

**Reclaiming “Roots” for Cape Verde:**  
Representations of Tabanka Festivals as Sites of Cultural Contestation

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As globalization is quickly rendering the idea of asserting cultural ‘roots’ untenable, academics are inescapably entangled with the question of how to develop a vocabulary for discussing culture that avoids privileging origins. In his influential study *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, James Clifford calls attention to this phenomenon: “An unruly crowd of descriptive/interpretive terms now jostle and converse in an effort to characterize the contact zones of nations, cultures, and regions: terms such as ‘border,’ ‘travel,’ ‘creolization,’ ‘transculturation,’ ‘hybridity,’ and ‘diaspora.’”<sup>1</sup> Yet as much as theorists employing these terms seek to discredit the concept of diffusionism, which posits a cultural origin and traces its trajectory, their language often affirms the notion of cultural origins by describing a process wherein multiple (usually two) “original” cultures come together to forge a third.

This is evident, for example, within contemporary Latin American theorists’ engagement with Fernando Ortiz’s concept of transculturation, first developed in 1940, which Diana Taylor describes as the “transformative process undergone by a society in the acquisition of foreign cultural material—the loss or displacement of a society’s culture due to the acquisition or imposition of foreign material, and the fusion of the indigenous and the foreign to create a new, original cultural product.”<sup>2</sup> Although Alberto Sandoval-Sánchez and Nancy Saporta assert that Ortiz’s theory gestures to multiple influences from diverse peoples converging in the Americas, and not just a simplistic binary of colonizing Spaniard/transported African slave, their assertion that transculturation emerges from the interaction between “the dominated and the dominator”

implies an intersection of two reified cultures,<sup>3</sup> as does Taylor's vocabulary of 'foreign' versus 'indigenous.' Transculturation theory seeks to replace diffusionism with the concept of 'mutual borrowing,' which recognizes that the 'indigenous' culture alters the 'foreign' just as the 'foreign' alters the 'indigenous.' Yet this involves positing a two-way flow between two cultural origins, which results in the use of terms such as "bicultural subject" for persons living in transculturated societies.<sup>4</sup> The underlying tenet of transculturation theory (foreign+indigenous=transculturation) renders it inapplicable to creolized societies where traces of cultural origins are elusive at best, so that even the term 'multicultural subject' is problematic.

The vocabulary of creolization theories often falls into the same trap of indicating a blending of two reified cultures. This is particularly true of theorists who adopt a linguistics approach, which likens the creolization of culture to the creolization of languages. Frank Korom employs this model to discuss the transformation of Muharram rituals in India to *Hosay* festivals celebrated in Indian communities within Trinidad. Korom likens the Indian signification of the festival, the commemoration of the martyrdom of Hussein, to the "substrate," or the "subordinate" language assumed to form the grammatical basis of an emerging creole language. The Trinidadian context of *Hosay*, which incorporates the sounds, colors, and festivities of Carnival, is paralleled with the "superstrate" or the "socially dominant language" that contributes the bulk of the vocabulary to the creole language.<sup>5</sup> Ulf Hannerz recognizes the danger in modeling culture after language, even while he concedes that the advantage of the linguistic approach is that it calls attention to the imbalance of power inherent to the formation of creole cultures. His own model for creolized cultures is a creole continuum designed to

take into account the “combination of diversity, interconnectedness, and innovation” inherent to such cultures.<sup>6</sup> Hannerz’ creole continuum is situated within his center-periphery model, which locates one contributing culture (the “center”) at one end of the continuum and the other contributor (“the periphery”) at the other end. Hannerz explains that although the two ends of the continuum represent historical rootings in different continents in order to situate the model within a global context, he does not assume that the cultures at the opposite ends represent ‘homogenous’ cultures. Instead, he explains that the two cultural referents at either ends of the spectrum are “usefully identifiable as of different derivation in the moment, or the period, of creolization,” and elsewhere acknowledges that the continuum model is a “rather oversimplified image” to be taken as simply a starting point for discussing creolized societies.<sup>7</sup> Likewise, Horom explains that his linguistic model for creole cultures should not be understood as a one-to-one correspondence; it merely provides a vocabulary for discussing a transcultural phenomenon.<sup>8</sup>

Clearly, creolization and transculturation theories imply dynamic cultural processes involving a multiplicity of influences. However, my concern is that the *language* employed in discourses of transculturation and creolization often contradicts the *idea* of complex diversification that the theories themselves seek to embody. As theorists grapple with pragmatic ways to discuss cultures that are becoming increasingly difficult to characterize in a globalized world, binaries that reinforce the idea of two cultural origins are continuously reinscribed: foreign/indigenous, dominator/dominated, center/periphery, substrate/superstrate. Much as we try to discount diffusionism, our vocabulary evidences that cultural ‘rooting/routing’ continues to matter.

In this paper, I discuss how tracing cultural roots matters even within the creolized culture of Cape Verde, whose complex history makes it especially incompatible with the language of transculturation and creolization theory. Such a statement seems paradoxical since “creole,” or “crioulo/krioulo” in various Cape Verdean spellings, is an important concept in Cape Verde. However, the polysemous quality of “Crioulo” defies the binaristic way that “creole” is often employed within theories of creolization. “Criouloness” is evident first within the mixed ethnicity of the Cape Verdean people, a result of centuries of racial mixing between Portuguese settlers to the islands and Africans brought over from the continent during the years of the slave trade (1466-1878), and later between Portuguese colonists and descendents of African slaves during the colonial era (1884-1975). As the West African islands were uninhabited when the Portuguese explorers encountered them, the notion of ‘indigenous’ that is so central to the theory of transculturation is hopelessly out of place in Cape Verde. Further, even though the Portuguese enslaved Africans from various ethnic groups on the continent (including, among others, the Mandinka, Fulani, and other groups from the Senegambian coastal regions),<sup>9</sup> because there were few large plantations on the islands the slaves were immediately dispersed and separated from one another, resulting in the gradual loss of individual ethnic identities.<sup>10</sup> Consequently, Jean-Loup Amselle’s notion of “originary syncretism” is a perhaps more appropriate description for the emergence of Cape Verdean culture than the “mixing of two” that contemporary creolization theory implies.<sup>11</sup>

Yet “Crioulo” signifies much more than ethnicity. “Criouloness” is also present in the Crioulo language, Cape Verde’s lingua franca, which derives from Portuguese and a

number of Senegambian languages. The term “Crioulo” also alludes to the various Portuguese and African influences on Cape Verde’s culture. As Richard Lobban explains, “the term *Crioulo* is used not only for the Creolized language but also for identifying the distinctive and dynamic culture—including the complete array of folklore, customs, cuisine, music, and literature of this people.”<sup>12</sup> Finally, “Crioulo” is a way of articulating identity: Cape Verdean men are called “crioulos” and women are “crioulas.”

Evidenced in much of the writing on Cape Verdean culture is that the concept of “Crioulo” is a constant source of tension for those seeking to identify specific Portuguese and African influences, as well as those aspects of culture that are “inherently Cape Verdean.” As I will argue, representations of Cape Verdean tabanka festivals are sites wherein the roots of Cape Verde’s Crioulo culture are contested and negotiated. The annual festivals, often described as “syncretic” and “Afro-Christian,”<sup>13</sup> are emblematic of Cape Verde’s “Crioulo” culture. In this paper I will discuss tabanka not in terms of an inherent signification but as what it has meant ideologically to people seeking to represent it: Gei Zantzinger in his 1986 film *Songs of the Badius*, and José Maria Semedo and Maria R. Turano in their 1997 book *Cabo Verde: O Ciclo Ritual das Festividades da Tabanca*. I suggest that representations of the festivals mobilize ideologies that variously enact reclamations of tabanka for Africa by emphasizing its roots in the continent, Cape Verde by identifying it as a “folk” form, or for the “West” by privileging its Portuguese and Catholic influences. Following an analysis of what reclaiming roots means in terms of contested terrains such as cultural origins and images of homeland for an exiled people, I suggest that Cape Verdean society challenges us to re-conceptualize the way we think of “diaspora” in an increasingly globalized world.

## Tabanka Festivals

Tabanka associations on the island of Santiago in Cape Verde, West Africa, date back to at least the eighteenth century.<sup>14</sup> Earlier incarnations of tabanka associations most likely functioned as mutual aid societies, with members assisting each other during times of harvest or economic crises brought on by famines or droughts.<sup>15</sup> More contemporary tabanka associations de-emphasize the mutual aid aspect, although some use annual fees to help pay the funeral expenses for deceased members.<sup>16</sup> Today members of tabanka associations concern themselves primarily with yearly festivals celebrated around such saints' days as Santa Cruz (3 May), Santo António (St. Anthony, 13 June), São João (St. John, 24 June), and São Pedro (St. Peter, 29 June). The word 'tabanka' can refer either to the association, the ten-day annual festival, or the parade that concludes the festival.

Tabanka festivities are complex and highly theatrical, with members of the tabanka association undertaking roles as members of the tabanka court (including Kings and Queens of the countryside and court), governors, military personnel, daughters of the saint, doctors and nurses, and a thief and his or her son, known as the falcon. During a Catholic mass on the designated saint's day, the thief steals a relic from the saint's chapel, usually one of two wooden branches known as *varas* that have been blessed and tied together to make a cross. The thief then sells the relic to a buyer, also a member of the tabanka association. During the week that follows, prayer ceremonies known as *salvas* are held every night in the chapel. A week after the theft, the thief leads the tabanka court and cast of tabanka characters on a festive processional march to the house of the buyer. In contemporary Cape Verdean society, the word 'tabanka' usually conjures up an image of this clamorous march, which features drumming, trumpeting on conch

shells, dancing, and singing. The parade concludes at the buyer's house, where, after jocular negotiations between the King of the Court and the falcon, the entire company is welcomed into the buyer's house for a night of drinking, dancing, and eating. The next day the relic is returned to the chapel, where one final *salva* takes place.<sup>17</sup>

In providing the above description of tabanka festivities as a navigation tool for the reader, I have already worked against my intent to prove that statements commencing with the words "tabanka is..." are necessarily equivocal, as the tabanka rite is inherently polysemous. As such, it resists classificatory systems devised by anthropologists and performance theorists alike to make meaning out of processions and public events. For example, of the three prototypes for public events proposed by Don Handelman,<sup>18</sup> tabanka fits simultaneously into two. In its intent to directly effect reality through the disruption and restoration of the social order (signified by the theft and return of the saint), tabanka fits the criteria for "events that model the lived-in world" by bringing about transformation through a resolution of contradictions.<sup>19</sup> However, tabanka is just as much an "event that re-presents the lived-in world," in that it has, at times, offered alternatives to hegemonic social reality.<sup>20</sup> For example, Susan Hurley-Glowa notes the parallels between tabanka characters and colonial courts and armies,<sup>21</sup> which took on considerable significance when tabanka processions were held in defiance of edicts prohibiting them by the Portuguese colonial government.<sup>22</sup> The fact that tabanka festivities often center around Santa Cruz, the day that Portuguese masters accorded their slaves temporary freedom during the era of slavery in Cape Verde,<sup>23</sup> suggests that it has occasionally taken the form of a carnivalesque ritual of inversion.

Tabanka fits just as uneasily into the characteristics of processional performances suggested by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and Brooks McNamara in their introductory note to a special issue of *TDR* devoted to processions.<sup>24</sup> The authors suggest that a procession “formalizes and dramatizes some event of importance to the community.”<sup>25</sup> While Hurley-Glowa describes the tabanka parade as an “Afro-Christian religious reenactment,”<sup>26</sup> I suggest that such a phrase is misleading in its allusion to a distant historical event restored, in Richard Schechner’s terms,<sup>27</sup> through the process of performance. Tabanka’s roots in multiple religious worldviews obscure the possibility of any “originary” event. Instead, the theft and reclamation of the saint is a dilemma newly posed and resolved by the tabanka association year after year; it is the event itself, rather than the dramatization of an event. Tabanka thus defies classification into so-called “universal” models for performance or public events. Elusive and forever in flux, tabanka’s “meaning” shifts according to its representation in writing, verbal communications, theatrical productions, or films.

### ***Songs of the Badius***

In *Songs of the Badius*, a roughly two-minute clip of a tabanka march on Santiago begins a film about “the music of the Kriolu people,” as advertised in the opening credits.<sup>28</sup> The music and dance forms featured in the film are tabanka, batuko, and funana. Following the tabanka march is a brief overview of the location, geography, history, and economic situation of the Cape Verde islands, which precedes a section on batuko, described by the narrator (Zantzinger) as a “traditional women’s dance [. . .] performed throughout the island of Santiago.”<sup>29</sup> Scenes featuring funana dancing follow,

while the voiceover proclaims funana to be the “national dance step.” The film concludes with more scenes of batuko dancing and an interview with Antoni Dente D’oro, one of the most renowned (and one of the only male) batuko musicians on Santiago.

The framing of the tabanka march by the opening credits reveals much about the ideology behind the film. The third screen of opening credits announces that the film was produced in cooperation with the Amilcar Cabral African Youth Movement (JAAC-CV). This youth group represents a political affiliation with the PAICV<sup>30</sup> government, an offshoot of the PAIGC<sup>31</sup> party formed during the time of Cape Verde’s joint liberation struggle with Guinea-Bissau from Portuguese colonization (1963-75). PAIGC, the ruling party in both Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde from 1975-1980, appropriated tabanka as a political tool in two ways: first by forming tabanka associations in rural villages in Guinea-Bissau during the fight for independence,<sup>32</sup> and second by reorganizing tabanka associations in Cape Verde in the immediate post-independence years.<sup>33</sup> This was in the spirit of re-Africanization, a concept central to the political and cultural theories of Amilcar Cabral, leader of the PAIGC until his assassination in 1973. Re-Africanization entails a valorization of elements of Cape Verde’s popular culture that had been discouraged and devalued by the Portuguese colonial government, as tabanka and batuko periodically were. The PAICV government continued with the re-Africanization agenda during the 1980s by supporting research into batuko and recording batuko ensembles.<sup>34</sup> Thus, by its position in the film between credits revealing a connection to PAICV politics and a segment on batuko dancing, the tabanka march in *Songs of the Badius* becomes an assertion of the PAICV re-Africanization philosophy, alluding to the African roots of Cape Verde’s culture and designating tabanka as a Cape Verdean national folk form.

This ideological move is apparent even within the spelling of the words “tabanka” and “kriolu” in the first and second screens of the opening credits. As there is no standardized spelling in Crioulo, the words can be spelled with either a ‘k’ or a ‘c.’ However, since the letter ‘k’ does not exist in the Portuguese alphabet but is present in many African languages,<sup>35</sup> writers who spell Crioulo with a ‘k’ are often deliberately aligning Cape Verdean Crioulo with the African continent.<sup>36</sup> The letter ‘k’ appears frequently in written *badiu*, a term commonly used for the variation of Cape Verdean Crioulo spoken on Santiago, but not at all in written forms of *sembadjudu*, the Crioulo spoken in the northern islands.

The term ‘*badiu*’ also refers to a community of descendents of escaped slaves living in Santiago’s interior. *Badius* have both been denigrated by other Cape Verdeans for their more “African” culture and admired for their resistance to the Portuguese colonials.<sup>37</sup> As Lobban notes, in Cape Verde’s post-independence years, “the *badius* came to represent a romantic symbol of the twentieth-century struggle for Cape Verdean legitimacy, authenticity, and even national independence.”<sup>38</sup> Thus, by using a *badiu* spelling for the phrase “the kriolu people of Cape Verde,” Zantzinger’s film engages in the reification of a single Cape Verdean subject, constructed as a *badiu* still in touch with an African identity and resistant to cultural imperialism.

The nationalist and “re-Africanist” ideology behind *Songs of the Badius* is mobilized through the process of metonymy. By announcing in the opening credits that tabanka is an example of the “folk music of Santiago,” Zantzinger’s film allows the *badiu* community, which makes up only a portion of the population of Santiago, to represent the island in its entirety, occluding Santiago residents who might not self-identify as *badiu*

(including perhaps the majority of the more than 60,000 people living in Praia, the capital city). Further, *Songs of the Badius* makes another metonymic move by allowing *badiu* culture to represent a single, unified Cape Verdean culture that the film constructs. The closing segment of the voiceover begins: “The dedicated efforts of these Cape Verdean musicians to sing *to their own people*, makes possible a future in which change, as it is developing now, will be based upon a *national appreciation of folk forms*.”<sup>39</sup> This ideological move erases the diversity within Cape Verde’s culture, evident for example in the residents of the northern island of São Vicente who celebrate not tabanka but a similar festival called coladeira around the feast days of São João and São Pedro. Ironically, then, even as the film purports to celebrate “Criouliness,” it succeeds in celebrating only “krioluness” by privileging the *badiu* component of Cape Verde’s culture and implicitly rejecting the non-*badiu* aspects.

In *Songs of the Badius*, tabanka becomes a strategy for the PAICV party (here represented by JAAC-CV sponsorship) to politicize Cape Verdean culture. Diana Taylor explains that the politicization of culture occurs through “the strategic use of cultural symbols, and the recognition that ‘cultural identity becomes a political resource’ in group action.”<sup>40</sup> By using terminology such as “national dance step” for funana and “traditional women’s dance” for batuko, the film strategically selects *badiu* cultural markers to suggest that the future of Cape Verde is rooted in its African past (symbolized by the *badiu*’s acknowledged closer ties to an African identity), and implicitly, that Cape Verde’s political future is safest in the hands of the PAICV party and its Africanist slant.

The strategic selection of *badiu* cultural aspects results in the reification of Cape Verde’s “traditions.” As Michael Shapiro explains it, reification is an ideological move

made by those wishing to reimpose “forms of social relations, which have a unity and coherence based on cultural tradition.”<sup>41</sup> This reification of tabanka as a Cape Verdean national tradition figures it as a static celebration of culture transported from the continent of Africa intact to the Cape Verde islands during the slave trade, denying its historical evolution from a system promoting mutual aid, to a symbol of resistance against the colonial government when it was discouraged during the colonial era, to how it is often represented today, as a cultural symbol of the new republic of Cape Verde.

In fact, the film denies that the process of creolization is still at work today in Cape Verde. If we consider creolization to be not the seamless blending together of two “cultural origins” but a constant evolution involving the incorporation of elements from various other cultures considered “foreign” to those embracing one cultural identity (such as “Cape Verdean”), then it stands to reason that tabanka and batuko are constantly changing and adapting. However, Zantzinger’s film implicitly rejects the idea that influences perceived as “foreign” to Cape Verdeans continue to permeate the culture. Towards the film’s close, the narrator makes the following pronouncement about contemporary Cape Verdean musicians: “The new musicians, playing amplified instruments, *will not have to look beyond their own country’s borders* for their musical models.”<sup>42</sup>

To apply transculturation theory to Zantzinger and the JAAC-CV’s representation of tabanka, we might conclude that the film acknowledges that tabanka is a transculturated tradition that incorporates elements of the “indigenous” (or “African,” which perhaps substitutes for “indigenous” in Cape Verde) and the “foreign,” as the film’s shot of a tabanka shrine dedicated to St. John does acknowledge Christian

influences. Following this reasoning, we might conclude that the emphasis on the indigenous is a strategic move that de-emphasizes the role of the West in the transculturation process. However, Angel Rama's important modification of Ortiz's concept of transculturation is that reclaiming indigenous aspects of culture "does not imply a nostalgic return to the past."<sup>43</sup> Yet this is precisely what the film suggests in the opening credits by stating that even though the morna and koladeira are the music genres most associated with Cape Verde,<sup>44</sup> "tabanka, funana, and batuko still persist from an *earlier time*."<sup>45</sup> This roots tabanka in a romanticized past that the film constructs, while the statement that follows suggests that creolization in Cape Verde took place at an isolated moment in Cape Verde's past: "They developed from the process of creolization of African and European music genres."<sup>46</sup> The language of the film thus resonates with the language of transculturation and creolization theory that implies a merging of two cultural origins, rather than allowing for the possibility of continued participation in the dynamic processes underlying the actual philosophies behind transculturation and creolization. This allows the film to select one of the two reified cultures, "Africa," to emphasize at the expense of the other, "Europe."

### ***Cabo Verde: O Ciclo Ritual das Festividades da Tabanca***

My second case study is a historical and ethnographic study of tabanka written by José Maria Semedo and Maria R. Turano, published in 1997 by Spleen-Edições in Praia, Cape Verde's capital. In the acknowledgment section, the authors thank Spleen-Edições for their support, adding that the publishing company is "always open to news about Cape Verde."<sup>47</sup> Later they list the Instituto Nacional da Cultura da Praia (Praia's National

Institute of Culture) as one of the project's primary patrons. Yet despite the framing of this book by a Cape Verdean cultural institute and publishing company, the representation of tabanka comes from a distinctly Western perspective, as may be surmised by the more "Portuguese" spelling of tabanca with a "c." As I will demonstrate, there is a tension within the book between the narratives offered by Semedo and Turano, with Semedo emphasizing the "Crioulo" property of tabanka and Turano reifying "Africa" and "Europe" as the two cultural origins much like *Songs of the Badius*, yet here privileging Portuguese influences to the exclusion of African ones. However, it is Turano's narrative that is ultimately legitimated by the book's preface, composed by a Lisbon-based anthropology professor, Augusto Mesquitela Lima.

Semedo, a Cape Verdean woman who wrote about Cape Verdean culture while studying at the Università di Lecce in France,<sup>48</sup> authored the first and second chapters of the book: "Geographic and Cultural-Historical Introduction to Cape Verde" and "Tabanca: A Historical Perspective,"<sup>49</sup> respectively. In these chapters, Semedo constructs a "Crioulo" narrative by privileging neither the "Portuguese" nor "African" aspects of tabanka. In her section on "Cultura Crioula" in the first chapter, Semedo quotes Cape Verdean historian Gabriel Mariano's assertion that during the formative years of Cape Verde's Crioulo culture, elements of Black-African culture were assimilated by the white Europeans just as the Blacks adopted aspects of European culture.<sup>50</sup> As evidence, she cites an eighteenth-century document stating that whites in Cape Verde used the Crioulo language in everyday parlance,<sup>51</sup> just as the black and *mestiço* (mixed ethnicity) population did. Semedo thus alludes to an originary syncretism in terms of the Crioulo

language, which she then extends to other cultural aspects by stating the impossibility of claiming direct importation of tabanka from either Europe or continental Africa.<sup>52</sup>

Yet in comparison with her own “Crioulo” narrativization of tabanka, Semedo’s discussion of colonial documents concerning tabanka sets up the idea that the colonial government perceived tabanka as “African,” or at least as an element of Cape Verde’s black population considered “disorderly” or “primitive.” Semedo writes, “As a rule, the few reference to Tabanca were made from a pejorative perspective, particularly when this display [tabanca] is included on a list of the negative aspects of Black-African influences on Cape Verdean culture.”<sup>53</sup> She first refers to an official prohibition of tabanka dated 1895, which describes a parade of tabanka characters, governors and judges among them, masked and speaking Crioulo from Guinea-Bissau, so as not to be understood by the colonial officials. This same document states that members of the tabanka procession were destroying gardens and orchards and committing other “abuses.”<sup>54</sup> Semedo then references an edict from 1920, which placed restrictions on Tabanca parades, followed by another from 1923, which banned them altogether, followed by yet another from 1927, which, in the interest of preserving Cape Verdean folk culture, allowed tabanka to continue but recommended that Portuguese officials work with Cape Verdeans on making tabanka parades “more aesthetic and consistent with the civilized state of the Colony.”<sup>55</sup>

These documents, along with Semedo’s commentary on them, suggest that the Portuguese colonials perceived tabanka as inherently “African” and in need of “civilization.” This sets up an interesting contradiction with Turano’s narrative, which, as I will show, characterizes tabanka as a primarily “Portuguese” tradition. Yet if this is

true, why did the Portuguese government not recognize it as such? Why was it denigrated because of its association with Black culture? This contradiction is never resolved within the book, serving as a quintessential example of the way in which tabanka representations become a site for contesting the roots of Cape Verde's Crioulo culture.

Turano's narrative of tabanka occupies the third and fourth chapters, "Ethnography of Tabanca" and "An Anthropological Analysis."<sup>56</sup> The European perspective that Turano brings to tabanka reflects her position as a European teaching at the Università di Lecce.<sup>57</sup> Although she opens the third chapter by stating that tabanka was a "genuinely Cape Verdean creation" and the result of mixing between Portuguese and various African cultures,<sup>58</sup> Turano immediately begins to construct a Eurocentric narrative by suggesting that tabanka may be a Portuguese inheritance, as pilgrimages in Portugal, like tabanka festivals held around Santa Cruz, take place in the beginning of May.<sup>59</sup> The parallel with Portuguese pilgrimage is extended in her anthropological analysis of tabanka, wherein she states that the progression of the tabanka parade, which is both ludic and ritualistic and concludes at a locale housing the relic of a Saint, fits the definition of pilgrimage given in Teófilo Braga's book, *O Povo Português nos seus Costumes, Crenças e Tradições (On the Portuguese People and their Customs, Beliefs, and Traditions)*.<sup>60</sup> Here Turano also reminds the reader that Braga considers tabanca to be a Portuguese tradition.<sup>61</sup>

Turano's description of *salvas*, the nocturnal prayer ceremonies held during the week following the theft of the saint, also privileges hypothetical Catholic influences on tabanka. Her depiction of *salvas* is as follows: two drum players kneel in front of the altar while two boys stand to the side, holding two *varas* (blessed branches) crossed like an X.

The tabanka king asks those present to rise, while the drum players commence a drum beat. After a dozen beats or so, the players pause while one moves forward and the other back, both bowing their heads. The boys holding the *varas* switch the position of the sticks, and the drum beating recommences. There are fifty drum beats altogether, separated by the pausing and switching of positions.<sup>62</sup> Turano characterizes this sequence as follows: “This whole sequence gives the idea of a true African ritual, but in reality it’s a ‘staging’ of the rosary with human figures: the drum beats correspond to the *Hail Mary*’s and *Glory Be*’s.”<sup>63</sup> Turano repeats this assertion in her anthropological analysis, stating that the drum beats mark the praying of the rosary, and that while the rhythm is “without a doubt” African, the model for the *salva* is Portuguese.<sup>64</sup>

This description of the *salvas* as an enactment of praying the rosary seems arbitrary. If tabanka practitioners wanted to signify the rosary, why not just pray it in the Catholic tradition? Why construct an elaborate ritual to “stage” rosary praying with drumbeats and switching positions? Turano provides no evidence for this assumption, which suggests that she is simply superimposing a “Catholic” meaning onto the tabanka *salvas*. The appendix of the book contains interviews conducted by the authors with three tabanka practitioners, yet none of them mention this connection to rosary praying. In fact, the voices of the people interviewed are conspicuously absent from the “ethnography” section of the book. They are instead relegated to a separate “interview” section, allowing Turano to control the narrative of the tabanka process. As a result, Turano focuses primarily on parallels she sees between tabanka and Portuguese customs. She claims, for example, that tabanka associations fit the definition of mutual aid societies provided in Beirante Vieira E. Rocha’s book, *Confrarias Medievais Portuguesas (Medieval*

*Portuguese Brotherhoods*), and that “robbing rituals,” such as the robbing of the saint’s relic, are common in popular Portuguese traditions, citing E. Veiga de Oliveira’s book *Festividades Cíclicas em Portugal (Cyclical Festivities in Portugal)*.

In her anthropological analysis section, Turano relies heavily on Roger Bastide’s theories about syncretism in Afro-Brazilian societies. She refers specifically to the Afro-Brazilian religion Candomblé, stating that the tabanka practice of holding a Catholic mass before the initiation of rituals that are not “strictly orthodox Catholic” parallels a similar practice in Candomblé, wherein an alliance between Catholic and Yoruba spirituality endows the ritual with power.<sup>65</sup> In fact, Turano’s analysis of the “African” aspects of tabanka is based largely on Bastide’s reading of Afro-Brazilian communities, even though she cites Mariano’s explanation that syncretism happened much differently in Cape Verde than in Brazil. Since large slave plantations were a part of Brazil’s slavery era, some ethnic identities (such as Yoruba) were retained, while, as explained earlier, in Cape Verde individual ethnic identities were gradually lost.<sup>66</sup> It is curious, then, that Turano relies solely on an analysis of Afro-Brazilian practices to inform her reading of tabanka’s African influences. For example, when she discusses the mutual aid aspect of tabanka, Turano points out parallels to brotherhood organizations in Afro-Brazilian communities, yet neglects to discuss the mutual aid societies found among various ethnic groups on continental Africa.

An article published by Semedo and Turano in the journal *Palaver* provides some explanation for why Turano draws on Bastide’s work on Brazil. In the introduction to the article, the authors write that their original intention for their book on tabanka was to discuss the African origins of the festival, but to do that they would have needed access

to a whole library of texts on West African cultures, namely Wolofe, Mandinga, and Fula, since these are the groups that renowned Cape Verde historian Antonio Carreira claims made up the majority of the African slaves brought over to Cape Verde.<sup>67</sup> The difficulty, then, seems to have been one of access. Since Turano did not have access to texts on the history of Wolofe, Mandinga, and Fula cultures, she draws her conclusions about tabanka from texts to which she did have access, namely books by Rocha, Oliveira, and Braga on Portuguese culture, and Bastide's text on Afro-Brazilian communities.

Yet what Turano overlooks is the perspectives from Cape Verdeans themselves on the origins of tabanka. Cited in the bibliography are two short articles on tabanka written by Cape Verdeans during the 1940s. Yet although Turano cites the articles, she fails to mention that in both cases the authors open their descriptions of the festival with assertions that tabanka has origins in Guiné (Guinea-Bissau).<sup>68</sup> Thus, the authors' perceptions of an origin rooted in continental Africa does not enter Turano's narrative. Neither does the fact that Nhô José, a "king of the countryside" from a tabanka association in Praia, tells Semedo in an interview that sometime during the 1940s or 50s, a colonial administrator lifted the ban on tabanka by explaining in a letter to the Portuguese prime minister that tabanka should be allowed to continue because it was an "African manifestation," and as such, should be preserved.<sup>69</sup> Instead, the conclusion to the book is a bold assertion about tabanka's essentially Portuguese character:

The exterior form of Tabanca, in its most familiar aspect, that is, the parade in the streets, appears, at first glance, as an African cultural manifestation; that is, it has African elements, essentially the music and choreography, while the structure, the organization, the model for Tabanca in its totality *belongs to* a Portuguese cultural scenario.<sup>70</sup>

The book thus sets up two competing narratives about the nature of tabanka: Semedo's perspective that it is impossible to trace the roots of an inherently Crioulo festival, and Turano's that tabanka may be African in form but Portuguese at heart. While the conclusion certainly tips the scales in favor of Turano's narrative, her version of the story is upheld even before the reader arrives at the first chapter. An authoritative voice from the Western world resounds from the preface, dictating the "proper" interpretation of the book. Augusto Mesquita Lima is a professor of anthropology at the Universidade Nova de Lisboa and the author of *Introdução a Antropologia (Introduction to Anthropology)*, a text that Turano quotes in her anthropological analysis of tabanka. As with *Songs of the Badius*, in *Cabo Verde: O Ciclo Ritual das Festividades da Tabanca*, in terms of representation, perhaps more important than the depiction of tabanka itself is the way in which that depiction is framed.

According to Shapiro, ideological legitimation occurs when an unquestioned and unquestionable authority provides an indisputable commentary on the referent, which in this case is tabanka.<sup>71</sup> As the author of a book whose very title pronounces him an indisputable authority on anthropology, as well as a professorial voice emanating from Portugal's academic universe, Lima legitimates Turano's Eurocentric narrative of tabanka's roots by writing:

Tabanca [. . .] has been considered one of the most African cultural manifestations of Cape Verde, which is not totally true. It is a ritual in which Africa is present, certainly, but just in certain details, such as, for example, the ritual of the drums [. . .], in the music, in the tedious narrative, and in the dances (all of these, yes, are clearly of African origin), but its profound significance brings us back to standard Portuguese paradigms of the popular festivals of Saint Anthony, Saint John, Saint Peter, and Saint Cross, current in Portugal, the Atlantic isles, and in other parts of the world where the Portuguese have been for a long period of time.<sup>72</sup>

Lima's take on the origins of tabanka clearly resonates with Turano's privileging of a Portuguese "meaning" over an African performance context. This analysis parallels the binaristic language of creolization theories that reify two distinct cultural origins by drawing from a linguistics superstrate/substrate model. Lima's language suggests that the Portuguese "meaning" of tabanka plays the role of a dominant superstrate while the African "exterior forms" are merely the substrate. Much like with Zantzinger's film, this binarism allows for the privileging of one reified culture over the other. Thus, *Cabo Verde: O Ciclo Ritual das Festividades da Tabanca* enacts a reclamation of tabanka for the Western world, and more specifically for Portugal, the former colonial power, through the legitimizing mechanism of Lima's commentary.

### **Conclusion: Cultural Roots and Diasporic Consciousness**

Clearly, in both *Songs of the Badius* and *Cabo Verde: O Ciclo Ritual das Festividades da Tabanca*, origins matter. Yet what is at stake for Zantzinger and the PAICV in one case, and Semedo, Turano, and Lima in the other? *Songs of the Badius*, with its English subtitles and voiceover, was clearly made for an American audience. Zantzinger is well aware that Americans have certain expectations about African "customs" and "traditions;" they want to see rituals that are exoticised and unfamiliar, as far removed from their own Western experiences as possible. This is reflected in the subject matter of other films produced by Zantzinger, one of which concerns the role of mbira instruments in ancestor-cult ritual and burial ceremonies in Zimbabwe.<sup>73</sup> Thus, Zantzinger's alliance with the J-AAC-C.V. was strategic. Any organization connected to the PAICV government would be looking for a way to emphasize the African roots of

Cape Verde's Crioulo culture in a gesture toward "re-Africanizing" Cape Verde. In addition, the film may well have targeted the sizeable Cape Verdean community in New England, a diasporic people who embody the concept of *sodade*, the sense of longing for "home" conveyed in the *mornas* of renowned Cape Verdean singer, Cesaria Evora. *Songs of the Badius* thus encourages Cape Verdeans in the states to "look back" not only to their birthplace, Cape Verde, but reminds them of Cape Verde's connection to a more distant homeland, continental Africa.

The reading audience that the book targets, however, is that of Portuguese-speaking academics, and more specifically, Portuguese academics, as the preface opens with an authority figure culled from that community. Reclaiming tabanka as an inherently Portuguese custom denies that the festival participated in what transculturation theorists might call 'mutual borrowing;' the Catholic meaning behind tabanka remained untouched, merely framed within an "African" context of dance, drumming, and singing. *Cabo Verde: O Ciclo Ritual das Festividades da Tabanca* celebrates the ascendancy of the Portuguese traces over the African traces within Cape Verde's Crioulo culture, congratulating the metropole for its successful "civilization" of a pagan custom, and by extension, an African culture. The book also encourages Cape Verdean academics to pride themselves in their Portuguese heritage, suggesting that they "look back" not to their African roots, but to their roots within Portuguese culture, which continues to inform even popular customs in Cape Verde.

As I argued in the introduction, tabanka is not the *re-enactment* of an originary event but an *enactment* that newly occurs every time the festival is celebrated. However, the representations of tabanka in my two case studies imply the existence of some

originary event in the distant past, located either in Portugal or mainland Africa, and further, that “explaining” tabanka, and by extension Cape Verde’s Crioulo culture, depends upon uncovering roots. The first line of Lima’s introduction reads, “One of the biggest problems of Cape Verde’s Crioulo culture is knowing, in anthropological terms, what is clearly African and what is European and, in particular, [. . .] Portuguese.”<sup>74</sup> In fact, both the book and the film imply that the ambiguity of Cape Verde’s roots is a dilemma that needs to be solved or explained.

Yet as the case studies reveal, the people seeking to “explain” the roots of tabanka are not practitioners of it. The danger inherent to this assigning of origins “from the outside” is evident in the fact that Turano and Semedo originally set out to write a book about the African origins of tabanka. In their article on tabanka published in *Palaver*, a footnote states that the article comes out of collaborative research by the authors on “African cultural traces in Cape Verde.”<sup>75</sup> However, the authors’ lack of access to ethnological texts on Wolof, Mandinga, and Fulani allowed them to essentially shift the origins of tabanka at will by allowing Turano’s narrative about the influences of Portuguese pilgrimages to predominate in their book. In effect, Turano attributes origins where she might have simply observed similarities.

This mistake is easily made by scholars not as familiar with the rituals or practices they study as those who actually practice them. For example, when I learned about the Haitian festival called *Rara* through reading Elizabeth MacAlister’s ethnography,<sup>76</sup> I immediately noted similarities to tabanka. The festival is processional, with practitioners taking on assorted roles similar to those of the tabanka court, including captains, queens, and musicians. Taking place during the Lenten season, *Rara* evidences influences from

African and Christian religions, much like tabanka. In McAlister's words, "The season's ritual events combine the symbols and tropes of Afro-Haitian religion with the plots and personae of the Christian narrative and rehash them in local ritual dramas."<sup>77</sup> Whistles and trumpeting conch shells are equally prominent in tabanka and rara, and as I listened to McAlister's recording of rara music I immediately noted that the rhythm made by the conch shells is based upon a continuous alternation between two tones, which I had read about in Hurley-Glowa's short article on tabanka and heard in the tabanka parade featured in *Songs of the Badius*. Consequently, my first inclination was to posit that rara and tabanka must have a common origin on continental Africa. As McAlister suggests that rara embodies religious principles from the fourteenth and fifteenth century African kingdom of Kongo,<sup>78</sup> this seems unlikely. However, the experience made me aware of my own tendency to employ a diffusionist model when considering cultural practices with which I lack personal familiarity.

Since a consideration of origins is seemingly unavoidable in cultural analyses, I would like to propose that the kind of origins that should matter are not "historical" origins posited, sometimes arbitrarily, by the researcher, but *perceptions* of origins by those "inside" the culture. One of the interviews printed in the back of *Cabo Verde: O Ciclo Ritual das Festividades da Tabanka* is with Henrique Lubrano de Santo Rita Vieira, a Cape Verdean cultural historian on Cape Verde's culture. Vieira's narrative about the origins of tabanka is strikingly different than the meta-narrative offered by Turano and Lima in the book. Vieira explains that when the slaves first arrived on the continent, they were immediately Christianized by the Portuguese. The officials recognized the importance of Santa Cruz, however, and let the slaves celebrate on that day.

Chronologically, Vieira explains, Santa Cruz celebrations came first, then tabanka parades, then tabanka associations, and finally batuko dancing, which often accompanies tabanka festivals. Vieira then asserts that Cape Verdean batuko dancing, associated with “Africanness” in *Songs of the Badius*, is a local creation and markedly different from batuko dancing on continental Africa.<sup>79</sup>

Vieira is not interested in locating the roots of tabanka in mainland Africa, nor does he allude to any influences from Portuguese pilgrimages or brotherhoods. Instead, in his perception, tabanka comes from “here;” the roots of Cape Verde’s culture are “here.” His description is in line with Semedo’s “Crioulo” narrative of tabanka, which suggests that tabanka “came” neither from Portugal nor continental Africa but evolved in Cape Verde through a continual process of give and take among Europeans and Africans from disparate ethnic groups. I would like to suggest that a theatrical production that I attended in 1999 at Mindelact, an International Theatre Festival held yearly in Cape Verde since 1995, reinforced through performance the idea that the roots of tabanka are not “there” (Portugal or mainland Africa) but “here.”

The production, called *Tabanka Tradiçon*, was performed by a Santiago-based theatre group, Teatro Ramonda. The performance stood out from the other offerings at the festival that year by theatre groups from Europe as well as the Cape Verdean theatre group directed by the festival’s organizer, João Branco, a Portuguese director living in Cape Verde. Branco’s group, Grupo de Teatro do Centro Cultural Português do Mindelo, performed a show called *Cloun Creolus Dei*. In the program notes, Branco wrote that he had first witnessed *Cloun Creolus Dei* performed at a European theatre festival and was immediately taken with the idea of adapting it for a Cape Verdean audience. Francisco

Salgado, a theatre group from Lisbon, performed Sam Shephard's *Cowboy Mouth*. Teatro Meridional, an international theatre group with actors from Spain, Italy, and Portugal, performed *Romeu, versão montesca da tragédia de Verona*, a variation on themes from *Romeo and Juliet*. Teatro Ramonda, however, staged a straightforward re-enactment of a Cape Verdean tabanka festival devoid of the Aristotelian narrativity characterizing the Western-canon plays typically produced at the festival. The group thus represented tabanka as a performance mode that resists the Western aesthetic promoted by Mindelact, consistent with Teatro Ramonda's performance philosophy of creating theatrical productions around cultural practices considered inherently "Cape Verdean." Like Semedo and Vieira, Teatro Ramonda located the roots of tabanka "here" in Cape Verde.

These perceptions of tabanka's roots are emblematic of many Cape Verdeans' perceptions of a larger Cape Verdean cultural identity. As previously mentioned, in Cape Verde the term "Crioulo" is used synonymously with "Cape Verdean." By saying "I am Crioulo," Cape Verdeans are in some ways performing both an African and a Portuguese identity, enacting a "consciousness of being double" rather than Du Bois' concept of "double consciousness." However, the self-identifier "Crioulo" is just as likely to indicate the opposite of "both...and," which is "neither...nor." We might read Teatro Ramonda's production of *Tabanca Tradiçon* as the performative statement, "We're not Western, we're Cape Verdean." Likewise, when I lived in Cape Verde, many of my Cape Verdean friends told me, "A mi ka e Africano, mi e Caboverdiano" ("I'm not African, I'm Cape Verdean"). This disidentification with a homeland—be it Portugal or Africa—stands in marked contrast to the diasporic consciousness felt by many Blacks in the diaspora—for example, practitioners of Candomblé in Brazil, who both "look to" Brazil as their current

home and “look back” to Yoruba communities in Nigeria, which they revere as an originary homeland.

Yet in many ways Cape Verde fits the definition of diaspora, if, as Brent Hayes Edwards notes, the most common reasons for adapting a diasporic discourse are “mass dispersal and collective identity.”<sup>80</sup> Cape Verdean society came about because of a forced removal from continental Africa in the distant past, and the fact that the term “Crioulo” applies to all Cape Verdeans indicates a powerful collective identity. However, if we are to locate Cape Verde within the African diaspora, it remains something of an anomaly because of the ambiguous way in which “homeland,” or as explored in this paper, “roots,” figures in the Cape Verdean consciousness. Many contemporary diaspora theorists, such as James Clifford in *Routes* and Tiffany Ruby Patterson and Robin D.G. Kelley in their provocative article, “Unfinished Migrations: Reflections on the African Diaspora and the Making of the Modern World,”<sup>81</sup> draw on William Safran’s formulaic description of diasporas, even though they modify and adapt it to their own theorization. Safran’s conception of diasporic consciousness includes a collective memory of the homeland as well as a commitment to its restoration, marginalization in the new home, as well as a desire to return, either physically or imaginatively, to the originary homeland.<sup>82</sup> Clearly, the idea of homeland is an integral part of the diasporic discourse.

The way that homeland figures in a diasporic consciousness, however, is much debated. Cheryl Johnson-Odim poses the question: “Is the African diaspora able to be conceptualized as a world of its own [. . .] or only in its relationship (however loose or close we may argue that to be) to the ‘original’—the motherland that spawned it?”<sup>83</sup> In a forthcoming book, *African Diasporas: Dispersals and Linkages*, Paul Tiyambe Zeleza

employs the vocabulary of “here” and “there” to discuss the “new home” and the “originary homeland.” In Zeleza’s explanation of the diasporic consciousness, the “here” is not enough because of the marginalized position of the diasporic people “here.” However, the importance of the “there” is constantly ebbing and flowing, so that, for example, the “there” superseded the “here” during Pan-Africanist movements, while the “here” took precedence over the “there” during the American civil rights movement.<sup>84</sup>

Zeleza provides a useful vocabulary for discussing the re-conceptualization of diaspora that Cape Verdean society presents. While Cape Verdeans may at times de-emphasize an African homeland, the “there” has mattered more at various points in history. For example, as previously mentioned, in the 1940s two Cape Verdean writers, Felix Monteiro and Carlos Barbos Amado, published short descriptions of tabanka in Cape Verdean journals, *Claridade* and *Cabo Verde*, both of which asserted that tabanka was “guinean” in origin. As Cape Verde’s history was tied to Guinea-Bissau’s long before the two countries’ joint liberation struggle, in that they were Portuguese colonies brought into frequent contact with each other through trade, Guinea-Bissau often stood metonymically for continental Africa in the Cape Verdean imagination. During the 1940s, the writers contributing to Cape Verdean journals, particularly *Claridade*, were promoting the idea of *caboverdeanidade*, or a uniquely Cape Verdean cultural identity. Therefore, the fact that both authors locate the “roots” of tabanka in Africa suggest the idea that the “there” was an integral part of their declaration of *caboverdeanidade*. The “there” likewise played a key role in the PAICV government’s agenda for “re-Africanizing” Cape Verde, as noted in the discussion of the ideology behind *Songs of the Badius*.

Perhaps what differentiates Cape Verde from other African diasporic communities is that the “there” is not necessarily important because of a marginalized position in the “here.” As the term “Crioulo” encompasses all members of Cape Verdean society, there is little room for marginalization according to ethnicity. This is not to say that there are not social or economic disparities among various populations. For example, people living in *badiu* communities generally occupy a lower socio-economic class. However, as all other Cape Verdeans share the same history of forced removal from a homeland with the *badius*, that particular instance of marginalization has little to do with the “here/there” paradigm. In fact, as Cape Verdean sociologist Dulce Almada Duarte points out, the Cape Verdean creole “was never a person lost between two cultures, a person seeking a homeland.”<sup>85</sup> Yet the importance of the original African homeland, the “there” that connects the Cape Verdean archipelago to the continent, does indeed ebb and flow within the Cape Verdean consciousness.

We might then conceive of Cape Verdeans as inhabiting an alternative diasporic space: a diaspora community with a sense of “place” restored so that the “here” always supersedes the “there,” and the “homeland” (or “homelands,” if we consider both Africa and Portugal as such) might provide context for the “here” at various points in time but never figure prominently in the diasporic identity. As a discussion of cultural “roots” of *tabanka* festivals suggests, Cape Verdeans “look back” neither at Portugal nor Africa, but “look to” Cape Verde with an acute feeling of *sodade*. James Clifford argues by the late twentieth century, most communities had “diasporic dimensions.”<sup>86</sup> As the forces of globalization propel us forward with an ineluctable momentum, one day we may all feel as though we are a part of a “diaspora.” Will we always be “looking back?” Or can we

imagine emerging diasporas as restoring a sense of place to dislocated peoples, paving the way for a new diasporic feeling, “looking to?”

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<sup>1</sup> James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard U. Press, 1997), p.245.

<sup>2</sup> Diana Taylor, ‘Transculturating Transculturation,’ *Performing Arts Journal*, 38 (1991), p. 91.

<sup>3</sup> Alberto Sandoval-Sánchez and Nancy Saporta Sternbach, *Stages of Life: Transcultural Performance & Identity in U.S. Latina Theater* (Tucson: U. of Arizona Press, 2001), p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> Frank J. Korom, *Hosay Trinidad: Mubarram Performances in an Indo-Caribbean Diaspora* (Philadelphia: U. of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), p. 197.

<sup>6</sup> Ulf Hannerz, *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places* (Florence, KY: Routledge, 1996), p. 67.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 67-8.

<sup>8</sup> Korom, 197.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Lobban Marlene Lopes, *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Cape Verde, third edition* (New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1995), p. 66. The authors obtained this information from the remaining slave registers.

<sup>10</sup> G. Mariano, *Cultura Caboverdiana* (Lisbon: Ensaios, 1991). Cited in José Maria Semedo and Maria R. Turano in *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca* (Praia: Spleen Edições, 1997), pp. 96-7.

<sup>11</sup> Jean-Loup Amselle, *Mestizo Logics: Anthropology of Identity in Africa and Elsewhere*, trans. Claudia Royal, (Stanford: Stanford U. Press, 1998).

<sup>12</sup> Richard Lobban, *Cape Verde: Crioulo Colony to Independent Nation* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), p. 71.

<sup>13</sup> See for example Semedo and Turano, *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*, and Susan Hurley-Glowa, ‘Tabanka, Tabanca’, in Lobban and Lopes, *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Cape Verde*, pp. 195-8.

<sup>14</sup> This approximation comes from a late nineteenth-century document cited by José Maria Semedo and Maria R. Turano in *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*. The author of the document, Senna Barcellos, comments on a letter dated 15 October 1723, directed to the Portuguese governor of Cape Verde, complaining about a noisy festival disturbing the peace on the island of Santiago.

<sup>15</sup> Hurley-Glowa, ‘Tabanka, Tabanca’, in Richard Lobban and Marlene Lopes, *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Cape Verde, third edition* (New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1995), pp. 195-8.

<sup>16</sup> From an interview conducted by Turano with Djudja, Governor of the *Tabanka* Association of the neighborhood called Achada Santo António in Praia, Cape Verde’s capital. Printed in *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca* (143-6).

<sup>17</sup> This depiction is culled from the descriptions of tabanka given by Felix Monteiro (cited below), Hurley-Glowa, and Turano and Semedo. It is also informed by a production called *Tabanka Tradiçon* that I saw at the Mindelact International Theatre Festival in Cape Verde in 1999, which I discuss later in the paper.

<sup>18</sup> Don Handelman, *Models and Mirrors: Towards and Anthropology of Public Events* (Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 1990), pp. 22-62.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>21</sup> Hurley-Glowa, 'Tabanka, Tabanca', p. 196.

<sup>22</sup> Turano and Semedo cite several colonial documents prohibiting *Tabanka* processions, dating primarily from the years 1895 through 1923.

<sup>23</sup> This was suggested by the Cape Verdean writer Felix Monteiro in his article 'Tabanca', published in *Claridade* 6-7 (1948-49), pp. 14-18. *Claridade* was an important literary journal produced by members of an elite Cape Verdean literati during the 1930s and 40s.

<sup>24</sup> 'Processional Performances: An Introduction', *TDR: The Drama Review*, 29 (1985), pp. 2-5.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>26</sup> Hurley-Glowa, 'Tabanka, Tabanca', p. 196.

<sup>27</sup> Richard Schechner, 'Restoration of Behavior', in *Between Theater and Anthropology* (Philadelphia: U. of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), pp. 35-116.

<sup>28</sup> Gei Zantzinger, *Songs of the Badius*, (Devault: Constant Spring Productions, 1986).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde.

<sup>31</sup> African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau.

<sup>32</sup> Lobban and Lopes, p. 198.

<sup>33</sup> Semedo and Turano, p. 71.

<sup>34</sup> Lobban, p. 76.

<sup>35</sup> The political significance of the letter 'k' in written Crioulo is described by Russell Hamilton in his compelling article about the influence of PAIGC politics on Cape Verdean poets writing during the revolution and post-independence years, 'Cape Verdean Poetry and the P.A.I.G.C.', in Richard K. Priebe and Thomas A. Hale, eds., *Artist and Audience: African Literature as a Shared Experience* (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press and the African Literature Association, 1979), p. 121.

<sup>36</sup> As I have pointed out the political ideology behind spelling '*Tabanka*' with a 'k', the reader may now have a better idea of my own biases represented by my rendering of the word with a 'k' throughout the paper, except when quoting sources that spell it with a 'c.'

<sup>37</sup> Susan Hurley-Glowa, *Batuko and Funana: Musical Traditions of Santiago, Republic of Cape Verde* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1997. 9738563), p. 175.

<sup>38</sup> Lobban, p. 61.

<sup>39</sup> Zantzinger. Emphasis mine.

<sup>40</sup> Taylor, 'Transculturating Transculturation,' p. 91.

<sup>41</sup> Michael Shapiro, *The Politics of Representation: Writing Practices in Biography, Photography, and Policy Analysis* (Madison: U. of Wisconsin Press, 1988), p. 27.

<sup>42</sup> Zantzinger. Emphasis mine.

<sup>43</sup> This is Diana Taylor's explanation of Rama's modification of Ortiz. Taylor, 'Transculturating Transculturation', p. 101.

<sup>44</sup> *Mornas* are the slow and mournful ballads made famous by the internationally recognized Cape Verdean singer Cesaria Evora. In *Cape Verde: Crioulo Colony to Independent Nation*,

Lobban notes that ‘in its vocal style, instrumentation, and use of harmony, the *morna* is predominantly European rather than African in character’ (78). For this reason, Cape Verdean nationalists are hesitant to “claim” *mornas* for Cape Verdean culture.

<sup>45</sup> Zantzinger. Emphasis mine.

<sup>46</sup> Zantzinger.

<sup>47</sup> ‘sempre aberta às novidades de Cabo Verde.’ José Maria Semedo and Maria R. Turano, *Cabo Verde: O Ciclo Ritual das Festividades da Tabanca*, (Praia: Spleen-Edições, 1997), *agradecimentos* page. All translations from this and other Portuguese-language sources are mine. I provide the original Portuguese in endnotes.

<sup>48</sup> I am inferring that Semedo is Cape Verdean because of an interview that she conducted with Henrique Lubrano de Santa Rita Vieira, printed in the *entrevistas* section of *Cabo Verde: O Ciclo Ritual das Festividades da Tabanca*, pp. 137-40. In discussing the Cape Verdean musical form *batuko* (here spelled as ‘batuque’) with Vieira, she identifies it as ‘nosso Batuque’ (‘our batuque’). An article that Semedo wrote about Cape Verdean culture is listed in the bibliography as ‘Cabo Verde: uma cultura mestiça no Atlântico,’ presented at the Università di Lecce in February of 1992.

<sup>49</sup> ‘Apresentação geográfica e histórico-cultural de Cabo Verde’ and ‘Tabanca: perspectiva histórica.’

<sup>50</sup> Semedo and Turano, *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*, p. 35.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>52</sup> Semedo and Turano, *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*, p. 41.

<sup>53</sup> ‘Em regra, as poucas referências à Tabanca foram feitas numa perspectiva pejorativa, designadamente quando esta manifestação é apresentada como integrando a lista dos aspectos negativos de influência negro-africano na cultura cabo-verdiana.’ Semedo and Turano, *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*, p. 60.

<sup>54</sup> Semedo and Turano, *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*, p. 62. Here Semedo is citing a 1901 magazine, *A Esperança*. She cites the author as A. Arteaga.

<sup>55</sup> Qtd. in Semedo and Turano, *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*, p. 69.

<sup>56</sup> ‘Etnografia da Tabanca’ and ‘Uma Análise Antropológica.’

<sup>57</sup> Turano is also the co-editor of *Afrique: Pour une histoire de l’Afrique. Douze Parcours*, Maria R. Turano and Paul Vandepitte, eds., (Lecce: ARGO, 2003).

<sup>58</sup> ‘uma criação genuinamente cabo-verdiana.’ Semedo and Turano, *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*, p. 78.

<sup>59</sup> Semedo and Turano, *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*, pp. 77-78.

<sup>60</sup> In a book about the *koladeira* festivals of São João, to which I have referred previously as the version of *tabanka* celebrated on the northern island of São Vicente, the author, Moacyr Rodrigues, also uses the term ‘pilgrimage’ (*romaria*). Rodrigues posits that these “pilgrimages” were brought to Cape Verde by the Portuguese, probably in the sixteenth century. At the same time, the African slaves brought to Cape Verde their own “pagan” festivals, which were then “christianized” when the slaves themselves were baptized into Christianity. He explains that this resulted in an inherently syncretic festival, but that in the Southern islands (such as Santiago), the tradition “lost most of the Portuguese traces and adapted more African ones” (“perdeu muito dos traços portugueses e adaptou os africanos à nova ordem”). Moacyr Rodrigues, *Cabo Verde: Festas de Romaria, Festas Juninas* (Mindelo: Gráfica do Mindelo, 1997), p.13. It is interesting to note that as a native of São Vicente, an island whose culture is widely considered more “Portuguese,” Rodrigues here makes the claim that São

João festivals in the north have retained more of the Portuguese traces than those in the south, thus substantiating his island's claim to a more "Portuguese" identity.

<sup>61</sup> Semedo and Turano, *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*, p. 103.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>63</sup> 'Toda a sequência dá a ideia de um verdadeiro ritual africano, mas na realidade é uma 'encenação' do rosário com figurações: os batimentos dos tambores correspondem às *Avé-Marias* e *Glórias*.' Semedo and Turano, *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*, p. 82.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

<sup>67</sup> José Maria Semedo and Maria R. Turano, 'A tabanca am Cabo Verde: aspectos culturais,' *Palaver*, 2/3 (1991), p. 91.

<sup>68</sup> One of these is Felix Monteiro's article, 'A tabanca,' cited above, p. 14. The second is Carlos Barbosa Amado's article 'Folclore Caboverdeano—Alguns Aspectos da Tabanca', *Cabo Verde*, 2 (1949), p. 21.

<sup>69</sup> The interview appears in Semedo and Turano, *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*, p. 142.

<sup>70</sup> 'A forma exterior da Tabanca, na sua exibição mais conhecida, isto é, no cortejo nas ruas, apresenta-se, à primeira vista, como manifestação cultural africana, isto é, tem elementos, essencialmente musicais e coreográficas, africanos, enquanto que a estrutura, a organização, o modelo da Tabanca na sua globalidade *pertencem ao* cenário cultural português,' Semedo and Turano, *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*, p. 111, my emphasis.

<sup>71</sup> Shapiro, p. 27.

<sup>72</sup> 'Tabanca [. . .] era tomada ou considerada das manifestações culturais mais africanas de Cabo Verde, o que não é totalmente verdade, pois é um ritual em que a África está presente, sim, mas apenas nalguns detalhes, como, por exemplo, nos rituais dos tambores [. . .], na música, nas lenga-lengas e nas danças (estas, sim, de origem nitidamente africana), pois que o significado profundo anda à volta de paradigmas e padrões portugueses das festas populares de S. António, S. João, S. Pedro e Santa Cruz, correntes em Portugal, nas ilhas atlânticas e noutras partes do mundo em que os Portugueses se foram fixando ao longo do tempo.' Augusto Mesquita Lima, Preface, in Semedo and Turano, *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*, p. 13-14.

<sup>73</sup> Gei Zantzinger, *Mbira dza vadzimu: urban and rural ceremonies with Hakurotvi Mude* (University Park, PA : Pennsylvania State University Audio-visual Services, 1978).

<sup>74</sup> 'Um dos grandes problemas cultura crioula de Cabo Verde é saber, em termos antropológicos, o que é nitidamente africano e o que é europeu e, muito particularmente, [. . .].' Augusto Mesquita Lima, Preface, in Semedo and Turano, *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*, p. 11.

<sup>75</sup> "Traços culturais africanos no Cabo Verde." Semedo and Turano, 'A tabanca am Cabo Verde: aspectos culturais,' p. 91.

<sup>76</sup> Elizabeth McAlister, *Rara!: Vodou, Power, and Performance in Haiti and its Diaspora*, (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 2002).

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>79</sup> Semedo and Turano, *Cabo Verde: O ciclo ritual das festividades da Tabanca*, p.138-9.

<sup>80</sup> Brent Hayes Edwards, "Unfinished Migrations?: Commentary and Response', *African Studies Review*, 43 (2000), p. 47.

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<sup>81</sup> Tiffany Ruby Patterson and Robin D.G. Kelley, 'Unfinished Migrations: Reflections on the African Diaspora and the Making of the Modern World', *African Studies Review*, 43 (2000), pp. 11-45.

<sup>82</sup> William Safran, 'Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myth of Homeland and Return', *Diaspora*, 1 (1991), pp. 83-84.

<sup>83</sup> Cheryl Johnson-Odim, 'Unfinished Migrations': Commentary and Response', *African Studies Review*, 43 (2000), p. 52.

<sup>84</sup> Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, *African Diasporas: Dispersals and Linkages*, forthcoming.

<sup>85</sup> Qtd. in Basil Davidson, *The Fortunate Isles: A Study in African Transformation*, (Trenton: Africa World Press, Inc., 1989), p. 33.

<sup>86</sup> Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, p. 254.