

FABRIC OF ENSLAVEMENT: PANOS DE TERRA

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Resumo

O artigo trata o tema do transporte têxtil como uma parte do comércio de escravos dentro do Império Colonial Português, ou seja, Africano, Asiático, territórios americanos e na própria Europa. Devido à sua diferente origem e tipo, comércio têxtil era constituído uma espécie de mercado globalizado dentro do mundo lusófono. Em contraste a estudos anteriores, este trabalho se concentra em tecnologias têxteis africanas transferidos para outras partes do Império Português e enfatiza a participação de tecnologias de fricanos dentro de diferentes culturas do mundo. Tal perspectiva nos ajuda a ver a África e não apenas como um continente de exportação de escravos, isto é, força de trabalho para outras partes do mundo. O artigo visa corrigir visão tradicional e amplamente difundida segundo a qual a África tinha descartado há tecnologias significativas antes da chegada dos europeus. Tal ponto de vista é prejudicial especialmente para diáspora Africana no mundo Atlântico. O artigo observa a importância das tecnologias têxteis africanas dentro do processo de colonização europeia e explora o legado do comércio têxtil especialmente em lusitana Atlântico (Cabo Verde, Brasil, Nigéria). O documento sublinha importância de Panos de Terra produzidos em Cabo Verde.

Palavras Chave: Africa. Diáspora africana. Comércio de escravos. Tecnologia.

Abstract

There were four sources of the textiles used in slave trading within parts of Africa under Portuguese influence; Africa itself, Europe, Asia and the Americas. The sources and types of textile varied over time and place and therefore represent aspects of globalisation in the Portuguese Empire. Past studies have tended to look primarily at the trade of European commodities within the trans-Atlantic slave trade. This has ignored the presence of African technology transfer to Macaronesia and the Americas and thereby overstressed the notion that Africans were transported simply as labour with no regard to their indigenous culture or technology. The result of this historical misinter-

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pretation is a widely held perspective in the Americas and Europe that Africa had no technology of worth prior to the arrival of Europeans. This notion is detrimental to all parties, and in particular to the African diaspora of the Atlantic World. This paper seeks to identify the role of Africans technology and trade within the process of European colonisation and to explore the legacy of the textile trade and its links to slavery by investigating costume and the textile trade in the Lusitanian-influenced Atlantic (primarily Cape Verde, Brazil and Nigeria). The study focus is on the *Panos de Terra* of the Cape Verde Islands.

Keywords: African. African diaspora. Slave trading. Technology transfer. Textiles.

Introduction

This paper is the product of two years of research within archives that were predominantly in English and therefore represent sources that are new to much of the Portuguese-speaking world. The main centres of research were the British Museum, the National Maritime Museum and the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) in London, England. However, some research was also conducted at the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga in Lisbon, Portugal and the Museu Etnográfico da Madeira at Ribeira Brava, Madeira. The fieldwork was conducted primarily at Assomado and Praia on the island of Santiago and on Fogo Island in the Cape Verde Archipelago with the support of the Ministry of Culture and the Arquivo Histórico Nacional de Cabo Verdes. Some research was also conducted in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil, and at Lamu Island in Kenya. Mr Neil Williams whose career is in the global textile and fashion industry accompanied Mr. Clifford Pereira on the fieldwork, and provided valuable input from a technical perspective. This has resulted in a historical study that is inclusive of the components of the textile industry; fibres, dyes, weaving, sewing, patterns and labour requirements.

It is of course possible that much more documentation exists on this topic in Por-

tuguese, as well as in Spanish, French and Dutch. This research serves as an audit of some English language sources on the narrative of the *Panos de Terra*.

Research outcome

The first Portuguese overseas expansions were into Morocco on the heels of the retreating Moors of Andalucia. This was followed by their first voyages of exploration seeking “Christians, spices and Gold” with landfalls in the uninhabited islands of the Atlantic starting with Madeira (c.1419), the Azores (c1427), the Cape Verdes (1456-60), and onto St. Helena and Ascension (1501-1502) and Tristao da Cunha (c.1506). By the time the Portuguese had discovered the islands of the South Atlantic they were already familiar with the inhabited lands of Iceland, Greenland, Labrador and Newfoundland, Brazil and in the 1520’s they attempted settlement of Cape Breton Island¹. The Portuguese were the first Europeans to discover the Guinea coast of Africa². This was marked by the rounding of Cape Bojador by Gil Eanes in 1434. Bartholemeu Dias (1488) round-

1 P. 9. The Portuguese Empire. 1415-1808. By A. J.R. Russell-Wood. 1998. Baltimore. USA.

2 P. 40. Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade. By Boubacar Barry. 1998. Cambridge. UK.

ed of the Cape of Good Hope and Vasco da Gama lead the sea route to India in 1489 thereby bringing Asia closer to Europe.

The Portuguese found neither spices, gold or Christians on the ten islands of the Cape Verde Archipelago, each of which has a distinctive character moulded by geology and geography. These islands had one advantage they were at the centre of sixteenth century Portuguese trade routes from Europe to Africa, India and Brazil. The Cape Verde islands were uninhabited at the time of the Portuguese discoveries, and though slightly wetter then today they were still arid. They contained adyeyielding lichen called *Orchilor Urzela* in Portuguese (*Rocella tinctoria*) that was collected in the misty mountainous areas, processed and exported to produce a purple-blue dye³. The Portuguese became characterised in the sixteenth century for their trading activities, but they were also pioneers in the experimentation of plant adaptation, using the Atlantic Islands as field stations. They had already introduced sugarcane to Madeira and the Azores by the end of the fifteenth century and were importing enslaved Africans from their newly “discovered” Guinea coast as labour for its cultivation⁴, and the proximity of the Cape Verdes to the adjacent coast of Africa provided a base from which to control the slave trade to the Americas⁵. The earliest and most successful cash crop in the Cape Verde islands was cotton (*Gossypium herbaceum*)⁶, which was initially introduced from West Africa and largely sold there. Africa of course had an ancient textile tradition based on leather,

raffia, bark cloth and cotton, sometimes using small amounts of waste silk fibres from Asia that reached Northwest Africa and even crossed the Sahara by way of the Arab trade routes. This silk was originally in the form of waste silk usually dyed magenta and known in Northern Nigeria as *Alaharini*⁷. West Africans were unable to produce this magenta colour, though the local Kola nut allowed for various shades of blue and brown. Hence this soft and brightly coloured material was a prestige trading item. In Guinea, the area between Senegal and Liberia, the spinners (mostly female) and the weavers (mostly male) seem to have been enslaved Africans. Warfare on the African mainland associated with the Kaabu (or Gabu) kingdom based in today’s North-eastern Guinea Bissau, created thousands of enslaved war captives, especially from the Western Fula peoples, also known as Fulani and Fulbe. Military actions led by the Moroccans in the Western Sahil created southwards migrations of the Fula people in the sixteenth century which led them directly into the path of the Kaabu kingdom. By the early sixteenth century, enslaved African weavers brought into the Cape Verde Islands by the Portuguese were producing high quality cotton textiles that were marketed on the African coast⁸. The spinners and weavers who also planted, harvested, cleaned and dyed the cotton served as domestic slaves in the large cotton plantations and small slave-trading households of Santiago Island. The Wolof (or Jolof) women were particularly prized because, in addition to being skilled spinners, they were considered very beautiful⁹. The weavers used sim-

3 P. 160. Atlantic Islands. By T. Bentley Duncan. 1972. Chicago. USA.

4 P. 40. Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade. By Boubacar Barry. 1998. Cambridge. UK.

5 P. 40. Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade. By Boubacar Barry. 1998. Cambridge. UK.

6 P. 172. The Portuguese Empire. 1415-1808. By A.J.R. Russell-Wood. 1998. Baltimore. USA

7 P. 8. Silk in Africa. By Chris Spring & Julie Hudson. 2002. London. UK.

8 P. 21. Atlantic Islands. By T. Bentley Duncan. 1972. Chicago. USA.

9 P. 219. Atlantic Islands. By T. Bentley Duncan. 1972. Chicago. USA.

ple and fragile looms of Africa-nororigin that produced very narrow bands of cloth, usually 5 or 6 inches (12-15 centimetres) wide and between 5 and 6 feet long (just under 2 me-

tres). Six of these strips were sewn together, to make a piece of cloth about one yard (or 1 metres) wide and no more than two yards (or 2 metres) long.

Courtesy of Mrs. Fatima Almeida, Atelier de Design Corte e Costura. Praia, Santiago. Cape Verde. — Pereira-Williams Photographic Collection



There is no evidence that Orchil was ever used to dye cotton for *panos*. If it was, no fabric of that period has survived. However the cotton was dyed various shades of blue with extract from the nut of the Kola Tree (*Cola acuminata*) that was produced in West Africa and traded through the Cape Verde Islands along with enslaved Africans. After the Portuguese reached India they started to import indigo (*Indigofera tinctoria*) directly from India to Europe. According to Duarte Barbosa writing at the beginning of the sixteenth century, “the Moors here [Sofala] now produce much fine cotton in this country, and they know how to weave it into white stuff, because they don’t know how to dye it, or because they have not got the right colours; and they take the blue or coloured stuffs of Cambay [Gujarat] and unravel them, and again weave the threads with their white thread, and in this manner they make coloured stuffs”. There was already an indigenous textile industry on the East coast of Africa when the Portuguese arrived in the

early sixteenth century. Apparently there was no knowledge of cotton dyeing in the region and therefore imported coloured cloth, especially in blue was very rare and highly prized¹⁰. When in 1502 Cabral (who discovered Brazil) decided to set up a factory at Sofala in Southeast Africa, the captain was supplied with the means to purchase Indian textiles as this was the only saleable ware at Sofala¹¹. Barbosa mentions that the coloured cloth woven with Indian and local thread at Sofala was traded for gold¹². In or shortly after the late sixteenth century the Portuguese introduced indigo (*indigofera tinctoria*) to the Kerimba Islands from India and thereafter the islanders started dyeing their

10 P. 6. Description of the East Indies and Countries on the seaboard of the Indian Ocean in 1514. By Duarte Barbosa (Translated by Hon. Henry Stanley). 1865. London.

11 P. 40. The Portuguese Period in East Africa. By Justice Strandes. 1971. Nairobi. Kenya.

12 P. 6. Description of the East Indies and Countries on the seaboard of the Indian Ocean in 1514. By Duarte Barbosa (Translated by Hon. Henry Stanley). 1865. London.

own cotton with this blue-black dye. The resultant cloth was called *Msumbiji* (“Mozambique” in Kiswahili). By the nineteenth century the Mijikenda people of Kenya had developed a preference for the blue-black *Msumbiji* cloth. Blue does not occur on animal skins and rarely occurs on birds, insects and plants. Blue cloth was prized and endowed with quasimagical properties¹³. This prized fabric had assumed an important social function and was presented to the mother of a bride who used it herself or presented it to her daughter for use as a baby sling. This practice was known by the Waswahili as *mbeleko* or *uweleko*, by the Digo as *makaja*, by the Pokomo as *kamahumbo* and by the Zaramo of Tanzania as *mkaja*¹⁴. From the Indian Ocean the Portuguese also introduced indigo to the Cape Verde Islands and by the late sixteenth century Cape Verdean slaves were cultivating indigo and producing their own good blue dyes. Each group of Cape Verdean spinners and weavers made their own dye¹⁵. It is possible that the introduction of the indigo from Mozambique to Cape Verde also involved the transfer of enslaved East Africans who had learnt how to cultivate and process indigo.

Separate strips of cloth went into the making of one *pano* (or piece), providing the opportunity for many ingenious variations worked out within the framework imposed by the six-banded arrangement. Alternating bands of indigo blue and white bands produced the so-called striped cloth (*pano listrado*) mentioned in many records. The *barafulas* were mostly of this type. Eventually Moorish and Portuguese patterns and

designs were incorporated sometimes with imported silk or wool¹⁶. Probably boosted by the introduction of Sea Island cotton (*Gossypium barbadense*) from Brazil, the production of high quality raw cotton became a central part of Cape Verdean economy. Cotton is very labour intensive and this would have required an increase in the local labour force. In 1582 the population of Fogo and Santiago included 1,608 whites, who were vastly outnumbered by 13,700 enslaved Africans and 400 free Africans¹⁷. Due in part to the demand for cotton these islands were now numerically dominated by Africans of differing cultures. The creation of a free mixedrace Afro-Portuguese community on the islands was inevitable, and so the Creole culture was born.

The Portuguese maritime trading ventures were restricted to the coast of West Africa where it fed into a larger trading network of free Afro-Portuguese origin from the Cape Verde known as *Lançados* or *Tango-maos*¹⁸. These were the middlemen of the region between Senegal and Liberia, trading in local textiles, kola nuts, ivory and slaves. If a European slave trader went to the Guinea coast, he would find himself involved with Cape Verdean intermediaries, and obliged to buy Cape Verdean *panos* (the *barafulas*, *oxos*, *panos pretos*, *panos de obra*, *panos de agulha*, *panos de bicho*, etc). Without the Afro-Portuguese middleman, and without the elegant Cape Verdean *pano* that dressed the upperclass people of Guinea, the coastal trade would have been quite different¹⁹. The Portuguese and *Lançados* also relied on an-

13 P. 248. Swahili Origins. By James de Vere Allen. 1993. London. UK.

14 P. 85. Swahili Origins. By James de Vere Allen. 1993. London. UK.

15 P. 220. Atlantic Islands. By T. Bentley Duncan. 1972. Chicago. USA.

16 P. 219. Atlantic Islands. By T. Bentley Duncan. 1972. Chicago. USA.

17 P. 40. Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade. By Boubacar Barry. 1998. Cambridge. UK.

18 P. 40-41. Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade. By Boubacar Barry. 1998. Cambridge. UK.

19 P. 212. Atlantic Islands. By T. Bentley Duncan. 1972. Chicago. USA.

other trading network, that of the Jews who were already established in the Moroccan city of Saffi and this was consolidated when the Portuguese took the city in 1508. When the Inquisition was established in Portugal in 1536, the fleeing Jews of Portugal and the *Maranos* sought refuge in Saffi and Arzilla, where they entered the Portuguese-African trade initially with freedom from the inquisition. Their principal trade was in *Alambeis*. Jewish traders who worked alongside the *Lançados* were known as *Ganagogas*. The Jews eventually married local women and became part of the genetic mix that is today the Cape Verdean. The presence of the Cape Verdean *Lançados* and *Ganagogas* traders (mostly in slaves) was so common that, already in the sixteenth century the coast came to be known as the “rivers of Cape Verde”, here referring to the archipelago and not the promontory in Senegal²⁰. However proficient the Guinea Africans were at weaving they did not seem to be interested in tailoring, instead they were content with sewing the narrow strips of cloth together producing large flat pieces of cloth that were wrapped and draped around the body. The importance of the *panos* in West Africa is exemplified in the John Sudbury map of Africa produced in England in 1626 which features costumed Africans from various coastal regions. The “Senagensian” inhabitant is depicted wearing *panos*²¹. Though the illustration suggests that the artist had not actually seen the fabric being worn, but was given some description of its use. Nevertheless this remains one of the earliest images of the *panos*.

The Cape Verdean *panos* were not the only textiles traded in West Africa. During the first three decades of the seventeenth

century Flemish and French merchants imported large quantities of textiles into Madeira, which were traded to West Africa in exchange for enslaved Africans. Then in the mid seventeenth century the Anglo-Portuguese war disrupted the trade. But by the end of the century most textiles came from England and on English vessels not just in Madeira, but also in the Azores and the demand for these textiles contributed to the development of English towns and ports such as Topsham in Exeter, and Colchester. These piece textiles known by such names as Devon Dozens, Colchester *bays* (*baize*), Barnstaple *bays*, *perpetuanas*, *says*, *kerseys*, *friezes* and *frizados* were transhipped from Madeira and the Azores for Brazil²². European red fabrics were particularly prized at waistbands and head coverings by Africans on both sides of the Atlantic. This was often a result of the exposure of Africans to the *bandanas* worn by the crew (including Africans) of the slaving vessels. These *bandanas* were usually produced in Bengal, India.

Africans often used the most attractive cloths they could find for funeral shrouds. Expensive textiles also figured prominently in marriage contract exchanges. As far away as the Gold Coast (Ghana) and Niger delta (Nigeria) the Cape Verdean *panos* helped to dress the elite. It is in this context that we must view two images that emerged within this research. During the brief Dutch occupation of Northeast Brazil (1630-1654) the Dutch artist Albert Eckout was commissioned by the governor of Dutch Brazil, Prince Johan Maurits van Nassau, to produce a series of paintings of the inhabitants of the land. Eckout eventually produced twenty-four paintings²³. Two of these images are of Africans, one of a man

20 P 54. The Portuguese Empire. 1415-1808. By A. J.R. Russell-Wood. 1998. London. UK.

21 mr. Africa. G. 84. Royal Geographical Society Collection. 1626. London. UK.

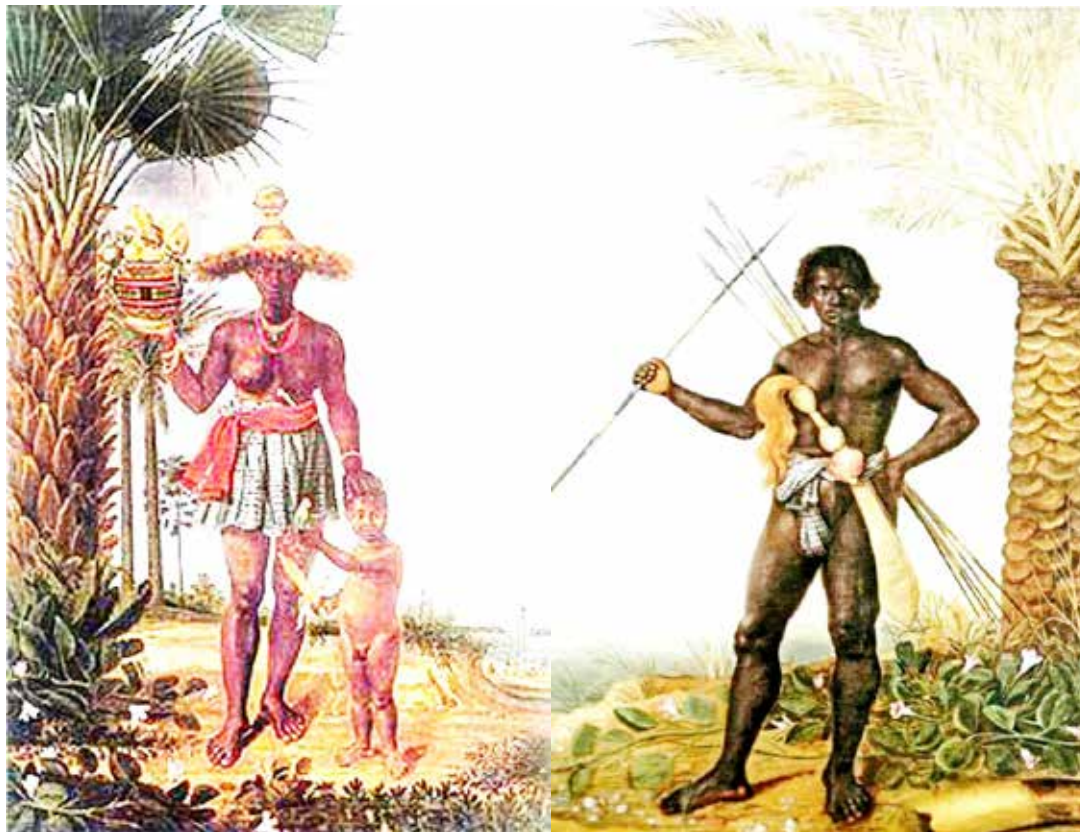
22 P. 72-73 Atlantic Islands. By T. Bentley Duncan. 1972. Chicago. USA.

23 P. 165. Portugal and the World in the 16th and 17th Centuries. 2009. Lisbon. Portugal.

and one of a woman and child. The paintings and some of the objects attached to them were bequest to Frederick III of Denmark

and are in the National Museum of Denmark. These images are rare visual references to the *panos* in Brazil.

Mulher Africana. (EN.38.A.8) and Homen Africano (EN.38.A.7). — Courtesy of the National Museum of Denmark



The painting of the African woman shows her wearing a short *panos* skirt, which is fastened at the waist with red sash. She is featured wearing a hat similar to those of the Khoisan of South Africa (itself a Dutch colony from 1652 to 1806) or like that of the Bakongo people of presentday northern Angola. The woman also wears coral beads, which were and still are a feature of elite in West Africa. The man wears a *panos* strip as a loincloth, with an Ashanti *Afena* sword in a rayskin guard and a pink oyster shell (*Ostrea rosacea*) from the Canary Islands²⁴. Two similar *Afena* swords are in the collection of the British Museum.

24 P. 194-195. Portugal and the World in the 16th and 17th Centuries. 2009. Lisbon. Portugal.

During the mid-seventeenth century Cape Verdean *panos* assumed a dominant position in the Guinea trade, ousting European, Indian and other African rivals. African Chieftains preferred the Cape Verdean cloth for its patterns and insisted that a certain number of quality Cape Verdean cloths must be part of the “mix” of commodities in every large bartering transaction. In the 1680’s one standard bar of European iron was exchanged for two Cape Verdean standard *barafula* cloths, and 30 iron bars were traded for one African slave²⁵.

By the eighteenth century, competition from the Dutch, British, Danes and

25 P. 218. Atlantic Islands. By T. Bentley Duncan. 1972. Chicago. USA.

French (especially from the textile traders of Rouen) who began to import large amounts of European and Indian textiles, had forced the Portuguese and the *Lançado* families to limit their trading activities to the region of present day Guinea and Guinea Bissau. One of the major companies involved in the eighteenth century trade of *panos* to Brazil was the General Company of Para-Maranhão that held a monopoly on the Amazon and Maranhão slave trade from Cape Verde and Guinea. The company also held exclusive rights on the Orchil extraction in Cape Verde, the Azores and Madeira. The obsession with clothing the native Brazilians created a demand for clothes and probably the demise of native Brazilians along the tributaries of the Amazon²⁶. It must be noted that there was a rise in smallpox and measles in the Amazon in the mid eighteenth century, at the same time that the enslaved African population was introduced²⁷. At this time the island of Fogo was the biggest exporter of cloth followed by Santiago and Brava. Eighteenth century records by English slave traders in West Africa confirm the wearing of the *panos* as a loin cloth with a “little slip of cotton flattened to a string before, which passes between the thighs, is tied to the same string behind” and the wearing of larger pieces; “Over all they wear a cotton cloth in the manner of a mantel²⁸; those of a married women are generally blue, and the darker the colour the richer it is reckoned; but the maidens and gay young wives or widows wear blue and white, some spotted, some figured”²⁹.

The latter spotted and figured is a description of the *Panos de Oxos* and the *Panos de Bicho*. While the dark blue fine quality cloth is the *Panos Pretos*. The word *Oxos* is from the Mandingo language, *nhantcho* meaning “noble”, these fine well-worked decorative cloths for the wealthy and imitated prized animal skins such as those of cheetahs and leopards that are recognised as signs of nobility and power, in much the same way as the use of ermine in England. The same English also mention that on Fogo Island land is rented to the “blacks and slaves” who “pay in cloth”³⁰. With reference to the exports of this cloth, and that on São Nicolau “the natives make the best cloths and cotton quilts of all the islands, these are too good for the Guinea trade — but fit for that of Brazil”³¹.

The Methuen Treaty of 1703 between Portugal and England was to mark the downfall of the *Panos* trade. The terms of this treaty provided preferential duty to the British market for Portuguese and Madeira wines and the lifting of a protective embargo on British textiles including those produced in the East India Company areas of rule in India. This treaty effectively sealed off the manufacture of textiles in Portuguese India, Brazil and the Cape Verdes³². Fabrics produced in India and exported by the East India Company including the plaid know in Nigeria as *injiri* produced in Chirala (Andhra Pradesh) and then at Chennai (formally Madras in Tamil Nadu) which gained popularity in the eighteenth century with the growth of British influence in the region. This highly valued fabric now has an important appli-

26 P. 14. Amazon Frontier: The defeat of the Brazilian Indians. By John Fleming. 1987. London. UK.

27 P. 43. Amazon Frontier: The defeat of the Brazilian Indians. By John Fleming. 1987. London. UK.

28 P. 135. The Voyage to the Cape de Verd islands. By Capt. George Roberts. 1726. UK.

29 P. 145. The Voyage to the Cape de Verd islands.

By Capt. George Roberts. 1726. UK.

30 P. 147-148. The Voyage to the Cape de Verd islands. By Capt. George Roberts. 1726. UK.

31 P. 147-148. The Voyage to the Cape de Verd islands. By Capt. George Roberts. 1726. UK.

32 P. 18-19. The Goa-Bahia Intra-Colonial Relations. By P. Sequeira Antony. 2004. Kerala, India.

cation in the life cycle particularly at births and funerals³³.

Within Brazil, cotton was a labour intensive crop and was cultivated in the north initially and subsequently in every province from Para to Rio de Janeiro. It only became important as an export crop in the 1770's partly as a result of the American Revolution or War of Independence³⁴. Soon 60% of Brazilian raw cotton was exported to Britain, who then exported the finished cloth back to Brazil to clothe the thousands of enslaved Africans working in the fields and mines of Brazil³⁵. Manufacture of fine fabrics was prohibited in Brazil by the Alvaráor Charter of 5 January 1785. Production of coarse cloth for the use of slaves alone was permitted. In 1802 the prohibition laws were repeated. This stimulated the export of Portuguese fabrics and Indian calicos to Brazil and encouraged large scale contraband trading by the European powers³⁶. As a consequence the *panos* and its memory virtually disappeared in Bahia where it was replaced by the familiar long white cotton skirt and blouse of the Bahiana. Cape Verdeans continued to trade *panos* with the rivers of Upper Guinea (Casamance, Cacheu, Buba and Geba) as they had three hundred years earlier, and had trading posts at the highest tidal points of such rivers into the early nineteenth century³⁷.

Conclusion

The *Panos de Terra* (i.e. cloth of the land),

like many other aspects of Cape Verdean culture had been unsupported and even suppressed by the Portuguese, especially during the early and mid-twentieth century. However since independence in 1975 the *Panos de Terra* has become the focus of nationalism. The *panos* are worn often as scarves and used as an improvised drum by local dance groups such as those performing the *Batuque*, and the patterns have been replicated on the front of souvenir shops, in stone on paving and even feature on the 200 Escudo bank notes as a reminder of their past monetary function. Today the *Panos de Terra* are produced around Assomada on Santiago Island by around six young individuals many of whom learnt the techniques of weaving from one young man. However there is a dependence on imported dyed yarn which has a high tax levy. There is a low domestic demand for the *Panos de Terra*, and while it is worn by many women in the Assomada wednesday market, nobody wears it at the busy St. Felipe market on neighbouring Fogo Island. So the fabric has yet to become a popular national icon throughout the archipelago. The efforts of people like Fatima Almeida to bring the textile to the international stage at fashion shows in Italy, Spain and Portugal are yet to pay off, and the fabric remains largely unknown in the English speaking world, despite the large Cape Verdean community in the USA, especially in Boston. In fact this research produced one of the first non academic coffee table publications on the *Panos de Terra* in English that was marketed in 2013 in Britain, Canada, the USA and Japan³⁸. So things are changing.

33 P. 153-168. Textiles from India — The Global Trade. Edited by Rosemary Crill. 2006. London. UK.

34 P. 172. The Portuguese Empire. 1415-1808. By A.J.R. Russell-Wood. 1998. Baltimore. USA.

35 P.19. The Goa-Bahia Intra-Colonial Relations. By P. Sequeira Antony. 2004. Kerala, India.

36 P.65. The Goa-Bahia Intra-Colonial Relations. By P. Sequeira Antony. 2004. Kerala, India.

37 P. 54. The Portuguese Empire. 1415-1808. By A. J.R. Russell-Wood. 1998. London.

38 P 56-60. Panos de Terra: Slave Fabric made in Cape Verde. By Clifford Pereira and Neil Williams. In *Selvedge*. Issue 53 July/August 2013. London. UK.

Assomada Market. Cape Verde. — Pereira-Williams Photographic Collection



In Africa itself the *panos* led to the “fashionability” of black and white cheque cottons. Today the people of the Niger delta produce a special design by subtraction of threads, which they call *pelete bite* meaning “cutthread cloth”. This fabric is usually worn as a wrap-around and is often black and white, and bears a remarkable similarity in pattern and usage to the *panos*. The memory of the *panos* survives in the printed black and white fabrics used in funeral rites in Southeast Nigeria.

Textiles, oil paintings and paper rarely survive in the tropics and the identification of the *panos* within the unlikely collections of the Royal Geographical Society in London and the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen represent a shared world history and the importance of an interdisciplinary approach, in this case with the in-

clusion of cartography and art history. The status held by of the *panos* within Africa in the seventeenth century is demonstrated within the Eckout paintings, where the African-Brazilians are dressed in composite high status African fashion, that demonstrate the indigenous African trading links with the Mediterranean, Macaronesia (ie. the Canary Islands and Cape Verdes), Asia and Europe. At the same time the higher level of status is demonstrated by the lack of cowrie shells which formed a part of the monetary exchange system as well as an important fashion item for the African middle classes in Africa and for African-Brazilians. Africans of that time clearly had notions of the “far away” or “exotic” which they wove into their notions of fashion, much as the fashion for Indian textiles among Europeans at the same period. The Eckout paintings suggest that the notion of fashion had crossed the Atlantic to Dutch-controlled Brazil (or Nieuw Holland).

Indian “Madras” cottons were also taken to the Caribbean by the British and became popular among the enslaved Africans as expensive trimmings and head coverings in costumes that were otherwise white cotton, perhaps as a memory of the prestige *panos* of West Africa. This was true of the British and the French colonies. It is also interesting that printed plaid cloth, similar to the *panos* is used in religious ceremonies of African origin in the Caribbean, such as the blessing ceremony of the Revivalist in Jamaica³⁹.

The importance of the *Panos de Terra* as representing an icon of identity in the Cape Verdes often hides its importance as repre-

39 P. 88. Slavery and the (symbolic) Politics of Memory in Jamaica. By Wayne Modest. In Representing Enslavement and Abolition in Museums: Ambiguous Engagements. Edited by Laurajane Smith, Geoffrey Cubitt, Ross Wilson and Kalliopi Fouseki. 2011. Abingdon. UK.

senting an African textile technology that was transferred to the islands as part of a global trade that marks one of the darkest sides of the human story. At the same time the *panos* represents the ability of enslaved Africans to maintain their distinct memories and even notions of fashion and hierarchy, first from the African mainland to the Cape Verde Islands, and then across the Atlantic to Brazil and the Caribbean. The existence of similar, if not parallel notions of wealth and prestige associated with the *panos*, in their modern form of fashionable and ritualistic printed cottons, represent a difficult and sensitive, yet factual connection between West Africans and their cousins in the Americas by way of the Atlantic slave trade. The dominant *Kriolu* (Creole) culture of the Cape Verdes evolved as the result of regional African and global exchange and this is demonstrated in the story of the *Panos de Terra* (Cloth of the land).

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Anexos

Glossary of textile and dress terms

Alambeis. From the Arabic *hambel*, for coloured striped blankets from Safa and Arzila, but woven in Safi, Marrakesh and Oran, all presently in Morocco.

Algodao. Portuguese for “cotton”.

Alharini. A Hausa-Fulani word from the Arabic *harir* (silk) for dyed waste silk yarn traded across the Sahara from Tunisia.

Bandana. Hindi for a large yellow and white handkerchief or head-scarf

Barafulas. The standard six-banded cloths, of-

ten with alternating bands of blue and white strips used as a unit of account.

Bays (Baize). These were light fine English woollens used for making habits for religious orders.

Frieze. A kind of coarse English woollen cloth with a nap, usually only on one side.

Frizado. A type of frieze

Injiri. Indian plaid cloth imported into the Niger Delta of Nigeria.

Kerseys. Narrow English cloths woven from long wool and usually ribbed.

Msumbiji. Kiswahili for “Mozambique” and referring to Indigo dyed blue cloth from the Kerimba Islands.

Panos de Agulha. Cape Verdean term meaning “Needle cloths”.

Panos de Bicho. Cape Verdean term for “Animal cloths.” With designs that resembled animal skins

Panos listrado. Cape Verdean term for striped blue and white cloth.

Panos de Obra. Cape Verdean term for “Worked cloths”.

Panos de Oxos. Cape Verdean term for a patterned fabric that resembles animal motifs.

Panos de Terra. Cape Verdean generic term meaning “cloth of the land”.

Panos Pretos. Portuguese for “Black cloths.” Fine, expensive deep blue cloths woven at Fogo and favoured by Wolof women.

Panos simples. Cape Verdean term meaning “simple cloths” and applied to plain white cloth, also called *cates*.

Perpetuanas. These were durable English woollen cloths.

Pelete bite. Term used in the Rivers State of Nigeria for “cut thread cloth”.

Says. These were English fine textured woollen clothes (similar to serge).

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