Barros Souza were the substitutes.⁴⁴ The judge that Fernandes wrote to was probably Carvalho. At any rate, Paulo had paid 30,060 *réis* for his freedom, but the slave curator explained that his owner demanded 80,000 *réis*. In December 1868, the *Junta* said that the price was 'excessive'; the local judge of São Nicolau Tolentino and *Junta* finally agreed to a 'maximum' price of 40,000. *Dona* Maria de Santa Frederico consented to the new price, prompting the *Junta* to demand that Paulo gives the remaining balance of 9,940 *réis*. At the end of the deliberations, the *Junta* recommended that the governor uphold the decision rather than 'nullify' it, and they extolled the slave owners because *Dona* Frederico acquiesced to the ruling.⁴⁵

Dona Frederico's female slaves, Marcella, Carlota Frederico, and Cecilia Frere, had children.⁴⁶ Despite the fact that the children had been baptized, there are no indications that *Dona* Frederico emancipated them. In October 1854, Marcella gave birth to twins, Luis and Maria.⁴⁷ In January 1855, Marcella baptized her twins. Their godfather was Luis João de Carvalho, a resident of Penda, and the twins had two godmothers, Maria Claudio Semedo, a resident of Tamosisra, and Luduvina Lopes, a resident of Pinha. The document does not explain the reason behind the selection of two godmothers but only one godfather. The baptism of the twins in 1855 occurred before the Law of the Womb of 1856.

Even with the enactment of the Law of the Womb, the children of *Dona* Frederico's female slaves remained in slavery. In May 1864, her slave, Carlota Frederico, had a baby girl, Maria. In May 1864, Carlota baptized her daughter with the assistance of her godfather, Ijedoro Rodrigues, and her godmother, Maria Rosa Gomes; both were from São Nicolau Tolentino and native to the island of Santiago. Again, there was no manumission. In February 1868, Cecilia Frere gave birth to a boy, Nicolau. In April 1868, Cecilia Frere baptized Nicolau; again, the child remained in bondage. However, in May 1869, *Dona* Frederico liberated the following slaves: Feliciano, Adriano, Agostinho, Guilherme, Serafim, Cezar, Augusto, Anastacia, Jejuina, Julia, Maria Guilhermina, Luiza, Joanna Ribeiro, José, Virginia, Catharina, Gloria, and Marcella.⁴⁸ It is most likely that Marcella was the mother of Luis and Maria. Besides *Dona* Frederico, another major slave-owner was Pedro Semedo Cardozo.

44. BOCV, Numero 48, 1868, 202.

45. SGG, Cx. N.º 576, P-04, f.10.

46. SGG, Cx. N.º 23, peça 2, vulso.

47. SGG, Cx. N.º 23, peça 1, Registo Civil da Praia, 98.

48. BOCV, Numero 38, 1869, 227. The document is silent about restitution.

Pedro Semedo Cardozo: Slave-Owner in Cabo Verde

Pedro Semedo Cardozo was a resident of Colegio in São Nicolau Tolentino Parish.⁴⁹ There was a João Jose Semedo Cardozo, resident of Colegio, who was most likely his relative.⁵⁰ The slave census of 1856 indicated that Pedro Semedo Cardozo owned twenty-seven slaves. With the addition of Felizberta, he owned twenty-eight, which was quite high for the Cape Verdean context.

Table 2. Slaves' Background for Pedro Semedo Cardozo

Name	Born	Age	Skin Color	Occupation
Mathias	Guiné	40	preto ⁵¹	farmer
Dionizio	Guiné	40	fula	farmer
Pedro	São Tiago	41	fula	farmer
Francisco	São Tiago	21	fula	carpenter
Noberto	São Tiago		fula	farmer
Candido	Guiné	46	fula	pastoralist
Cezilo	São Tiago	24	fula	
Jozé	Guiné	20	fula	
Thomas	Guiné	74		farmer
Ambrozio	São Tiago	3	preto	
Claudino	São Tiago	2	preto	
Nicolau	São Tiago	Five months	mulata	
Felipa	São Tiago	47	preta	
Violante	São Tiago	31	preta	
Jezufina	São Tiago	21	preta	
Luiza	Guiné	24	preta	
Camila	São Tiago	18	preta	
Theodora	São Tiago	15	fula	
Maria da Conceição	Guiné	47	preta	
Constança	São Tiago	26	preta	
Gregoria	São Tiago	28	preta	
Thereza	São Tiago	22		
Joaquina	Guiné	34	preta	
Francisca N ^o 1	Guiné	34	preta	
Francisca N ^o 2	Guiné	32	preta	
Marcelina	Guiné	10	preta	
Roza	Guiné	36		

49. SGG, Cx. N.º 23, peça 02.

50. SGG, Cx. N.º 23, peça 02, Registo Civil da Praia, f.117.

51. In general, there was a three-color code system in the slave census: *preta* (black), *mulata* (light-skin), and *fula* (brown). The Portuguese believed that some ethnic Fula were not "jet black," whereas slaves, whether born in Cape Verde or from Upper Guinea, were sometimes described as *cor fula* (fula color).

The census indicated that Roza paid 30,000 *réis* for her manumission on July 4, 1867.⁵² However, the road to manumission for Roza was a decade-long legal battle. In 1857, when Metheuz Severino de Avellar was curator of slaves and *libertos*, he noted that Roza, a slave owned by Pedro Semedo Cardozo, went to Avellar's house and gave him 20,000 *réis* in the presence of Thomas da Costa Ribeiro and Evaristo António Ramos de Figueiredo to buy her freedom.⁵³ Avellar wrote to Cardozo inquiring about the price that Cardozo required for Roza's freedom.

About ten years later, in July 1867, the *Junta* was considering the circumstances of this case, because the amount given to the former curator of slaves was a matter of contention. Avellar testified that he delivered 20,000 *réis* to Cardozo; Roza stated that she had given 90,000 *réis* to Avellar. Evaristo António Ramos de Figueiredo allegedly received 'a certain amount' from Roza. Cardozo claimed to have kept 20,000 *réis* for manumission. Roza paid more to Evaristo, who transferred the money to her slave owner, but Cardozo said that 5,006 *réis* remained for Roza's emancipation. It is difficult to discern the truth, but after ten years, Roza insisted on her position, despite facing very powerful men. If she was fabricating the story, she was quite courageous.

Pedro Semedo Cardozo's female slaves had children. The mothers baptized their children, yet Cardozo did not manumit them, which implies that he demanded indemnification. For example, Cardozo's female slave Francisca Semedo had a baby boy, Anibal.⁵⁴ In October 1858, Anibal's godparents, Thomas da Costa Ribeiro and Henriqueta Leopoldin de Mendonça, both from Colegio and natives of Santiago, baptized her at the São Nicolau Tolentino Church, yet without obtaining freedom.⁵⁵

In a baptismal record, Maria Joaquina was listed as a native of Guiné and a 'servant of Pedro Cardozo.'⁵⁶ In January 1868, Maria gave birth to a baby boy, Sebastino, described as being born a slave.⁵⁷ In June 1868, in the São Nicolau Tolentino Church, Father Pedro Rodrigues Tavares baptized Sebastino. 'The godparents were José Bernardo Rodrigues, a farmer, resident of Fegueira Branca and Roza Maria Tavares,' a slave of Father Tavares, a resident of Colegio, both natives of Guinea.⁵⁸ In July 1870, Maria Joaquina

52. SGG\F2.2\Lvo863, f. 11 frente (f)-f.14v.

53. SGG, Cx.576, P-011; These two men must have been of high social standing in Praia.

54. SGG, Cx. N.º 23, peça 2.

55. This must be the same Thomas da Costa Ribeiro who was present when Roza, a slave of Pedro Semedo Cardozo, paid Avellar for her freedom.

56. SGG, Cx N.º 23, peça 2, Registo Civil da Praia, 161verso (v).

57. SGG, Cx. N.º 23, peça 2, Registo Civil da Praia, 161v.

58. SGG, Cx. N.º 23, peça 2, Registo Civil da Praia, 161v.

gave birth to a baby girl.⁵⁹ Joaquina, however, was listed as resident of São Felipe and *liberto* of Pedro Semedo Cardozo. With her 'freedom,' she no longer lived in Colegio with her master. Presumably she still worked for him, but preferred to live in a different place. In July 1870, in Our Lady of Grace Church in Praia, Father Simeão Gomes Correa, baptized and christened the baby girl as Maria. The godfather was João Tavares and the godmother was Joanna Maria; both were single and farmers.

Finally, in December 1868, Felizberta, a female slave of Semedo Cardozo, had a baby boy.⁶⁰ In February 1869, the boy was christened Januario. His godparents were Lucio Lopes and Archangela Lopes, both single and residents of Colegio. Once again, Cardozo did not grant manumission. As one can see, for most slaveholders compensation was essential for manumission.

Slaves also tried to manipulate the new laws in their interest. For instance, the *Junta* wrote that:

The slaves are indolent by nature, and the laws are incomprehensible to them; they understand that they have legal protection, and they assume they should not work for their owners and that slave owner cannot obligate them to work, because they will not obey the owners, which results in disobedience. The owners punishes them, but slaves argued that the laws prohibit them being physically punished.⁶¹

The *Junta* emphasized that slaves should be protected in conformity with the new law, but they should also be punished when they commit a crime. According to the *Junta*, 'in Angola, S. Thome and other Portuguese possessions, where there is still slavery, they are corporally punished, in accordance to the crime they committed.'⁶² The *Junta* articulated religious and moral parameters to restrict any severe physical punishment in accordance with Decree of 16 December 1854. But some slaves did not just rely on the will of the master, but used the *Junta* for fight for their manumission.

59. SGG, Cx. N.º, peça 2, Livro No.3, Registo Civil da Praia, 77.

60. SGG, Cx, N.º 23, peça 2, Registo Civil da Praia, 178v.

61. SGG, Cx. N.º 576, P-09.

62. SGG, Cx. N.º 576, P-09.

Accusations and Counter-Accusations: The Case of the Female Slave Thereza

Besides issues of money, the *Junta* received complaints from slaves and other entities. In Praia, on 19 April 1859, Thereza, a slave owned by Maria da Conceição, filed a complaint with the governor general counsel (*Conselheiro Governador Geral*) that Maria 'maltreated' her by inflicting injuries. Subsequently, the case was sent to the *Junta*. Maria claimed that Thereza "slowly" inflicted injuries to her hands and feet with the sole purpose of not doing work.⁶³ Maria da Conceição allegedly claimed that her neighbor Maria Ignocencia witnessed this and notified another neighbor, José Sanches. Apparently, a person named Barbara also 'testified' that Thereza 'was not touched and not even threaten[ed].' Maria Ignocencia confirmed Maria da Conceição's statement. When the *Junta* interrogated Thereza, she confessed to the falseness of her complaint.

The *Junta* said that this black woman 'was so perverse' that she stole 600,000 réis from her owner's money hidden in a tin can on top of a table a few days later. She fled to the backyard of the house with the tin can, cracked it open, and stole and hid the money. Apparently, Maria da Conceição confronted her, but Thereza did not confess. Her owner found most of the money buried but Thereza adamantly denied any guilt. The rest of the money was found with a third person. The *Junta* recommended an 'appropriate' punishment. The punishment might have been corporeal or some jail time, which was common for individuals convicted of crimes.

The *Junta* also heard cases about the legality of the enslavement of some slaves. On 3 May 1862, in Praia, the *Junta* began deliberating the legal status of Domingos, a slave of Agostinho José Rodriguez, resident of Santiago.⁶⁴ They made their decision on 8 May 1862. The *Junta* noted that the secretary of the general governor had not registered Domingos. He was a native of Bissau, but was not counted by customs when he entered Cape Verde with Lieutenant Colonel Aloveres da [Piola Deziasasky].⁶⁵ Domingos came from Bissau in 1845 on the Portuguese war grig, *Vouga*.⁶⁶ The *Junta* argued that it did not have the documents to determine his freedom. If the documentation of his registration existed, it was 'inadvertently' given to the curator of slaves. In other words, the bureaucracy could not locate his documents, which made determining his status difficult.

63. SGG, Cx. N.º 576, P-06.

64. SGG, Cx. N.º 576, P-04.

65. SGG, Cx. N.º 576, P-07.

66. SGG, Cx. N.º 576, 07.

Eventually, the *Junta* noted that a certain certificate demonstrated that José was ‘imported by contraband.’ The Decree of 1836 banned the importation and exportation of slaves in Portuguese possessions. Because of this, the *Junta* decided that Domingos technically arrived as a free person. Moreover, Agostinho José Rodriguez did not have the right to register Domingos with the Slave Registry. On 23 May 1862, *Junta* said that Agostinho should properly register Domingos and ‘obtain clarification in the documents.’

Even slaveholders petitioned the *Junta* for assistance. On 14 January 1862, Antonio da Costa Ferreira Borges petitioned the *Junta* to have José, a liberated slave who was a native of Bissau, to be sent to his homeland.⁶⁷ Jose was hospitalized, but Borges complained that this was a financial burden for him. Hence, Borges argued that his former slave was ‘deranged’ and he pleaded with the *Junta* to assist José’s return to his homeland where he could best convalesce. Borges might have been more concerned about what this freed slave was costing him than José’s health. The document does not provide José’s ethnic group or his exact homeland in the Guinea-Bissau region. Moreover, the document is silent about his age or if he had another name. José had been in Cape Verde for about seventeen years.

The *Junta* also paid for the manumission of adults. Gregorio was a native of Santiago, age 26, black, and owned by João Cabral Franco.⁶⁸ On 26 April 1863, in the *praça* across the street from Our Lady of Grace Church in Praia, Franco auctioned Gregorio to Francisco Cardozo de Mello. With Mello’s death, his son, Francisco, inherited Gregorio. On 3 December 1867, Gregorio paid 50,000 réis, with the *Junta* providing 15,000 réis, for his manumission. In another case, the *Junta* manumitted Luiz, who was the slave of Jozé Monteiro d’ Almeida, a resident of São Thiago Corado Parish on 14 July 1866.⁶⁹ Luiz was a mason, a native of Guiné, and age 26 with ‘facial markings.’

Although issue of inheritance, such as the case of Gregorio, could be straightforward, other cases were complicated and people sought assistance from the *Junta*. On 30 August 1869, the *Junta* considered an application by Dionizia Sanches Lopes and Maria dos Reis da Fonseca that demanded ‘manifesto’ (pronouncement) concerning three freed slaves, Athanasio, Antonio, and Lucas, who were owned by Antonio Lopes da Costa.⁷⁰ The three slaves submitted documents requesting their freedom.

67. SGG, Cx. N.º 576, 04.

68. SGG\F2.2\Livro (Lv) 0863, 27 v.

69. SGG\F2.2\Lv0863, 29v.

70. SGG, Cx. N.º576, P-07, f4.

The *Junta* noted that due to the 'instructions of 28 May 1868 [they] denied the solicited registration because there was a lack of endorsement of past manifestos by the requesters.'⁷¹ This referred to Article 6 of Decree of 28 October 1857, which stipulated that a new 'possessor' must register the slave as evidence before manumission. Because Antonio Lopes da Costa died after the proclamation of the Decree of 25 February 1868, the documents were deemed 'insufficient.' The *Junta* noted that Antonio Lopes da Costa had died 'more than four years ago,' which meant Dionizia and Maria's petition for these slaves was legally difficult to succeed. The resolution was that 'legitimate heirs to the couple's assets' prevailed rather than the unlawfully submitted manifesto.

On 2 October 1865, the *Junta* said that a plethora of slaves lodged grievances daily about lack of sustenance as well as maltreatment.⁷² The *Junta* emphasized that when both sides of the stories (from slaveholders and slaves) were heard that the majority of the complaints were false. The *Junta* adjudication was quite prejudicial because those deliberating were well established and some were slaveholders.

In addition to manumissions being issued by the Junta, the governor-general also provided freedom letters for slaves. In 1856, Francisco Alberto Azevedo, a resident of Praia, had six slaves. Four of them were from Guiné and the other two, Virginia and Julia, were born on São Tiago Island. Both under age 5, which suggests that their parents were one of his Guinean female slaves, Constança and/or Jozepha.

Table 3. Francisco Alberto Azevedo's Slaves⁷³

Name	Born	Age	Color
Jozé de Azevedo	Guiné	20	<i>fula</i>
Pedro	Guiné	20	<i>preto</i>
Constança	Guiné	30	<i>fula</i>
Jozepha	Guiné	30	<i>preto</i>
Virginia	São Tiago	4	<i>preto</i>
Julia	São Tiago	1	<i>preto</i>

The governor-general issued a freedom letter for Pedro.⁷⁴ In May 1863, the local authorities altered this information in the slave census of 1856,

71. SGG, Cx. N.º 576, P-07, f.4v.

72. SGG, Cx. N.º 576, P-09.

73. SGG\F2.2\Lv 0863, f.4f-4v.

74. SGG\F2.2\Lv 0863, f.2v.

which means that Pedro was freed between 1856 and 1863. In January 1857, Francisco Alberto Azevedo freed his female slave, Constança, but the local authorities only added this information in the slave census in May 1867.⁷⁵ This was when the push to end slavery in Cape Verde was well underway and keeping updated records became crucial.

Others, nevertheless, were only freed when their owners perished, such as in November 1859, when the death of Maria da Penha Franco, a resident of Praia, freed Rufino in her will.⁷⁶ The latter was a male, from Guiné, age 35, and described as black. On November 1859, Maria da Penha Franco Jaz, who was a slaveholder, passed away in Praia.⁷⁷ (This is not to be confused with Maria da Penha Franco who passed away on the same date.) In her will, Jaz emancipated Forentina, a woman, age 45, from Guine, and also labeled black. *Dona* Anna de Mendonça, a resident of Colegio, divided some of her slaves among her relatives in her will.⁷⁸ According to the slave census of 1856, *Dona* Mendonça had eleven slaves: Paulo Semedo, Manoel, Maria, Jozepha, Maria da Boa Esperança, Izabel, Aniceta, Felisberta, Ignes, Bernardina, and Sabina. Ignes was 20 years of age, born on São Tiago Island and described as *fula*. In May 1855, Ignes had a baby named Bernardina, who was baptized in June 1855.⁷⁹ The godparents were Paulo Nunes and Maria Luanta, both residents of São Nicolau Colegio. Neither the baptismal record nor the slave census mentions her being manumitted. When *Dona* Mendonça died, in February 1866, her daughter, *Dona* Maria Semedo Ferreira, inherited Izabel, who was from Guiné, age 50, and Ignes, a native of São Thiago, age 20, and described as *fula*. In February 1866, Pedro Semedo Cardozo inherited Felizberta, a female slave from Guiné, age 21, and black.⁸⁰ Therefore, manumission came gradually: despite the founding of the *Junta* in 1856, in Cape Verde, slavery was not completely abolished until 1876.

Although obtaining freedom could be a legal nightmare, *libertos*, former owners, and the state had different notions of ‘freedom.’ Thus, ‘freedom’ created tensions and conflicts. The state and the elites used free labor for their personal interests, and legal institutions, such as the *Junta*, usually provided control mechanisms. The colonial state inculcated that an exemplary ‘free’ people were good citizens who perform work for the polity and those who freed them, whether state, private owners, or charity

75. SGG\F2.2\Lv 0863, f.2–2v.

76. SGG\F2.2\Lv 0863, folha 8 frente-f.8 v.

77. SGG\F2.2\Lv 0863, folha 9 frente-f.9 v.

78. 1856/03-1856/05, SGG\F2.2\Lv0863, N.º2, (f) 2.

79. SGG, Cx. N.º 23, peça 1, 105v.

80. SGG\F2.2\Lv0863, 2v.

organizations. The Catholic Church was instrumental in developing the 'free' citizenry by serving as the institution via which manumission was conducted via baptism, but along with the state, it upheld the compensation to the slave-owners. It was, perhaps, a Portuguese Catholic bourgeois notion of citizenry, which is different from the Weberian notion of a Protestant work ethic. In the history of the Portuguese Empire, the discourse about the criminal exiles (*degredados*) was usually laced with religious overtones of impurities that required spiritual purification. James Sweet believes, that 'The logic of banishment mirrored that of purgatory: Once cleansed of one's sins after a period of strict penance, a convict could reenter society and live an upright godly life.'⁸¹ Thus, slaves as heathens (*gentios*) once freed (*liberto*), needed tutelage to become true citizens, i.e., civilized, which the mandatory service for freed persons entailed to accomplish.

Exile to Upper Guinea

The *Junta* meted out punishment not only to libertos who were 'lazy' but also to those who committed 'crimes.' There is a direct link between slaves and prisoners, because the curator of slaves was also the curator of poor prisoners (*curador de escravo e presos pobres*). Rebellious people and those deemed criminals in Cape Verde were a reservoir of foot soldiers. Exile in the Portuguese Empire was used extensively and later colonial powers, such as the British and the French, used it in Africa and other regions. Just like in Brazil and Portugal, *degredados* were sent to Africa; Cape Verde sent them to mainly Portuguese Guinea. In Brazil, there were loose vagrancy laws that restricted movements and gathering of people to acquire people to serve in Angola.⁸² The number of convicts sent to West Africa shows that the colonial government desperately needed foot soldiers in the *praças*, especially those who were resistant to malaria, i.e., Africans.

In Cape Verde, sending exiles to the mainland started with the colonization of the archipelago during the late fifteenth century. Exile was an important factor for commercial activities (i.e., slave trade and 'legitimate' trade) and to wage a war of terror to that eventually would consolidate Portuguese Guinea. In October 1861, in Praia, Carlos Augusto Franco,

81. James Sweet, *Domingos, Álvares, African Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 186.

82. Roquinaldo Ferreira, *Cross-Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World: Angola and Brazil during the Era of the Slave Trade* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012) 192–3.

governor of Cape Verde, emphasized the need to establish with ‘urgency’ a regular means of communication between the fledgling Portuguese Guinea and Cape Verde. Finally, the governor suggested that regular communication would be good not only for the two colonies, but for commerce, which had declined in recent times.

In Portuguese Guinea, elite Cape Verdeans, including slave-owners, commanded the fighting forces of *degradados* that consisted of free poor individuals, slaves, and *libertos*. In 1861, for instance, Major José Xavier Crato, a major slaveholder and graduated major of battalion of artillery of Cape Verde (*Mayor Graduado do Batalhão d’Artilheria de Cabo Verde*) was nominated to be auditor for the War Councils.⁸³ In February 1863, Major Crato, acting as interim governor of Portuguese Guinea, ratified an old treaty of 1843 with the Felupe of Matta de Putama.⁸⁴ From at least 1862 to 1865, Major José Xavier Crato led numerous military expeditions and signed treaties with African rulers. During this period, the Portuguese were at war with several African groups for which they desperately required foot soldiers. For instance, in the military fort (*presidio*) of Geba, they were in conflict with the nearby Beafadas of Badora.⁸⁵ Major Crato was selected to head a delegation to Geba. From the Portuguese perspective, this antagonism by Beafadas attacking the fort stifled trade, particularly because Cape Verdean/Portuguese merchants on the estates (*pontas*) had established themselves in the slave trade and were making the transition to ‘legitimate trade.’

A prominent case handled by the *Junta* concerned *libertos* from São Nicolau Island. In December 1857, João Antonio Leite, an administrator for the Saint Nicholas County (*Concelho de São Nicolau*), lodged a petition about *libertos* who had ‘abandoned’ their masters and were ‘robbing in the streets’ and ‘turned vagabonds.’⁸⁶ Leite requested that the *Junta* to deal with this ‘scandal’ to bring ‘calm to the inhabitants of that island.’ In December 1857, Reverend Robert Fernandes Pinto, president of the *Junta*, wrote that it was beyond his authority to determine the ‘necessary punishment’ for the *libertos*. Therefore, Pinto submitted the case to the governor general counsel (*Conselheiro de Governador Geral*) in December 1857.⁸⁷ In January 1858, Arroba, the governor of Cape Verde, wrote to the Portuguese government seeking ‘authorization’ for the *Junta* to send the

83. BOCV, N.º 46, 1861, 215.

84. SGG, Cx. N.º 347, Peça 3.

85. BOCV, N.º 5, 1862, 27, Continuado do numero antecedente.

86. SGG Cx. N.º 576, P-04, f.22–23.

87. SGG Cx. N.º 576, P-04, f.22–f.22v.

libertos to a 'military colony' in the Rio Grande. The document is silent about the authorization, but given that there were cases from the *Junta* of Justice about exiled convicts sent to West Africa, and that a major slaveholder, Major Crato, led a military expeditionary force from Cape Verde to Portuguese Guinea, it is highly unlikely that this request was denied.

In summary, the *Junta* of Protection of Slaves and *Libertos* ushered in the end of slavery in Cape Verde, even though it was gradual, legalistic, and elitist driven. The Catholic Church and the state collaborated to end slavery in Cape Verde, but with financial recompense for the slaveholders. Furthermore, *libertos* had to serve seven years of service to the state or private entities, probably to instill notions of wageworker, rather than free peasant. A popular form of punishment was 'public works,' which the state used to implement major projects or control the *libertos*, slaves, and the poor majority. Thus, ending of slavery in Cape Verde was caught between manumission and emancipation. While they were manumitted, *libertos*, had to perform mandatory services, against their wills and full citizenship or emancipation was still lacking. Besides mere passive agents in history, slaves and *libertos* used the new law and institution to gain greater freedom and more rights for themselves or just to improve their lot in life. Godparents were vital in manumitting their godchildren, which underlined the sense of kinship and social bond between them.

Like other parts of the Black Atlantic, *libertos*, 'liberated Africans' had to undergo the mandatory apprenticeship tutelage to become true citizens, i.e., civilized. Thus, they were in a limbo between freedom and enslavement, which occurred with liberated Africans in Brazil, Cuba, Sierra Leone, Luanda, and so on. For the Portuguese Empire, particularly for Cape Verde, the Catholic Church played a vital role in instilling a Catholic outlook that deemed a civilized and full-citizen, ipso facto, was also an upright Catholic.

The historiography of abolition of the black Atlantic have centered on three arguments: Clarksonian (Thomas Clarkson, Reginald Coupland, Leslie Griggs, Seymour Drescher, W.E.H. Lecky, Crane Brinton, Howard Temperley, and João Pedro Marques, etc); the decline school (Eric Williams, David Ryder, Selwyn Carrington, etc); and the revolt school (Michael Craton, Hilary Beckles, Richard Hart, Elikia M'Bokolo, Herbert Aptheker, etc.). With the exception of João Pedro Marques, these schools of thought focus primarily on the British Empire, thus superimposing a British imperial outlook on these processes. Moreover, the imperial framework overlooks that perspective of the colonies or colonial possessions. In the Portuguese Empire, indeed, there has been a tendency to downplay the African colonies, such as Cape Verde, São Tomé e Príncipe, Angola, Portuguese East Africa, and

'Portuguese Guinea' as a determining factor in how the ending of slavery unfolded. In the Portuguese Empire, João Pedro Marques promotes the idea of *tolerationism*, as a passive stance about the eventual natural demise of slavery, but neglects in depth focus on Lusophone Africa as it concerns the ending of slavery.⁸⁸ With the case of Cape Verde, abolishing slavery was intricately linked to the colonizing enterprise on what became Portuguese Guinea. *Libertos, degredados*, criminals, etc, were used as foot soldiers and functionaries to spearhead the colonizing efforts and protect territories against British and French incursion into what would become 'Portuguese Guinea'.

João Lopes Filho persuasively suggests that rural property holders, usually slave-holders, were not affected by the British pressure, despite in 1836, Sá de Bandeira outlawed re-exporting of slaves from Portuguese possessions and the 1842, Luso-British Commission of 1842 in Boavista to end slave trafficking, but Filho underscored the social tension.⁸⁹ Indeed, António Carreira highlighted how social conflicts, including slave revolts, *degredados'* rebellions, and famines played a part in the decline of slavery. Rudolphe Paul Widmer challenges Carreira's theory of demise of plantation slavery model in Cape Verde during the eighteenth century or before; by illustrating with detail examples that this only occurred in the mid nineteenth century with the official push toward abolition.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, James Duffy underscored that for the third Portuguese Empire that slavery and slave trade was crucial for Angola.⁹¹ In the same vein, Augusto Nascimento notes the persistency of slavery and slave-like labor in São Tomé from the nineteenth century to the twentieth centuries, with contract laborers, *contratados*, from Cape Verde to São Tomé.⁹² Other studies by Frederick Cooper, Rebecca Scott and Thomas C. Holt underscore that post-emancipated societies that freed-people had to negotiate the meaning of freedom, which was constrained by issues of race, labor

88. Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo, Review of Marques, *The Sounds of Silence*, e-JPH, Vol. 7, number 2, Winter 2009: 2.

89. Filho, *Cabo Verde Abolição da escravatura*, 77.

90. Rudolphe Paul Widmer, 'Structures coloniales et crises agricoles. Pour une relecture des sécheresses cap-verdiennes du XVIII e siècle', *RAHIA (Recherches en Anthropologie & en Histoire de l'Afrique)*, N° 17 (2006) (Éditions du Centre d' Etudes des Mondes Africains (CEMAf) MMSH-Aix-en-Provence).

91. James Duffy, *A Question of Slavery. Labour Policies in Portuguese Africa and the British Protest, 1850-1920* (Harvard Press: 1967).

92. Augusto Nascimento, 'Escravidão, Trabalho Forçado e Contrato em S. Tomé e Príncipe nos séculos XIX-XX: sujeição de Ética Laboral', *Africana Studia*, N° 7, 2004: 183-217, Edição da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto; http://www.africanos.eu/ceaup/uploads/ASo7_183.pdf, accessed 20 Feb 2014.

and citizenship.⁹³ Even before this post-emancipation reality, enslaved individuals were in a liminal state of existence between manumission and emancipation, in which issues of labor, citizenship, race, and religion determined their new status.

93. Frederick Cooper et al., *Beyond Slavery: Explorations of Race, Labor, and Citizenship in Postemancipation Societies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).