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Chloe Helsens March 17th, 2025

“Nossos Corpos Também São Pátria” – How Dino d’Santiago's Music Centers Blackness in a Reimagination of Portuguese National Identity

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Abstract

"Nossos Corpos Também São Pátria" – How Dino d'Santiago's Music Centers Blackness in a Reimagination of Portuguese National Identity

By Chloe Helsens

Music has been utilized historically and transcontinentally as a form of storytelling, expressing various ideas, identities, and (de)constructing communities. One song alone offers multifaceted forms of communication—via genre, rhythm, lyrics, tempo, harmony, and more—allowing artists to weave their own narratives. Dino d'Santiago, a Black-Portuguese musician of Cabo Verdean descent, similarly utilizes music to assert his (and others') presence in Portugal, a country haunted by the remnants of its colonial past. While Portugal often claims it is a country void of racism, Dino uses music as a platform to expose how his country marginalizes Black-Portuguese communities and excludes them from national identity. In this body of work, I investigate how Dino d'Santiago utilizes his music as means to assert his place within a collective Portuguese identity. Mainly, I explore his albums *Kriola (2020)* and *Badiu (2021)*, and how he employs racial and spatial dialogues to expose systemic physical and social oppression of Black-Portuguese communities, mark their presence, and reimagine a future, more inclusive Portugal.

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"No importa si los de alante corren mucho, si los de atrás corren *bien*."

"It doesn't matter if those ahead run a lot, if those behind run well."

Those words echo in my head, spoken in the voice of my abuela, through every challenge I face. She ingrained them into me—just as she learned them herself as she and my abuelo navigated immigrating from their native Dominican Republic to the U.S, enduring all the hardships and discrimination that immigrants of color too often face, with their little family of five. When I entered college, I finally began to understand why she repeated that same phrase. To her, they were more than just words: they served as an anthem of resistance and declaration of self-determination, a reminder to continue pushing through.

Similarly, I learned from my mom that music is more than just sound; it can uplift you, connect you to a greater sense of community, and serve as a form of social advocacy. My favorite memories with her are us riding in the car together, listening to Shakira's "Timor" blasting at full volume (while she listened to my twin brother and I singing along off-key)—completely forgetting about the rest of the world for 3 minutes. This thesis is dedicated to my family, and my abuela, who's unwavering support encourages me to continue to achieve the impossible and persist through the challenges. In all my endeavors, all I hope for is to make them proud.

I would also like to thank my committee for their continual support, their encouragement, and patience for all of my questions. I would like to thank Dr. Palomino, whose passion inspired me to study music in an academic setting and learn more about Latin and Caribbean studies, namely, the Dominican Republic. I am grateful to Dr. Velloso-Lyons, who always pushed me academically, enabling me to interact with texts I would've once thought were impossible to

read, and to whom I am forever indebted for my close-reading abilities. Lastly, I am especially thankful for Dr. Teixeira, who inspired me to major in Spanish and Portuguese. I would've never imagined being capable of starting a new language—and major—so late in college, but with her support and encouragement, I did. Dr. Teixeira, I hope you know how deeply appreciated and truly loved you are by all of your students, and all of the lives that you touch. Thank you for believing in me and my brother and for always making us laugh, brightening our day, and encouraging us to achieve the impossible. Thank you for bringing music into our classrooms, and most importantly, for introducing me to Dino d'Santiago.

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Introduction

My Research, Methodology, and Structure

Nearing the climactic finale of musician Dino d'Santiago's track, "Esquinas" ft. Slow J., the beat slows to a lull, just as Dino's voice, swelling with passion, chants:

(Nas curvas do bairro) nem todo tuga é luso

(Nas curvas do bairro) nem todas as quinas são vanglória

(Nas curvas do bairro) aceno ao corpo negro com quem cruzo

(Nas curvas do bairro) nossos corpos são também pátria

(Dino d'Santiago "Esquinas" ft. Slow J, 2021)

(In the neighborhood's curves) not every Portuguese is Luso[1]

(In the neighborhood's curves) not all shields are boastful

(In the neighborhood's curves) I nod to the Black body I cross by

(In the neighborhood's curves) our bodies are also homeland

(my trans.)

The weight of his words linger in silence for a few brief moments until the chorus resumes, with Dino and Slow J singing in harmony. Unpacking these lyrics raises several questions: *Who belongs in Portugal? What images are evoked by the terms "Luso" and "vanglórias?" How does the national discourse define Portuguese identity? What is Dino's counter-response?* According to Dino, *who gets to feel at home in Portugal, and why is race a critical part of this sense of belonging? What makes a homeland—a country, flag, rituals,*

[1] Dino d'Santiago's verse "nem toda tuga é luso" is complex, and can be interpreted and translated in a variety of ways, which I delve further into in Chapter 2.

traditions, race, or the community constructing its future? The above verses demonstrate how Dino, a Black-Portuguese man, utilizes his platform to center questions of race and space, reconstructing Portuguese national identity by arguing that Blackness is an integral part of it. These themes are not merely artistic choices, but inherently tied to his experiences as a Black man born, raised, and living in Portugal. In my work, these are examples of the questions and songs I tackle, as I analyze how Dino brings his Portuguese and Cabo Verdean identities into his craft, using their plurality to reconstruct a more inclusive national Portuguese legacy.

My project is not an ethnomusicological analysis; rather, I use Dino d'Santiago's lyrics as the main body of work for my argument. Dino is a prolific artist, and while he has released five total albums, my work focuses primarily on two of his most recent collections, *Kriola (2020)* and *Badiu (2021)*, along with a few of his singles. Concentrating my attention on these two albums allows for a more meaningful and in-depth analysis of the songs I examine. These bodies of work contain some of Dino's strongest social critiques, demonstrating how he is involved in the present moment, placing himself at the forefront of national discourse surrounding social inequities for Afro-Portuguese communities in Portugal.

In this work, my introduction serves as a foundational guide to Dino d'Santiago, providing information about his origins and his evolution into the artist he is today that is relevant to my analysis. Through my first chapter, I explore the shared historical background of Cabo Verde and Portugal, which is vital to understanding Dino d'Santiago and his craft, as a Black-Portuguese man, who is a second-generation immigrant with Cabo Verdean roots. In my second chapter, I dissect two central themes in Dino's work— discourses surrounding questions of race and space. With these two topics, I argue that Dino's music hopes to reconstruct Portuguese national identity. The marriage between these two chapters is critical for

investigating why and how Dino utilizes music to rewrite his homeland's image. With this, I present to the readers my thesis.

Who is Musician Dino d'Santiago? An Overview of His Discography

Dino, born Claudino de Jesus Borges Pereira, currently boasts five albums as a solo artist, beginning with *Eva (2013)*, *Mundu Nôbu (2018), Kriola (2020), Badiu (2021)*, and *Eva (onti y oji) (2023)*.[2,3] In addition to these albums, he has nearly 30 singles as a solo artist, and 4 Extended Plays (EPs).[4] Dino is a leading musician in the Portuguese music scene, with his songs frequently airing on radio stations across the country (Brito, 2020). His music is widely available on popular music streaming platforms, such as Spotify, where it is estimated that he holds approximately 58 million plays across his entire music catalog, with his most popular song "Kriolu" ft. Julinho KSD having over 8.5 million listens (*Spotify*, *Music Metric Vault*).[5] On YouTube, some of his most played tracks, "Como Seria" and "Kriolu" ft. Julinho KSD each respectively have 5.5 and 5.3 million views (*YouTube*). To contextualize, these streaming numbers alone are over half of Portugal's population (roughly 10.6 million) and ten times that of Cabo Verde (approximately half a million) (*European Union; World Population Review*).

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[2] All of Dino d'Santiago's music is available on popular streaming platforms (i.e., Spotify, Apple Music, Youtube, Amazon music).

[3] While Dino d'Santiago does have five albums, some popular streaming platforms and other biographies list him only having four total albums. This is due to his last album *Eva (onti y oij) (2023)*, being a re-recording of his first album in honor of its 10 year anniversary. In my thesis, I choose to count this as its own separate album, for five total.

[4] This is Dino d'Santiago's discography description as of February 9th, 2025.

[5] This data is as of February 2025 and is an estimate across all Spotify data (*Music Metrics Vault)*

Dino is part of a larger, heterogenous music scene; genres typically consumed by audiences in Portugal include Rock, Pop, Fado, Afro-Pop, and more (UNESCO, 2022; Andrade, 2023). Dino has approximately 320,000 monthly listeners on Spotify, compared to other popular Portuguese artists such as Bárbara Bandeira, with 520,000, Mariza, with 410,000, NENNY, with 171,000, and Ivando, who has 780,000 monthly listeners. Dino's four most recent albums were released under the prominent publishing group, Sony Music Entertainment. Although a great majority of his listeners reside in Portugal (according to streaming data), he also has a larger audience in Lusophone countries, such as Cabo Verde and Brazil (*Spotify*).

While Dino is connected ancestrally to Cabo Verde, Brazil is a rather recent market, still in the making, that he has entered—and done so with tremendous success. He recently received his first Latin Grammy nomination for a collaboration with Brazilian musician, Criolo (who has almost two million monthly listeners on Spotify), for their song "Esperança" (Stilwell, 2024). Dino's two most recent singles, "Batukerê" and "Porta Retrato da Família Brasileira" additionally are collaborations with Brazilian artists.[6] One of the possibilities for his rising popularity in this market is the similar histories Cabo Verde and Brazil share. This is not a novel connection, but one that has been written about for quite some time. The *claridosos*, for example, a famous Cabo Verdean group of intellectuals and poets in the mid-twentieth century, were inspired by Brazilian literature. In their work, they emphasized the bittersweet realities of living in their country, having to endure widespread hunger and droughts. They frequently read Brazilian regional literature that expressed similar struggles in Brazil, which shaped their own writing about Cabo Verde (Varela, 2000). These shared themes allow for connection points between Brazilian and Cabo Verdean audiences, a principal factor in Dino's success with a larger

[6] These are his most recent singles as of March, 2025.

Brazilian audience. While he has had widespread success in various markets and is contemporarily considered a popular Portuguese artist, his rise to fame was not one of immediate success. Rather, it was a gradual journey, beginning with his first exposure to music in childhood.

Dino d'Santiago's Cabo Verdean Roots and Beginnings in Music

Dino is a second-generation Cabo Verdean immigrant, born in 1982 in Quarteira, Algarve, which is located in Portugal's Southern region (Lemos, 2023). Although Dino has never lived in Cabo Verde as his parents have, he still feels strong connections to his heritage. He comes from a working-class family, as his father immigrated from the island of Santiago, Cabo Verde, to the Algarve in 1972, during simultaneous independence movements in Cabo Verde and other PALOPs (Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa, "English Portuguese-speaking African countries," my trans.) shortly before the fall of Portugal's dictatorship in 1974 (Abel, 2024).[7] His mother later followed, coming to Portugal in the early 1980s, before Dino's birth. He spent his childhood in the neighborhood *Bairro dos Pescadores* ("Fisherman's Village" trans. by Lemos; Lemos, 2023). Dino comes from a disadvantaged socioeconomic background and has been open about the adverse living conditions he and his family experienced residing in a low-income neighborhood in Portugal (Expresso, 2022).

Dino's relationship with music began at a young age, as he participated in the church choir alongside his parents. This experience gave him early exposure as a singer, nurturing his love for music. He additionally makes various references to his religious background in his

[7] See *Chapter 1, Section 1.4: Estado Novo – How the Portuguese Dictatorship Shaped Cabo Verdean Migration and Identity* for more information on migration patterns and the *Estado Novo* Regime in Portugal.

music (as seen in Chapter 2). Later, growing up in the 1990s, he wrote song hooks for rappers in his neighborhood giving him an early introduction to Portugal's rap scene and a space to practice his skills as a lyricist (Leight, 2019). His first true exposure to the public eye occurred in the 2000s for participating in the talent show *Operação Triunfo* in 2003. His fame on this show persuaded him to chase a career as "Dino o Cantor" rather than "Dino o Ilustrador" (*Expresso*, 2022; Carvalho, 2021).[8] After gaining this exposure, he pursued other music projects such as Dino & The SoulMotion, Expensive Soul, and Nu Soul Family, releasing his music professionally for the first time in 2008, with the group album, *Eu e os Meus* (KISMIF, 2024). His solo debut officially began in 2013, with his first album's release, *Eva* (LEFFEST, 2022).

Aside from music, Dino is heavily involved in other realms in and outside of the arts. He is a writer, an illustrator, a philanthropist, a cultural ambassador for Cabo Verde intercultural mediation, was a judge for the singing competition *The Voice Portugal,* and even a curator at the Gulbenkian in Portugal (Jardim de Verão 2022).[9] One example of the projects he pursues outside of music is *Sou Quarteira,* which he founded as means of promoting local talent in Quarteira, Portugal, the place where he spent the first 20 years of his life. The project itself stemmed from one of his songs called "Sou Quarteira," and is contemporarily an annual music festival, featuring famous artists such as Mayra Andrade, another artist with ties to Cabo Verde and Portugal (*Expresso*, 2022).

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[8] Initially, Dino was more interested in pursuing a career drawing, painting, and sketching than he was as a musician. His love for art is still apparent in Dino's work, and he frequently uploads photos on social media of his own drawings.

[9] The Gulbenkian is known as one of Portugal's most famous museums, with extensive collections of international art. For information on the Gulbenkian, visit the following link: https://gulbenkian.pt/en/

Having both Portuguese and Cabo Verdean heritages is the genesis of much of Dino's inspiration for his songs. In his childhood, he often never felt "Portuguese enough" because he was Black and a second-generation immigrant, leaving him caught between identities and struggling to fully belong in Portugal (Medeiros, 2021). This identity plurality is at the root of many of Dino's songs, where he addresses his experience being Black in Portugal, and the marginalization of Black-Portuguese communities he witnessed while growing up. Though he is specifically from Cabo Verde, Dino serves as a greater voice for Afro-Portuguese descendants in Portugal. Consequently, many of the key themes in his songs involve discussions of race, where he critiques the systematic oppression of Afro-Portuguese individuals, while simultaneously imagining a new generation of Portugal as a *nação kriola,* a more collaborative future between races and cultures. Dino's partnerships with other musicians additionally display his desire for a more inclusive Portugal, where diversity is embraced and celebrated.

Who does Dino d'Santiago Collaborate with in His Music?

In many of Dino's tracks, including "Kriolu," "Corvo," "Eu Sou," and "Nhôs Obi," which I dissect in Chapter 2, he shares his platform with musicians who, in some form or another, are connected to PALOPs or represent this new *nação kriola*. This serves as a key aspect of amplifying multicultural voices in his work through the contributions of fellow creators in his songs. Dino deliberately chooses to uplift Black-Portuguese cultures, sounds, and narratives in his art. He has collaborated with a plethora of fellow artists throughout his music career, such as Mayra Andrade, Sara Tavares, Lura, Nelson Freitas, Kalaf Epalanga, DJ Branko, and Di Tchaps (Belanciano, 2018).

Andrade, Tavares, Lura, Freitas, and Tchaps are of Cabo Verdean descent, and all of them have either been born or resided in Portugal; in their music, they frequently pay homage to their Cabo Verdean roots, including Cabo Verdean Creole phrases and references in their songs (Gomes, 2022). Epalanga, on the other hand, is of Angolan descent and popularized the Angolan dance, Kuduro, in Portugal, alongside his highly successful band, Buraka Som Sistema (*RBMA*; *The World from PRX, 2013)*. He is frequently involved in Dino's music production and is credited as a writer on *Kriola* and *Badiu*. This is just one example of how collaborates with other Afro-Portuguese artists, not solely Cabo Verde, emphasizing that his messages extend to a broader and more diverse audience.

DJ Branko, a White-Portuguese producer, DJ, and another founder of Buraka Som Sistema, regularly collaborates with Afro-diasporic artists and incorporates African sounds and beats into his productions. *The World*, for example, discusses Buraka Som Sistema's sound as a synthesis of African and European influences, intentionally reworking colonial sounds (2013). This demonstrates his hopes for a new, *nação kriola*, as he is asserting Black experiences, but in a greater collaboration with a multicultural Portugal; he magnifies Afro-Portuguese voices, yet is not careful not to silence others. This is undoubtedly part of Dino's strategy to showcase and embrace Black-Portuguese experiences, emphasize the solidarity of his messages, and contribute to a greater dialogue of Black identity and multiculturalism in Portugal.

Dino d'Santiago Recognition: His Role as a Trailblazer for Afro-Portuguese Communities in Portugal

Beyond Dino d'Santiago's widespread popularity, he also boasts an extensive awards list. Dino is a Grammy-nominated artist, and the attention he continually receives on a popular and

official level (as in, recognized and celebrated by entities, companies, awards, e.g., rather than solely by his fans) reflects the importance of the topics that he sings and writes about.[10] In 2023, *Forbes* classified Dino as one of the "voices of Lusofonia," and is also considered one of the top 100 most influential Afro-descendant people by MIPAD (Most Influential People of African Descent); proving his impact extends far beyond music. Dino's accolades highlight that his songs clearly reach broader audiences and convey important messages to and for Black communities and beyond.

He is a trailblazer in multiple ways, as seen by how he was the first person of Afro descent in Portugal to receive a Cultural Merit Medal, gifted to him by Portugal's president, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa in 2023 (though Dino reassures that he is not the first Afro-Portuguese descendant to have deserved this honor) (Farinha, 2024; Lemos, 2023).[11, 12] According to the Portuguese Republic website, the Cultural Merit Medal is given as an official, governmental recognition to commemorate "dedication to cultural action and dissemination" (2023). He additionally was recognized by *Expresso* magazine as "uma das 50 figuras que podem vir a definir o futuro de Portugal" ("one of the 50 people who could come to define Portugal's future"; my trans, 2023).

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[10] Dino was nominated for a Latin grammy for "Best Song Sung in Portuguese" in 2024 for his song "Esperança" with musician Criolo (Stilwell, 2024).

[11] In an interview with *Timeout*, Dino explains he does not want to carry the weight of being the first Afro-descendant to receive the Cultural Merit Award, especially when artists such as Sara Tarvares, another Portuguese artist of Cabo Verdean descendant, who often used her platform to touch on social justice issues, questions of race, and more (2024).

[12] Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa is Portugal's president as of February 2025.

Dino's albums are also highly celebrated; *Mundu Nôbu (2019)*, his second album, was named The Best Album by GQ, and *Kriola* (*2020)* was recognized as the Best Portuguese Act by MTV EMA. In 2022, his album *Badiu (2021)* received multiple PLAY awards and he was honored with the title of "Best Male Artist" (*Sul Informação*, 2022). While Dino's accolades showcase his prominence as an artist on the surface, the true measure of his significance as a musician lies in the profound impact of his music. Furthermore, it's reflected in the depth of his lyrics, the richness of his rhythms, and the resonance of his messages with wider audiences. Dino's achievements exemplify the importance and influence of his artistry in Portugal, and especially for Black-Portuguese communities. Overall, Dino's work serves as a key platform to rewrite narrow ideas of national identity and assert that Blackness also belongs in his nation's framework. However, to fully comprehend how he reimagines his nation's identity, first and foremost, it is necessary to determine what a nation is.

Nations as "Imagined communities"

Defining what constitutes a nation is critical for understanding how Dino contests rigid views of Portuguese national identity. According to leading scholar Benedict Anderson, a nation serves as an "imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (2006). It is a figment of imagination because a majority of these members will never personally know each other—yet they construct a shared sense of camaraderie, intangibly tethered to one another in their conceptualization of a nation. Nations are inherently limited, as Anderson emphasizes, because they draw boundaries between the rest of humanity, though they can be flexible depending on shared cultural and ideological scaffolds. Nationalism, then, is a

derivative of this idea of state, and as he explains, is focused on horizontal fellowship and not innately xenophobic.

However, as other scholars, such as Partha Chatterjee, argues in "Whose Imagined Community," while these communities are indeed imagined, nationalism itself is a creation that was enforced via colonialism. This suggests that even national identities are infiltrated by colonialist mindsets. This is precisely what Dino challenges in his music, as he reconstructs Portuguese rhetoric on national identity to also include spaces for Black-Portuguese communities. Dino's ideals of a nation, therefore, reimagine what it means to be Portuguese, opposing restrictive concepts of Portugueseness.

Dino d'Santiago's music serves as a platform where he centers discussions about race and space in Portugal. He uses space to merge the implicit and explicit together, where he contrasts tangible, physical spaces, such as neighborhoods or train lines, with his imagined reality for future Portugal, where unity is prioritized rather than differences (ideas that are further developed in Chapter 2). My first chapter provides a historical analysis on the shared histories of Cabo Verde and Portugal, demonstrating how colonialism has impacted Black-Portuguese communities. I choose to intentionally focus on Cabo Verde due to Dino's connection to its rich history and as means to fully understand his specific cultural references, though a great majority of his ideas apply to broader Afro-Portuguese communities, diasporas, and histories. Subsequently, my second chapter delves further into how Dino employs discourses on race and space in his artistry. Overall, these topics in Dino's music rewrite Portuguese national identity, critiquing his country's deeply ingrained and narrow colonial mindset.

CHAPTER 1: Investigating the Role of Cabo Verdean and Portuguese Histories in Defining Black-Portuguese Identity

Introduction and the Role of Music

Music is a vessel; a powerful tool of communication, capable of conveying a vast array of messages and stories within it (Golemo, 2020). It is a medium of narration, enabling musicians to articulate and share their personal, cultural, and societal experiences. For migrant and marginalized communities, music is an act of asserting presence, reinforcing group solidarity, and shaping (or dismantling) identity markers, and furthermore serves as a cultural transmitter (Golemo, 2020). As scholar Derek Pardue argues, this presence is a form of asserting visibility within a space, which holds especially true for marginalized communities (2018). Beyond entertainment, music is a powerful channel for artists to explore themes of belonging as well, shedding light on exclusionary societal practices (Pardue, 2018). By embedding these stories within their lyrics, they craft narratives that transcend boundaries, and resonate with diverse demographics.

For Afro-Portuguese musicians such as Dino d'Santiago, music encapsulates both the multidimensionality of their identity and the spaces in which they feel they belong. His identity, intertwined with both his Cabo Verdean and Portuguese heritages, informs his discourses regarding belonging and experiences of Black-Portuguese communities. Dino never inherently thought that his Blackness did not fit within the framework of Portugal's identity; rather, it was implicitly learned as he grew up. Despite living in Portugal, a country that boasts of the multiculturalism present in their country, growing up, Dino felt that having African ancestry was a source of shame (Medeiros, 2021). The rich and complex histories that both these countries

share are central to understanding Dino d'Santiago's cultural references, his connections to his lands, and how they have shaped his discourses surrounding race and space in his artistry.

The history of both respective countries demonstrates how they are inextricably intertwined with one another (Batalha, 2008). Through his lyrics, Dino addresses each countries' colonial past, clearly highlighting its impact on Cabo Verdean communities, while also demonstrating its role in broader Afro-Portuguese experiences. He intertwines this history with his own stories as a Black man in Portugal, demonstrating his struggles with his sense of belonging to two separate spaces—feeling both fully Portuguese and Cabo Verdean, yet expressing his qualms with his identities and how they intersect.

Here, in this chapter, I aim to elaborate the relationship between Cabo Verde and Portugal, and how it adds to the complexities of being of Afro-Portuguese descent in modern Portuguese society. I lay the groundwork for topics frequently discussed in Dino's songs, which are vital to the context of the narratives he conveys through his musical prowess. The shared history between the two countries has immensely informed Cabo Verdean immigrants, a larger Afro-Portuguese identity, and the space they occupy in Portugal. I initially outline a general history of both countries, building upon their relationship as I delve more into their shared histories and the implications of this overlap in contemporary Portugal. Music absorbs collections of history and memory within it, and to fully understand and extract deeper meaning from this entity, comprehending the nexus between Portugal and Cabo Verde presented in his lyrics is critical for meaningful analyses.

Section 1.1: Cabo Verde and The Portuguese Empire: The Islands In-between

Cabo Verde - A Geographical Overview

Within the vastness of the blue Atlantic lies Cabo Verde, a small collection of 10 islands approximately 1,700 miles from Portugal, its former colonial power (Gottlieb, 2015).[13] Despite its small size, the horseshoe-shaped archipelago's impact on Portugal and the Portuguese Empire is extensive, and vice versa. Though the substantial distance between the two would seemingly discourage any relationship between them, Portugal and Cabo Verde share a rich, yet complex history, dating back to colonial times (Gottlieb, 2015). These countries' histories are deeply connected, so much so that analyzing one without discussing the other would be incomplete (Pardue, 2013).

Lovingly known as “Cabo Verde” by its inhabitants (“Green Cape”; my trans.), is 350 miles from the nearest point to the mainland, in Senegal, in West Africa (Rego, 2024). Of the 10 islands that compile the archipelago, a total of 9 are inhabited, which are divided into two general categories: the *Barlavento* (or Windward) and *Sotavento* (Leeward) islands (Rego, 2024). The Barlavento islands consist of Santo Antão, São Vicente, Santa Luzia, São Nicolau, Sal, and Boa Vista, while the Sotavento are composed of Maio, Fogo, Santiago, and Brava. Santiago, the largest of the islands, houses the archipelago's capital city, Praia (Gottlieb, 2015). In total, approximately 530,000 residents are scattered across the 9 islands of Cabo Verde (*World Population Review*). Geographically speaking, most of the islands generally feature an arid, rocky landscape; however, Sal, Boa Vista, and Maio are an exception to this, as they are known

[13] Though the direct translation in English for Cabo Verde is ‘Cabo Verde,’ and this name is still used in some discourse, in this work, I will refer to the archipelago as Cabo Verde. My primary reasoning for this is that in 2013, Cabo Verde requested that “Cabo Verde” be used by the official United Nations for all official purposes, indicating that this is how their government prefers to be referred to by global leaders (*United Nations)*.

for their flat, sandy, and saline terrain (Rego, 2024). Additionally, Santiago is the island that Dino d'Santiago's parents hail from and where he derives his artist name from, as d'Santiago means "of Santiago;" Dino strategically chose his stage name to pay homage to his ancestral roots after he began singing in Cabo Verdean Creole and infusing traditional Cabo Verdean music genres into his music (Sousa Vieira, 2019).

The archipelago is home to various rich cultures that have garnered global attention, with its music considered its crowned jewel, also known as the "country's only export" (Hurley-Glowa, 2015; Braz Dias, 2018). One of the most well-known Cabo Verdean musicians is global icon Cesária Évora, who Dino references in his songs "Morabeza" (which is analyzed in Chapter 2) and "Mbappé." While the islands themselves have many similarities between each other, each one has many of its own respective cultural contributions to the broader Cabo Verdean identity (Rego, 2024).

Cabo Verde is a relatively "new" country, gaining its independence from Portugal in just 1975, along with many other PALOPs that Portugal previously controlled (Pardue, 2013). Cabo Verde is known for its high emigration rate, and while the exact number of emigrants who have left the country is unknown, numerous scholars have estimated that more Cabo Verdeans currently reside abroad than within the archipelago itself (Carling, 1997).

Portugal - Early Beginnings and Connection to Cabo Verde

Alternatively, Portugal houses more than 10 million inhabitants, with the metropolitan area of Lisbon accounting for approximately three million of these (European Union; World Population Review). Portugal is located in the Iberian Peninsula of Southwest Europe and its capital, Lisbon, is considered one of the world's oldest cities, dating back to as far as the 8th

century BC (Oliveira and Pinho, 2010). The country has played an integral role in many world regimes, dating back to prehistoric Celtic societies (Jack, 2007). Throughout the subsequent Roman, Moorish, and Christian kingdoms, Portugal has repeatedly demonstrated its influence via colonization and commerce, touching all corners of the world (Birmingham, 2018). Spanning across four centuries of Portuguese colonization, Lisbon was considered the epicenter of the Portuguese colonial empire, extending over many continents, such as Africa, America, Asia, and Europe (Jack, 2007). The founding of the country itself by D. Alfonso Henriques in 1143 was built off ideals of a White, Catholic Christian nation-state, which has had lasting impacts on ideas of national identity (Roque, 2023). Throughout the colonial era of conquest, it acquired many territories—one of them being Cabo Verde.

Cabo Verde as the Nexus Between Africa, Europe, and the Americas

The story between Portugal and Cabo Verde first began in 1456, as this was when Portuguese, Spanish, and Genovese navigators first spotted the collection of islands (Batalha and Carling 2008; Albuquerque, 1991). Upon further investigation in 1460, they were believed to be uninhabited and the Portuguese promptly converted it into a refueling station for their slave ships (Rego, 2024). Cabo Verde was named after Cap-Vert, the closest point to the mainland of Africa (which is contemporarily known as Senegal) (Rego, 2024). By 1466, the Portuguese king, King Alfonso V, granted the islands to slave traders in an attempt to monopolize the slave traffic of Guinea Bissau, another collection of islands off the African Coast (Albuquerque, 1991).

Over time, the archipelago's location began functioning as the "perfect stopping point" for the Portuguese's involvement in the Triangular Trade —an economic bartering system between the Americas, Europe, and Africa, which traded enslaved peoples, products, and raw

materials (Rego, 2024). This system functioned by exchanging manufactured goods from Europe for enslaved peoples from Africa, who were in turn sold by traders to plantations in the New World in exchange for raw materials produced there (Andrade, 1974). Soon after settlements were established on the islands in 1461, it began serving as the hub of the Triangular Trade system for Portugal; the Portuguese exploitation of its geographic location drove extensive economic development for traders and European settlers on the islands until the 19th century, signifying that the Triangular Trade system lasted over 300 years on the islands (Rego, 2024).

The majority of this trading began in Santiago, the largest Cabo Verdean island and the first overseas colony in sub-Saharan Africa. Santiago also acted as a point of interaction between diverse cultures, albeit forced (Rego, 2024). The first settlers onto the island were European men sent by the Portuguese empire, along with enslaved people brought from Africa. The violence perpetuated by the European men against the enslaved women forcefully brought to Cabo Verde soon mirrored its population, as children of mixed origin promptly became a large majority of the island's inhabitants (Batalha and Carling, 2008). The enslaved population was forced to establish sugar plantations and work in the harbors, while the European settlers garnered the profits from this exploitative system, trading the exportable goods enslaved peoples produced. However, the arid climate inhibited a successful agrarian economy, which allowed merchants to primarily focus on exports and trading rather than a cash-crop economy as they had originally planned. Cabo Verde's ideal location as a stopping point between Africa, the New World, and the rest of Europe, generated what Rego describes as "a profitable slave-trade entrepôt for over three centuries—a fact which left a "lasting social legacy" (Rego, 2024).

Cabo Verde's role in the Triangular Trade between these three markets is what marked its beginnings as an intermediary space in history, and what made it "special" in comparison to other Portuguese colonies. As Madeira describes this phenomenon:

> The settlement of the archipelago, after 1461, put in contact different population quotas from Africa and Europe, with distinct cultures that allowed shaping the Cabo Verdean Nation in a very peculiar way. Being the communication node between different continents (Africa, Europe, and America), and a society remade from initially uninhabited islands, Cabo Verde received and assimilated cultural influences, which ended up by offering rich and diverse aspects, imposed by history, geography, and economics (2014).

Madeira describes Cabo Verde's location as much more than just a physical intermediary space. He locates Cabo Verde as a simultaneous junction point between three continents, and a point of sociocultural contact. The Triangle Trade deeply impacted Cabo Verde's population, and as a result of this trade, Cabo Verdeans were uniquely situated as a part of the African diaspora and Portuguese conquests (Batalha, 2008). As a byproduct, they are neither socially perceived to be fully African nor fully European; they occupy a liminal space where they are enshrined as a middleman between both, failing to possess acceptance in either space. Similar to Cabo Verdeans who feel stuck in an intermediary space and rejected from both groups, a central aspect to Dino d'Santiago music how, even though he was born, raised, and resides in Portugal, he feels excluded from greater Portuguese national identity due to being Black (a concept further developed in the next sections and in Chapter 2).

Section 1.2: Cabo Verdean Diaspora Waves – The Beginnings of a Transnational Community in Portugal

The Fall of the Slave Trade System

The Triangular Trade's downfall came in the early 1800s, hundreds of years after its commencement in Cabo Verde (Rodrigues, 2014). One of the contributing factors to its deterioration was in 1836, when trading, but not the ownership, of enslaved peoples was officially prohibited. This elicited "the irreversible decline of the Cabo Verde economy," which subsequently induced the first large-scale emigration out of the country (Rego, 2024). Aside from the prohibition of trading enslaved peoples, its collapse was brought upon by several additional factors (Batalha and Carling, 2008). The first was self-inflicted—the Portuguese crown craved greater profits from the slave trade, subsequently increasing restrictions on merchants, and inadvertently causing deficits in buisness (Rego, 2024). However, in addition to these imposed limitations, new land claimed in the Americas boosted competition within the slave trade. These factors, paired with pirate attacks and looting from the French and the Dutch ships coming into Cabo Verde, leading to plundering on land, facilitated significant profit decreases.

The economic suffering of the island, coupled with numerous droughts, and famines, plagued the archipelago and weighed heavily on its inhabitants (Albuquerque, 1991). By the 1940s alone, approximately one-fourth of the entirety of the Cabo Verdean population perished as a result of two consecutive famines (Batalha and Carling, 2008). All of these factors combined—newly imposed regulations on the slave trade, economic hardships, widespread starvation, and droughts—began ripples of mobility out of Cabo Verdean islands, and began the origins of larger webs of Cabo Verdean communities around the globe (Rego, 2024).

Contratados – How A System of Forced Labor Facilitated Cabo Verdean Emigration

By 1878, the abolishment of slavery in Cabo Verde was officially implemented; however, this was far from the end of exploitative labor in the islands (Williams, 2010).[14] Once the ban was adopted, the slavery system that had been in place for centuries was promptly replaced with another form of forced labor, the *contratados* system (Batalha and Carling, 2008; Williams, 2010). Portugal, aware of the hardships that the Cabo Verdeans were facing, yet still wanting cheap labor for its colonial regime, manipulated Cabo Verdeans necessities and forced them to work as indentured laborers in other Portuguese colonies (Albuquerque, 1991). One of the primary ways that the Portuguese forced this revitalized system of slavery was by only issuing passports to certain locations where the Crown desired laborers (Batalha and Carling, 2008). In addition to the decline in the slave trade, Portugal failed to invest in necessary infrastructural advances in their previous colony, withering the available job opportunities for locals.

Due to Cabo Verdeans' collective suffering during this time period, many citizens fled to find jobs elsewhere, and hence were more willing to emigrate where their colonial power urged them to. Passports were mostly issued to São Tomé and Príncipe, another country off the coast of Africa, where they worked in coffee and cacao plantations (Batalha and Carling, 2008). According to scholar Luís Batalha, from 1900-1970, approximately 80,000 emigrants alone went to São Tomé and Príncipe, with others migrating to other countries such as Senegal, Argentina, and other PALOPs (for example, Angola and Guinea-Bissau) (2008). One of Cesária Évora's most popular songs, "Sodade," is a poignant reminder of the pain the *contratados* and their

[14] While Portugal officially passed a law banning slavery in its empire in 1869, abolishment of slavery did not take effect until 1878 in Cabo Verde (Williams, 2010).

families endured, as she sings about the sorrows of watching loved ones go to work in São Tomé and Príncipe. Dino d'Santiago's song "Morabeza" in his album *Kriola (2020)* similarly references Évora's iconic chorus in "Sodade" (which is unpacked more in Chapter 2). As thousands of Cabo Verdeans began working as indentured servants in other Portuguese colonies, it marked the initiation of mass Cabo Verdean migration into other countries (Andrade, 1974).

Migration Influxes from Cabo Verde to Portugal

Portugal did not witness a large influx of Cabo Verdeans until the mid-1960s through the 1980s (França, 1992; Rego, 2024), during rising labor demands. Throughout the 1960s, Portugal began experiencing work-force shortages, as much of their current laborers were lost to other European countries. The dictatorship in Portugal was also facing a new era, with the power shift from António de Oliveira Salazar, the dictator at the time (Sardica, 2012). After battling several health issues, including a stroke in 1968, he was replaced by Marcelo Caetano, who placed great priority on economic modernization (Sardica, 2012). Under Caetano's rule, the previously strict authoritarianism underwent modest changes, seeing increased industrialization and greater integration with Europe as a whole (Sardica, 2012).

The Portuguese economy was on the rise, and the need for urban labor in bigger cities such as Lisbon attracted a great number of Cabo Verdeans (Batalha, 2008). As Batalha describes, the lack of opportunity on the Cabo Verde islands, and the increasing demand for laborers formed an unprecedented demand for Cabo Verdeans in Portugal. He states that "While in Cabo Verde, the 'push' factor, in the forms of drought and famine, had its effects on migration until the early 1970s. In Portugal, the 'pull' factor only became significant in the 1960s, when the country experienced considerable economic growth, industrialisation, and growing urbanisation (Barreto

and Preto, 1996). During this era, Salazar's *jus soli* laws were implemented, stating Portuguese citizenship could be granted to those born in any Portuguese territory, further providing incentives for immigrating into Portugal (though this law was later revoked) (Almeida and Corkill, 2015).

Cabo Verdean Migration into Portugal - The "Badius" and the "Elites"

Historically, Cabo Verdeans who began immigration journeys to Portugal in the 20th century are typically divided into two groups: the "elite" Cabo Verdeans and the *badiu* (Batalha and Carling, 2008). The colonial "elite" are typically denoted as Cabo Verdeans who emigrated from Cabo Verde pursuing greater academic opportunities abroad, and had the monetary means to do so. They were characterized by students, merchants, administrators, and more, who were welcomed without "any bureaucratic hassle," as Batalha argues (Batalha and Carling, 2008). The later influx of Cabo Verdeans mostly consisted of young, general laborers (typically males) in search of a domicile from hardships in their motherland. They are often denoted as the *badiu*, which is derived from "vadiu" in Cabo Verdean Creole, signifying vagabond in English (Pardue, 2013). *Badiu is* also a colloquial term for Cabo Verdeans hailing from Santiago, and particularly is utilized to describe "those with darker skin and clearly of African ancestry" (Batalha and Carling, 2008).

This history reflects much of Dino d'Santiago's personal story, as his father immigrated to Portugal from Santiago in 1972 to work as a bricklayer in the South of Portugal, with his mother following in the early 1980's shortly before Dino's birth in 1982 (Abel, 2024). Dino classifies himself as Badiu, which is the inspiration of his 2021 album, named *Badiu.*

These immigrants were forced to rapidly adapt to urban life and industrial work, a stark contrast from the way of life they were accustomed to in Cabo Verde (Batalha, 2008). Most of these workers resided in underdeveloped areas on the outskirts of Lisbon or government-funded housing projects. These pockets of Cabo Verdean communities surrounding Lisbon are still visible today, in neighborhoods such as Couva da Moura, also nicknamed KovaM, Amadora, and Damaia (Castellano and Raposo, 2020). As I analyze in Chapter 2, Dino describes some of these working-class neighborhoods in discussions of space. In addition to housing discrepancies, other challenges impact Cabo Verdeans' quality of life in Lisbon, as many are not fully accepted into Portuguese society. As Batalha and Carling emphasize that:

> A conjunction of ethnicity, race, class, and cultural practices has worked to segregate them in the social world of shantytowns and, lately, in government-sponsored housing projects. It is these immigrants who those in white, mainstream Portuguese society consider as constituting 'the Cabo Verdean community'. In the eyes of that mainstream, they are 'Cabo Verdean', 'black', or 'African' - but rarely 'Portuguese.' This holds true not only for the immigrants themselves, but also for their descendants - who, despite having been born in Portugal and often having Portuguese nationality, are viewed by others as 'Africans' (2008).

As Batalha and Carling explain, Cabo Verdeans have historically been “othered” and viewed as second-class citizens while residing in Portugal (Vala et al. 2002). Not only do these feelings of non-belonging plague Cabo Verdeans, but extend to broader Black-Portuguese communities in Portugal, as Dino highlights in his music. Though Dino d’Santiago makes many references to his cultural roots, which is why understanding the shared history of Cabo Verde and

Portugal is critical to comprehend the full impact of his art, his messages about being Black in postcolonial Portugal extend to a wider audience of Black-Portuguese communities.

The Cabo Verdean Identity and Transnational Community Building

Despite the new culture that Cabo Verdean immigrants were immersed in, many still maintained the sociocultural values and norms of their homeland. Their dedication to upholding their Cabo Verdean identity is one of the many factors that makes them unique and is part of a greater transnational identity that facilitates connections with their communities across the globe (Carling, 1997). Transnationalism plays a great role in Cabo Verdean communities due to diaspora, and is described as "the flow/movement of people, ideas, and things across national borders. It can also refer to the development of social spaces and institutions that are organized across borders" (Meintel, 2002). Due to their participation in a transnational community, Cabo Verdean immigrants are part of a greater, collective identity that can resonate with transnational communities.

Challenges with Estimating Cabo Verdean Migration Numbers

Currently, estimating the exact numbers of Cabo Verdean immigrants is a significant challenge, firstly due to a majority of the migration occurring during Cabo Verde's colonial history under Portuguese rule (Batalha and Carling 2008; Carling, 1997). Though a vast quantity of Cabo Verdeans immigrated during the colonial era, the raw numbers of the actual number of Cabo Verdean immigrants in Portugal is still unknown and is subject to estimations. According to Portugal's Foreign and Borders Service (Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras, or SEF), a total of 36,748 Cabo Verdeans currently reside in Portugal (Sílvia and Machado, 2022). However, this

statistic only considers Cabo Verdean nationals, meaning immigrants who maintain dual citizenship status in both Portugal and Cabo Verde (Neto et al. 2022). Thus, the actual number of Cabo Verdeans is estimated to be significantly higher than the official representation by statistical analyses. Nonetheless, Cabo Verde continues to comprise a large majority of immigrants and remains the 3rd largest group of foreigners in Portugal. Understanding immigration into Lisbon is especially important for investigating the migration patterns into Portugal, as Lisbon alone houses 55 percent of the documented foreign residents in the country (Sardinha, 2008).

Second-generation Cabo Verdean Immigrants as Intermediaries

The diligence of Cabo Verdean immigrants in maintaining their cultural values can at times put their descendants in a challenging position; as Batalha explains, "The children of Cabo Verdean immigrants grow up in a liminal world: they neither fit in their parents' world nor have they gained a satisfactory place in the mainstream of Portuguese postcolonial society" (Batalha 2008). The cultural divide between the worlds of their parents and Portugal, their birthplace, often leaves second-generation Cabo Verdean immigrants feeling caught between two identities, not feeling they fully belong to either, similar to the middle-man role Cabo Verdeans have historically held throughout history, and extends the same sentiments as Dino d'Santiago. Though Cabo Verde is one piece of a greater, Afro-Portuguese diaspora, this idea is also applicable to the broader Afro-Portuguese population in Portugal, who similarly occupy an intermediary space between two identities (as Dino notes in his music) (Vala et al. 2002). Black-Portuguese people are often not perceived as "fully Portuguese" (Batalha, 2008). Rego supports this idea, "Having been 'separated' from Africa, they are acknowledged as being of

Africa, but not African, just as they are also of Portugal but hardly Portuguese" (2008). The struggle with the duality of their identity is often portrayed in music. The utilization of Cabo Verdean Creole, for example, is of great importance in this process, as it is an identity marker of the Cabo Verdean community abroad (Golemo, 2020).

One of the most prominent ways that Cabo Verdeans and other marginalized communities build transnational communities and exchange ideas is through music (Golemo, 2020). As Rego states, "Cabo Verdeans in the diaspora are known to preserve their language and their music—in fact, music is a significant Cabo Verdean export" (2024). Music is a way to reconcile artists' divided worlds: by singing in Creole, they connect to their ancestral world, while lyrics in Portuguese carry their lyrics to a broader audience (Andrea, 2022). Cabo Verdeans in diaspora compensate for the lack of physical connections by reconstructing their communities transnationally via music, which helps them maintain a collective identity (Golemo, 2020). In summary, though Cabo Verdean communities are separated by many miles due to large emigration from the archipelago, they still find ways to connect with each other with identity markers. The use of Cabo Verdean Creole and self-identification as *Kriolu,* for example, is one of the most prominent ways they build collective identities, both within and outside of music.

Section 1.3: Cabo Verde as the first "Creole" Society

Kriolu as a Social Identity

One of the cornerstones of the Cabo Verdean identity that has historically assisted in building transnational networks is the concept of being and speaking *Kriolu* (Rodrigues, 2014). Kriolu (also spelled as *crioulo*) refers to Cabo Verdeans mixed background, who neither fully identify themselves with being African nor Portuguese; they see themselves in a middle ground

between both, not quite one or the other (Batalha and Carvalho, 2008). Additionally, it serves as another language. The beginnings of *Kriolu* can be traced as far back as Triangular Trade, with the sociocultural intercalation between Western and African cultures (Rodrigues, 2014). The connection between European and African cultures, and moreover, the subsequent miscegenation of the population, mirrored the convergence of cultures that took place on the islands. As interactions between the different social groups in Cabo Verde intensified with Portugal's continual exploitation of the island's geography, a new generation was born, marking the beginning of the *Kriolu* (or Creole, in English) identity that many Cabo Verdeans describe themselves as contemporarily, regardless of if they are foreign-born and live abroad or if they hold Cabo Verdean citizenship status (Rego 2024). The term *Kriolu* is often used interchangeably with "Cabo Verdean." *Kriolu* is not a static definition; it encompasses a plethora of heterogeneity within the identity, including a variety of skin color, physical features, hair texture, dialects, and more (Batalha 2004; Rego, 2024). Identifying as *Kriolu* is a unique marker of Cabo Verdeanity, thus contributing to deep transcultural ties that bind Cabo Verdeans and their descendants together in diaspora.

Not only is Kriolu a social identity, but also a language spoken colloquially in Cabo Verde , which adds more layers to the Creole identity (Vale de Almeida, 2007). Cabo Verdean Creole, or Kriolu, blends Portuguese and African languages and is spoken by Cabo Verdean immigrants and their progeny in communities abroad, including Portugal (Pardue, 2013). The Creole identity therefore is not just an identity, but a language as well; similarly, there are other dialects of Creole spoken by those who are connected to PALOPs (Vale de Almeida, 2007).

Cabo Verde thus had influences from Europe and Africa due to interactions between the enslaved population and the Portuguese settlers, imposed by economic, historical, and

geographical motives; this process of creolization consequently caused the assimilation of cultural influences and birthed the rich and diverse cultural practices contemporarily present in Cabo Verde (Amaral, 2004). As Batalha states, “From its very origins, Kriolu was located, paradoxically, both within and outside of the Portuguese language,” as it originates from the convergence of Portuguese and African cultures and peoples, serving as a marker of identity in Portugal (2008). In his craft, Dino draws inspiration from his cultural roots, applying *Kriolu* to his envisionment of a larger, new *nação kriola* in Portuguese society. This idea of a Creole nation means that neither he nor Portugal is defined solely by one background, race, culture, or sound, but instead by a mix of several identities, cultural practices, and histories.

Cabo Verdeans and Their Descendants as Creole Citizens

The Kriolu identity additionally has further transnational implications that impact Cabo Verdean identity in diaspora. Many immigrants with Cabo Verdean roots, for example, in Portugal, still self-identify as Cabo Verdeans, despite having garnered official Portuguese citizenship status (Pardue, 2013). The same is true for second-generation immigrants and beyond; regardless of the degree of separation between their ancestors who emigrated, many still identify themselves as *Kriolu* (Pardue 2013). Dino similarly identifies as such, describing himself as both Cabo Verdean and Portuguese. As Pardue describes, they are uniquely “Creole citizens,” feeling connected to a country that was “born” *Kriolu*, lacking any proof of indigenous culture prior to the Portuguese’s claim of the land, and being a consistent point of contact between European and African cultures (2013).

Impacts of Lusotropicalism on Creolization in Cabo Verde

In addition to identity, the Creolization of the Cabo Verdean population had an extensive impact on the concept of race in the Portuguese empire, especially following Gilberto Freyre's proposed idea of Lusotropicalism (Almeida, 2015). Freyre first introduced Lusotropicalist theory in his famous 1933 book, *Casa Grande e Senzala*, where he put forth the notion that the Portuguese were the most gentle colonizers and praised the miscegenation occurring in the tropics (Vala, 2008). According to Freyre, this Portuguese presence in the tropics was denoted as special, arguing that the Portuguese colonizers appreciated and normalized miscegenation. As a result of the constant contact between European and African cultures, a *Kriolu* nation was formed via the supposed symbiotic union between the two (Almeida, 2015). As Vala states, Lusotropicalism was "a social representation that emphasizes the uniqueness of Portuguese colonial relations based on the Portuguese capacity to deal with people from different cultures" (2008). Freyre's exceptionalist theory that Vala highlights essentially gave the Portuguese claim to being "the good colonizers," and a way to deny their participation in discriminatory practices, and obscuring exploitative racial hierarchies (Vala, 2008).

Freyre's theory has perpetuated a sense of superiority surrounding its past as a colonial power that is still present in contemporary attitudes toward Portuguese history and has influenced national identity. As Santos describes, the intentional collective amnesia surrounding slavery and refusal to believe in the existence of racism in Portugal "punctuates Portuguese people's sense of their own history" (2018). Consequently, the Creole identity is multidimensional and complex, with many historical factors influencing the social identity.

Additionally, the notion that the Portuguese were gentle colonizers was quickly adopted by the Estado Novo Regime (a four-decade-long dictatorship in Portugal that celebrated the discovery period in Portuguese history), further spreading falsehoods about Portugal's colonial past, which even remain in present-day Portugal (Sardica, 2012). The Estado Novo Regime used Lusotropicalism to portray itself to both the world and its citizens as the most humane colonialists, propagating the "myth of a non-racist culture to claim ideological legitimacy for colonialism" (Santos, 2018). The adoption of this theory further spread the illusion of racial harmony, impacting race relations in Portugal and the perception of incoming immigrants, especially during the first wave of Cabo Verdean diaspora during the 1960s and 70s (França, 1992; Sardica, 2012).

Section 1.4: Estado Novo – How the Portuguese Dictatorship Shaped Race Relations and Portuguese Identity

An Introduction to Estado Novo

The Estado Novo regime profoundly impacted Portugal, and by extension, its former colonies in numerous ways, influencing migration patterns, identity, and race relations (Castro Leal, 2016; Sardica, 2012; Santos, 2018). The authoritarian dictatorship endured four decades, lasting from 1933 to 1974 (Castro Leal, 2016).[15] During the regime, run by António de Oliveira Salazar, the Portuguese government imposed rigid restrictions on Cabo Verdean emigration. Coupled with heightened immigration restrictions in the United States, this shift led to more

[15]Though Portugal has been under the rule of dictatorships since 1926, Estado Novo did not officially commence until 1933 (Sardica, 2012). Initially, a military coup occurred on May 28th, 1926, starting a military dictatorship that lasted until 1928, when Salzar began his rise to power alongside Carmona. 1933 marked the official start of *Estado Novo* with the ramification of the constitution (Sardica, 2012).

Portuguese immigration shares being given to Azoreans and Madeirans, islands off Portugal's coast (Meintel, 2002).

One of the most prominent ways the Estado Novo Regime influenced race perceptions was through the false depiction of one, united Portuguese empire, which hid the "brutal racialized systems of societal, cultural, economic, and political white hegemony" (Almeida, 2015). The empire neglected former colonies, and racial divides still ran deep in Portuguese culture, highlighting the hypocrisy of their autobiographical representation as one, harmonized entity (Batalha and Carling, 2008). Through the Estado Novo regime, Salazar and his government spread the belief that Portugal was a "pluricontinental" entity—meaning that the Portuguese empire was a singular nation-state, rather than an empire made of many parts and differences (Macqueen, 1999; Macqueen, 2014). Furthermore, he glorified the founding of Portugal and its era of conquest, subsequently idealizing the idea of a White, Christian nation-state that perpetuated exploitative and exclusionary practices. Simultaneously, his narratives masked systemic racism under the guise of being a racially inclusive society, enabling the Portuguese Empire to maintain its racial hierarchy.

This fake illusion of "one state, single and indivisible" (*um estado, uno e indivisível* – one of the dictatorship's infamous mottos) also ignored the underfunding of infrastructural and education systems in Cabo Verde and other African colonies (Macqueen, 2014; Batalha and Carling, 2008). The lack of secondary schooling led many citizens to pursue education in Portugal, which inadvertently created new faces of revolution in the fight for independence in Africa (Rego, 2024). One of the most prominent places to attain education for students from former African colonies at the time was *Casa dos Estudantes do Império* (CEI), founded by the Estado Novo in 1948 to create "model minority citizens" from PALOPs, and further push their

propaganda of sameness and equality (Sardica, 2012). Many of the students from the CEI went on to be leaders in independence movements for former Portuguese African colonies.

Pressure for Decolonization and Fights for Independence

Throughout the 1950s, the Portuguese government grappled with high internal tensions, especially concerning the decolonization process unfolding across the rest of the globe post-World War II (Rego 2024). Salazar and his government held tightly onto these colonies, refusing to give them their own independence, despite gaining momentum to do so around the world. By the early 1960s, wars in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau were underway, while Cabo Verde maintained a neutral position, as it once again found itself as an important refueling station between the two opposing forces of Portugal and its African colonies (Batalha 2008). The Portuguese desperately sought loyalty from Cabo Verde, as its geographic location gave an ideal location as a stopping point for ships heading into the war in Africa, mirroring its geographical importance for colonizers in the past (Batalha, 2008). Throughout the dictatorship, strict censorships were placed on cultural productions, media, and more (Sardica, 2012). Police brutality was also rampant, especially by the International Police for the Defense of the State (PIDE), a secret government police force that would kidnap, torture, and murder suspected insurgents (Rego, 2024). One of the most prominent PIDE facilities was the Tarrafal prison, located on the island of Santiago in Cabo Verde (Rego, 2024).

In the mid-1960s, Cabo Verde joined the PAIGC (The Party of African Independence for Guinea-Bissau and Cabo Verde) in the fight for Independence along with other former Portuguese colonies in Africa (Rodrigues, 2014). PAIGC was an anti-colonialist campaign, led by Amílcar Cabral, whose identity had a duality similar to the musician Dino d'Santiago; Cabral

was born to Cabo Verdean parents in Guinea-Bissau, as he felt deep connections to two different countries (Sardica, 2012). Similar to many other revolutionary leaders and thinkers, he received his education from CEI in Portugal, where he began his campaign against colonial structures (Rego, 2024). The Portuguese dictatorship officially ended on April 25th, 1974, after a military coup overtook Caetano's government, a day which is celebrated as the "Carnation Revolution" (Macqueen, 2014). The Carnation Revolution subsequently propagated the liberation process in the previous Portuguese colonies. With the help of revolutionary leaders, and after years of conflict across Africa, Cabo Verde finally gained independence from Portugal on July 5th, 1975, ending Portuguese control over the archipelago that spanned across multiple centuries (Rego, 2024).

Cabo Verde Post-Carnation Revolution

Following the independence movement, Cabo Verde has seen a plethora of political and economic changes. It initially operated as a socialist government under The Partido Africano da Independência de Cabo Verde (PAICV), which broke from the previous PAIGC that Cabo Verde fought for independence with (Meintel, 2002). From 1991 onwards, the archipelago has functioned under a multi-parliamentary system and is contemporarily considered to be one of the most stable African democracies (Rodrigues, 2014). Though it experienced a rupture from Portugal in 1975, Cabo Verde has upheld its relationship with its previous colonial power, especially concerning migration (Batalha, 2008). Migration has increased since the fall of the dictatorship, especially as the Cabo Verdean government retains a positive attitude towards migration, with some of the most popular immigration locations being Portugal, other countries in Europe, and the United States (Meintel, 2002; Batalha, 2008). Similarly, Portugal has

functioned under a parliamentary democratic republic since their freedom from the dictatorship in 1975 (Sardica, 2012).

Although the end of the dictatorship and subsequent independence brought along many new freedoms for Cabo Verdeans and the Portuguese alike, it failed to repair the deep-rooted racial divides latent in the Portuguese empire since colonial times (Batalha, 2008). Since 1975, colonial mindsets surrounding race relations have been profoundly ingrained in multiple aspects of Portuguese contemporary culture, including national history, culture, and identity (Edwards, 2019). Since the 1990s, much discourse has been focused on promoting and facilitating cross-cultural exchanges, yet it has failed to discuss the "imperialist baggage" that came along with these notions (Edward, 2019). As a result of the Estado Novo Regime spreading Lusotropicalist ideals throughout the country, Portugal has adopted a reluctant attitude towards acknowledging the racism and inequalities that continually persist in their own society (Batalha and Carling, 2008). These dispositions, as a result, have permeated contemporary society in Portugal today and infiltrate themselves into everyday struggles that Black-Portuguese communities face.

Section 1.5: Present-Day Portugal - An Intersectional Analysis of Black-Portuguese Experiences in Portugal

Black-Portuguese Presence and Belonging

Analyzing the commonalities between Portuguese and Cabo Verdean history showcases the many events that have shaped the multidimensionality of contemporary experiences of Cabo Verdean immigrants, their progeny, and more broadly, Black-Portuguese experiences in Portugal. For Afro-Portuguese immigrants and their descendants, one of the current-day struggles is

carving out spaces, finding belonging, and demonstrating their "presence," especially because remnants linger of the racial hegemonic systems in place during the colonial era (Pardue, 2018). As a result of the exceptionalist perspective that the Portuguese empire adopted with Lusotropicalism, their institution harbors a "colorblindness" regarding racism in Portugal (da Luz Scherf, 2024; Araújo, 2013, Araújo, 2016). Consequently, many prejudices are found in Portugal today that are ignored, and many citizens still refuse to believe that Portugal has any racism (Vala, 2008). This proves to be challenging for Black-Portuguese citizens, leaving them grappling with how they coalesce with Portuguese society (Vala et al. 2002). The dilemma of what spaces Black-Portuguese individuals are allowed to occupy, and the unacknowledged injustices, all contribute to and continually impact their experiences and belonging in contemporary society.

For example, in 1981, the *jus soli* laws (as discussed in Section 1.2) were revoked and replaced by *jus sanguinis*, a law stating that mainly only those of Portuguese descent could be granted citizenship. This excluded thousands of Afro-Portuguese immigrants from full citizenship, as many were born in PALOPs with no direct Portuguese ancestry (Almeida and Corkill, 2015). This law serves as a restrictive measure, limiting who can be officially considered Portuguese. Consequently, these exclusionary practices shaped governmental and social perceptions surrounding "Portugueseness." This was slightly modified in the 2006 law, which allows foreigners to become naturalized citizens if they have legally resided in Portugal for at least five or more years, and only with a permit.

Furthermore, the aftermath of colonial ideas that persist, liminal spaces thus remain for those who identify as Black and Portuguese. The aftermath of racist structures goes ignored, and the belief in the Portuguese's "colonial benevolence" overlooks the disparities and

marginalization the Black-Portuguese face regularly (Batalha, 2008; Santos, 2018). Consequently, their social acceptance remains hindered, leaving them with a sense of social subordination. A prime example of this adversity is second-generation Cabo Verdeans in Portugal. Descendants of Cabo Verdean immigrants face a particularly challenging duality in their identity: they maintain ties to a homeland they have never physically known, simultaneously grappling with exclusion in the country they reside in (Batalha, 2008). Batalha, for example, while analyzing Cabo Verdean identity in Portugal, states:

> Because they are perceived as 'Africans', their integration is difficult; reciprocally, because they see in their skin colour a reason for rejection, they tend to interpret their relation to the mainstream in terms of race, which in turn pushes them to develop an oppositional, 'African' identity that - both they and others believe - denies them the middle-class lifestyle and values of the white families who live in neighbourhoods surrounding theirs (2008).

As he describes, these immigrants and their descendants feel they are not fully integrated into Portuguese society; they are habitually seen as "African", yet seldom as their nationality, Portuguese (Batalha, 2008). Consequently, they face the challenge of carving out their own spaces of belonging, as racial structures already in place "did not easily accommodate people of puzzling African and Portuguese mixed origin" (Batalha, 2008).

Modes for Acceptance for Black-Portuguese Communities

The alienation they experience leaves a limited array of options for acceptance into Portuguese society. In an effort to feel belonging, non-dominant groups adopt different acculturation strategies to gain acceptance from the dominant group. In this case, dominant

groups are considered individuals with a “disproportionate share of societal resources, privileges, and power” compared to non-dominant individuals (Knowles and Peng, 2005). Acculturation encompasses the cultural shifts that occur after non-dominant and dominant groups interact with one another, and can come in a variety of ways (Neto et al. 2002). There are two main obstacles concerning acculturation strategies that non-dominant groups face: “the wish to maintain one’s cultural heritage (‘cultural maintenance’) and the wish to participate in the settlement country (‘host country participation’)” (Neto et al. 2022). Four different acculturation strategies subsequently stem from these concerns: assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization (Berry, 1997; Neto et al., 2022).

Assimilation is characterized as the full adoption of another dominant culture's beliefs or practices, signifying that Black-Portuguese individuals sever ties with their ancestral heritage and cultural practices, fully adopting cultural norms of Portuguese society (Raposo and Marcon, 2021). Integration, on the other hand, is when a non-dominant individual maintains their cultural identity while also engaging with the larger society (Neto et al. 2022). Separation consists of individuals who prioritize maintaining their cultural bonds as opposed to the dominant culture, while, conversely, marginalization includes a low interest in maintaining cultural ties and focusing on establishing connections with broader society (Neto et al. 2022). At times, these tactics are not optional either, as societal pressure from a dominant culture forces assimilation or other strategies.

Lisbon is commonly denoted as a “Black City” and presents itself to the outside world as a multicultural space by highlighting the attributes that promote the idea of being diverse, many Black-Portuguese communities have to adopt these strategies in hopes of furthering their societal acceptance (Francisco, 2006; Santos, 2018; Neto et al. 2022). In Portugal, there is an “intentional

forgetting of slavery and the denial of racism that punctuates Portuguese people's sense of their own history," impacting how Cabo Verdean individuals are seen and how they interact with society because their marginalization is overlooked (Santos, 2018). These struggles of Cabo-Verdean communities also resonate with the greater hardships of other individuals in the overall Afro-Portuguese diaspora. Dino utilizes music as a means to contest Afro-Portuguese exclusion by incorporating both his Portuguese and Cabo Verdean heritages into his craft. He especially utilizes traditional Cabo Verdean styles to curate the melodies of his songs.

Section 1.6 – Morna, Funaná, and Batuque: The Cabo Verdean Heartbeat in Dino d'Santiago's Signature Sounds

Morna: Music of the Kriolu

Dino d'Santiago's music is a combination of diverse influences, genres, and sounds. His genre-defying sound is one of the defining characteristics of his signature sound. Dino is mainly inspired by Cabo Verdean music styles such as morna, funaná, and batuque. Music itself is known as one of the 3 pillars of Cabo Verdean culture, and serves as the country's most important export, and is home to a variety of globally recognized song styles and dances (Arenas, 2011; Palmberg, 2002). While Chapter 2 delves more into the lyrical analysis of his artistry, this section serves as a brief background to the main Cabo Verdean genres that Dino draws inspiration from, includes in his songs' soundscape, and even references in his lyrics.

Morna is the most internationally recognized Cabo Verdean music genre, and is muddled into many social spheres (Palmberg, 2002; Braz Diaz, 2012). Contemporarily, it can be found playing during celebrations, funeral processions, and on the radio. Morna is imprinted by "saudade" (longing; my trans.), With a mournful and gloomy tone, and was traditionally both a

poem and a song (Palmberg, 2002). While morna contemporarily receives global recognition, it first became known outside of Cabo Verdean music circles through Cesária Évora, who in the early 1990s brought the morna genre to its unprecedented international fame (Arenas, 2011). Évora is a staple in Cabo Verdean music, so much so that Dino d'Santiago pays homage to the international star in his own work, in songs such as "Morabeza" (which is further unpacked in Chapter 2) and "Mbappé."

Morna is characterized as "Kriolu" music due to its African and European influences (Palmberg, 2002). Its poetic, emotional style is sung in medium-tempo quadratic meter, almost exclusively in Cabo Verdean Creole (Palmberg, 2002; Braz Diaz, 2012). It originated in the 20th century, with Eugenio Tarvares being credited for the genre's creation (Palmberg, 2002). Tavares was a well-known Cabo Verdean poet who was the first person to give importance to writing in Cabo Verdean Creole (Williams, 2010). The leading composer of morna, conversely, was B. Leza (a pseudonym for Francisco Xavier da Cruz, 1905-1958). B. Leza was another Cabo Verdean poet who formed part of the *claridade* (as discussed in the Introduction), a group that expressed the harsh realities of living on the archipelago, facing hunger, droughts, and more (Aoki, 2016).

Morna showcases its Portuguese roots through the string instruments that accompany the melody. Composing the genre requires a polyphonic instrument, which necessitates the *violâo* (the Portuguese guitar) (Palmberg, 2002). Other instruments that can accompany the melody include the *cavaquinho* (which is similar to a ukulele), the violin, and the clarinet (Palmberg, 2002). Morna has greatly influenced Dino d'Santiago's work, as he incorporates the heartfelt, emotional style in some of his work, such as in his track, "Morna," which is analyzed in Chapter 2. Furthermore, Dino references Morna in multiple songs, including "Esquinas" ft. Slow J

(which I discuss in Chapter 2), and acts as a means to incorporate his Cabo Verdean roots into his art and emphasize the cultural capital that Cabo Verdean immigrants bring to Portuguese culture.

Batuque: Cape Verde's Oldest Music Style

Similar to morna, Dino draws from batuque (*batuku* in Cabo Verdean Creole), another traditional genre and also a dance, to inform his own music style. Batuque is considered the earliest Cabo Verdean genre, and is considered to be the closest in origin to African beats (Palmberg, 2002; Williams, 2010). Initially, batuque was part of a ceremony solely performed by women during special rituals, where women form a semicircle, beating contrasting rhythms on *panos* ("cotton-cloth shawls"; trans. by Williams) (Palmberg, 2002; Williams, 2010). It is characterized by a polyrhythmic sound, call-and-response singing, and its percussive intensity (Palmberg, 2002).

Batuque generally has three different stages. The *finaçon* is the introduction to the batuque, and traditionally performed as a competition between two women who are improvising their verses (Palmberg, 2002). The next stage is the "meat" of the batuque, where one to two women dance in the heart of a circle with the *panos* fastened around their waists, while the others retain the rhythm. The finale, the *torno*, concludes with rapid hip movements (perceived by some as sensual) (Palmberg, 2002; Williams, 2010). The themes of the songs are flexible, ranging from satire to general commentaries on life (Palmberg, 2002). Aside from the musical influence it has in Dino's songs, he has explicitly mentioned batuque in his lyrics; for example, in "Ken Ki Flau," in his album, *Kriola (2020)*, Dino references Nácia Gomi, a legendary Cabo Verdean *finaçon* singer (Gomes, 2011; Kabir, 2019). These references to batuque are yet another way for Dino to embrace his Cabo Verdean heritage, and also serve as a means to underline the plurality

of his identity, as he often mixes these traditional genres with modern electronic and Afro-Portuguese beats.

Funaná – Sounds from Santiago

In addition to morna and batuque, funaná plays an integral role in the soundscapes of Dino d'Santiago's songs. Funaná was originally developed in the 19th century, in rural Sâo Tiago (contemporarily known as Santiago), the island that Dino's family hails from (Palmberg, 2002). Similar to how morna was initially a poem rather than a song style, the term funaná was initially utilized to refer to parties or celebrations rather than the music itself (Palmberg, 2002). The genre is accompanied by two key instruments—the *ferro* and the *gaita*. The ferro is a scored iron bar which marks the rhythm of the beat, while the gaita is a diatonic accordion that accompanies the melody (Palmberg, 2002). Funaná is classified as the music of the *badius* (a Cabo Verdean term used to describe people of the lower class, with darker skin, who are from Santiago, like Dino's family).

Historically, funaná and batuque were both banned by the Catholic church during colonial rule in the second half of the 19th century. Due to their influence from African rhythms, the church thought that the drumming and beats were "a secret 'African' message calling for revolt" (Palmberg, 2002). Additionally, the perceived sensuality of the batuque dance was considered immoral by the church, furthering their disapproval of the music genre. Funaná and batuque were thus seen as subversive and anthems of anti-colonialism and resistance. Contemporarily, funaná is converted to a more electronic style, which is how Dino incorporates it into the background of his music. As scholar Hurley-Glowa states, "The version used in modern Cape Verdean pop music is played on amplified instruments including synthesizer,

electric guitar, electric bass guitar, and drum set or drum machine" (1991). One of Dino's most famous songs, "Kriolu" (which, as mentioned in the introduction, has over 8 million Spotify streams), part of his *Kriola (2020)* album, opens with the iconic ferro and gaita as the first sounds heard as the track plays (which is another song that I unpack in the following chapter). He also infuses other songs with the essence of funaná, such as his solo single, which itself is named "Nós Funaná." These music genres, overall, provide a vital background to important traditional Cabo Verdean music styles that influence Dino's craft. This brief introduction to the histories of morna, batuque, and funaná is critical to understanding Dino d'Santiago's cultural references and what sounds shape his soundscape. These references are especially important for Dino and broader Black-Portuguese communities, to mark their presence in a society that marginalizes them.

Music as an Assertion of Presence

One of the principal outlets in which Afro-Portuguese artists express their frustrations with the persistence of racial hierarchies and societal rejection is music (Golemo, 2020). Musical production, as Castellano et al. state, is an avenue to "make structural racism visible" (2020). Therefore, music allows minority communities to bring injustices to light and is a mechanism for resisting wholesale assimilation (Leurs, 2018; Golemo, 2020). Additionally, music can act as a transmitter of cultural community, creating greater bonds between Black-Portuguese individuals (Lundberg, 2010; Golemo, 2020).

The utilization of music to express structural injustices and inequalities for the Black-Portuguese communities is crucial, especially with the rise of far-right political groups in Portugal and broader Europe (Cordeiro-Rodrigues, 2024). CHEGA, a conservative, nationalist

party, has recently gained much traction across Portugal, and is infamous for its "normalization of racist discourse" and anti-immigration stance (Martins, 2023).[16] Political parties such as CHEGA only further promote xenophobia, which is defined as fear, hatred, or distrust towards foreigners or foreign cultures, and produces civic ostracism (Kondor and Littler, 2023; Kim and Sundstrom, 2014; Bordeau, 2009).

In consequence, music is utilized as an art form in which Black-Portuguese communities address structural racism and preserve or reinforce their cultural identities, especially in the context of the current political climate in Portugal, with xenophobic narratives being spread by right-learning parties (Batalha, 2008; Golemo, 2020; Kondor and Littler, 2023). Music is a vital tool for Black-Portuguese individuals to navigate and declare their identities in a society where they are often seen as invisible. It not only can address the injustices that they face, but also empower a form of solidarity, pride, and deep connection to their cultural heritages (Batalha, 2008; Pardue, 2018). Music thus has established itself as a form of visibility for these communities and has risen in popularity within younger generations (Castellano and Raposo, 2020). Dino d'Santiago is one of the main artists in Portugal utilizing music's vitality to highlight the daily struggles that Black-Portuguese communities face. Through his lyrics, he displays the resilience and dedication of Afro-Portuguese communities, especially those who have connections to an immigrant identity, as he does, being a second-generation Cabo Verdean immigrant. He brings this complex, multifaceted history between Cabo Verde and Portugal into his music to explain what it means to be a Black-Portuguese man in contemporary Portugal (Vanspauwen, 2013).

[16]CHEGA, Portuguese for "enough," was founded in 2019, and has exponentially risen in popularity in Portugal since its founding (as of January 2024) (Martins, 2023).

Dino d'Santiago is one of the most compelling and transformative voices within the broader Portuguese music scene due to how he carves out his own paths. While he does not perfectly encapsulate an entire movement nor represent all Afro-Portuguese cultures and experiences in their totality, he is one of the most innovative and influential voices within it; he participates in a larger, heterogeneous musical scene. While Dino specifically has Cabo Verdean roots, his music acts as a greater ambassador of Afro-Portuguese presence and culture, demonstrating how Black-Portuguese communities undoubtedly contribute to a greater Portuguese identity. His genre-defying sounds are just one representation of embracing his heritages, as he mixes European and African sounds. Dino, through including his own cultural traditions, marking the presence of Black-Portuguese people in Portuguese culture, and displaying his ancestry in his soundscape, is one of the principal foundations of discussions of race and space in his craft. These are ideas further developed in Chapter 2, where I argue that Dino uniquely utilizes racial and spatial discourses to assert Black-Portuguese presence and reimagine Portuguese national identity.

CHAPTER 2: "Sou um preto em construção, não sou um branco em desconstrução:" An Analysis of Racial and Spatial Discourses in Dino d Santiago's Artistry

Section 2.1: Centering Dino d'Santiago in Discussions of Race and Space

An Introduction to Chapter 2

Growing up in postcolonial Portugal, Dino d'Santiago learned that his Blackness was not welcome. Through his country's deeply rooted norms and its glorification of a colonial past, he was made to feel that as a Black-Portuguese man, his race was inferior and held no place in a greater, collective Portuguese identity. Dino argues that Portugal constructs its national identity through a Eurocentric and selective national consciousness via celebrating an era that profited from exploitative racial hierarchies. Consequently, the legacy it leaves for its Afro-Portuguese inhabitants is one in which Blackness does not belong. Dino, in an interview with Portuguese digital music magazine *Rimas e Batidas*, explained the sociocultural consequences of the colonial mindsets that plague Portugal:

> A única coisa onde sinto que Portugal realmente falhou, e que só agora na idade adulta consigo perceber melhor, foi na romantização da colonização. Ou seja, a forma como nos sentimos heróis… E é isto que Portugal tem também de trazer ao de cima e dizer assim, "olha, existe esta herança," porque isto quebra-nos culturas, crenças, até ao ponto de eu, em criança, sentir vergonha de compreender a cultura africana, e dizia, "não, eu não sou africano, eu sou europeu," porque achava que a cultura africana era menos elevada, porque tudo o que vi só me mostrou isso, até os próprios filmes americanos, o negro aparecia sempre num ambiente selvagem ou num ambiente de droga, e a sociedade sempre colocou as coisas num prisma que eu próprio, como negro, não me identificava com aquilo.

(qtd. in Brito, 2020)

> *The only thing I feel that Portugal truly failed at, and that I can only understand now as an adult, was the romanticization of colonization. That is, the way we feel like heroes… and it's this that Portugal also needs to bring to the surface, and say "look, this heritage exists," because this breaks our cultures, beliefs, until the point that I, as a child, felt ashamed of learning about African culture, and I said "no, I'm not African, I'm European" because I thought African culture was less elevated, because everything I saw only showed me this, even in American films, Black people always appeared in a savage or drug environment, and society always placed things in a prism that I myself, as a Black person, didn't identify with.*
>
> (my trans.)

As he notes, living under romanticized ideals of colonialism drew a false dichotomy between Dino's African and European heritages, leading him to internalize the notion that they are incompatible with one another. Music serves as a platform for Dino to alleviate the tormenting, diametrical opposition between these two realms of his identity, allowing him to dream of a Portugal that champions Blackness and multiculturality instead of a past White, exploitative nation-state. Dino, rather than accepting his country's exclusionary perspective on what it means to be Portuguese, rejects that Afro-Portuguese culture and identity should exist on its margins. By embracing both his Cabo Verdean and Portuguese heritages, he utilizes his music as a vehicle for deconstructing restrictive national narratives. Dino argues that he, too, belongs within his own nation's framework, positioning Blackness at the forefront of national identity

rather than a source of shame. His work thus serves as both a critique and a reimagination of what it means to be Portuguese.

Two of the principal ways Dino employs this are through racial and spatial discourses in his lyrics, where he portrays racial issues and space in multiple manners, marking presence and belonging for Afro-Portuguese communities. Not only does Dino embrace these themes in his songs, but utilizes them to envision a new, more inclusive future for Portugal, acknowledging multiculturalism and demonstrating the diverse ways to be Portuguese. In this chapter, I analyze how, through questions of race and space, Dino repudiates the historically ingrained notions of Blackness not fitting within his own nation's framework, proclaiming that it is not an external influence but instead a foundational element of national identity.

Section 2.2 - Exploring Racial Narratives in Dino d'Santiago's Music

The Layers of Racial Discourse in Dino's Songs

Racial discourses in Dino d'Santiago's music are central to his critique of the enduring legacies of colonialism in Portugal. Dino's portrayals of race are polysemous, as he discusses it through a variety of lenses. His lyrics nuance race, not solely considering it as a historic means of marginalization, but also a matter of belonging and presence. By voicing the racial injustices and oppression of Afro-Portuguese communities, he lays the groundwork for his aspirations of a future, *Nova Lisboa* ("New Lisbon;" my trans.), where societal unity is emphasized over division and hate. These discourses are particularly prominent in two of his most recent albums, *Kriola (2020)* and *Badiu (2021)*, which are the principal foci of my analysis. Within these collections, the tracks "Corvo," "Eu Sou," "Nhôs Obi," "Esquinas," and "Morabeza" demonstrate how he demonstrates the hardships and lived experiences of Black-Portuguese communities. Both

"Morabeza" and "Nhôs Obi" are in Dino's album *Kriola (2020)*, while "Esquinas" and "Corvo" are part of his collection *Badiu (2021)*; "Eu sou", on the other hand, was released as a single in 2024. This section, in summary, explores how Dino depicts racial hegemonies in Portugal and how they function as a mechanism of physical and social marginalization, excluding Black-Portuguese from national identity.

Quem ainda sofre bué, são as pessoas mais escuras" - Examples of How Systematic Oppression Appears in Dino d'Santiago's Songs

Race, as Dino d'Santiago argues, can serve as the sole means for systemic oppression, leaving Black-Portuguese communities trapped in vicious cycles of suffering and inequality. In "Corvo" ("Raven"; my trans.), for example, Dino challenges his listeners to reflect on the racial inequalities rampant in contemporary Portugal.[17] Throughout the song, he chooses to sing in a rock-adjacent style, blending a raw, emotional tone into his melodic delivery. His voice carries a grittiness, adding to the vulnerability of his message. In one part of the song, however, he subdues the power of his vocals, and settling in a calmer, more introspective manner, he sings:

> Benjamim perguntou porquê, em todas as culturas
> Quem ainda sofre bué, são as pessoas mais escuras
> Se precisamos imaginar a dor para adivinhar a cor
> Então dá meia volta, aqui não há nada
> Mas se esticares a corda
> Vai partir, (Vai) partir, (Vai) partir do lado do povo

[17] For more information on the colonial history between Cabo Verde and Portugal, please see Chapter 1.1: Cabo Verde and The Portuguese Empire: The Islands In-between.

(Dino d'Santiago ft. Rincon Sapienca "Corvo," *Badiu*, 2021)

Benjamin asked why, in all cultures

Those who still suffer the most, are the darkest people

If we need to imagine pain to guess the color

Then turn around, there's nothing here

But if we stretch the rope

It'll break (It will) break, (It will) break on the side of the people

(my trans.)

In these verses, Dino and Manicongo (also commonly referred to as Rincon Sapiência, who took part in writing the lyrics) question why Blackness equates to disproportionate suffering of Black bodies.[18] One of the main avenues they employ to convey this is through adding a character into the narrative they weave, named Benjamin. His character allows for a point of societal reflection, innocently asking why being Black is universally tethered to anguish. The purity of his question evokes imagery of a young child, asking his loved ones to explain the complexities of the world around him. These lines humanize Dino and Manicongo's critique, demonstrating that even children grapple with systemic injustices.

Aside from being a popular Christian name, its etymology is derived from the Hebrew בִּנְיָמִין (Binyamin), meaning "son of the right hand." The careful selection of his name is yet

[18] Manicongo, whose real name is Danilo Albert Ambrioso, is an Afro-Brazilian rapper known for incorporating samba, reggae, electronic, and rock influences into his music style (Culture Scapes). Born in 1985, he began his music career in 2000, and has since been a staple in Brazil's hip hop culture. Manicongo's raps serve as spaces for social critiques, where he commonly critiques the racial injustices present in his city, São Paulo (WOMEX).

another reinforcement of Benjamin representing a younger generation (Abarim Publications). Additionally, in the Old Testament, individuals hailing from Benjamin's tribe have a pattern of acting as redeemers and restorers of Israel, despite the tribulations that plague their people. Dino, who was raised in the church, may thus have selected the name to symbolize Afro-Portuguese descendants as the hope and renewal of Portugal despite the obstacles they face.

Benjamin's observation additionally serves as a mechanism to imply that these are not just his sentiments, but ones of a larger community. Even he, as a naive child, understands the enduring oppression of Black individuals. This commentary, which links Blackness and hardship, sows seeds of doubt as to whether racial hierarchies have truly ceased to exist, something that Benjamin, and by extension, Dino and Manicongo, clearly falsify. This is central to Dino's argument against the notion that racial equality has been achieved in Portugal, a country contemporarily grappling with the remnants of a colonial system that benefited from the profiteering of enslaved Africans and others (as discussed in Chapter 1).

Additionally, Dino, by remarking, "Se precisamos imaginar a dor para adivinhar a cor, Então dá meia volta, aqui não há nada" ("If we need to imagine pain to guess the color / then turn around; there's nothing here;" my trans.), he furthers his critique. Dino troubles racial discrimination, showing how mainstream Portuguese society fails to truly grasp what it means to be of Afro-Portuguese descent; pain and inequality are vital to understanding their lived experiences. These two impactful verses communicate that if Portugal fails to acknowledge suffering correlated to race, then they are not truly looking. These lines also bring attention to how Dino not only presents discrimination as an integral part of the lived experience of being a Black-Portuguese man, but also demonstrates how others often fail to fully comprehend racial injustices unless they themselves have experienced it.

Changing his tone in the last verse, Dino conveys a message of hope in a society of despair: “Mas se esticares a corda / Vai partir, (Vai) partir, (Vai) partir do lado do povo” (“but if we stretch the rope, It’ll break (It will) break, (It will) break on the side of the people;" my trans). By breaking the chains of an unjust system, this represents how, by joining as a united force, Portugal can make a change for Black-Portuguese individuals and liberate themselves from a repressive colonial mindset. Dino thus calls for others to take part in the shaping of a new generation of thinking, one that challenges Portugal's colonial legacy and embraces a more inclusive national identity. These six verses are not the only instances in “Corvo” where he discusses themes of exclusion and the marginalization of Afro-Portuguese identity.

At the beginning of his song, Dino hints at the marginalization of Black-Portuguese communities. As it opens, Dino’s voice powerfully appears, singing in a soulful, determined manner and mixing both Portuguese and Cabo Verdean Creole:

Se as ruas não sabem quem sou

Oji N ta ben pa mostra-u

Ken mi é

Ken mi é

(Dino d’Santiago, ft. Manicongo “Corvo," *Badiu*)

If the streets don’t know who I am

Today, I come to show you

Who I am

Who I am

(my trans.)

In the above lines, Dino's declaration "Ken mi e" ("Who I am"; my trans.) is an act of resistance and powerful affirmation of self in the face of systemic invisibility. He argues that his own homeland's streets fail to recognize him, alluding to how Black individuals are pushed into the peripheries of society. The collective amnesia that Portugal perpetuates regarding racial inequality reinforces these colonial racial hierarchies that praise Whiteness (Santos, 2008). This is precisely the experience Dino encapsulates in the above lines. However, rather than accepting his marginalization due to his society's failure to acknowledge him, he firmly asserts his presence. Dino, by placing himself in the center of this narrative, pushes back against racial hegemonic structures seeking to silence Black-Portuguese voices.

Manicongo's verses then quickly follow Dino's affirmation, as he raps: "Polícia pra todo lado, bandido pra todo canto / Sorriso vai guerrear pra pegar o lugar do pranto," ("Police everywhere, criminals everywhere / Smiles are fighting to take the place of tears;" my trans.). Manicongo contributes another layer to Dino's declaration, as he confronts over-policing in Black communities. His verses communicate that in Portuguese society, race serves as a means for the criminalization of Black-Portuguese people. Together, their voices enter into dialogue with one another, representing one larger community message.

"Corvo" overall critiques police brutality and anti-Black discrimination, showing the tangible, everyday impacts of racial inequality; this exposure of Portugal's deeply ingrained discrimination acts as an implicit call for change. Dino's declaration of his presence showcases his commitment to dismantling the erasure of Black identity, rejecting that Blackness is something to be hidden or denied; rather, he utilizes his music to exert his right to exist fully and unapologetically within Portuguese national identity.

One of the main questions that arises from Dino's work in "Corvo" is why he chose to discuss discrimination as central to understanding race, and how what he sings about relates to contemporary Portugal. Recently, a series of episodes have become infamous in Portugal's media, highlighting how Dino's messages are engaged with the present injustices in Black communities. Over the past decade, numerous cases involving unjust murders and human rights violations committed by the Public Safety Police (PSP) have garnered widespread attention and provoked public outcry. Dino himself has been outspoken and acted as a social advocate for these issues, frequently posting and responding on social media to these horrific occurrences on a national discourse. One of the constitutional duties of PSP, according to their website and Safe Communities Portugal, is to "Ensure order and public peace and security and the protection of persons and property" (Safe Communities Portugal). It is thus intended to act as an entity that protects its citizens, yet Dino's work contends that this is not true for all demographics, and rather is used as a means of persecution of Afro-Portuguese descendants.

Dino has shared his own experience with the PSP on social media, advocating against injustices that occurred in Bairro da Jamaica, a neighborhood on the Southern outskirts of Lisbon, in 2019. Bairro da Jamaica is known as a shantytown, with most of its inhabitants being of Afro-Portuguese descent (Naomi de Sousa, 2019). As discussed in Chapter 1, neighborhoods such as these were the result of large-scale migration influxes from former colonies in the 1960s during rising demand for workers to revitalize Lisbon's infrastructure (Naomi de Sousa, 2019). These immigrants often had to find means to house themselves, constructing homes out of leftover materials from their construction jobs. On January 20th, 2019, the PSP was videoed using disproportionate, excessive violence against a group of Black residents; this incident led to greater protests against police brutality across the country, with many citizens arguing that justice

in Portugal indeed has color (Teles, 2020). Dino, in response to the viral video, posted on Facebook about his own experience with PSP in 1992. He shared that the PSP forcefully entered homes in his neighborhood, aggressively searching their residents for drugs. In reflection, Dino stated that "Ainda hoje, para mim e para o meu irmão, a palavra Polícia não consegue ser sinónimo de "Segurança Publica"' ("Even today, for me and my brother, the word Police isn't synonymous with "Public Safety"'; Facebook, my trans.). Dino's denunciation of the events that occurred in Bairro da Jamaica and his own memories of interactions with the PSP are emblematic of larger conversations surrounding societal injustices in Portugal and show how government-funded forces continually perpetuate social inequities.

Some of the most recent racially motivated cases to have even received media attention include the attack against Angolan-Portuguese woman Claúdia Simões, who was brutally verbally and physically assaulted in 2020 by a PSP officer outside of a bus station, for having forgotten her daughter's bus ticket (Pereira, 2024). Amid the fiftieth anniversary of the 25th of April, bright red posters, reading "Justiça para Claúdia" in bolded letters, were plastered on Lisbon's historic buildings.[19] Her case remains highly controversial and heavily covered by the media.[20] In 2020, the same year Claúdia Simões was attacked, the Portuguese Commission for

[19] When I studied abroad in Lisbon, Portugal during the Summer of 2024, I noticed the "Justiça para Claúdia" posters scattered throughout the city. The institute I studied at, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas (NOVA FCSH), had a large mural of *cravos* or carnations, representation the Carnation Revolution (As discussed in Chapter 1) that had Claúdia's posters layered on top of it. I also noticed these at the Carmo Church ruins, a historical site for the peaceful 1974 military coup.

[20] This is an update as of December 2024. Currently, Cláudia Simões' case is still being written about in different journals, along with discourse in songs and other forms of art media. Cláudia's case is highly controversial especially due to her having received an 8 month-long suspended prison term for biting her aggressor, officer Carlos

Equality and Against Discrimination saw a 26% spike in case complaints regarding racism in comparison to their data in 2018 (Alberti, 2020). Additionally, since 2019, 968 hate crime cases have been opened, with 17 indictments made (Venceslau, 2024). These statistics convey that not only is discrimination present, but reported cases increased in recent years; one can infer that there are infinitely more. This rise, however, is not necessarily due to the absence of racist attacks in the past, but perhaps is a result of growing dialogue surrounding discrimination. Dino's music, for example, serves as a platform to tackle racial inequalities and raise awareness.

Dino honors Claúdia Simões in his song "Badia," where he sympathizes with women and condemns society's mistreatment of them, particularly Black women. His activism for justice for Simões is just one example of his advocacy, as he frequently pays homage to victims of racial injustices in his music, and a critical component to analyzing his albums *Kriola (2020)* and *Badiu (2021)*.[21] Discussing police injustices committed against Black-Portuguese communities acts as a vehicle for Dino to show his society the systemic inequalities he and others repeatedly suffer.

"Corvo" is not the only song where Dino highlights the many obstacles Afro-Portuguese communities face. "Eu Sou," a song by Dino d'Santiago and Di Tchaps, for example, functions as a social statement that discusses the historical exploitation and repression of Black-Portuguese individuals, and represents an anthem of resistance. Written in a more traditional rap style, it

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Canha (Pereira, 2024). Canha, however, was acquitted of all charges. This case remains a topic of debate on police violence, with many social activists arguing that Simões' case shows that justice has color.

[21] Additionally, Dino d'Santigo's song "Mbappé" references Moussa Marega, a famous Black-Portuguese Porto striker, who famously walked off the pitch in 2020 in the middle of a match after enduring racist chants by the crowds (Church, 2020).

offers less chorus to sing along to, but instead consistently emphasizes the phrase “Eu Sou," present in roughly every other verse. As the song’s beat drops, Di Tchaps raps:

Eu sou parte da sociedade de que faz questão de rejeitar

Aquele que na tua empresa nunca há de trabalhar

Eu sou o sem-abrigo que ignoras ao passar

Aquela memória que fazes planos de eliminar

Eu sou aquele que pedes à tua filha de não enamorar

O tipo que a polícia corrupta quer capturar

(Dino d’Santiago, Di Tchaps, “Eu Sou” 2024)

I am part of society that you make a point of rejecting

The one who will never work at your company

I am the homeless person you ignore in passing

The memory that you make plans to eliminate

I am the person you ask your daughter not to fall in love with

The person that the corrupt police want to capture

(my trans.)

The themes present in Dino and Manicongo’s “Corvo” similarly emerge in “Eu sou," adding more breadth to his social critique. In the above lines, Di Tchaps and Dino speak to a “you,” their song’s target audience. While “you” presumes their critiques are directed toward a specific person, rather, they are intended for Portuguese society. Specifically, members of a whitewashed Portugal perpetuate racial hierarchies. In the first verses, Di Tchaps expresses how

he is denied being a part of his own nation, representing the broader marginalization of Black-Portuguese communities.

Di Tchaps additionally points out microaggressions and discrimination in his verses, as he states he will never have the opportunity to work for certain companies. He also asserts “Eu sou aquele que pedes à tua filha de não enamorar” (“I am the person you ask your daughter not to fall in love with”; my trans.), claiming that parents beg their children not to date him solely on the basis of him being Black. This line exposes the profound hypocrisy of Portuguese society, where, in a nation that claims to welcome and represent diversity, White-Portuguese families fear that their bloodline will be “compromised” by interracial relationships. His line additionally carries a significant gender dynamic, as Tchaps’ implies (White) daughters, not (White) sons. The implication is that daughters would bear and raise children of mixed race, which would be a source of societal shame and judgment for their family. In contrast, sons can have children out of wedlock without the same societal obligations.

Continuing, he states “Eu sou o sem-abrigo que ignoras ao passar” (“I am the homeless person you ignore as you walk by;" my trans.). Tchaps’ characterization of himself as homeless represents the dereliction of non-White Portuguese people, with fewer access to resources; they suffer while others intentionally disregard these systemic inequalities. As Dino and Di Tchaps demonstrate, their race subjects them to consistent marginalization that permeates several spheres of their lives, including job opportunities and romantic relationships. Di Tchaps additionally remarks he forms part of “Aquela memória que fazes planos de eliminar” ("the memory that you make plans to eliminate;" my trans.), displaying that Afro-Portuguese descendants battle daily against the erasure of their existence and negation of their contributions to a close-minded Portugal.

These commentaries also point to how lingering Lusotropicalist discourse continues to shape Portugal's sense of self, which as discussed in Chapter 1, argued that miscegenation is proof of the absence of racism; nevertheless, as these artists convey in their song, Black-Portuguese history and identities continue to be silenced (Vala, 2008; Santos, 2008). In parallel with "Corvo," Di Tchaps exclaims he is, " O tipo que a polícia corrupta quer capturar," arguing that police officers disproportionately condemn Black communities, reinforcing the vilification and oppression Black-Portuguese individuals face in a supposed postcolonial world. Tchaps reinforces this with additional verses, claiming he is "a cor durável para o juiz julgar" ("the lasting color for the judge to judge;" my trans.), yet again, commenting on the unjust judicial system. In his next verses, he declares,

Eu sou o mero cidadão sem relevância

Eu sou o futuro incerto, sem esperança

……

Eu sou o espelho, o reflexo da tua arrogância

E sou a voz dos oprimidos que não descansa

Porque eu sou

a voz dos oprimidos que não descansa.

(Dino d'Santiago, Di Tchaps, "Eu Sou" 2024)

I am the mere citizen, without relevance

I am the uncertain future, without hope

……

I am the mirror, the reflection of your arrogance

The voice of the oppressed that never tires

Because I am

The voice of the oppressed that never tires

(my trans.)

Di Tchaps begins by sharing how he feels like a mere citizen, emphasizing his powerlessness in his own country's political structure. Yet, at the same time, he proclaims that he embodies the tireless voice of the victimized, in defiance of a society he is rejected from due to being Black. Following this sentiment, Dino's voice powerfully debuts for the first time in the song, as he sorrowfully declares, "A minha é vida / minha é morte / … / A minha é uma história / que sempre teve uma vida dura." ("What's mine is life / What's mine is death / … / What's mine is a story / that always had a hard life;" my trans.). Through this joint commentary, both Dino and Di Tchaps come together to critique the treatment and perceptions of Blackness in Portugal. Dino proclaims through saying he is life, death, and hardship, he has inherited the struggles of his Afro-Portuguese ancestors, embodying the suffering passed down through generations due to continual persecution.

Pointing to life and death, he also invokes imagery of a ravenous, never-ending cycle for people of color—one that will fester endlessly without systemic change. Tchaps and Dino's narratives both reflect the challenges of Black-Portuguese individuals and serve as a cry of resilience. As they emphasize, they will continually be a voice for the voiceless and marginalized, and hope for future generations of Afro-Portuguese descendants. For example, nearing the end of the track, Dino and Tchaps pay homage to revolutionary Black leaders and thinkers, such as Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela, and Amílcar Cabral, people they find to be points of inspiration. Tchaps remarks that he represents "a revolução que está a nascer em Portugal" ("the revolution that is being born in Portugal;" my trans.)

Conventionally, the first revolution that comes to mind in considering Portugal's history is the 25th of April (as described in Chapter 1). However, Tchaps and Dino argue that their liberation from systemic, governmental oppression was not then; the revolution for Black-Portuguese people is now developing in the present moment. When describing this revolution, they employ the present tense in Portuguese, positioning it in the present and driven by the voices of artists like them, who expose racial hierarchies and injustices. For Dino and Di Tchaps, this is a revolution fighting for equality and embracing Blackness, powered by love, which they exclaim is "A força e a coragem, a superação de qualquer dor" ("The force and courage, the overcoming of any pain;" my trans).

Cries for justice are echoed throughout Dino's song "Nhôs Obi," featuring Vado MKA (the artistic name for Vado Más Ki Ás).[22, 23] Throughout their song, they highlight the struggles of immigrants searching for greater opportunities, only to be oppressed in the land that once served as their beacon of hope. Dino woefully recites, "Ô, mamãe, mamãe, mamãe, yeah / N meste justiça / Ô, mamãe, mamãe, mamãe, yeah / Obi grito di bu fidju, oi." ("Oh, mother, mother, mother, yeah / Listen to the cry of your child, hey"; my trans.). Dino repeats these pleas several times, representing urgency and a call for rectitude for Black communities. As the track progresses, Dino and Vado MKA sing in unison, stating that they are "Maltratadu pa polícia, apontadu pa justiça" ("Mistreated by the police, targeted by justice"). Similar to "Corvo" and

[22] Nhôs Obi, or "Escutem" in Portuguese, means "Listen" in English (Medeiros, 2021). This translation was provided by Dino d'Santiago in an interview on his album, *Kriola*, where he discussed the meanings behind the songs in his album.

[23] Vado Más Ki Ás is a Afro-Portuguese rapper born in Amadora, Portugal. He is of Cabo Verdean descent, and represents a younger generation of voices in Portugal's music scene (Gomes, 2022).

"Eu Sou," they argue that Black-Portuguese people exist within a framework that disproportionately targets them.

Both Dino and Vado MKA engage in a dialogue with one another, saying that society must listen to their citizens, and adding "nu labanta, nu luta pa nos diretu" ("we rise up, we fight for our rights"), intended to motivate Black-Portuguese individuals to continue bringing visibility to social inequality issues (as Dino does on social platform and his cultural productions. By exclaiming the need to resist on a systemic level, they demonstrate that their own system fails to recognize and meet the needs of Black-Portuguese people, and instead punishes them.

For example, Joana Henriques, a journalist who invests in human rights in Portugal, released a series outlining how systemic racism is perpetuated in Portuguese judicial systems. Using data derived from a 2011-2016 Census from the Directorate-General for Reinsertion and Prison Services (DGRSP), she compared incarceration data from PALOP citizens in Portugal to Portuguese citizens (2017). As described in Chapter 1, Afro-Portuguese individuals frequently face citizenship status issues, they are not considered Portuguese citizens without having at least one parent who has obtained citizenship status. Therefore, despite many Afro-Portuguese descendants being born and raised in Portugal, they are not considered citizens. Additionally, Portugal's census takes no race-related statistics; as a result, though imperfect data, Henriques compared PALOP citizens (immigrants in Portugal from a Portuguese-speaking African country) to uncover general patterns of systemic racial discrimination. According to her research, a striking 1 in every 48 Cabo Verdean citizens have been imprisoned in Portugal, and 1 in every 73 PALOP citizens are in jail (Henriques, 2017). These statistics are a stark contrast from Portuguese citizens, where 1 in 736 are incarcerated.

Additionally, this jarring disparity is upheld in sentence length for African and Portuguese prisoners. For individuals charged with the same crime—either simple theft, qualified theft, or domestic violence—African immigrants faced significantly harsher penalties. They were charged maximum sentences (15 to 20 and 20 to 25 years), twice the rate of their Portuguese citizen counterparts, exposing the large racial biases ingrained in Portugal's justice system. For minimum sentences (1 to 3 years), 25.3% of Portuguese citizens received a smaller punishment, compared to less than half (12.4%) of PALOP citizens (Henriques, 2017). Despite being charged with the same crime, their punishments were vastly different. In convictions, the same pattern is upheld, with PALOP immigrants charged nine times more frequently for robbery, and eight times more for resisting an official than Portuguese citizens, who were accused of the same offenses. Prosecutor Alípio Ribeiro, the former director of the Judicial Police, even states in Henriques' article, "há uma justiça para portugueses e uma justiça para estrangeiros, uma justiça para brancos e uma justiça para negros" ("there is a justice system for Portuguese citizens and a justice system for foreigners, a justice system for White people, and a justice system for Black people"; my trans.). These figures substantiate Dino's argument that Portugal remains entrenched in anachronistic systems, perpetuated by their government, that rejuvenate repressive colonial systems that perpetuate violence against Black bodies.

Dino, describing the significance behind his lyrics in "Nhôs Obi" in an interview, explained:

> "Nhôs Obi" – Escutem, em português – tema com o Vado MKA, é mesmo sobre tudo o que acontece de mau nas comunidades negras, nos bairros, mas que não tem a importância devida nas notícias…A letra fala de como matam os nosso filhos para, de forma indireta, enterrarem as nossas mães; fala sobre essa pressão

> constante para te mostrar que não és daqui e que, à menor crise no país, essas comunidades são as primeiras a ser atacadas.
>
> *"Nhôs Obi" – Listen, in Portuguese, a song with Vado MKA, is really about everything bad that happens in Black communities, neighborhoods, but isn't given the importance it deserves in the news…The lyrics speak on how they kill our children to, indirectly, bury our mothers; it talks about that constant pressure to show you that you are not from here, and that, at the smallest crisis in the country, those communities are the first to be attacked.*
>
> (my trans; Medeiros, 2021).

As Dino illustrates in his work with Vado MKA, Black-Portuguese communities are too frequently marginalized, with their struggles dismissed, and are questioned as to how they fit within a broader national identity. Consequently, they are made to feel like outsiders, despite being fully Portuguese.

In contemporary Portugal, one of the most common phrases in xenophobic, anti-Black, racist rhetoric is "Preto, vai para a tua terra" (Guimarães, 2024). Racially charged insults such as this, meant to affront Afro-Portuguese descendants by demanding they return to their 'land,' negate Black presence and their contribution to Portuguese ethos, making them an "other" in their homeland solely due to their race. As scholar Guimarães explains, "A presença dos africanos em Portugal, ao longo da história e não apenas no cenário recente, é ainda um assunto de certa forma silenciado, mantendo-se uma imagem nacional branca e o lugar dos corpos negros como 'outro.'" ("The presence of Africans in Portugal, throughout history and not just in the recent scenarios, is still a topic that is somewhat silenced, maintaining a White national image

and the place of Black bodies as an 'other.'"; my trans; 2004). Guimarães corroborates that Blackness in Portugal is taboo, downplaying how, as Dino argues, Afro-Portuguese contributions are a staple in broader Portuguese culture (Guimarães, 2024; Santos, 2008). Therefore, cultural productions contesting these narratives, such as Dino's, are vital to comprehending racial disparities in a country that negates its colonial past.

Dino frequently subverts racist attacks against Afro-Portuguese descendants, with the most notable instances being when he was gifted a Cultural Merit Award during the 25th of April celebrations. As the government recognized his contribution to Portuguese culture in this ceremony, Dino sported a shirt reading "Preto, estás na tua terra" (Guimarães, 2024). Dino's reclamation and challenging of prejudice serve as a way for Dino to assert his presence in Portugal. His songs serve as a form of advocacy that pushes against how his nation acknowledges the horrors of its colonial past.

These three songs, "Corvo," "Eu Sou," and "Nhôs Obi," collectively explore themes of systematic oppression, racial injustices, and violence against Black-Portuguese communities. They also provide messages of resilience—all intrinsic to unpacking Dino's artistic expression of exposing institutional discrimination and rewriting national identity. Through discussions of race and anti-Black discrimination, Dino navigates what it means to be of Afro-descent in Portugal. In addition to this, Dino emphasizes his conversations on race with other artists. All of the above songs analyzed are collaborations with other artists of Afro-descent, demonstrating that amplifying Black voices is a key aspect of Dino's work. Overall, he uses his platform to center Blackness by integrating numerous Afro-Portuguese descendants in his songs. Dino's deliberate effort to highlight these experiences through his music is vital to his social advocacy efforts. As seen in "Corvo," "Eu Sou," and "Nhôs Obi," his songs consistently serve to call injustices to

attention, inviting others to action in the hope for future generations. His deliberate choice to feature artists that share the lived experiences of Black-Portuguese communities functions as a means to assert Black presence in Portugal as well. Dino recognizes that he needs multiple voices to confront inequalities, not just his own. The collective nature of this struggle in his songs contributes to the solidarity of Dino's message, which is the only way to bring greater visibility to these societal injustices. Through these songs and his collaborations, he challenges the status quo, exposes systemic oppression, and contributes to a greater dialogue of Black identity and belonging in Portugal.

Race as a means of (non)Belonging in Portugal

A defining moment in Dino d'Santiago's life arose after a trip to Cabo Verde in 2010 with his father. Growing up, he had become desensitized to security guards following him in stores and being subjected to racist remarks under the guise of 'jokes.' However, in Cabo Verde, he never experienced the same level of racial profiling or discrimination; this jarring contrast served as a point of societal reflection for him (Medeiros, 2021). In an interview about his hometown, he expresses the deep scars this inflicted on his sense of belonging in his own country, stating: "Quando voltei, pensei 'eu não estou no meu país. Por mais que tenha nascido aqui eu nunca vou ser um português inteiro, porque sou filho de imigrantes, porque sou negro'" ("When I came back, I thought 'I am not in my country. Even though I was born here, I will never be fully Portuguese, because I am the son of immigrants, because I am Black'"; Medeiros, 2021; my trans.). Dino's above statement posits that race influences belonging. Furthermore, in Portugal, a country haunted by its colonial past and exploitation of Black bodies, it is considered as a means of nonbelonging.

Every day, microaggressions that Dino experienced after returning to Portugal made him aware of the persistent racism and ostracization of Blackness that his country vehemently denies. The estrangement Dino feels from his own homeland's national image is a great inspiration for his work. His song, "Esquinas," is one of the most powerful accounts of this, as Dino addresses how Black-Portuguese communities not only face physical marginalization, but social marginalization as well.

"Esquinas," featuring. Slow J and part of the album *Badiu (2021)*, guides readers through a sonic journey, following Black individuals that carve out their own spaces in Portuguese society.[24,25] The song begins with Dino softly singing "Nas curvas do bairro" ("The neighborhood's curves;" my trans.) in the background. This serves as a clever way for Dino and Slow J to prime the audience into imagining their song's scene: everyday, urban spaces. They are highly intentional about their vocabulary, as they choose to sing specifically about the curves and bends of the neighborhood, not the neighborhood in its entirety. The word "curvas" itself suggests twists, turns, and complexities—much like the lived experiences of the inhabitants of the neighborhoods they sing about. Similar to how bends of a road prove challenging to see around, "curvas" also implies the less visible parts of a neighborhood, a reference to marginalized Black-Portuguese communities. Not only are the curves hard to visualize, but arduous to navigate; they are the taboo areas in a society that others avoid discussing and

[24] Slow J, whose real name is João Coelho, is a Portuguese rapper that represents a younger generation in music. Coelho is bi-racial, with a Angolan father and Portuguese mother; both of his roots are at the heart of his music, as he is known for mixing Angolan and Portuguese sounds (Ferreira, 2019).

[25] Slow J and Dino d'Santiago both wrote "Esquinas," also with contributions from Kalaf EpalangaTiago Manuel Teles Rodrigues.

confronting. These curves are the uncomfortable truths—like racial inequities—which Portuguese society prefers to disregard, as they unveil deeply ingrained systems of power.

Additionally, the turns and bends within bustling cityscapes serve as points of contact, marking the intersection of different cultures. Dino echoes these sentiments in the soundscape of his song, and delivers this verse as a whisper in the background. His quiet singing mirrors how the voices and realities of those living on the peripheries are silenced and written off as background noise. Dino can faintly be heard echoing this line in the track's backdrop throughout its entirety. In the manner the song is produced, Dino's voice is layered to sound as if there are multiple of him, giving the illusion of more than one person chanting the same lines he does—mimicking a sense of community standing with him that emphasizes his message.

Slow J, as he begins to rap, asserts:

> Porque eu não sou do bairro, eu sou da raça que os habita
>
> Quando eu canto fado soa a mais do que uma vida e eu não sei explicar
>
> ……
>
> Se eu voltar pra minha terra eu sou da raça lusa vinda
>
> Do outro lado do mundo o tempo passa e multiplica, eu já não sei voltar
>
> (Dino d'Santiago, Slow J, *Badiu,* 2021)

> *Because I'm not from the neighborhood, I'm from the race that inhabits it*
>
> *When I sing fado, it sounds like more than one life, and I don't know how to explain it*
>
> …….
>
> *If I were to go back to my land, I'd be from the Luso race*

On the other side of the world, time passes and multiplies, and I don't know how to go back anymore

(my trans.)

Through these lyrics, Dino and Slow J underline the identity challenges that those who belong to multiple heritages face. In the first line, Slow J claims that he is not just from a neighborhood, instead pointing to a collective identity defined by the race to which he belongs. This argues that belonging goes beyond ties to a geographical place, but rather is about being part of the group that occupies and shapes that space. In his next verse, he states that "Quando eu canto fado soa a mais do que uma vida e eu não sei explicar" ("When I sing fado it sounds like more than one life, and I don't know how to explain it;" my trans.) to highlight his multiple heritages.

Slow J relays how emotions in fado are timeless and transcend generations. Fado is a traditional Portuguese music genre characterized by *saudade* ("longing;" my trans.).[26] Through this statement, he highlights that his voice carries more 'life'—or cultural identity. Slow J is biracial, from Portuguese and Angolan heritages, which is a key aspect of his work. He feels caught in between these two identities. As Slow J presents in the song, he feels connected to his Portuguese roots through fado, though it also evokes ties to his Angolan ancestry. Slow J affirms this identity duality in his next line, where he states that upon returning home, he is labelled as part of the *Luso* race. Despite being of Angolan descent, in Angola itself, he is considered "Portuguese." In this context, *Luso* specifically denotes someone who is White, because Slow J raps "da raça Lusa vinda" *("*"from the *Luso* race"' my trans.). Slow J, who is white-passing and

[26] Saudade is known as a uniquely Portuguese concept, with no direct translation into English; some words similar in English would be "longing."

biracial, claims that he would be considered White in Angola, reinforcing a sense of nonbelonging and caught between two heritages. In his next verse, he notes that the longer he spends away from Angola, the harder it is for him to return, because he feels less tied to his ancestral land.

Nearing the end of the track, Dino's voice soulfully and passionately sings:

(Nas curvas do bairro) nem todo tuga é luso

(Nas curvas do bairro) nem todas as quinas são vanglória

(Nas curvas do bairro) aceno ao corpo negro com quem cruzo

(Nas curvas do bairro) nossos corpos são também pátria

(Dino d'Santiago, Slow J, *Badiu,* 2021)

(In the neighborhood's curves) not every Portuguese person is Luso

(In the neighborhood's curves) not all shields are boastful

(In the neighborhood's curves) I nod to the Black body I cross by

(In the neighborhood's curves) our bodies are also homeland

(my trans.)

Themes of race, as Dino portrays them here, manifest in measures of belonging. As Dino voices in his artistry, circulated Portuguese narratives praising Eurocentrism form in and out groups between its citizens, pushing historically marginalized groups into the peripheries of society. However, as Dino and Slow J contest, Blackness is also Portuguesness; this is the message Dino firmly declares in these verses. He begins with a complex statement, asserting "nem todo tuga é luso" ("not every Portuguese person is luso;" my trans.). *Tuga,* as described by scholar Derek Pardue, is a reference to someone who is Portuguese—yet is intrinsically bound to

colonialism (2018). It is short-hand for *português* (“Portuguese”; my trans.), popularized during the Independence wars across Africa. ‘Tuga’ was adopted by African guerrillas to refer to the Portuguese military. The term itself was in response to the Portuguese calling these opposition forces *turra*, short for *terrorista* (“terrorist”; in trans.). ‘Turra’ was an effort of the Portuguese, as Pardue explains, to brand resistance, and moreover, Afro-Portuguese people, as “savage” and inflicting self-harm onto their own nation (which at this time, was Portugal). While not literally referencing race, ‘tuga’ specifically implies someone who is a White Portuguese person.

Luso, on the other hand, is a term derived from *Lusitania*, an ancient Roman region that roughly aligns with modern-day Portugal (Azevedo, 2005). *Lusitania* was named after Luso, the son of Bacchus, the god of wine; Luso is known as a mythical demigod and the founder of Portugal.[27] The term Luso thus evokes the foundational myth of the Roman Empire and the idea of ancestry to the land of Portugal. Dino’s affirmation could thus translate to “not every Portuguese person is of its foundation,” meaning that not all those who identify as Portuguese are encapsulated by the White, Christian nation-state idealized standard that Portugal was founded with. Dino thus rewrites this narrative by exclaiming that not all Portuguese are White, and he too is Portuguese as a Black-Portuguese man.

In his next line, “nem todas as quinas são vanglória” (“not all shields are boastful;" my trans.), Dino critiques Portugal’s praise of its colonial past. “Quinas” refers to the five blue shields (which form a larger shield) displayed on the coat of arms of the Portuguese flag, the “Bandeira das Quinas.” The quinas, arranged in the shape of a cross, are part of the ancient arms of Portugal, originating from Afonso Henriques, Portugal’s first king (Roque, 2023). Its heraldic

[27] References to Bacchus can also be seen in historically notable Portuguese texts, such as the canonical epic poem *Os Lusíadas*, written by Luís de Camões in 1497. Camões’ *Os Luísadas* is work greatly inspired by greek mythology, and references Bacchus numerous times throughout his Cantos.

background is a reference to the Portuguese Expansion, as the quinas were intended to be symbols of Portuguese dominion during colonial rule (Roque, 2023).

These blue shields are similarly visible on the emblems of the Portuguese national soccer team's jerseys, who are known as the"Equipa das Quinas" ("Team of the Shields;" my trans.) With both of these interpretations, Dino makes a clear reference to Portuguese nationalism via symbols of state propaganda. Shields themselves often are symbolic of heraldry, and representative of a nation. By intertwining patriotic emblems of Portugal in his narrative, specifically shields, Dino denotes that not everyone nor every representation of Portugueseness should be glorified. Portugal, a country still deeply impacted by the remnants of a colonial past, often chooses to ignore that its society is built on the exploitation of Black bodies, which, as Dino states, should be a point of reflection and acknowledgement rather than something to idealize (Santos, 2008).

Lastly, Dino sings "(nas curvas do bairro) aceno ao corpo negro com quem cruzo / (nas curvas do bairro) nossos corpos são também pátria" ((In the neighborhood's curves) I nod to the Black body I cross by / (In the neighborhood's curves) our bodies are also homeland));" my trans.). In these lines, Dino d'Santiago's hushed voice that echoes "nas curvas do bairro" is juxtaposed with his last verse, where he passionately exclaims "nossos corpos também são patria," leaving his voice lingering in the silence before the song's beat returns. Though Dino describes a small gesture of nodding to a Black person he passes by in the neighborhood, it holds large implications for the Black-Portuguese community. Dino's nodding is an acknowledgment of being Black in Portugal, a race relegated to society's margins. The simple motion validating another's existence is a vindication of Blackness in Portugal, authenticating belonging for Black-Portuguese communities. Though their contributions have historically been silenced,

forced into the periphery, Dino, through these lyrics, situates them at the heart of Portuguese national identity. He thus proclaims Blackness as an integral part of Portuguese culture, rewriting the dominant narrative of what it means to be Portuguese.

By portraying race in several ways and redefining rigid definitions of national identity, Dino brings racial inequities present in deeply rooted Portugal to light. His work transcends conventional boundaries of national identity, demonstrating that Portugueseness is not a static, linear definition. This creates room for further discussion of space, where he expands on Black-Portuguese presence in Portugal and broadens definitions of national identity. By employing race as the groundwork of his argument, he expands on how he defines himself through multiple spaces, both physical and imagined. This allows him to utilize space to rewrite a more inclusive future for Portugal.

Section 2.3 - Exploring Spatial Discourse in Dino d'Santiago Artistry

What types of Spaces Appear in Dino d'Santiago's Songs?

For Dino d'Santiago, his space(s) are Creole—meaning they are interwoven, mixed—in a greater mosaic forming his identity. As explained in an interview: "Eu posso ter duas pátrias. Eu posso ter duas raízes e honrá-las. Honro muito a minha raiz portuguesa, que me deu a língua que falo, e a minha raiz cabo-verdiana, que me deu a alma para me exprimir sem receio. Esse casamento enriqueceu-me e tento passar isso para todos." ("I can have two homelands. I can have two roots and honor them. I honor my Portuguese roots a lot, which gave me the language that I speak, and my Cabo Verdean roots, which gave me the soul to express myself without fear. This marriage enriched me, and I try to pass that on to everyone;" my trans., Forum Estudante, 2020). Dino highlights how he belongs to two heritages, both of which inform his idea of what a

homeland should be. The Creolized nature of Dino's spaces enables him to interact with both tangible and abstract ideas of space, as it inherently embodies a mixture of many different elements. Not only does he interact with different representations of them, but also with scales as well. Some of the spaces he describes are more conceptual and macro, while others are specific and niche, leaning more towards micro illustrations of space.

This multidimensionality represents how Dino refuses to be solely reduced to a singular space or sound as an artist—much like how he refuses for national identity to only be written from one side of history, or one race. Through the songs "Morabeza," "Roda," "Morna," "Esquinas," and "Maio," I argue that Dino d'Santiago portrays space in two main ways: he uses physical space to mark Afro-Portuguese presence in a greater Portuguese society, while employing imagined space to re-envision a new Portugal.

"E a Linha da Sintra / Fala a Língua da Cesária": Tangible Space as a Marker of Afro-Portuguese Presence

As Dino d'Santiago argues in discussions of race, systematic oppression limits Black-Portuguese communities to the fringes of society, denying their contributions and place in a greater identity. Dino, however, via representations of space, recognizes and celebrates Black presence in Portugal, establishing their importance for national identity. By underscoring the physical spaces that Cabo Verdean and other Black-Portuguese communities occupy, he challenges the historical erasure of Blackness, asserting their sociocultural presence within the broader Portuguese landscape. He therefore rejects that Portuguese society is based solely on Whiteness through emphasizing Black presence and spaces.

A critical song to understanding how Dino denotes Black spaces is “Morabeza," the first track of his album, *Kriola* (2020). The title of the song itself, “Morabeza,” comes from Cabo Verdean Creole and is considered a unique cultural concept; it is often thought about as a word that encapsulates the essence of Cabo Verde, embodying values of friendliness, warmth, and hospitality (Johnson, 2016). As the song begins, Dino’s voice is isolated, singing acapella in the first line. As the melody begins—a soothing and uplifting electronic mix—it complements his warm tone, as he sings:

Não me venhas dizer
Que só chegou agora
Essa nação kriola
Já passou no Lontra, hey
B.Leza e noites longas
E a linha de Sintra
Fala a língua da Cesária.

(Dino d’Santiago, “Morabeza," *Kriola*, 2020)

Don’t come and tell me
that it just arrived now
that Creole nation
It already happened in Lontra, hey
B. Leza and long nights
and Sintra’s line
Speaks the language of Cesária

(my trans.)

Dino begins the song on a macro level by declaring that the *nação kriola* has already arrived. Interestingly, instead of proclaiming that Black-Portuguese presence is palpable in his city, rather, he chooses to assert that it is a *nação kriola*, instead of solely Black presence—key to understanding what Dino argues for. *Nação kriola* implies a conjunction of multiple races, cultures, and spaces, rather than being exclusive to just one. By claiming that his nation is Creole, Dino is demonstrating how Blackness is embedded into Portuguese culture and identity, just as much as other races and cultures. As he also expresses, these are not contemporary developments, but have been occurring for a considerable time. Not only is this *nação kriola* timeless, but it spans across different geographical locations, such as famous Portuguese nightclubs —Lontra and B. Leza—which he references in his lyrics.

Lontra ("Otter"; trans. by Livia Sedano), a "mythical dance club" situated in the city of Lisbon, opened in 1977, shortly after the independence wars in Africa (Sedano, 2015). It was one of the city's first African discos, owned by an interracial Angolan couple escaping the war in their country. Lontra served as a space to alleviate homesickness via dancing along to African rhythms. It grew into a staple of Lisbon's nightlife, a clear indicator of Afro-Portuguese presence in Portugal (Sedano, 2015).

In the next verse, Dino sings about "B.Leza e noites longas" ("B.Leza and long nights;" my trans.), a reference to B.Leza, a highly regarded and iconic nightclub in Portugal. By referencing B. Leza, known for playing Afro-beats, Dino points to a physical space as a strong representation of Afro-Portuguese presence in Portuguese culture (de La Barre and Vanspauwen, 2013; Sedano, 2022). In addition to referencing a popular club, B. Lezaa also offers another significant cultural reference. The word B. Leza functioned as a pseudonym for the Cabo

Verdean composer Francisco Xavier da Cruz (1905-1958). As described in Chapter 1, he is known as one of the most influential figures of morna, a signature Cabo Verdean music genre (Aoki, 2016). Morna has both Cabo Verdean and Portuguese influences, making it known as "Kriolu music," and the style is derived from African and European origins (Palmberg, 2002). B. Leza thus carries a polysemic function, containing multiple significant meanings that Dino uses to honor both of his heritages, another reminder of the multiculturality he embraces. Dino pays homage to both these hallmark places in Lisbon, which function as a message, stating that Lisbon has been an African city all along. He demonstrates thus that Blackness has always been intertwined within the city, yet it was overlooked and never the center of attention.

Dino then proclaims in the last two lines "E a linha de Sintra / Fala a língua da Cesária," ("and Sintra's line / speaks the language of Cesária;" my trans.). Once again, Dino draws his audience's attention to a space where Afro-Portuguese influence in Portugal is tangible (and in this case, primarily Cabo Verdean presence). "A linha de Sintra" in actuality refers to the physical train line connecting metro-goers from Lisbon to Sintra, another city in Portugal. Along this route, there is a heavy Cabo-Verdean and Afro-Portuguese presence, as many of these communities call areas near this line their homes. Thus, not only is he referring to a train route, but an often-traveled route of those who occupy these neighborhood spaces in Portugal. Neighborhoods such as Amadora and Damaia are similar to dormitórios ("sleeper cities"; my trans.)—spaces where residents live and sleep, but commute to other areas for work. As described in Chapter 1, during migration influxes into Portugal after the dictatorships, many male immigrants from PALOPs worked in construction, while female immigrants were employed in cleaning and domestic service (Pereira, 2013). These immigrant households serve as

the backbone of Lisbon's infrastructure, as their members tirelessly travel along Sintra's line daily, and are integral parts of the city's workforce.

Living in these spaces also carries connotations. Neighborhoods such as Amadora and Damaia are highly stigmatized, due to having a dense immigrant population from PALOPs (Sitaprasertnand, 2021). They are viewed by the public as dangerous and undesirable, reinforcing negative stereotypes against these majority Black-Portuguese communities. Consequently, these prejudices are translated into negative social attitudes about the residents themselves.

Additionally, by stating "Fala a língua da Cesária," Dino is commemorating one of the most renowned artists in Cabo Verdean history, Cesária Évora (who was mentioned in Chapter 1). Évora, known as the "Queen of Morna," brought Cabo Verdean music to an international stage (Palmberg, 2002). Her music thus was popular not just in Cabo Verde, but in the Lusophone world and beyond; Dino's reference to Évora is his way of providing evidence of Cabo Verdean and Afro-Portuguese contributions to a greater identity. As he asserts, this influence is in Portugal itself, conspicuous even in the neighborhoods on the outskirts of Lisbon.

Another layer of meaning to Dino's verse about Sintra's train line speaking Cesária's language is his reference to *Kriolu*, the language utilized in virtually all morna songs, colloquially spoken in Cabo Verde, but also Portugal among Cabo Verdean immigrants and their descendants (Pardue, 2013). Language is yet another way that Cabo Verdeans carve out their own spaces in Portugal, preserving their cultural heritage. This also means it is another language within Portugal, spoken in daily life, and therefore, part of Portugal's culture.

Overall, Dino, through the usage of Cesária Évora's influence, showcases spaces shaped by Afro-Portuguese influence, emphasizing the cultural contributions these areas and communities bring to Portuguese society. By accentuating Cabo Verdean sounds and spaces, he

illustrates how Afro-Portuguese presence is embedded in the fabric of Lisbon's urban life, highlighting how Portuguese culture and identity are interwoven with Black-Portuguese spaces and presence.

Later in the song, Dino quietly echoes "Ken mostra-b es kaminhu lonji?" (Who showed you this long path?;" my trans.) in the song's soundscape, another reference to Cesária Evora, with one of her most famous songs, "Sodade," sung in Cabo Verdean Creole. In this song, Évora denounces the *contratados* system in Cabo Verde that sent many Cabo Verdeans to São Tomé and Príncipe, out of reach of their homes, cultures, and loved ones, as discussed in Chapter 1. However, Dino's jubilant tone in "Morabeza" is a sharp contrast from Évora's melancholic cries in "Sodade." Dino rebrands Évora's despondency as a means for recognizing and showcasing Cabo Verdean contributions to Portugal.

Dino plays with ideas of space one last time in "Morabeza," as he sings:

> Sempre que oiço "nha terra, nha krêtxeu"
>
> Sempre que volto em busca do que é meu
>
> Já não vou correr em vão
>
> Tipo ciso os pés no chão
>
> (Dino d'Santiago, "Morabeza," *Kriola*, 2020)

> *Whenever I hear "my land, my love"*
>
> *Whenever I return in search of what's mine*
>
> *I'll no longer run in vain*
>
> *Like placing my feet on the ground*
>
> (my trans.)

Dino is speaking to movement in between places, as he desperately runs to tangible spaces he feels belonging in, which in this case, are those that remind him of his Cabo Verdean roots. He asserts that he'll not run to these in vain, chasing belonging in a place that consistently reminds of his exclusion. Rather, Dino embraces his heritages and different spaces, claiming space for himself and his identities. In summary, "Morabeza" shows how he integrates his Cabo-Verdean roots into his music, how it enriches a larger national Portuguese image, and also contributes to his sense of a *nação kriola*.

Similarly, in "Nova Lisboa," a single released in 2018, Dino centers his song on intercity communities. "Nova Lisboa," an anthem for Lisbon as a site of fusion between African and European influences, begins with Dino calling out:

> Qual é a ideia?
>
> Não ouves a tua cidade a chamar por ti?
>
> Entra na zona, yeah, yeah
>
> Não digas que tens de sair para acontecer
>
> (Dino d'Santiago, "Nova Lisboa," 2018)
>
> *What's the idea?*
>
> *Don't you hear your city calling for you?*
>
> *Get in the zone, yeah, yeah*
>
> *Don't say you have to leave for it to happen*
>
> (my trans.)

Dino personifies the city, engaging with it as if it were a sentient being, one that calls out to its inhabitants. The city's summoning for unity emphasizes community over division; the collective presence of its inhabitants is not just a desire but imperative for the reimagination of

Lisbon. Moreover, Dino's critique goes beyond the idea of individualism, as true success can only be achieved through community building. As the song develops, Dino references *batuku*, a traditional Cabo Verdean music style. Dino's homage to his Cabo Verdean roots is another marker of Afro-Portuguese presence in shaping Lisbon's culture, again highlighting Black presence and influence in the city's landscape. Continuing, Dino states:

De onde veio toda essa gente, eu não sei
Dizem que 'tamos na moda, ma N ka kre sabe
Ali sta tudu dretu, ma' não 'tou nessa
De vender a sodadi ou a morabeza

(Dino d'Santiago, "Nova Lisboa," 2018)

Where all these people are from, I'm not sure
They say we're in fashion, but I don't care about that
There, everything's fine, but I'm not into that
To sell sodadi or morabeza

(my trans.)

Through these lyrics, Dino denounces Portugal's commodification of Lisbon, advertising it under the facade of a multicultural, harmonious city. By referencing "De vender a sodadi ou a morabeza" ("To sell sodadi or morabeza"), he alludes to two important cultural concepts from both his Portuguese and Cabo Verdean heritages. Portugal, as previously mentioned, boasts itself to be a diverse and welcoming city, yet in practice, these claims fail to match the lived realities of its Black-Portuguese communities. Dino urges his audience to look beyond the superficial commercialization of Lisbon. Rather than appealing to "diverse city" narratives spread on tourist

guides, he calls his readers to interact and engage with his city authentically, instead of just for clout.

In the chorus, he also chants “Vem e sente, sente, sente esta nova Lisboa / Sente, sente, sente esta nova Lisboa” (“Come and feel, feel, feel this new Lisbon / Feel, feel, feel this new Lisbon;" my trans.). In contrast with the other geographical locations Dino mentions in his songs, Nova Lisboa functions as both a physical and an imaginary space. By consistently repeating “sente” (“feel;" my trans.), he underscores a sensory and emotional connection to this multicultural city. Dino invites his listeners to engage in dialogue with Lisbon and its citizens, inviting them to feel its multiculturalism through experience rather than solely observation. Additionally, his perception of Lisbon is not only a tangible space, but also an idealized version of it. This draws attention to how Dino’s references of space are nuanced, as he depicts it in several ways. Thus, the duality of these illustrations sparks greater discussion of other ways Dino conceptualizes space.

Reimagining Space: Dino d’Santiago’s Music as a Portal for Change

Space, as Dino d’Santiago defines it, goes beyond a geographical location; it is a cultural anchor, holding both memories and future aspirations. Dino references imagined spaces to create a sense of broader community and, most importantly, formulates a more utopic version of Portugal where differences are points of celebration and learning, rather than for fortifying exclusions or creating hierarchies. His lyrics in “Esquinas,” “Morna," and “Roda” serve as platforms for Dino to articulate a new vision of Portugal that embraces multiculturalism, reclaiming space for Afro-Portuguese communities. Through weaving together physical and abstract spaces, Dino reimagines Portugal as inclusionary and challenges historically rigid

notions of national identity. Dino thus acts as the architect of a new future, with greater intercultural dialogue, through his musical narratives. A prime example of this imagined space is seen within the first few lines of “Esquinas.”

Aqui toda a gente sente
Terra não é só lugar onde se nasceu
É também o chão que trazemos na mente
Aqui toda gente é parente
Mesmo quando se nasceu doutro ventre
Chamamos mãe ao mesmo continente

(“Esquinas,” Dino d’Santiago ft. Slow J, *Badiu*, 2021)

Here everyone feels
Land isn’t just where one was born
It’s also the ground we carry in our minds
Here everyone is related
Even when born from another womb
We call the same continent mother

(my trans.).

In the previously analyzed “Esquinas,” part of Dino d’Santiago’s album *Badiu (2021)*, Dino situates discussions of space, as he states, “Aqui toda a gente sente / Terra não é só lugar onde se nasceu / É também o chão que trazemos na mente." (“Here everyone feels / Land isn’t just where one was born / It’s also the ground we carry in our minds;" my trans.). In the first verse, he describes a collective experience, saying that “everyone” feels that the homeland is not

just a physical space, but something that exists in memory and consciousness. In the next three lines, Dino argues that ‘everybody’ is family, regardless of blood relations, as he mentions being born from another “ventre;" “womb”). His statement implies a shared experience and space uniting people of diverse origins, symbolizing how physical and conceptual land is a common source of identity. This points specifically to how the immigrant communities in Portugal serve as cultural enclaves (as detailed in the previous section). Despite being born in Portugal, Dino feels tethered to Cabo Verde, though he has never physically lived there. His belonging to Cabo Verdean spaces is not necessarily tied solely to the archipelago’s land itself, but to the culture and community that people in that space (and their descendants) produce, which is what Dino claims here by stating homeland is a mix of the corporeal and fantasized.

Ideas of an imagined homeland are paralleled nearing the end of “Esquinas," as Dino cries out: “(Nas curvas do bairro) aceno ao corpo negro com quem cruzo / (Nas curvas do bairro) nossos corpos são também pátria” (“I nod to the Black body I cross by / Our bodies are also homeland”). While homeland may be read as Portugal, the heart of Dino’s message in these verses is not about Portugal’s physicality; instead, it references Portuguese national identity (as discussed in the previous section). By proclaiming that his body, as a Black-Portuguese man, is also part of Portugal, he is creating space for himself and other Afro-Portuguese descendants to fit into the definition of what it means to be Portuguese. Symbolically, Dino thus is redefining rigid concepts of Portugueseness, and rewriting himself and Black Communities a new legacy for Portugal.

In conjunction with his other work, he acknowledges that not only is Afro-Portuguese influence seen in various ways and spaces in Portugal, but integral to overall Portuguese identity. Foregrounding their contributions, his music serves as both an embrace and a critique—uplifting

Black-Portuguese voices, while also exposing the systemic barriers that still hinder full inclusivity. Much of Dino's rhetoric in his art is centered around not only Blackness, but also multiculturalism. In "Roda," for example, he invites others to join his circle where he spreads messages of unity. He sings, asking for everyone to "(Vem, vem) Entra na roda, (Vai, Vai) Roda Kriola" "((Come, Come) Enter the circle, (Go, Go) the Creole Circle);" my trans.)). Dino promotes togetherness by invoking imagery of a circle with racially and culturally mixed people sitting side by side in the same space. The circle is utilized as a conceptual space, not only symbolizing being complete together, but also movement, flow, and transformation. Subsequently, this "Creole circle" is where cultural intersections are revered, and each person is a piece of a system that compiles a greater sum.

The imagery of the circle represents inclusivity and interconnectedness, breaking down barriers between cultures. It symbolizes a community where all participants are equal to each other and engaged in mutual exchange. When Dino is calling for a shared space where 'Portugueseness' and 'Blackness' are not seen as separate entities, but rather as intertwined. In close-knit communities, circles often signify intimacy, trust, and collective belonging, values that are frequently present in traditional African cultures, like batuque, referenced in Chapter 1. Dino's invitation to "enter the circle" suggests a radical reformation of national identity, one where Portugal fully acknowledges the value of Afro-Portuguese communities. Ultimately, Dino presents the circle as both a challenge and an opportunity, as it confronts Portugal's pre-existing framework to present opportunities for a more inclusive country that will benefit a collective whole.

In an interview about his album *Kriola,* Dino articulated, "No *Kriola* assumo tudo e peço que entrem na roda, que façamos parte do mesmo círculo, que venham beber da cultura que tanto

temem e percebam o quanto nós bebemos da vossa cultura.” (“In *Kriola*, I take on everything and ask you all to enter the circle, that we be part of the same circle, that you come and drink from the culture that you fear so much and realize how much we drink from you all’s culture;" my trans; Medeiros, 2021). Dino explains that entering the circle symbolizes a greater invitation to embrace and engage in cultural exchange. His audience for this message is mainstream Portuguese society, as he urges others, specifically White Portuguese individuals, to recognize how cultural and racial mixing have shaped and continue to shape Portuguese identity. He calls them to interact with what they fear, Afro-Portuguese cultures, which would cause them to recognize the flaws in a national identity based on Eurocentrism.

Similar sentiments of intercultural dialogue are seen upon analyzing Dino’s song “MAIO (Kel Kê Di Nôs)," the fifth track of his extended play (EP), *Sotavento (2019).* In MAIO, Dino searches for a new hope for his culture:

Ta manxi lonji nha guentis
Pa-m buska n buska ti kin atxa
Nôbu speransa pa nôs kultura
Nô batuku sta na mundu (nu bai!)

Kel kê di meo kê di bo (ka bu skesi)
Kel kê di bô kê di nôs tambê
Kel kê di bô ê di meo simê
Kel kê di meo ê di nôs

(Dino d’Santiago, MAIO, *Sotavento,* 2019)

Far away from my people

Looking and searching until one day I find

A new hope for our culture

Our batuku is in the world

What's mine is yours, don't forget

What's yours is ours too

What's yours is mine too

What is mine, is ours

(trans. by Dino d'Santiago)

As he describes in his lyrics, Dino feels isolated from his people, in this case, Cabo Verdeans, and is diligently searching for new ways to revitalize their culture. He then proclaims that *batuku*, a traditionally Cabo Verdean music style, has permeated the world, pointing to the influence of his cultural heritage globally. Changing tone from the previous verse, in the next four lines, Dino promotes togetherness and sharing. Similar to what he explains in "Roda," Dino aspires to live in a community based on cultural exchange. Through stating that "what's yours is ours / what's yours is mine too," Dino expresses that unity serves as the hope he was desperately searching for in his earlier line. This new future Dino is looking for, thus, is a society that creates spaces for multiple identities to co-exist.

In summary, through "Esquinas," "Roda," and "MAIO," Dino utilizes imaginary spaces to promote Creoleness, asking that everyone take part in a larger identity. He uses these to not only express a new, more collective and inclusive Portuguese identity, but also to emphasize that

both he and Portugal are culturally mixed and diverse (which should be celebrated, but not as a means of exploitation, as Lusotropicalism did). Imposing one narrative or forcing one image, as past regimes have, therefore, is not an accurate representation of Portuguese identity. Dino portrays himself as "um cidadão 200%, sou 100% português, e 100% caboverdiano" ("a 200% citizen, I'm 100% Portuguese, and 100% Cabo Verdean"; my trans., *Facebook*). Typically, having a multiracial or multiethnic background is conceptualized as being into parts. However, through his perspective, he emphasizes that having more than one heritage is not a matter of division or dilution, but instead is an enrichment—it is an addition rather than a subtraction. Portugal, like Dino, is thus not defined by one, but multiple cultures, races, and sounds. This can be seen additionally in the way that Dino utilizes genre fusion as a means of non-conformity.

Genre Fusion as a Symbol of Cross-Cultural Spaces and Belonging

What genre does Dino d'Santiago sing? This seemingly simple question, in actuality, is deceivingly difficult to answer. Searches on popular artist biographies and streaming platforms either ambiguously categorize Dino's music or confine him into a singular category, such as "Pop" or "Hip-hop." Solely opening the artist-written biography pages—and listening to his songs themselves—gives a true glimpse into what genres Dino incorporates into his artistry. Dino showcases a cross-genre musical style, featuring clever mixes of traditional Cabo Verdean rhythms such as morna, funaná, and batuque, fused with contemporary R&B, Hip-hop, Electronic music, and Soul.[28] The albums at the center of my analysis, *Kriola (2020)* and *Badiu (2021)* (paired with some of his singles), are prime examples of Dino's "signature sound," where

[28] For more information on traditional Cabo Verdean song styles, refer to *CHAPTER 1.6: Morna, Funaná, and Batuque: The Cabo Verdean Heartbeat in Dino d'Santiago's Signature Sounds*

he elegantly mixes all of these genres. Dino utilizes his fusion of diverse genres and his lyrics to discuss race and space in his music.

Dino d'Santiago's sample list of genres is a statement on how he refuses to be reduced to solely one sound; additionally, much like how he breaks dividing boundaries between races and cultures in his songs, he also breaks defining lines between music categories, reimagining them into something new. Dino's reimagination is especially pronounced in work that merges his African and European heritages. Through blurring lines between these categories, Dino cultivates a greater dialogue between the two, bridging continents and cultures. Songs such as "Kriolu" and "Nova Lisboa," for example, showcase Dino's blending of distinct heritages and sounds, where he amplifies Afro-Portuguese rhythms and shapes a new *Kriolu* sound-branding within Portuguese society. The fusion of beats emphasizes intercultural dialogue and harmony, while simultaneously amplifying the voices and roots of Afro-Portuguese communities.

In Dino's "Kriolu," his lyrics mirror his seamless synthesis of sounds playing in the song's sonic landscape. Much like how he proclaims in his song that "Nu ta mistura, nos tudu é kriolu" ("We mix, We are all Creole"; my trans.), he mixes soundscapes from diverse cultures, creating a new sound and new identity. He does so by building the beat's foundation on a 21st-century electric funaná, a musical style traditionally accompanied by the ferro, gaita, and Portuguese diatonic accordion (Palmberg, 2022). This upbeat gaita is the first sound heard when the song begins. Funaná itself represents a fusion of two cultures, with European melodies and African rhythms. In Dino's songs, the symbiosis between these two rhythms creates something uniquely creole, joining his Cabo Verdean roots and Portugueseness. This blending of cultural influences not only highlights his heritages but also serves as a bridge to connect with his listeners on a global scale. Using more than one culture's sounds also allows him to appeal to a

broader audience. Dino, discussing his choices to merge genres, explains the tune's catchiness for greater people groups. He states, "Por isso é que as pessoas gostam tanto de funaná e nem sabem porquê, porque existe uma cédula nossa portuguesa também com que toda a gente se identifica e talvez seja o ritmo mais crioulo e símbolo de mistura que podemos encontrar" ("This is why people like funaná so much and do not even know why, because there is a Portuguese signature that everyone identifies with, and it is possibly the most Creole rhythm and a symbol of a mixture that we can find"; my trans.). As Dino explains, his choices for beats and rhythms in this song are representative of intercultural communication.

Paired with the funaná also comes a corresponding beat drop, which is when Dino begins singing. A crucial element of the beat arrangement is to seamlessly integrate the rap of Julinho KSD, a Black-Portuguese artist, into the song's rhythm.[29] His inclusion of rap is yet another nod to Cabo Verdean and Black-Portuguese communities, showcasing his deliberate effort to celebrate and honor cultural contributions. By including another artist, Dino reinforces the solidarity of his message, as Julinho contributed to the writing process. This emphasizes his song's sentiments, reinforcing unity and collective storytelling, and embracing Black presence despite the hardships that Black-Portuguese communities face.

In their rap, they sing "Nu ta festeja, nu ta festeja / Nu ta mistura nôs tudu eh kriolu / … Branku ku pretu um gerason di oru." ("We celebrate, We celebrate / We mix, we are all Creole / Black with White, a golden generation"; my trans.). His lyrics, in congruence with the unique soundscape Dino has forged, prove to be powerful messages of racial harmony and richness of

[29] Julinho KSD is a Afro-Portuguese rapper who was born and raised near Linha da Sintra. Julinho KSD's music typically mixes Cape Verdean Creole, English, and Portuguese—representative of the many languages heard in the neighborhood he grew up in (Ferreira, 2022).

the *Kriolu* identity, challenging historical divisions while concurrently embracing the shared heritages of African and European communities.

Similarly, Dino's song "Nova Lisboa" calls for his audience to embody a "New Lisbon" that amplifies diversity and unity. Lisbon, a city known for its multiculturalism and high immigrant populations, is central to Dino's song. Lisbon is a symbol of mixing that Dino hopes to spread throughout the rest of Portugal, serving as a *cachupa* (a quintessential dish of Cabo Verde) that blends different races and cultures, respecting differences, but together forming a larger identity (Lam, 2022). This idea is apparent as he sonically illustrates Creoleness through his mix of electronic reinventions of traditional Cabo Verdean sounds like batuque and funaná, as with the song "Kriolu." Dino shows via intercultural mixing how his idea of being Creole is an ongoing process of reinvention, taking inspiration from his heritages, and part of a collective whole. However, discussions of sameness and Creoleness may bear a striking resemblance to Lusotropicalism, where colonial exploitation was guised under the ruse of a racially mixed population.

Does Dino d'Santiago's Concept of "Nova Lisboa" Mirror Lusotropicalist Ideals?

Lusotropicalism posited that Portuguese colonization was special, as the (forced) interculturality of their former colonies served as a means for justifying a repressive colonial system. As discussed in Chapter 1, these ideas proposed by Gilberto Freyre argued that due to the miscegenation occurring within their lands, the Portuguese empire was a harmonious reigndom, where races and cultures lived in unison. The center of Dino d'Santiago's message as an artist involves his concept of a *nação kriola*, a united people that, although diverse, form part of a larger, collective identity in Portugal. While Dino's arguments for a more integrated Portugal

may draw some parallels to Lusotropicalism superficially, deeper analyses of his work reveal his more nuanced and critical approach to a Creole society—vastly distinct from the beliefs presented by Freyre and perpetuated by Portuguese regimes.

Unlike Lusotropical theories that romanticized narratives of racial harmony for clout, Dino emphasizes Black-Portuguese contributions to Portuguese identity. His focus is not on erasing differences, yet conversely, on celebrating and recognizing them in a reimagined framework that challenges exclusion. His vision, consequently, is not one where diversity is merely tolerated or boasted about to continue reinforcing racial hierarchies, but thought of as a vital dimension of national identity.

Dino d'Santiago's song, "Morna" in his album *Kriola (2020),* is a prime example of his pleas for societal unity. Dino chooses to sing the track, in its entirety in Cape Verdean Creole, singing somberly:

Nhos da'N un Morna
Pa'N tadja kel dor
Nes mar di vida sen do
Dun kriolu sen txon

Nu djunta mon pa mudansa
Dja txiga di fastentura
Sen djobi pa ladu, djes fla
Dizimola, nos e un so

Luta kada un pa si ladu

Nu djunta pa razon eradu

Ta fazi muru pa nu sipara

Ignoransia di speransa

(Dino d'Santiago, "Morna," *Kriola*, 2020)

Give me a Morna

to soothe this pain

in this sea of merciless life

of the landless Creole

Let us come together for a change

to stop this mess

We carry on blindly

when we are part of a whole

We fight with our backs turned

United for the wrong reasons

We create walls that separate

ignorance from hope

(trans. by COLORSXSTUDIOS)[30]

Dino cries out to the audience about his frustrations with contemporary society, condemning the divisions it promotes. He begins by referencing Morna, evoking imagery of the

[30] Although "Morna" was sung entirely in Creole, and the English translation of the official lyrics were provided by COLORSXSTUDIOS, one of Dino d'Santiago's collaborations.

melancholic genre in Dino's ancestral land. The sea, often a literary symbol of exploration and limitless opportunity, is characterized here as “merciless," a space for the wandering, “landless” Creole to roam. Dino, using this symbolism, points to the greater historical significance the sea held for the Portuguese colonial regime. Serving as a bridge between continents and colonies, it catalyzed the expansion of Portuguese and other, empires. Landless not only implies the loss of a physical space, but a sociocultural one as well. Afro-Portuguese communities are continually alienated and excluded from national identity.

Additionally, landlessness speaks to the erasure of histories perpetuated under colonial mindsets, such as Lusotropical ideologies, that ignore the struggles faced by Black-Portuguese individuals. As he continues, he pleads for unity rather than drawing lines between people of diverse races and cultures. He sings “We create walls that separate / ignorance from hope," challenging the limitations imposed by societal impositions. Walls, in this case, represent dividing lines between people groups, as he understands these barriers as a means of societal rejection and exclusion, blinding others to how their bitter division is damaging Portugal. Conversely, he encourages the dismantling of these repressive binaries, which he portrays as the sole hope not only for Afro-Portuguese communities but for larger Portuguese society as a whole.

Another example of Dino’s discourse on his imagined *nação kriola* lies in “Kriolu” featuring Julinho KSD, as partly analyzed in the previous section. For example, in Dino’s song, “Kriolu,” he describes a “Creole nation,” bringing together different races and cultures into a united “we.” “*Kriolu”* is a unique marker of Cabo-Verdeanity, a reference to their language and racial mixing. In this song, and as explained in Chapter 1, Dino extends *Kriolu* not only to Cabo Verdeans—a population marked by miscegenation of African and European populations— but to

other communities as well. For example, in "Kriolu," part of the album *Kriola (2020),* Julinho KSD raps, "Nação kriola nha eterno mood," continuing "Di nos língua n ka ta kexa / Berdianu ku tuga prontu pa kasa dentu d'igreja." ("Creole nation is my eternal mood / … / Of our language, I have no complaints / Cabo Verdean with Portuguese ready to get married inside the church"; my trans).[31] Here, they promote 'marrying' between two cultures.

Continuing with the acceptance of racial and cultural mixing, Dino exclaims "Nu ta festeja, nu ta festeja / Nu ta mistura nôs tudu eh kriolu / … / Branku ku pretu um gerason di oru." ("We celebrate, We celebrate / We mix we are all Creole /…/ Black with White, a golden generation") Paired with a catchy beat and uplifting chorus, Dino uses his verses as an anthem for intermingling different races and identities. They frame this mix as something to be celebrated and embraced, even calling mixing between Black and White Portuguese individuals "a golden generation." In "Eu Sou," Tchaps expressed the harsh realities for Black communities, describing interracial relations as frowned upon in contemporary Portuguese society; "Kriolu," however, accepts mixing between races and rewrites it as a norm.

Dino's own reflection on "Kriolu" supports it serving as an anthem for this is well. In one interview, Dino was asked what his album, *Kriola* (which contains the track "Kriolu" ft. Julinho KSD), represented to him. In response, Dino stated:

> Quando se ouve a expressão "kriolu" ou "kriola" associa-se logo ao negro, a Cabo-Verde ou à Guiné. E gostaria de deixar bem claro que o disco tem o nome de "Kriola" porque é, precisamente, a representação de uma geração de mistura. Crioulo não é mais do que isso – é uma mistura entre o ocidente e, neste caso, a

[31] In this verse, the term "Tuga" is utilized to refer to a Portuguese person (Hutchison and Pires, 1999; *Peace Corps English to Kriolu Dictionary*).

> África dos Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa (PALOP). O crioulo é tão português como cabo-verdiano, como guineense, como são-tomense ou como moçambicano. Esse é um dos princípios base que eu espero que as pessoas possam sentir quando escutam o Kriola. Entrem na roda, fazemos todos parte da mesma cachupa (*Forum Estudante*, 2020).
>
> *When one hears the expression "Creole," it is immediately associated with Black people, with Cabo Verde or Guiné-Bissau. I would like to make it very clear that the album has the name "Kriola" because it is, precisely, a representation of a generation of mixture. Creole is no more than that– it's a mix between the West and, in this case, Portuguese-speaking African Countries (PALOP). Creole is just as Portuguese as it is Cabo Verdean, Guinean, São Tomean, or Mozambican. This is one of the basic principles that I hope that people can feel when they listen to Kriola. Enter the circle, we are all part of the same cachupa.*
>
> (my trans)

Creoleness, as Dino argues, spans beyond specific territories, and is not solely applicable to PALOPs and Afro-Portuguese descendants. He, as reflected in his album, encourages diversity, and intercultural exchange, hoping that his listeners mirror this principle of unity in everyday practice and make steps to a more inclusive Portugal. Again, Dino references *cachupa*, a Cabo Verdean dish formed from a variety of different ingredients; these elements, however, in this case symbolize different races and cultures, that though they have their individual value and

are critical parts of the overall dish, come together to form a larger collective identity, rewriting narrow views of Portugueseness (Lam, 2022).[32]

In summary, Dino's ambitions for a new, more inclusive Portugal do not deny differences; rather, they acknowledge them, much like how he denounces social inequities for Black-Portuguese communities. He hopes for a new, integrative space that uplifts Blackness in Portuguese identity to also be celebrated as other races and cultures of national identity are—but breaking the colonial, Lusotropicalist mindset. Instead of perpetuating colonial discourses in the Portuguese nation, he implores others to genuinely embrace the rich multiculturality that his country holds. Dino thus inspires a new generation of thinking for Portugal, not rigidly defined by only one people group, but one where Blackness, historically pushed into the periphery, also constitutes homeland.

[32] *Cachupa* is a quintessential, national dish of Cabo Verde (Lam, 2022). It is known as a "Creole" stew, mixing together a variety of meats, vegetables, and beans (Lam, 2022). Dino in several interviews utilizes cachupa to symbolize the diversity and multiculturality of Lisbon (*Forum Estudante*, 2020*)*.

Concluding Remarks

Dedicated to his son, Lucas, Dino d'Santiago created his now famous, sold-out t-shirt that reads "Preto, estás na tua terra" in bold letters, the same one he sported while receiving the Cultural Merit Medal from the Portuguese Government. Explaining why he wore the shirt in an interview with Notícias Magazine, he explained that he never wants his son to grow up hearing the same disparaging, racist remarks that he has endured throughout his entire life while living in Portugal (2022). Rather, Dino hopes to be a symbol of change so that his son, Lucas, will always feel a claim to his own land, and in a world where their heritages coincide with one another, without controversy.

Similar to how Dino hopes for Lucas to belong, I argue that Dino's music functions as a platform to assert Black presence in Portugal and imagine a future in which Blackness is part of Portuguese national identity. In two of his latest albums, *Kriola (2020)* and *Badiu (2021*) and other works, Dino reconstructs this identity via discourses on race and space. In his discussions on race, Dino and his collaborators expose the still present systemic oppression against Black-Portuguese communities, while also discussing race in terms of belonging to assert that Black individuals face both physical and social marginalization. Through tackling various interpretations of space, Dino points to physical spaces as evidence of Afro-Portuguese presence, and utilizes imagined spaces to rewrite a more inclusive Portugal where differences are respected and acknowledged, yet where unity exists. He emphasizes collectivism over division, and stresses that it is the sole hope for Portugal. In the famous words of Dino, "Sou um preto em construção, não um branco em desconstrução" ("I'm a Black person in construction, not a White person in deconstruction", my trans.). His music acts as a vehicle for change, one of Black self-determination in a country still grappling with its colonial past. It acts as a force that

proclaims Black presence and belonging, amid the hardships their communities face, asserting themselves as part of their homeland.

As discussed throughout both my Chapters 1 and 2, Dino's denunciation of the horrors committed against Afro-Portuguese individuals and firm declaration of presence hold important implications for Portugal, especially in light of anti-Black discrimination cases on the rise and several episodes of police brutality within the past decade. Dino's music serves as a way for Portugal to come together and critically consider how lingering remnants of a problematic colonial past affect Afro-Portuguese descendants in contemporary society. Through rewriting national identity, Dino deconstructs colonial mindsets and imagines a new society where Blackness functions as a point of embrace and celebration, rather than marginalization.

The analysis of my work focuses primarily on two of Dino d'Santiago's albums, although I also explore some of his other tracks. Dino is a highly prolific artist who is constantly releasing new forms of art, which is one of the reasons I chose to delimit the albums and songs I investigated. In addition to his music, Dino's messages permeate his musical videos, writing, painting, drawing, and more. In future work, I would hope to explore other parts of his extensive catalog,and possibly pair my examinations of the imagery in his music videos with an analysis of his lyrics. One of the challenging aspects of this project was Dino's usage of Cabo Verde Creole; in future work, I would hope to expand my knowledge and lexicon of such an integral language in his work.

Dino d'Santiago's music, in summary, is vital to drawing attention to the racial injustices occurring in Portugal against Black-Portuguese communities. While his critiques are directed towards his homeland, Dino's music is international, and clearly reaches broader audiences,

meaning that Portugal is not the only country where Black communities are marginalized, or the only country still coping with its colonial past. Dino d'Santiago's artistry serves as a means to claim space in his country's collective identity, and acknowledge the cultural capital that Afro-descendants bring to Portugal. While he identifies as Cabo Verdean, he extends his messages to a more ample Afro-Portuguese community and beyond. Overall, he inspires a new generation of thinking, for individuals like his son, Lucas, reimagining a future where their bodies also constitute a homeland.

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