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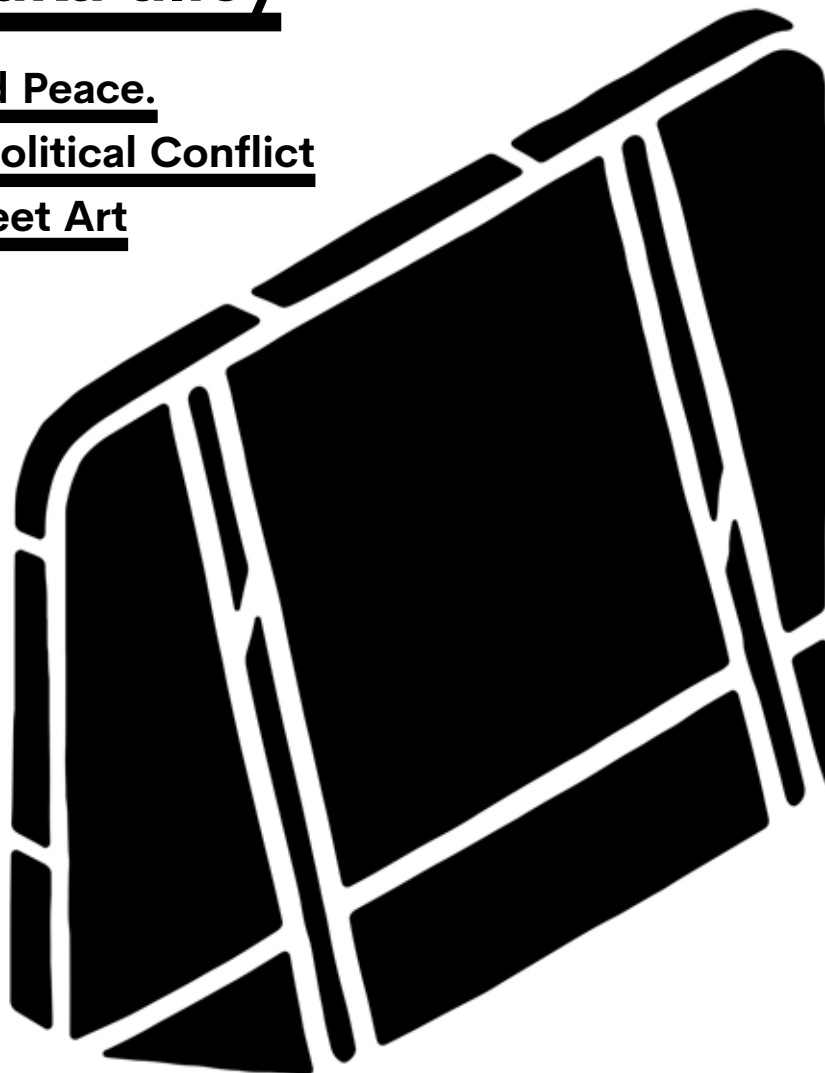
War and Peace. Socio-Political Conflict and Street Art

Małgorzata Kaźmierczak

Mariusz Waras

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Introduction

This essay's main concern is urban art and postcolonial identitary configurations in Portugal. Focusing on several artistic and cultural productions arising from the "peripheral" spaces of Cova da Moura and Quinta do Mocho in Lisbon (two spaces which are marked by the presence of populations of African origin), it examines how urban creativity is challenging straightforward and unproblematic understanding of the country's relation with its colonial past. Associated with violence and marginality in the Portuguese imagination, both racialized neighborhoods are nowadays active contexts of cultural production and are particularly fertile in terms of urban art and music. Nowadays, they are integrated into the cultural circuits of Lisbon, a city that has become a top international cultural and touristic referent. This article's central objective is analysis of the contradictions brought about by this process.

The cases of urban art examined in this text are linked to the processes of gentrification taking place in the Portuguese capital city. They are also related to the political economy of cultural resources[1] and subaltern identities within the framework of postcolonial Portugal. Portuguese postcoloniality will be characterized by some specificities deriving from the colonial period, among them the *long duree* of colonialism (the independence of Angola, Moçambique, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau and São Tomé only happened as late as 1974–1975, while territories such as Macau and Timor only become independent in the late 1990s), the dependence on Britain, and the particular relationship with Brazil.[2] However, as Fernando Arenas argues, this "specificity" is called into question by the impact of migration and

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1 See: George Yúdice, *El recurso a la cultura: usos de la cultura en la era global* (Barcelona: Gedisa, 2002).

2 See: Fernando Arenas, "Migrations and the Rise of African Lisbon: Time-Space of Portuguese (Post)coloniality," *Postcolonial Studies* 18, no. 4 (2015): 353–66.

intercultural relations on the definition of cultural and artistic citizenship. This process was reinforced in 1985, when Portugal joined the European Union. Integration within this European framework altered the ways of dealing with the inheritances of colonialism. Urban art and popular creativity, as we will see, will be particularly eloquent in that sense.[3]

From the late 1980s, migration and interethnic cultural relations determined the composition of Portuguese society, something that did not impede the persistence of more or less subtle forms of racism and a benevolent remembrance of the imperial period.[4] The composition of the spaces we are analyzing will be determined by the settlement of several communities of African descents in what for a long time were characterized as "illegal" urban neighborhoods. Originally created in 1960, the main settlement of what today constitutes Cova da Moura took place in 1974, with the massive affluence of *retornados*.[5] Subsequently, the construction of several habitational structures took place, especially with the arrival of Cape Verdean families that quickly became the majority in the neighborhood.[6] In 1978, the neighborhood created the first *Comissão de Moradores,* while basic services such as electricity and public water were made available.[7] A shared African identity with a strong Cape Verdean influence was also configured then[8], developing what Guilhermo Aderaldo and Otávio Raposo called (with the similar case of Arrentela in mind) a transnational "periphery."[9] Far from homogeneous, the history of the neighborhood was then shaped by an exchange of ideas and hybrid cultural values and the development of a sense of belonging.

In this sense, the artistic productions analyzed in this text can be understood as the result of processes of migration and negotiations and reterritorialization of transnational identities.[10] At the same time,

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3   The cultural debates over postcolonialism and multiculturalism in Portugal privilege "more formal" creative forms over the informality and horizontality presiding cultural production in the outskirts. This explains why these productions remain very much unattended despite the proliferation of interest in critically confronting Portugal's contemporary identity.

4   See: Bruno Peixe Dias and Nuno Dias, eds., *Imigração e racismo em Portugal. O lugar do Outro* (Lisboa: Edições 70, 2012); Manuela Ribeiro Sanches, ed., *Portugal não é um país pequeno: contar o império na pós-colonialidade* (Lisboa: Cotovia, 2006).

5   After the end of the so-called "colonial war," Portugal received vast groups of migrant populations from Africa, including Portuguese citizens from the group of Portuguese-speaking African countries (PALOP). The label "retornado" refers to thousands of people, mainly white, who came to Portugal from the former colonies during the independence processes of 1975 and 1976, although its usage is subjected to discussion. See Elsa Peralta, *Retornar. Traços de Memória* (Lisboa: Edições 70, 2017).

6   See: Otávio Raposo, "Sociabilidades juvenis em contexto urbano. Um olhar sobre alguns jovens do Bairro Alto da Cova da Moura," *Fórum Sociológico*, no. 13/14 (2º Série) (2005): 151–70; Ana Paula Beja Horta, *A construção da alteridade: nacionalidade, políticas de imigração e acção colectiva migrante na sociedade portuguesa pós-colonial* (Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 2008).

7   See: Marco António da Silva Godinho, *Cova da Moura. Bairro "histórico" em evolução* (Ph. D. thesis, Universidade de Coimbra, 2010).

8   Although Cape Verdeans are by far the most numerous, populations from São Tomé, Guinea-Bissau, Angola, as well as Portuguese "retornados" also live in Cova da Moura. These "retornados" inhabit the lower part of the neighborhood, where the houses are clearly of better quality.

9   Guilhermo Aderaldo and Otávio Raposo, "Deslocando fronteiras: notas sobre intervenções estéticas, economia cultural e mobilidade juvenil em áreas periféricas de São Paulo e Lisboa," *Horizontes Antropológicos* 22, no. 45 (2016): 282.

10   In that sense, Boaventura de Sousa Santos has highlighted how postcolonial Portuguese society is defined through continuous processes of reterritorialization. See: Boaventura de Sousa Santos, "Entre Próspero e Caliban: colonialismo, pós-colonialismo e inter-identidade," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 39, no. 2 (2002); *Pela mão de Alice. O social e o político na pós-modernidade* (Coimbra: Almedina, 2013).

they also give voice to a critical and alternative approach that challenges mainstream interpretations of the benevolent (and therefore exceptional) character of Portuguese colonialism. Under this view, as Miguel Vale de Almeida (among others) has explained, Portuguese society will conceive its own identity as determined by the inheritance of a "soft" colonialism in which racial intermixing and non-violent cultural relations will be the norm.[11] This view is contradicted by the persistence of racism, police violence, and the criminalization of peripheral spaces and the bodies that inhabit them, by which young afro-Portuguese are blamed for the phenomenon of urban violence. Being aware of these debates and confronting the persistence of negative stereotypes and preconceptions, the examples analyzed here define the spaces of Cova da Moura and Quinta do Mocho in a positive way as spaces of creativity and emancipative action. Before examining them in detail, a short consideration of how culture works in the contemporary Portuguese context is in order.

Culture and Visuality in a Postcolonial City

The processes we analyze were produced with the shifting context of contemporary Lisbon as a framework. Once marginalized and hidden, the presence of an "Africanized imaginary" both in the city's creative landscape and in cultural and touristic policies plays a central role in the definition of the city's image. In recent decades, Lisbon established itself in a position of privilege in the global mapping of tourism and creative cities.[12] This process came along with a rebranding of the old metropolis into a cosmopolitan, multicultural city with a vibrant cultural scene. Within that context, the cultural productions linked to African referents occupied a central role. The configuration of "Afro-Lisboa," as Vítor Belanciano calls it, not only draws attention to people of African descent living in the territories surrounding the Portuguese capital; it is also related to the emergence of artistic-cultural attractions around the idea of a multicultural Lisbon and is behind the diversification and internationalization of the city's cultural attractions.[13] Therefore, it is possible to argue that the global branding of postcolonial Lisbon was produced by emphasizing the role of cultural production and consumption within the urban landscape. From this perspective, it can be argued that the multicultural purchase of postcolonial Lisbon is indissolubly linked to new forms of black cultural productions emerging out of transnational fluxes across Africa, Brazil, and Europe.

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11 See: Miguel Vale de Almeida, *Um mar da cor da terra. Raça, cultura e política da identidade* (Oeiras: Celta, 2000). The author has analyzed how a certain nostalgia for the imperial past survived through the ideological reconfigurations of Portuguese contemporary identity. This contemporary interpretation has its roots in a historical configuration of the "Lusophone" geopolitical landscape in which Portuguese imperialism appears to be substantially different and "less harmful" than other European colonialisms.

12 In the World Travel Awards of 2017, Portugal was voted the World's Best Tourist Destination, an award never before received by a European country.

13 Vítor Belanciano, "O triunfo da Afro-Lisboa," *Público,* 28.06.2015, publico.pt/2015/06/28/culturaipsilon/ opiniao/o-triunfo-da-afrolisboa-1700358, accessed 15.09.2019. It is also important to emphasize the importance of Brazilian musicians in this process as through performances their music in public spaces they play an active role in the dynamism of the nightlife of Bairro Alto (a playful neighborhood in the center) and in Lisbon. See: Lígia Ferro and Otávio Raposo, "O trabalho da arte e a arte do trabalho: circuitos criativos de formação e integração laboral de artistas imigrantes em Portugal," (Lisboa: Observatório da Imigração/ACM2016).

A new visual universe is emerging that matches the social transformations undertaken by the multi-ethnic Portuguese society. This is especially evident in the Portuguese contemporary art landscape. Visual artists like Mónica de Miranda, Délio Jasse, Pedro Neves Marques, Grada Kilomba or Salomé Lamas, to name just a few, are raising pressing questions related to the legacies of colonialism in the Portuguese-speaking world and the invisibility of African descent in Portuguese society.[14] This transformation can also be seen in the curation of art exhibitions,[15] where the number of visual practices related to postcolonial issues has increased drastically within the last ten years, or in the cultural programming of major institutions such as the Fundação Gulbenkian, Culturgest, the Centro Cultural de Belem, or the Teatro María Matos.[16] Finally, in recent years there have been several artistic interventions at landmark locations (such as Belem[17]) that have sought to critically reposition the ideological charge accumulated in these locations concerning the kindness and "specificities" of Portuguese colonialism.[18] Challenging the idea that *saudade* for empire is something from the Estado Novo, all these agents have tried to demonstrate how the legacy of an unproblematic vision of Portuguese's imperialist intervention is still very much at play.

So, "Afro-Lisboa" is not without contradictions. As Joana Gorjão Henriques, the author of the biggest study so far on racism in Portuguese-speaking countries, argues, "The fact that today there is still no correspondence between the black persons we see in the streets and black persons occupying positions of leadership in society is at least surprising. The lack of representation of a significant segment of Portuguese society – a segment used by some official entities as banner of its population's cosmopolitanism – evidences a system that discriminates by skin color."[19]

Despite the difficulties in getting statistical data on this situation in Portugal[20], the research undertaken on educational institutions provides clear evidence on how the unequal structure of

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14 It is worth noting that some of these artists are of African descent, while others do not have any familiar link with Africa. In their works, in any case, there is a common interest in understanding how the legacy of colonialism is affecting the current Portuguese socio-political predicament. At the same time, platforms such as Buala (buala.org/) are bringing closer the voices of "Lusophone" contexts in Europe, America, and Africa.

15 After the political commemorations in 1998 that were linked to the "discovery" of Brazil, several art exhibitions dealt (in more and less critical ways) with the weight of colonialism in contemporary Portuguese identity. Among them we can include *Trading Images* (Museu da Cidade, 1998) or *Um océano inteiro para nadar* (Culturgest, 2000).

16 Projects such as Fundação Gulbenkian's *Próximo Futuro* or the recent cultural cycles on coloniality organized by the Teatro Maria Matos have turned the attention of vast segments of the Portuguese population to cultural manifestations that engage with postcolonial issues. On these, see Maria Restivo, „O pós-colonialismo e as instituições culturais portuguesas: O caso do programa Gulbenkian Próximo Futuro e do Projeto Africa.cont", *E-Revista de estudos interculturais do CEI – ISCAP*, 4.05.2016, buala.org/pt/a-ler/o-pos-colonialismo-e-as-instituicoes-culturais-portuguesas-o-caso-do-programa-gulbenkian-proxi, accessed 6.03.2020.

17 Belem constitutes the site of cultural memory *par excellence* linked to a celebratory vision of Portugal's "civilizatory mission."

18 In 2017, funding of a memorial to the victims of slavery was approved by Lisbon City Council's participative budget. This unusual event calls attention to the public dimension of the processes described above.

19 Joana Gorjão Henriques, *Racismo em Português. O lado esquecido do colonialismo* (Lisboa: Tinta da China, 2015), 11–12.

20 The Portuguese State forbids the gathering of ethno-racial statistics despite advice to do otherwise from many international organizations, including the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI, 2013) and the Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD/ONU, 2016).

opportunities affects afro-descendants from an early age. The children of PALOP countries, for example, repeat grades in the first stages of elementary education much more frequently than Portuguese children (16% versus 5% in 2013/2014).[21] In lower and higher secondary school, the rate of retaking is double that of Portuguese students. Among PALOP students starting high school, the vast majority of them join professional courses (80% versus 43% of Portuguese students in 2013/2014) that are considered less prestigious than scientific or humanistic curricula, which also constitute the most common form of access to university. It is not by chance than young afro-descendants are highly underrepresented in higher education: 16% versus the 34% of Portuguese students in 2011. The difference is even bigger if we consider students from Cape Verde, Guinee and São Tomé: 8% versus 34%.[22] Besides this, in prisons the ratio of African nationals of African descent to Portuguese is twelve to one.

Indeed, despite the fact that more than three decades have passed since the end of the decolonization of Angola, Moçambique, Guinea, Cape Verde and São Tomé e Príncipe, many Portuguese citizens of African descent are still considered as "others"; as Inocência Mata has argued, this is a process of *estranhamento* – of banishment. While Portugal has started to look at its own identity "with multicultural eyes," Mata adds, the process of othering of a significant part of the country's sociocultural reality has also persisted.[23] The consequence of this process is that several elements associated with "African" culture are still considered exotic or marginal despite the fact that they are produced in the spaces of the metropolis by communities who were born in Portugal or who have lived in the country for decades. Despite remaining largely marginalized and unacknowledged, the cultural productions of these communities are very much behind the urban and cultural transformations that contemporary Lisbon is experiencing. The cultural productions analyzed in this text are framed within this process.

Making Race and Racism Visible

The dark side of "Afro-Lisboa" hides and naturalizes processes of exclusion: the proliferation of hyper-surveillance and criminalization of the peripheral spaces; the rampant and aggressive gentrification campaign that is quickly expanding well beyond the city center and impacting neighborhoods traditionally

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21 See: Pedro Abrantes and Cristina Roldão, "Old and new faces of segregation of Afro-descendant population in the Portuguese education system: A case of institutional racism?" (paper presented at the Conferência Educação Comparada para Além dos Números: "Contextos locais, realidades nacionais e processos," Lisboa: Universidade Lusófona, 2016).

22 See: Teresa Seabra, Cristina Roldão, Mateus Sandra and Adriana Albuquerque, *Caminhos escolares de jovens africanos (PALOP) que acedem ao ensino superior,* (Lisboa: Observatório da Imigração/ACM, 2016).

23 Inocência Mata, "Estranhos em permanência: A negociação da identidade portuguesa na pós-colonialidade," in *Portugal não é um país pequeno: contar o império na pós-colonialiadade*, ed. Manuela Ribeiro Sanches (Lisboa: Cotovia, 2006), 293. One of the most effective mechanisms used in order to legitimize this process of banishment in Portugal (and Europe) is related to the obstacles imposed on children of immigrants in their attempts to get national citizenship, something that makes ethno-racial origin (*jus sanguinis*) a determinant factor in access to rights granted through citizenship.

shaped by afro-descendants and migrant communities of heterogeneous origins.[24] To these we have to add the weight of police violence, which has contributed to a misrepresentation of the outskirts of Lisbon that are inhabited by populations of African descents. Spaces such as Cova da Moura have been systematically featured in the national press in relation to police interventions, and several public cases of abuse of authority and torture have been presented in Portuguese courts. The episode of police violence that took place in February 2015 in Cova da Moura exemplifies the regime of surveillance and the state of exception that is concentrated in the racialized peripheral areas of Lisbon. On this occasion, five young black men were brutally attacked, tortured, and humiliated inside a police station. When asking for information concerning a colleague who had been recently jailed in the context of a disagreement, they were punched, hit with sticks, and even shot with rubber bullets. Once inside the police station, they were attacked, threatened and humiliated again. On the same day, the police made false statements, arguing that they attempted to "invade the police station." Such an invention was intended to publicly legitimize the police's incompetence, taking advantage of the public opinion that equates black young communities that inhabit „infamous neighborhoods" with criminal attitudes[25]. After 48 hours of detainment, the youngsters were released and an unprecedented demonstration against police and racist violence was held in front of the Portuguese Parliament[26]. In July 2017, a sentence declared that the five youngsters were innocent, stating also that they were victims of police violence. At the same time, eighteen police agents were accused of multiple felonies, including torture, kidnapping, injury, and offense to the victims' physical integrity, these accusations being aggravated with crimes of hate and racial discrimination.

Despite the impact generated by such cases of police violence and the gutter-press approach to these events in the media, spaces like Cova da Moura or Quinta do Mocho are justifiably famous for another reason: their aesthetic and cultural production. Through these means, some of their dwellers are joining vast creative and activist networks that go far beyond the physical boundaries of Lisbon. Their participation makes them capable of enjoying an array of cultural and symbolic capitals, being therefore repositioned as agents and participants of a transnational afro-Lisbon. Similarly, the transformation of these peripheral neighborhoods into central nodes of musical and artistic creativity is countering the still frequent stereotypes that associate these spaces with criminality and drug trafficking. In this context, several young creators are articulating strategies of visibility that challenge what it is to be black and African in Portugal, affirming an „insurgent citizenship" and challenging normative views about their place within Portuguese society.[27]

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24   A clear case of this happens in Graça, a "traditional" neighborhood located near the charismatic spaces of Alfama and Mouraria.

25   The sensationalist tone which the press used in this case shows the violent collective imagination grounded in the racialization and geographical demarcation of criminality within the contours of peripheral areas of Lisbon. See Otávio Raposo, "Tu és rapper, Representa Arrentela, És Red Eyes Gang: Sociabilidades e estilos de vida de jovens do subúrbio de Lisboa," *Sociologia, problemas e Práticas*, no. 64 (2010).

26   See James Fletcher, "They Hate Black People," *BBC News*, 23.03.2015, bbc.com/news/magazine-32419952, accessed 22.07.2019; Otávio Raposo and Pedro Varela, "Faces do racismo nas periferias de Lisboa. Uma reflexão sobre a segregação e a violência policial na Cova da Moura" (paper presented at Atas do IX Congresso Português de Sociologia, Lisboa, 2017).

27   See: James Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship: Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

Peripheral Visions

Each weekend, Cova da Moura is transformed into "Cova da Música."[28] Then, several bars and restaurants are set up in the neighborhood to offer the Cape Verdean gastronomic experience and dancing with coladeira, morna, or funaná music. Besides Cape Verdean musicians, São Tomean, Angolean, and Guinean bands also perform. In Cova da Moura there are five remarkable spots with live music and an audience mainly composed of African migrants and Afro-descents from the Lisbon Metropolitan Area.[29] All this transforms the context of Cova da Moura into a central spot within the "African musical circuit"[30] of an Afro-Lisbon that expands beyond the capital city. One of the most popular meeting points for youngsters is the musical studio of the Moinho da Juventude Cultural Association. In this space, the sounds oscillate between celebratory *batida* or *afro-house* and politically engaged rap. Created in 2009 by local rappers, the activity of Kova M Studio consolidated the musical production of Cova da Moura's younger inhabitants, offering them a space in which to record their own compositions in a semi-professional environment. One of these productions, the musical theme *Kova M Fronta*, became one of the first videoclips in creole language[31] to attract more than one million views on *YouTube.* Released in 2012, this song narrates the atmosphere of permanent tension motivated by police violence, pointing out how it affects the everyday life of local youngsters:

> In times of distress, run. Otherwise you can be hit *nigga.* I told you already that here in the street the situation is tough. In times of distress, run. If he runs and is hit, he goes to jail, is processed, and many lives are injured (...) They [police] invade our ghetto. Beating in white and black. They disrespect us. They pull their pipes. Humiliate us. Tell us to lean against the wall. Register the boys. Light another WI [weed]. The devils are passing by. Look at them there, in times of distress run. Otherwise you are arrested *nigga.* Whoever is by your side is arrested too. Keep your feet steady, ready for any result. In the street you have to be ready.[32]

The increasing popularity of musical expression among the young population of Cova da Moura encouraged several inhabitants to organize a hip hop festival. The Kova M Festival, which also pays attention to other creative media, was created in 2012 and soon became the most important event for

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28 See: Pedro Varela, Otávio Raposo, and Lígia Ferro, "Sociability networks, identities and generational interchange: from the 'Burrow of Music' to the African music circuit of Amadora," *Sociologia, Problemas e Práticas*, no. 86 (2018): 109–32.

29 See: Ferro and Raposo, "O trabalho da arte e a arte do trabalho: circuitos criativos de formação e integração laboral de artistas imigrantes em Portugal."

30 Ibid.

31 Creole is the language spoken in the archipelago of Cape Verde and Guiné-Bissau; its phonetics have several similarities with Portuguese and multiple internal variations.

32 "Kova M – FRONTA 2012 (Katana Produções)," *YouTube*, 7.06.2012, youtube.com/watch?v=KRNMoka7f2k&list=PLCN-WKsVZ+TiSJHAFpQDS7VAcyjMLW7NEp0&index=5, accessed 22.07.2019.

the younger populations of the peripheral areas of Lisbon. It gathers a wide range of cultural practices, including debates, workshops, sport events, film screenings, fashion shows, dance spectacles, and several musical performances. Through these events, which span a week, the festival celebrates black and African cultural identities, engaging with Cape Verdean and 'Lusophone African' cultural traditions. This focus turns the festival into a privileged locus of affirmative creative forms in which the populations of the Lisbon periphery reinterpret the ethnic heritage of their countries of origin and redefine cultural symbols from the perspective of transnational black aesthetics with a strong American influence. A vast plurality of styles is mixed and expressed through clothes, hair styles and fashion accessories (strings, rings, earrings, kerchiefs and caps), and Creole is the most widely spoken language. This aesthetics celebrates black bodies and black identities, promoting the visibility of African and afro-descendant culture within the context of an intercultural society that nevertheless continues to have problems in assuming itself as such.

As the participation of the Finka Pé group or the musician Ritchaz Cabral demonstrated in 2017, the Kova M Festival embraces all kinds of musical productions, including traditional styles such as *batuke* or *funaná,*. However, it is more oriented towards transnational expressions such as rap, zouk, kuduro, reggae and batida, which constitute the festival's main attraction.[33] In the 6th edition of the Festival, which took place in the neighbourhood sports court, local rappers such as Puto G, Mynda Guevara, Soul Jah, Timor and Thugs shared the space with visiting musicians such as Vado, GFemma, and Muleka. This edition also featured several bands that mix African rhythms with electronic music such as Samba, Afrokillerz and Os desbloqueados, a dynamic made popular and continuously refreshed after the international success of groups such as Buraka Som Sistema.

Graffiti and visual arts have also been present at the Kova M Festival since its creation: during the last edition of the festival, the walls of the sports court were painted and a graffiti workshop was held. Although there are few graffiti artists in Cova da Moura, urban art is highly valued by the Cova's inhabitants. The neighbourhood is populated by images of icons of global black culture such as Bob Marley, Tupac, Eusébio or Martin Luther King, many of which were created by the graffiti artist Odeith. The streets of the Cova are also covered with messages of affirmation and pride, and large portraits of Malcolm X or Cape Verdean and Guinean anticolonial leader Amílcar Cabral can be found. Police violence and exclusion are also dealt with through visual means, as in a stencil that shows a young boy being questioned by the police and pointing to the sentence *Nu ka kré más riprisóm pulisial*, "we don't want more police violence" in Creole.

Born in 1976 in Damaia, Odeith is one of the most renowned Portuguese graffiti writers. From Damaia, an area close to Cova da Moura, his first large-scale murals were designed in local schools

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33   An in-depth examination of the relation between these musical productions can be found in Timothy. Sieber, "Popular Music and Cultural Identity in the Cape Verdean Post-Colonial Diaspora", *Etnográfica* 9, no. 1 (2005); Varela, Raposo, Ferro, "Sociability Networks, Identities and Generational Interchange: From the 'Burrow of Music' to the African Music Circuit of Amadora".

and the walls of Amadora's areas of informal construction.[34] He was responsible for the beginnings in the Portuguese graffiti scene of Tazy, one of the few graffiti artists from Cova da Moura. When he was interviewed he was 26, he currently lives in London and describes his beginnings in the graffiti world in the following terms:

> One weekend I was looking at a really big graffiti that him [Odeith] had made in the D. João V School. I was a kid. Then this dude appears in a car. He sees me looking at the graffiti, and I even thought he was a cop (...) Then he asks me "do you like graffiti?" I answered "I really like it, I really like these paintings. Was it you who made them? You are kidding me, was it you?" "Yes, it was me." And I was a kid. Then he gave me a flyer with the address of a tattoo store in Benfica: "look, if you like my graffiti go to my shop, I have more work you will also like" (...) And after this day I went to his shop every day.[35]

The support of Odeith and the recognition of local inhabitants of the Cova was essential for Tazy to advance within street art. Several years later, Tazy's name became indissolubly attached to the Cova, as he started working side by side with Odeith. Together they decorated one of the entrances to the neighbourhood with an effigy of Bob Marley linked to a lion, along with the motto "Kova M." In 2013, Tazy joined "Global Smurfs Day" along with the Brazilian street artist Utopia, and together they decorated several houses in Cova da Moura with the famous blue characters.

Another supposedly "problematic" area of Lisbon is Quinta do Mocho,[36] which is located in the nearby city of Loures.[37] With more than 70 large-scale urban artworks on social housing buildings that house around three thousand inhabitants, Quinta do Mocho recently became one of Europe's largest open-air art galleries.[38] This rebranding project began in September 2014 in the context of an urban art festival organized by Loures City Council and Associação Teatro Ibisco; its main objective was to "show the neighbourhood to the world and to bring the world to the neighbourhood." To do this they rely on urban art and collaborative participation. In 2015, the project was rebranded as Galeria de Arte Pública (GAP), while the number of painted walls grew and regular guided visits to the intercultural environment of the Quinta were established. Some of these urban artworks have a close dialogue with the neighborhood's inhabitants, who are largely of African origin. They make reference to local women and men, also portraying

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34 See odeith.com/, accessed 22.07.2019.

35 [Tazy, 26 years old, 17.06.2015]. The interview with Tazy was undertaken as part of the project "O trabalho da arte e a arte do trabalho: circuitos criativos de formação e integração laboral de imigrantes em Portugal," coordinated in 2016 by Lígia Ferro and Otávio Raposo.

36 Both Cova da Moura and Quinta do Mocho are commonly described as "problematic," "critical" or needing "urgent interventions." Such stereotypes reinforce the image of these spaces as uncivilized and anomalous.

37 This neighborhood was built by Loures City Council in 2001 to allocate low-income families.

38 Despite the fact that these productions are commonly framed under the term "graffiti," they put into practice a wide range of artistic techniques, including different forms of painting and collage.

the interest in "peripheral" street art has also increased, and the spatial negotiations between artists, cultural promotors and inhabitants are not always taking place in horizontal terms. In the case of GAP, the participation of local inhabitants was reduced to a minimum: not only are they not allowed to choose the issue to be represented in their buildings, they also cannot paint or acquire graffiti skills through the process.[41] In this sense, the participation of local communities in the construction of the neighborhood's collective image remains limited, depending on a writer's individual sensitivity.

The informal artistic practices developed by the inhabitants of the peripheral areas of Lisbon play a crucial role in the struggle for access to the urban space, aiming also to democratize Portuguese citizenship.[42] In Quinta do Mocho, several actions pursue this goal, including open air dinners and cultural parties. These events encourage social exchanges and potentiate the creative skills and "ways of doing" of the neighborhood's creators.[43] The parties that took place in the neighbourhood between 2003 and 2007 were decisive in the emergence of a new rhythm that nowadays stars in Lisbon nightlife, the *batida*.[44] Strongly influenced by *kuduro,* this sound is made with music production software and incorporates a mixing of styles including *funaná* and *tarraxinha*, afro-house and electronic music. Everything started in Quinta do Mocho, when DJ Nervoso started playing his own musical creations at *kuduro* parties. The collective effervescence provoked by the original *batida* of this "resident DJ" attracted people from different areas, which contributed to the dissemination of this musical style throughout the periphery of Lisbon. Performances by DJ Nervoso in other areas and the dissemination of his music online were essential for the circulation of *batida,* which presented a previously unknown face of Afro-Lisbon. Marfox was one of many youngsters who followed in the footsteps of DJ Nervoso, learning with him the secrets of musical production. Former inhabitant of Quinta da Vitória,[45] Marfox first presented his music at parties in Quinta do Mocho, where he moved to in 2011. Nowadays, Marfox, who is 28 years old, is the main ambassador of this style and was recognized by *Rolling Stone* magazine as one of the top ten artists to know in 2014. He is also responsible for introducing *batida* to a global audience and for giving the floor to new talents. Such success does not stop Marfox expressing the respect he feels for DJ Nervoso, whom he considers his mentor.

> He is the person who created this by himself. Do you understand?! He didn't go to Angola to steal beats. He created his own stuff alone (…) Many DJs performing in the African nightlife were inspired to be DJs by Nervoso. This is what many people don't recognize. The main DJs playing nowadays in African discos at weekends were and are inspired by Nervoso. He is

41 The choosing of a painting's main issue is usually done by the artist beforehand and is discussed only with the local city council.

42 See: Henri Lefebvre, *O Direito à Cidade,* trans. Rui Lopo (Lisboa: Estúdio e Livraria Letra Livre, 2012).

43 See: Michel Certeau, *L'Invention du quotidien*, vol. 1: Arts de faire (Paris: Gallimard, 1980).

44 Many of these parties were held on the ground floor of unclaimed commercial spaces and were attended by youngsters.

45 Quinta da Vitória was a self-constructed neighborhood in the Portela demarcation (Loures); it was demolished about ten years ago as part of the Special Program of resettlement (PER).

not the only one making this music. Besides making it, he also has a nervous way of playing. That's how he got his nickname.[46]

The partnership established with Editora Príncipe in 2011 was crucial in bringing the music created by these young artists to Lisbon and expanding it beyond the Portuguese-speaking world[47]. The use of digital platforms (social networks, websites, *YouTube*) for the dissemination and sale of their musical projects granted them professional status, while the circuit of events where they perform acquired a transnational presence. Quinta do Mocho is at the "heart" of this process, which is based on new technologies and collaborative processes that link musicians, artists and cultural agents worldwide. These artistic and symbolic exchanges challenge binary demarcations between the global and the local or the center and the periphery. Home of DJ Nervoso, Marfox, Firmeza and similar artists, this neighborhood is a node of a "glocal" network that includes artists from other peripheral locations of Lisbon: Nigga Fox, Maboku, Liofox, Dadifox, Liocox, etc. In this context, dominated by imagination and creativity, populations historically excluded from the hegemonic spaces of cultural consumerism feature symbolic and material exchanges that play a central role in transcending stereotypes and renegotiate the frontiers of Portuguese society.

Conclusions. Expanding the Periphery

The cultural productions analyzed so far are not reduced to the space-time of postcolonial Lisbon. On the contrary, they are part of a multicentered, transnational, cultural network that reaches Cape Verde, Angola, Brazil, and other locations. The cultural referents produced in spaces such as Cova da Moura are consumed, discussed and followed by a vast community spread across several continents and contexts. This dissemination explains, for example, the popularity of hip hop videoclips produced in small studios, posted on *YouTube*, and watched by millions. Not only are these productions oriented toward a transnational audience, they are also informed by a multiplicity of cultural referents that are sampled and transformed as part of the creative process.

The transnational dimension of these cultural productions has a decisive impact in the affirmation of African identities within the postcolonial landscape of 'Lusophone' culture. Besides having an impact on how Africanity is defined, these cultural productions are enhancing aspects of pride and self-valorization over the traditional image of marginality and exclusion that was constructed through the colonial and postcolonial genealogies of racialized labor. They are also repositioning the role of community agency in

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46   [Marfox, 28 years, 9.09.2016]. Our translation.

47   Mostly descendants of African migrants, the DJs and producers of this musical style gather around this small editorial imprint, which for a number of years has promoted music events in the downtown area of Cais de Sodré.

the cultural exchanges taking place across the 'Lusophone Black Atlantic.'[48] In relation to colonial Cape Verdean mobility, the US anthropologist Kesha Fikes has argued that migration, and more specifically the consequences of transnational racialized labor requirements, acted as a central element in the configuration of Cape Verdean citizenship and cultural identities.[49] In challenging the racial constructions that determined the production of racialized identities in both the metropolis and the archipelago, she asks for a critical reconsideration of the potentiality of transnational mobility to envisage alternative identities and cultural agencies: "If the racial politics of the sending and recipient contexts (through independence) mutually produced de-historicized narratives and perceptions of Cape Verdean social practice across space, how then can we reconsider the organizing capacity of race at the transnational level?"

The examples analyzed in this essay corroborate the continuities between migration, racialized labor, and identity production, while also offering productive answers to Fikes' question. First, through the dissemination of cultural and aesthetic values produced in the periphery of "multicultural Lisbon," they are redefining hospitality and inclusion. They are also challenging the logic of circulation that prevails in more "official" cultural circuits that seek an impact on the cultural programming of Lisbon. In the second case, "peripheral" cultural productions are incorporated and made available in the "culturally sanctioned" spaces of downtown Lisbon.[50] In the examples we have analyzed, a wider network of producers and consumers are brought into the equation as part of a process that spans countries and contexts and does not have a single exhibitional purpose.

Finally, contemporary urban creativity is politicizing debates about racism and racial exclusion in both Portugal and Cape Verde. In the case of Lisbon, these productions are consciously revealing the persistence of patterns of racial exclusion and both institutional and day-to-day racism, even when they are masked within the official policies of postcolonial Portugal. Moreover, they are also challenging the claims of *creolidade* that define Cape Verdean's official postcolonial cultural aspirations. Although they include elements of cultural affirmations, these are positioned within a complex social and racial landscape in which race still has a say in issues of citizenship, marginality, and civic agency.

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48 See: Nancy Priscilla Naro, Roger Sansi-Roca, and David H. Treece, eds., *Cultures of the Lusophone Black Atlantic* (London: Palgrave, 2007).

49 Keisha Fikes, "Emigration and the Spatial Production of Difference from Cape Verde," in *Cultures of the Lusophone Black Atlantic*, ed. Nancy Priscilla Naro, Roger Sansi-Roca, and David H Treece (London: Palgrave, 2007), 168.

50 The clearest case is Martim Moniz, a square located near the *Baixa* or downtown area that has been historically associated with multicultural exchanges. Martim Moniz concentrated migrant populations of Indian, Bangladeshi and Chinese origin. The actual structure of the square was shaped by the Estado Novo project, which developed an "ethnically mixed" urban market during the first decades of the democratic period. See Nuno Oliveira, „Lisboa redescobre-se. A governança da diversidade cultural na cidade pós-colonial. A Scenescape da Mouraria", in *Cidade e império. Dinâmicas coloniais e reconfigurações pós-coloniais*, eds. Elsa Peralta and Nuno Domingos (Lisboa: Edições 70, 2013).

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