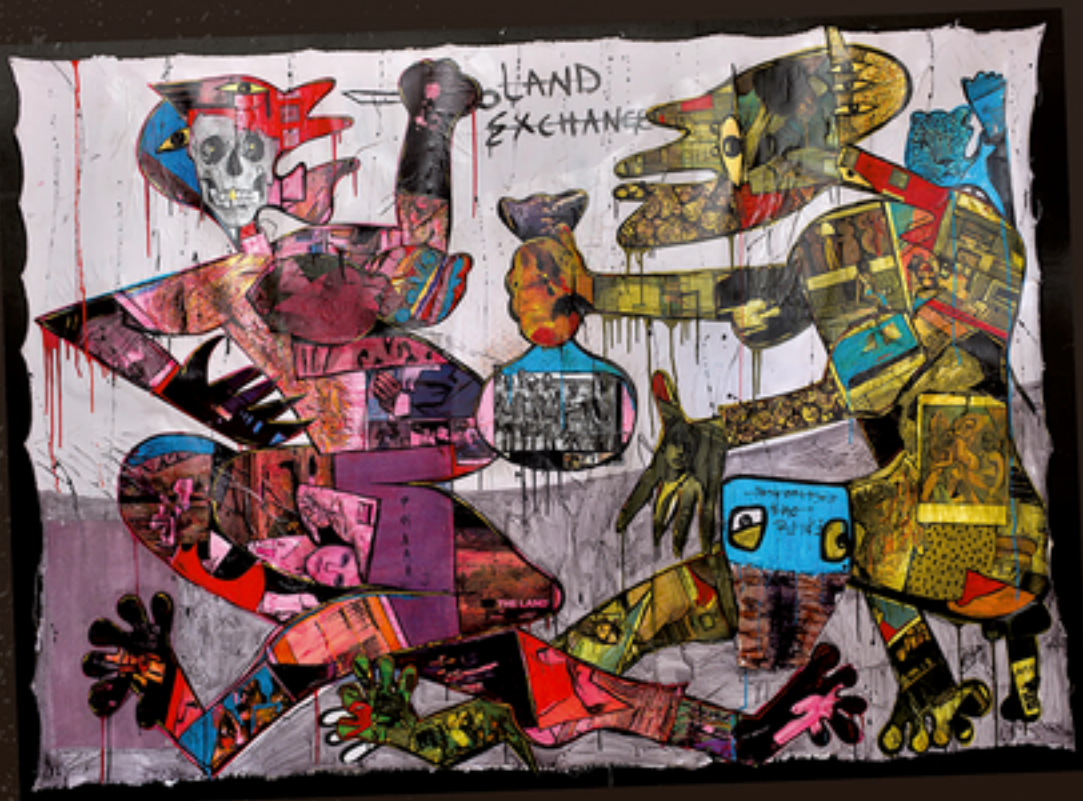


edited by

ANA ALIVERTI | HENRIQUE CARVALHO  
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**DECOLONIZING** COLONIAL  
**THE CRIMINAL** LEGACIES,  
**QUESTION** CONTEMPORARY  
PROBLEMS

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# 12

## Emancipatory Pathways or Postcolonial Pitfalls?

### Navigating Global Policing Mobilities Through the Atlantic Archipelago of Cape Verde

Conor O'Reilly

#### Introduction

'*Cabo Verde não é bem Africa*' ('Cape Verde is not quite Africa'). This statement—made by the Portuguese police liaison officer (PLO) who greeted us upon arrival at Aeroporto Internacional Nelson Mandela in Praia, Cape Verde, provided our first insight into the anomalies of this small archipelago-state located some 350 miles off the West African coast. Our interlocutor, who was attached to the Portuguese Embassy, and had also served on international policing missions, was quick to single out an atypical African-ness as a defining characteristic of Cape Verde, and by extension of its policing. In essence, he was telling us to prepare for something less expected in our coming fieldwork. He was reiterating how this West African archipelago, and its policing experience, emerge somewhat exceptional to, and indeed can be juxtaposed against, dominant trends across Western and sub-Saharan Africa. On deeper reflection, however, there was more to be taken from this welcoming exchange. First, Cape Verde has been *comparatively* spared—largely by geographic removal—from the conflicts, instabilities, ruptures, and turmoil that have impacted policing in many other postcolonial African settings (see, e.g., Beek and Göpfert, 2015; Beek et al., 2017; Hills 2000; 2014). Indeed, Cape Verdean policing boasts democratic credentials and claims a surprising 150-year historical continuity within its police organization that spans pre-independence colonial policing to the present day. Second, the presence of a Portuguese PLO—there to advise the *Polícia Nacional de Cabo Verde* (PNCV) on training needs and organizational improvements—was a strong signal for the renewed connections between Cape Verde and its former Metropole in Lisbon. Consequently, whilst independence had witnessed separation and later *rapprochement*, the rupture that occurred appears less extreme than that experienced in most other Luso-African postcolonial contexts. Moreover, it also became apparent that transnational policing mobilities through Cape Verde were much more varied and complex than re-engagement with Portugal. Indeed, this eight-island archipelago occupies a space within both flows of policing—expertise, models and practices—and the correlated

policing of flows—notably drugs and migrants—that belies its modest 4,000 square-kilometre landmass and population of almost half a million.

We visited Cape Verde in July 2014 to conduct interviews as part of the international research project 'COPP-LAB' (Circulations of Police in Portugal, Lusophone Africa and Brazil). Seventeen interviews were conducted with PNCV officers and site visits undertaken to PNCV headquarters and police stations in Praia and Tarrafal.<sup>1</sup> Whilst this fieldwork was not pursued with the explicit aim of contributing towards decolonizing criminological scholarship, its findings retain significance for such ambitions.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the general lack of attention towards Cape Verde from within this field reiterates dominant Western-centrism. The archipelago reveals itself to be a significant research blind spot, with the penal and policing structures of these small, but strategically important, Atlantic islands deriving from colonialism, exploitation, and slavery. Moreover, they continue to be marked by multiple external *neo-colonizing* influences. Currently, most evident in a certain recruitment of its crime control and security structures into the (Western) policing of global insecurities.

An important *entrepôt* for the transatlantic slave trade; multifaceted carceral continuities throughout its history; elevated standing through intermediary roles within colonial administration, as well as within racial hierarchies of Portuguese colonialism; serial status as a recipient of multiple policing mobilities that span transcolonial exchange, imperial oppression, foreign police assistance and international training; enlistment as an Atlantic sentinel in efforts to combat irregular migration and drug trafficking: these super-imposed characteristics cumulatively offer insights into the outworkings of policing's historical and transnational co-constitution. In short, the Cape Verdean experience sheds new light on the 'entangled histories, global encounters and uneven power relations' that combine to forge policing in the postcolony, and indeed beyond (Hönke and Müller, 2012, p. 386).

Both rooted within formative structures of colonialism and engaging the voices of senior policing figures from these islands—themselves with diverse transnational experiences—this chapter explores Cape Verde's evolving subaltern role within the global making of policing, temporally, spatially, and subjectively (Aliverti et al., 2021). From former colonial subject and colonial intermediary to contemporary agent of global mobility regimes and global security agendas, it considers how progressive

<sup>1</sup> This chapter results from the research project 'COPP-LAB—Circulations of Police in Portugal, Lusophone Africa and Brazil' (PTDC/IVC-ANT/5314/2012) supported by the Portuguese *Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia*. I am grateful for the fieldwork support provided by Joana Oliveira, who accompanied me to Cape Verde, as well as to Nina Herzog for later research assistance. I also wish to acknowledge support from my COPP-LAB colleagues Susana Durão and Daniel Seabre Lopes during the project, as well as from the editors, for their support and very helpful feedback. This chapter has benefited immensely from comments provided by Sandra Araújo, Jarrett Blaustein, Rita de la Feria, Graham Ellison, Richard Hill, and Beatrice Jaurequi. Previous iterations of this chapter were presented at academic gatherings hosted at the universities of Leeds, Maynooth, Montreal, Porto, and Warwick (virtually). My thanks to all who provided feedback.

<sup>2</sup> Whilst this project had self-evident postcolonial underpinnings, its fieldwork had two broad aims: namely (a) to interview serving PNCV officers who had attended a five-year officer training course at the Academy of Police Science and Internal Security in Lisbon regarding that training experience and subsequent reintegration into police service in Cape Verde; and (b) to interview senior PNCV figures about Cape Verdean policing generally, not least as regards its participation and engagement with transnational policing, and foreign police training in particular. Interviews were conducted in Portuguese and the extracts used have been translated into English by the author.

cooperation with external policing influences has given way to more *knowledgeable* and *knowing* engagement with the agendas, architecture, and networks of transnational policing. These interactions have fostered aspirations within the Cape Verdean policing organization to extend its own agency within regional and transnational policing and pursue a more protagonist role in policing mobilities. In so doing, it further disrupts dominant, Western-centric, assumptions about the unilateral nature and direction of policing and security travels.

The Cape Verdean case provides nuanced insights into the variant ways that police forces in postcolonial settings may harness colonial legacies to gain a foothold in the transnational policing realm. Aware of the prestige and legitimacy to be garnered by elevating policing action and experience out of the domestic setting, Cape Verdean policing holds itself out as a beacon for democratic policing and exemplar for policing change elsewhere in Africa. It is simultaneously regarded as a model regional player within Western efforts to combat transnational insecurities. However, Cape Verdean ambitions and strategies to leverage and mediate postcoloniality afford both emancipatory pathways and postcolonial pitfalls. A less-dependent policing future that offers scope for inter-African co-constitution of policing is also paralleled by the potential recrudescence of Cape Verde's intermediary past through the problematic self-identity it left behind. There are risks that Cape Verde's postcolonial, North-to-South, intermediary role in confronting transatlantic insecurities risks facilitating processes of international postcolonial othering (Brogden and Ellison, 2013) with its crime control structures enlisted into neocolonial policing and security arrangements (Ciocchini and Greener, 2021). Mapping out these potentials for Cape Verde provides valuable insights and reflections into how postcolonial settings seek to carve out their own space, identity, and purpose within the global policing web; one that remains overwhelmingly anchored within Western policing traditions, models, and priorities.

This chapter is divided into six sections that progressively demonstrate how Cape Verdean policing is: contextually/historically embedded; transnationally connected; and, increasingly regionally/globally ambitious. The first section locates this chapter within evolving patterns of criminological and policing scholarship and its contribution in the context of decolonizing ambitions. The next section critiques Cape Verdean exceptionalism by both recognizing embedded divergences from continental African neighbours, whilst also raising important qualifications for positive imagery regarding the archipelago's much vaunted democratic and development credentials. Following this, Cape Verdean policing's progressive engagement with transnational policing is charted through key phases from the colonial to the contemporary: exploring its evolving position; shifting points of policing reference; and the complicated police identity that ensued. The next section sets out how policing patterns in these islands paradoxically demonstrate Occidental traits, but also illuminate archetypal subaltern roles within the architecture of global policing. Next is a closer focus on Cape Verde's role within efforts to combat the illicit mobilities of drug trafficking and irregular migration. It spotlights brokering possibilities within asymmetrical power dynamics that can work in its favour, as well as the risk of (re)emerging as a postcolonial intermediary through such arrangements. The final section reflects on recent plans to construct an international police academy in Cape Verde, as well as the symbolism for its police identity and wider ambitions that this proposal represents.

## Cape Verde and Decolonizing Policing Scholarship

Policing scholarship has unquestionably progressed since Brogden (1987a) lamented how '[e]thnocentricity, inadequate comparative knowledge of policing and a-historicism are the hallmarks of the Anglo-American sociology of the police' (p. 4). A range of scholars have built upon pioneering critical observations regarding 'boomerang effects' (Foucault, 2003), 'counter-colonialism' (Agozino, 2007), and 'internal colonialism' (Brogden, 1987b) to develop refined research attention to what Hönke and Müller (2012; 2016) usefully term 'the global making of policing', endorsing approaches that reject conflation of the global with the Western. This has included scholarship explicitly focused on dismantling unidirectional conceptualizations of policing and security traffic (Amar, 2013; Bilgin, 2016; Jones et al., 2021; Newburn et al., 2018), as well as works that recognize nuance within power dynamics, along with more complex ambitions across all parties to these mobilities (Blaustein, 2015; O'Reilly, 2017b; Qadim, 2010; Stambøl, 2021a; 2021b). More integrated disciplinary approaches have paralleled these efforts, notably increased exchange between colonial policing historians and transnational policing scholars (see, e.g., Blanchard et al., 2017; Ellison and O'Reilly, 2008; Sinclair and Williams, 2007) and productive harnessing of conceptual resources from areas such as critical policy studies, advocating for more refined methodologies within the criminological examination of global crime-control mobilities (Newburn et al., 2018; Jones et al., 2021).

Nonetheless, despite such advances, the lens of global policing studies remains blinkered and significantly 'Anglobalised' (Agozino, 2019, p. 13). Swathes of Southern settings remain either problematically approached or comparatively under-examined; neglected not only as sites for research that can contribute novel practical and theoretical approaches towards the criminal question, but also as regards their importance within the global penal and policing web. Cape Verde is a powerful example of this. It is part of the Lusophone community; that postcolonial collection of African, Asian, European, and American settings where some 270 million people—primarily located in the Global South—are linked through legacies of Portuguese colonialism. In terms of policing scholarship, Luso-policing—considered collectively—is a neglected but emerging field (see, e.g., Bretas, 1997; Durão and Lopes, 2015; Gonçalves, 2014; O'Reilly, 2017a). It is also a field that furnishes difference, novelty, and less orthodox outlets and subjects for policing scholarship. For example, during the Portuguese late-colonial era, policing operated under the dual repressive tendencies of imperial power and a fascist regime. Its political police, PIDE, were active both at home and in the colonial *ultramar* (as Portuguese 'overseas' territories were then termed). In parallel, key actors and thinkers within anti-colonial movements—not least Cape Verde's Amílcar Cabral—were at once pan-African, anti-colonial, anti-fascist, and anti-capitalist in their orientation. Indeed, Cabral's own ideals were part-informed by encounters with other political activists whilst attending university in the Metropole of Lisbon through educational structures to integrate promising young scholars from the colonies (Tomás, 2021, pp. 37–43). This inadvertent outcome reiterates how structures of coloniality can create unintended opportunities for agency and resistance to take hold. This chapter later returns to Cabral's revolutionary reflections on the need for

critical assimilation of colonial/foreign transplants which usefully informs discussion of opportunities afforded by contemporary policing mobilities.

Whilst Cabralism has an important place within Africana liberation criminologies (Agozino, 2020), Cape Verde itself remains an unfamiliar setting for criminological research, more so for policing scholarship. However, it would be inaccurate to hold it out as untouched for scholarship holding interest for criminologists. Anthropological and sociological research, primarily from Cape Verdean and Portuguese scholars, has made important contributions across a range of salient security issues, notably youth gangs and violence, reintegration of deportees, public security, and penal policy in Cape Verde (see, e.g., Bordanaro, 2010; Lima, 2018; Rocha, 2017; Zoettl, 2016). Building upon these works and recognizing Cape Verde's complex colonial/penal/racial history are fundamental points of orientation for navigating policing mobilities within, through, and out of this postcolonial setting. Cape Verde is not only a node for multiple intersecting policing mobilities, but also a fascinating nexus of both the postcolonial condition (Hönke and Müller, 2012; 2016; Waseem, this volume) and the transnational condition (Sheptycki, 2007a; 2007b). These conditions coalesce, both negatively and positively: shared *othering* processes stretch across time and space; local agency in the postcolony exerts growing influence within transnational policing/security arrangements; and, transnational connections offer both pathways out of postcolonial subordination, as well as pitfalls that obstruct such progress.

### Qualifying Cape Verdean Exceptionalism

Intersecting peculiarities of geography and colonial/postcolonial history have witnessed Cape Verde emerge *somewhat* exceptionally to other postcolonial patterns in Africa. It is important to note that this continentally detached setting was not only comparatively sheltered from the worst effects of the war for independence that principally played out in continental Guinea-Bissau, but also subsequently less exposed to the conflict and ethnic, political, religious, and/or tribal ruptures that marked other nations' post-independence emergence. As a result, its governance—particularly as regards security—emerged relatively stable and well defined. Indeed, it sits in contrast to some other West African settings where heterarchical, rather than hierarchical, arrangements dominate, and governance of security is often characterized by fragmented, improvised, and sporadic arrangements (Stambøl, 2021a).

Cape Verde is widely viewed as an embedded, stable democracy that has forged progress in a challenging context (Baker, 2006; 2009). It is consistently ranked amongst Africa's most democratic nations. It is viewed as 'developing', rather than 'less developed'. It is relatively peaceful, culturally rich, and possesses a well-educated population. It has demonstrated traits that have earned plaudits from Western and international policy bodies; one US Ambassador hailing Cape Verde as 'a model in the region for strategic partnership' (Plácido dos Santos, 2014, p. 2). However, this almost idyllic picture bears qualification. These islands retain significant problems of poverty, inequality, and unemployment that have historically been addressed through emigration. Recent decades have also witnessed moral panic around youth gangs and urban crime, as well as an increasingly punitive penal state that has embraced more



securitized Western policies (see, e.g., Bordanaro, 2010; Lima, 2018; Zoettl, 2016). The spectre of transatlantic narco-traffic—so toxic in effects upon neighbouring Guinea-Bissau, termed Africa's first narco-state—with its attendant scope for infiltrating corruption and money-laundering into Cape Verdean society, has also prompted action and concern (Kane, 2019).

It must also be underscored that Cape Verdean society was shaped by carceral continuities and penal (im)mobilities that extend beyond the, more acknowledged, slave trade (returned to later). From its earliest colonial settlement, Cape Verde was the final destination for the undesirables expelled from the Metropole and exiled to its inhospitable environment (Lobban Jr, 2019, p. 23). It was later home to the infamous concentration camp at Tarrafal, part of a transcolonial framework of externalized political prisons that foreshadowed more contemporary 'black-site' jails and offshored asylum-processing facilities (Mester, 2016). More recently, this archipelago has become integrated into repressive mobility regimes. Cape Verdean immigrants who have been convicted of gang-related or immigration offences in the USA have been deported back to these islands through a 'corridor of abandonment' (Drotbohm, 2011, p. 392). Public insecurity around these co-called '*Americanos*' was woven into moral panic around gang violence with pursuant Western-inspired tough penal/policing approaches witnessing both doubling of the prison population as well as criticism of heavy-handed policing (Zoettl, 2016, p. 401). Lima (2018) draws historical parallels of dehumanization with the black man exiled to the islands through the slave trade; the folk-devil of the *badio* (fugitive slave) being (re)lived in contemporary urban Cape Verde through the figure of the *thug* (gang member) (p. 15).

The colonial legacy looms large. Not least within the complex psyche of this Creole nation of the 'Brown Atlantic' (Vale de Almeida, 2004, p. 109) where traumatic and stigmatic colonial bequests heavily endure. Slavery and exploitation; the sexual violence of miscegenation; lingering identity issues born of colonial intermediary roles: all retain a shaping influence on the collective subconscious, and indeed on police identity. One senior police officer when asked how history had shaped Cape Verdean policing, reiterated these effects of colonial legacy, highlighting how they both stood in contrast to popular imagery about the archipelago and resonated within policing. Questioning the romanticized Cape Verdean trait of *morabeza*—a term that speaks to an engrained friendliness and hospitality of the people from these islands—he remarked:

I don't agree with that [the idea of *morabeza*] ... To be honest and sincere. If *morabeza* ever existed in the past, it no longer exists in that form. We must consider that the people of Cape Verde were people that were exchanged in violence ... slavery ... you don't treat a slave with niceties ... the relationship between people was a tense one. Not only between the bosses but also in relation to the slaves themselves. The colonizer was careful enough not to have two people from the same tribe in the same house ... so they don't speak the same language ... Well, that, whether we like it or not, has an influence on the formation of the individual and on the various generations, doesn't it? ... And ... We're going to recruit our [police] agents in this society, not in any other place. So, it comes in the DNA, in people's genes ...

Portuguese cultural imperialism entailed erasure and concealment of Cape Verdean African origin history, replacing it with educational orientation towards the Metropole. This Atlantic colony was the setting for intersecting ambitions that spanned civilization, exploitation, punishment, settlement, and slavery. The sexual violence of miscegenation was positively recast through Portuguese colonial endorsement of Lusotropicalism. Deployment as colonial intermediaries, in tandem with elevated status in colonial hierarchies, fostered problematic, often superior, Cape Verdean attitudes towards mainland Africans (Lobban Jr, 2019, pp. 8, 58, 60–61; Vale de Almeida, 2004, p. 113). All bequeathed ‘imperial debris’ (Stoler, 2013) in complex and weighty identity issues. DuBoisian ‘double-consciousness’—the challenge of reconciling European and black identities—takes on enhanced complexity within Cape Verde’s Creole society due to its colonial intermediary past (Vale de Almeida, 2004, p. 108). Indeed, despite post-independence efforts towards re-Africanization, a certain taboo maintains around being African in Cape Verde (Gorjão Henriques, 2018). There is much more than physical detachment from the continent. Rocha (2017) draws out how such sentiments contribute to contemporary othering of the West African immigrant. The ‘*mandjaku*’, as they are termed, have emerged as contemporary folk-devils in Cape Verde. These legacies of colonialism have specific relevance to the policing sphere, not just as regards othering processes, but also as regards the quasi-schizophrenic police identity that has taken shape.

### ***Morabeza* for Transnational Policing?**

As previously mentioned, the Creole term *morabeza*—conveying welcome and hospitality—has received criticism for having greater relevance to positive place-branding to market Cape Verde as a tourist destination than it does for accurately depicting its everyday security realities (Zoettl, 2016). However, insofar as addressing its police training, capacity, and resource deficiencies are concerned, foreign assistance to Cape Verde has consistently been very warmly received through successive historical phases. Across the five decades of its independence, Cape Verdean policing has been shaped by a series of foreign training arrangements that have evolved in alignment with fluctuations in geopolitics, development agendas, and international security priorities. As Steinberg (2020) has remarked, African police practices ‘reveal an archaeology [of external influence] running several generations deep’ and its ‘police officers carry the burden of global history on their backs’ (p. 136).

In the case of Cape Verde, a need for post-independence police training and capacity-building resulted in what one senior police officer termed ‘a philosophy of openness’ towards foreign assistance. He continued, ‘Anyone who supports it [Cape Verdean policing] would be welcome and everyone supported it. And we benefit from that.’ In terms of foreign policing engagement, therefore, Cape Verde has progressed through a variety of phases that can be conceptualized as follows: colonial instrument > grateful recipient > knowledgeable consumer > aspirant donor. PNCV officers across different levels were conscious of the need to tap into whatever police training or technical cooperation was available: ‘the reasons were the necessity for [policing] knowledge’; ‘We try to absorb the best experiences’; ‘For us, everything to do with

training is good'. The chronology of foreign police training for Cape Verde reveals an absorbent approach towards policing development in the archipelago.

Post-independence, foreign police assistance principally came from so-called *Paises Amigos* ('Friendly Countries'); those socialist countries such as Cuba, East Germany, and the Soviet Union that had lent support to the anti-colonial struggle and were ideologically sympathetic to the new Cape Verdean government of the PAIGC.<sup>3</sup> This resulted in the first cohort of post-independence Cape Verdean police officers being dispatched for training in locations such as the German Democratic Republic; one senior officer from that generation reminisced when interviewed about how technical lessons were accompanied by instruction in Marxist and Leninist theory—an aspect of training for which he had little interest. Such assistance faded with the fall of Communism and was followed by increased *rapprochement* towards the former Metropole in Lisbon. Whilst many Cape Verdean police officers have passed through Portugal for diverse police training, the dispatch of small cohorts of selected Cape Verdean officers to pursue a five-year degree programme in officer training at the Academy of Police Science and Internal Security was both important and symbolic. Not only had policing in Portugal also undergone post-dictatorship reform towards democratized and demilitarized policing, but there was clear intent to re-engage with former colonies, and provide training to small groups of officers brought to Lisbon (Durão and Lopes, 2015). For some cohorts, notably those from Cape Verde, those selected to be dispatched were seen to represent the future leadership cadre of the police. Echoing Metropolitan detachments of the past, the Lisbon training experience afforded enhanced capital for translation into career progression.

In tandem with training connections to Portugal, other channels opened up for European foreign police assistance; one officer interviewed ranked their strongest sources of support as Portugal, Spain, France, and then the UK. Emerging global insecurities—most notably drug and migrant smuggling—have also created new conduits for capacity-building and technical assistance (addressed later in the chapter). A noteworthy transatlantic connection has been forged between the PNCV and Boston Police Department that reflects both diaspora links to New England—there is a Cape Verdean Police Association in Boston—as well as connections around policing gang activity; criminal deportations from that US region back to the archipelago have opened up another route for lesson-drawing and police exchange.<sup>4</sup> Looking eastwards to the mainland African continent, the PNCV are now also forging training connections with the police academies of Angola and Mozambique to which PNCV officers have been dispatched (Pereira, 2021). Past pathways of transcolonial police circulation (Gonçalves and Cachado, 2017) have thus been replaced with new channels for police training mobilities between Luso-African postcolonial settings. Beyond these formal training connections, there are multiple smaller training visits and other technical support missions to Cape Verde. Reflecting its increased strategic interest and

<sup>3</sup> *Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde* (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde).

<sup>4</sup> BPD in the Community, see: BPDNews (2018) 'BPD Chief Gross and BPD Cabo Verdean-American Police Officers Meet in Praia to Share Best Practices', 18 January. Available at: <https://bpdnews.com/news/2018/1/18/bpd-in-the-community-bpd-chief-gross-and-bpd-cabo-verdean-american-police-officers-share-best-practices-in-policing> (accessed 10 June 2022).

diplomatic presence within this Atlantic setting, China has also recently joined the ranks of donors to the PNCV, making significant financial contributions to support its training facilities.<sup>5</sup>

For Cape Verdean police officers—as with most recipients of foreign training or participants in transnational policing engagements—their positive representation of such experiences can be partially explained through motivated reasoning. By representing the contribution of such pedagogical experiences—organizationally and personally—in a highly favourable light, they enhance their own cultural, network, social, and symbolic capital upon their return. Selective and specialized police training programmes inevitably advance career prospects. However, these acquire even more prestige when obtained from the elevated transnational realm. Beek and Göpfert (2015) have drawn attention to how ‘story-telling’ is an important mechanism for African police officers to translate and make sense of their transnational experiences. In the case of Cape Verdean respondents, it was unsurprising that their reflections on participating in foreign training and transnational exchanges were overwhelmingly complimentary. Such experiences also afforded the opportunity to compare Cape Verdean policing’s capacities and organizational structures against those of others; a benchmarking exercise for self-improvement that looks more to Europe than it does to Africa. One police officer felt that his five-year degree course at the Academy of Police Science and Internal Security in Lisbon had equipped him to serve anywhere in the world; whilst another felt that the operational practice of Cape Verdean policing was most similar to that of Portugal or France. However, unlike the multiple Western policing entrepreneurs and gurus who export policing *solutions* with hardwired conviction in those policing brands they promote (Ellison and Pino, 2013, p. 79), Cape Verdean police respondents—on the other side of such exports—displayed a degree of reflexivity and nuance, acknowledging the need for foreign lessons to be adapted to context.

Recognizing value within foreign training is, in itself, a *knowing* act; it makes sense to positively portray professional training that you have received. It also reflects *knowledgeable* engagement with transnational policing generally, and donor communities in particular. Decades of experience dealing with foreign police assistance creates institutional savviness for recipients within such arrangements: technical competences are increased where possible; crime-control policy initiatives and rhetoric are translated for local realities, often as symbolic expressions of modernization and professionalization; police training missions become integrated into wider diplomatic action; and, even flawed exports can be adapted to context. For example, in relation to that most ubiquitous (and most critiqued) of Western democratic police reform exports, community policing, one senior PNCV officer remarked how: ‘We are trying to perfect things. There is no importation of a model ... There is no importation of a concrete model for us to introduce here.’ This mixture of on the one hand recognizing value within foreign police training received, whilst on the other acknowledging local ‘adaptation’ (Beek and Göpfert, 2015, p. 467) was a recurrent theme. Police training

<sup>5</sup> As well as having made a significant donation to the PNCV National Training Centre, China has also dispatched specialists to Cape Verde for residential training in areas including: anti-terrorism, strategic planning for police action, community policing, and tourism policing.

exports to Cape Verde thus exhibited patterns of translation and resistance (Blaustein, 2015). The way foreign police training and transnational exchange was discussed within interviews indicated agency and increased proficiency at harnessing training opportunities to both extract benefits and satisfy donors.

A growing body of scholars highlight how when policing expertise becomes mobile that it is transformed in the process, catalysing more complex effects than unidirectional export. Whether 'refined' (Hönke and Müller, 2012, p. 388) or 'translated' (Ellison and Pino, 2013, p. 77), undergoing processes of 'vernacularization' (Hönke and Müller, 2012, p. 395), 'non-linear reproduction' (Newburn et al., 2018, p. 570), or 'metamorphosis' (Sozzo, 2011, pp. 201–202), critical scholarship spotlights the need for nuanced examination of the translocation of policing knowledge/models. It is interesting to link these observations to decolonial thinking regarding lessons from elsewhere. Turning to the Cabralism of a half-century ago, Amílcar Cabral advocated 'critical assimilation' within cultural resistance, reiterating the need for selective and judicious adaptation of foreign technical and knowledge imports:

a part of our struggle has been the constant application of the principle of critical assimilation, that is, availing ourselves of others, but criticizing what can be useful for our land and that which cannot. Accumulating and testing.

(Rabaka, 2016, p. 137)

However, when the incoming flows of foreign police assistance and training are so diverse, so multi-sited, and so variegated, and indeed stretch across generations of the police corps, a certain schizophrenic police identity—*schizo-polícia*—and scope for conflicting police cultures and approaches can emerge. Steinberg (2020) has spoken of '[t]he ultimately schizophrenic composition of postcolonial policing' (p. 133) and Hills (2014) of the 'layers of knowledge comprising legacy issues, international influences, functional requirements and local norms and practices' (p. 773). Both were pronounced in Cape Verde. Individual police officers might have received formative police training in Cuba but studied for a law degree in Lisbon with multiple smaller training exchanges in addition to these. Generational difference was also manifest; the leadership cohort at the time of our fieldwork had mostly received training in sympathetic Communist settings during the post-independence era, whilst the younger generation of leadership aspirants had mostly received formative police training in Lisbon. Indeed, even the police training relationship with Portugal carried its own burdens; transitional policing processes across both former colony and Metropole had to wrestle with intersecting legacies of colonialism and dictatorship under new policing dispensations of independence and democratization (see Durão and Lopes, 2015). Certainly, PNCV respondents acknowledged the 'panoply of trainings' to which they were exposed, albeit that the collectively forged composite police culture still appeared decidedly Occidental. There was a strong orientation towards the West generally, and Portugal in particular. Such complexities of Cape Verdean police identity also rested upon an already complicated national psyche born of colonialism and geography (Gorjão Henriques, 2018; Vale de Almeida, 2004, p. 113).

## Occidental 'Policeness' and Subaltern Global Cops

Drawing on the less recognisable experience of policing in Somalia, Hills (2014) has explored what it is to be recognized and to recognize oneself as police through the concept of *policeness*. The organizational structure, occupational culture, uniform appearance, and symbolic representation of the Cape Verdean state through the PNCV, all indicate an African police force that conforms to Western orthodox notions as to who the police are, what they should do, and when/where they should be doing it. Such Occidental commonality presents Cape Verde as a less problematic partner for transnational policing collaboration than might be found in some other West African contexts. However, in the same reflexive vein that acknowledged the necessary adaptation of foreign police training, senior PNCV figures were equally conscious of how 'cooperation has been, in fact, more directed towards the West, towards Europe', whilst 'exchange . . . at the level of our sub-region [West Africa], I must admit that it is weak'. Whilst the Lusophone connection has facilitated police training links with Angola and Mozambique, connections with policing peers in the West African region were described as comparatively under-developed. A poignant example was given when a senior PNCV officer commented how he could readily pick up the phone to speak to the National Director of Policing in Portugal but would not have the same level of familiarity or access with his peer in Senegal; a much closer African neighbour with whom one might expect greater policing commonality.

Foremost within this Occidental policeness has been the reconstruction of policing links with Lisbon, where small groups of African police agents from the PALOPs (*Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa*) are integrated into the police officer training cohort of the Academy of Police Science and Internal Security's five-year degree programme. Progressing beyond mere benevolent mentorship, and continuing long-standing practice of dispatching promising young Cape Verdeans to Lisbon for higher education, this officer-training programme symbolically aligns Cape Verdean and Portuguese policing realities. Indeed, statements that asserted proximity within the policing approaches adopted across these two settings were a recurrent refrain of fieldwork. This was not only a question of training at the Academy in Lisbon, or linguistic, cultural, and historical connections. It was also reflected in the particular importance placed upon criminal and penal law education within both policing contexts, as well as the fact that those Cape Verdeans officers selected for training in Lisbon were perceived as representing the future leadership cadre for policing back home. Indeed, the emphasis and the importance placed upon legal education came through strongly in the fieldwork with several respondents not only pointing to their legal training in Lisbon but also speaking of 'normative convergence' and proximity between these two countries' legal frameworks.

Within our project team, the research-lead from the Lisbon Police Academy (who played a fundamental role in facilitating the COPP-LAB project), approached policing research and education from a quite legalistic perspective; his work in police training across various Lusophone police settings communicated through what he termed a 'general theory of policing law' (Valente, 2014). Indeed, as a police officer and

lawyer, his role as a diplomatic and legal bridge between police forces in the former colonies and the former Metropole furnished an important new cast member to the *dramatis personae* of global policing. Whilst Bowling and Sheptycki (2012, pp. 87–92) have set out an extremely useful typology of global cops, and Brogden and Ellison (2013, pp. 100–101) expose archetypal roles within police reform missions, these works place justifiable emphasis on identifying dominant transnational protagonists and critiquing Western actors who engage in more commodified policing transplants. A valuable addition here—not least from a decolonizing perspective—can be made by placing increased attention on archetypal subaltern and interlocutor roles that reformulate, and are integral to, global policing. This fieldwork provided some useful additions: *O policial jurídico neo-colonial*—the neo-colonial legal ace who returns to overseas territories to reanimate former colony–Metropole links through criminal justice processes and legal transplants; *O aspirante policial subalterno*—the subaltern officer candidate who travels abroad for training to later return with enhanced skills to translate into both police practice at home and enhanced leadership credentials for future career progression; *O intermediário do Sul*—the Southern broker who leverages postcolonial and subaltern status within efforts to combat global insecurities, increasing local agency within transnational policing. In short, by thinking more broadly, with increased attention to pluri-directional mobility in the co-constitution of global policing, we might (re)cast, or at least redefine, the roles within a more diverse and inclusive *dramatis personae* of global cops. One that better integrates subaltern, Southern, and postcolonial actors and perspectives into the story of global policing, as well as the diverse contributions they make to it. One that also challenges any suggestion of a global policing project with a coherent set of agendas or interests.

### **International Broker or Postcolonial Intermediary? Atlantic Policing of Global Insecurities**

It's the mid-Atlantic right? This is the crossing point for almost everything, right? ... Good and evil ... We are aware that the future of Cape Verde will depend on our actions, for better or for worse. But we are also aware of our vulnerabilities ... We don't have the means ... Just go to the Canary Islands. The police have more means in terms of naval resources than the whole of Cape Verde ... In this world of transnational crime, nobody can fight transnational crime just through the resources they have. And we feel that we also have an important role to play in combating this crime and we have been collaborating, with the resources we have, with the knowledge we have. We've been doing what we can to contribute to less crime, haven't we?

These comments from a senior PNCV officer demonstrate keen awareness of the threat that illicit mobilities pose not only to distant locations by transiting through Cape Verde, but also as regards future security and stability within the archipelago itself. The officer's comments reiterate their appreciation that transnational threats necessitate bilateral/multilateral action and that Cape Verde has an important role to play within such efforts. Indeed, whilst irregular migration from Africa and transatlantic

drug trafficking present ‘*illicit flows to be policed*’ by Cape Verdean authorities, it should also be recognized that these mobilities have also catalysed *flows of policing/security technologies and trainings* into Cape Verde through a multitude of cooperative arrangements. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM); Frontex—the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and wider European Mobility Partnership; support from powerful foreign governments through diplomatic missions—not least the USA and China: these represent just some of the auspices for transnational security governance in this increasingly securitized Atlantic space.

In this context, Cape Verde has emerged as a strategic hub for operationalizing both global prohibition regimes (against narco-traffic) and global mobility regimes (to combat irregular immigration and implement deportation) in the region.<sup>6</sup> The archipelago’s security agencies now also act, in effect, as sentinels for those ‘seigneurial states’ which dominate transnational policing; those authorizing entities ‘that seek, for instrumental or higher-minded reasons, to share or impose their conceptions of what appropriate regimes of law and order are upon other societies’ (Goldsmith and Sheptycki, 2007, p. 21; see also, Sheptycki, 2007a, pp. 49–52). Consistently viewed as a good student of Western democracy, Cape Verde represents an important setting for the more nuanced examination of ‘neo-colonial penalty’ advanced by Stambøl (2021b). The sheer volume, and diverse sources, of bilateral arrangements that endeavour to enlist Cape Verde’s strategic advantage, also furnish ‘brokering spaces in the transnational security field’ (Qadim, 2014, p. 242). In essence, opportunities through which to assert agency within the asymmetric power arrangements of penal/policing assistance and global mobility regulation. Opportunities also for Cape Verde, and its policing structures, to increase their standing and to earn respect within the global arena—not least from Western actors and international organizations perceived to be at the forefront of modern policing. However, Cape Verde’s willing participation in externalized mobility–security arrangements also carries attendant risks; not only of reanimating aspects of its colonial intermediary past, but also of making its security arrangements complicit in processes of international othering in this postcolonial setting.

Stambøl’s (2021a; 2021b) exploration of neocolonial penal transplants highlights how certain African criminal justice agencies harness their strategic location and importance to increase their bargaining power within the arrangements through which fortress continents conduct border control at a distance. In this way, ‘penal aid to African countries may not only decrease or hollow out their sovereignty, but may also buttress it’ (Stambøl, 2021b, p. 549). The situation is highly contextual and nuanced. In the case of Cape Verde’s resource-poor policing and security apparatus, significant benefits can accrue through implementing the security arrangements of others. In this context of Occidental policeness, the *bons policías* (‘good police officers’) of Cape Verde—as our ILO interlocutor referred to them—embrace the

<sup>6</sup> There is historical precedent for Cape Verde’s strategic importance within global prohibition regimes. Under the Treaty of Washington of 1942, the US Navy was authorized to use the Cape Verdean archipelago as a base for their anti-slavery naval policing actions (Lobban Jr, 2019, p. 38).



opportunities for capacity-building, modernization, and professionalization afforded by foreign police assistance. For example, this was recognized in how participation within intelligence frameworks such as the Africa–Frontex Intelligence Community mitigated weak sub-regional policing links. One respondent described how such support ‘had a huge impact, because Frontex allowed for various co-ordinations even with countries here in our sub-region that in operational terms did not have this connection, but which Frontex made work, in the fight against illegal immigration.’ Additionally, Cape Verdeans are well aware of the risk that narco-trafficking poses through the experience of its Creole sister country, Guinea-Bissau—often referred to as Africa’s first ‘narco-state’ (Kane, 2019). Shoring up domestic policing capacity, whilst also engaging with transnational crime control efforts, mitigates this risk.

The operationalization of foreign security priorities has catalysed criticism within Cape Verde. For example, a 2017 Statute of Forces Agreement which provided certain immunities for US military and contractors passing through the islands was challenged for undermining the islands’ sovereignty (EFE, 2018). Other concerns resonate with the archipelago’s colonial past and how it still weighs upon the mindset and outlook of its political elites. Varela and Lima (2018) consider its role within global mobility regimes as one of ‘Foreman of the Empire.’ For them, acquiescence to externalized border controls is symptomatic of an inability to break with the colonial past and has resulted in the forging of new suspect communities. Bowling and Sheptycki (2012) have observed how “‘Othering” is integral to [policing] the space of flows’ and creates categories of ‘suitable enemies and folk-devils’ (p. 115). In Cape Verde’s intermediary redux for the twenty-first century, othering processes renew linkages between criminalization, deportation, immigration, and racialization in the transnational apparatus of mobility control. Priority targets of this discourse of insecurity reverberate in the public domain. A pejorative counterpoint to the cadre of subaltern global cops previously identified is furnished through the creation of *glocal* folk-devils for this transatlantic setting: the *mandjaku* African immigrant, the Latin American *narco* drug-trafficker, the *Americano* deportee, and the *thug* youth-gang member.

Transnational security assemblages may furnish emancipatory pathways towards greater agency if harnessed strategically. However, the power imbalances inherent within such arrangements, when combined with the selective priorities of transnational policing, can reactivate subordinate enlistments of the past. Whilst there is much still to uncover from attempts to mediate postcoloniality in the face of global insecurities in this islands setting, Cape Verde’s transnational policing engagement reflects the need for the type of nuanced analyses advanced by scholars such as Qadim (2014) and Stambøl (2021a; 201b). At the nexus of colonial legacies, geopolitical interests, and illicit transnational flows, Cape Verde reflects how Southern settings can extract benefits from the multiple seigneurial suitors who covet their integration into mobility–security regimes. In terms of ambitions to decolonize criminological and policing scholarship, mapping Cape Verde’s complex externalized security interactions in greater depth and engaging a wider range of its policing and security voices will yield further insights into how knowledge of the transnational policing environment is both accumulated and strategically repurposed.

## ‘If They Build It, Will They Come?’ An International Police Academy for Cape Verde

Policing in Cape Verde has recently displayed ambitions to progress beyond the status of serial recipient of foreign police assistance. It has emerged as an aspirant donor of policing knowledge and expertise through aspirations to establish an *Academia de Segurança Interna* (Academy of Internal Security) for the islands. This higher education facility would not only train Cape Verdean policing and security actors but would also welcome African police officers from other regional settings for training in Cape Verde. This objective has developed through domestic police and political mission statements (PNCV, 2014, p. 66), has been a feature of diplomatic exchange (PortugalDigital, 2013), and was formally committed to in 2017 when the Cape Verdean government recognized these institutional plans in programmatic law.<sup>7</sup> However, ambitions to construct this facility have yet to be realized. There are well-acknowledged challenges to these capacity-building objectives, not least its viability in terms of numbers and funding, as well as questions regarding external interest. However, the aspiration to construct this international police training facility is symbolic and a powerful metaphor. It reiterates how Cape Verdean policing wishes to ‘flip the switch’ on the direction of policing mobilities and progress towards greater agency within regional and transnational policing. To be clear, the plans envisaged are much more expansive than training new cohorts of Cape Verdean police officers at home, rather than dispatching them abroad. This facility could extend usage to the wider, pluralized penal and security fields of the archipelago; training prison guards and private security officers has been discussed. However, it is its potential role as a hub for inter-African police training and exchange that is of most interest. Those respondents interviewed saw an international police training facility as a site where the PNCV model for democratic and non-militarized policing could be shared with other police forces from across the region, not least other Luso-African police forces. As one senior police officer explained:

I ... for example, think that Cape Verde possesses the conditions, at least in terms of geographic location, for a police institute to serve Western Africa ... I think that, even at the level of training ... the Cape Verdean Police ... Not only the Cape Verdean police, because not everything is done by the police. The very structure of learning in Cape Verde has the right conditions to provide training in our region.

The very notion of constructing an international police training facility signals a police force with self-confidence about its abilities and a keenness to receive regional and transnational recognition. It also sends a message about the quality and investment in policing being made in that particular setting. Certainly, there is *performative* value in signalling greater ambition within the transnational policing community, and public discourse around the academy *acts out* a leadership role. Whilst police officers have

<sup>7</sup> See the legal decree on the Academy of Internal Security: *O Decreto-Lei* n.o 49/2017 de 14 de novembro.

been held out as condensation symbols of the national character (Loader, 1997), this can also be extended to those police academies where they are trained. Whether it was establishing the ISCPSP in Lisbon after the demise of Portuguese dictatorship (Durão and Lopes, 2015), or grand ambitions for a new police college in Northern Ireland as part of transitional policing (Ellison, 2007), training institutions are important symbols within attempts to construct narratives of police reform and institutional prestige. In essence, they can *tell a story* about their particular police organizations (Beek and Göpfert, 2015). In the case of the plans for an Academy of Internal Security in Cape Verde, this story can be read both positively and more critically.

First and foremost, this higher education facility would enable the PNCV to create a training programme for its officers; one better tailored towards the contextual requirements of Cape Verde than inevitable compromises of formation abroad. Second, the PNCV would be able to receive and train police officers from other West African or Luso-African countries, showcasing its more democratic and less militarized brand of policing in the process. As previously noted, Cape Verde has already made significant progress in 'Marketing Good Governance' within its place branding and public diplomacy (Baker, 2006; 2009). For the PNCV to promote itself as a beacon of hope for democratic policing elsewhere in the region is a logical extension of such efforts. Whilst much academic attention has centred upon critiquing Western police exports to Africa, an international training facility in this Atlantic archipelago would open pathways for increased *inter-African* co-constitution of policing, potentially creating new police training networks and intra-continental mobilities.

However, from a more critical perspective, there is also the possibility that ambitions for an international police training facility in Cape Verde might also reflect a certain *learned behaviour* born from extensive engagement with (predominantly) Western foreign police assistance. In essence, Cape Verdean policing has, like many other African police forces, been exposed to multiple policing exports and can undoubtedly perceive the value added by forging export possibilities of its own. A 'geopolitical brand' (O'Reilly, 2017b) for Cape Verde could be forged around the more democratic and less militarized policing the PNCV delivers, the good governance credentials of Cape Verde, and also the archipelago's strategic importance for transnational policing action. To draw on the work of Ellison and Pino (2013), this push for protagonism within foreign police assistance seemingly replicates behaviour associated with Western police exporters; the Cape Verdean policing establishment 'Seeing like a *donor*' and 'Doing it the Western Way!' Consequently, ambitions for an enhanced role for Cape Verde within foreign police training must be set against its own (over)exposure to patterns of commodification, externalization, and promotionalism.

Considering the aforementioned Occidental policeness of the PNCV, and an outlook that can sometimes prioritize Portugal, Europe, Brazil, the United States, or even China, over its African neighbours, there is room for concern about underlying rationales for such ambition. The same questions that are raised regarding the Western export of police knowledge, training, and models must also be reflexively applied to Cape Verde. Is its policing model appropriate and translatable for other African contexts? Indeed, efforts to position itself as the best practice exemplar for democratic policing rest upon an implicit juxtaposition against *other*, seemingly tainted, African police forces. Colonial bequests again resurface in tacit superiority and distinction

from their African counterparts as integral to the promotion of Cape Verdean policing. None of this is to suggest that there is not merit for an international police academy in Cape Verde, or that senior PNCV officers are entirely unreflexive regarding this proposal—they were quite aware of some of its limitations. Rather, it is to encourage that academy ambitions be viewed through a more critical lens. Engagement with the global policing mission has always been marked by a complex blend of ‘self-interest as well as the desire to do good and to be seen to be doing good’ (Goldsmith and Sheptycki, 2007, p. 7). There is much potential for Cape Verdean policing to play an important role in forging new cooperative arrangements for police training across the African continent, as well as in providing lessons in brokering benefits from transnational policing interaction. An islands nation that rests at the North–South interface, on the transit routes of illicit mobilities and which carries a heavy colonial legacy, it is a setting that presents both pathways and pitfalls for greater agency and ambition within the global policing web.

## Conclusion

Ostensibly peripheral to the global policing web, this chapter has spotlighted how Cape Verdean policing is, in fact, highly integrated within transnational networks. Previously, a significant blind spot for policing scholarship, this Atlantic archipelago represents a rich setting through which to examine evolving subaltern roles within global policing mobilities. In this regard, it makes the following important contributions. First, through selective and critical absorption of foreign policing expertise, whilst also promoting its own policing brand externally, Cape Verdean policing challenges uncritical assumptions that subaltern actors are merely passive beneficiaries for knowledge flowing unidirectionally from North to South. Second, it offers insights into the policing nexus of postcolonial and transnational conditions; unpacking how policing in these islands carries heavy burdens of colonialism, as well as a schizophrenic identity born of multiple overlapping external influences. Third, it charts how this exemplary subaltern policing actor seeks to cultivate its own space in the transnational realm: by brokering its strategic location for policing global insecurities; by playing off multiple suitors for its policing attentions to extract capacity-building; and, by harnessing its own democratic policing credentials to cultivate a reputation as a Southern site for lesson-drawing. Fourth, by focusing on subaltern policing from this Atlantic context, possibilities can also be identified for the *worlding* of subaltern policing, practically and conceptually. By drawing out the experiences, roles, and ambitions of PNCV officers whose training and police work reaches beyond these islands, a deeper appreciation is advanced of subaltern action within the global policing web. Indeed, moving such, less acknowledged, roles centre stage reveals a more diverse *corpus* of transnationally engaged policing actors, and interactions, than previously recognized; one that better reflects evolving policing patterns throughout history and across the globe.

For subaltern settings such as Cape Verde, participating in transnational policing mobilities affords both *emancipatory pathways* towards greater agency and independence, as well as *postcolonial pitfalls* that risk reanimating problematic subordinate/

intermediary roles of the past. Certainly, Cape Verdean policing actors demonstrated knowledgeable and knowing engagement with transnational policing. This was evident: when critically assimilating foreign police imports to selectively adapt what was useful and discard what was not; when contributing to foreign policing agendas to avail of modernizing opportunities and be recognized as an international player; and, when cultivating their own policing brand and developing inter-African training links to enhance networks and credibility. However, a note of caution must be added to this discussion: *are such policing advances truly emancipatory?* Breaking from the yoke of colonial oppression has, in this chapter, been shown not to deliver a truly independent or protagonist place within the architecture of transnational policing or a policing organization free of external influence. We should be cautious not to conflate those important advances outlined earlier with emancipation from, or resistance to, powerful policing arrangements. It may prove that evolving towards increased status and recognition are very necessary precursor steps on the pathway towards ever greater independence. However, such progress will usually occur in compliance with established global policing power dynamics and will often be tied to the complex policing identity bequeathed to postcolonial settings. None of this is meant to dismiss the very real benefits for Cape Verdean policing that can derive from critically integrating foreign policing imports. Rather it is to reiterate that engagement with transnational policing is most often achieved within the constraints of pre-formatted power structures. Enhanced standing rarely equates to independent action on a level playing field. For both subaltern policing actors, and indeed for those who study them, articulating what emancipation really means within the context of transnational policing is a necessary next step in further advancing decolonizing agendas.

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