

"Growing up in Portuguese-Canadian Families: an oral history  
of Adolescence in Vancouver, 1962-1980"

by

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## ABSTRACT

A history of growing up in Vancouver with immigrant Portuguese parents was constructed by interviewing seventeen adults who were teenagers in Vancouver between 1962 and 1980. Sixteen emigrated as children or adolescents from a variety of social and economic backgrounds in the Azores and Continental Portugal and one was born in Vancouver.

This thesis examines aspects of their adolescence in the family, at school, at work, in friendship and courtship, as well as at church. Their lives in Vancouver often differed considerably one from another, a diversity that was already apparent in Portugal. In Vancouver, many parents attempted to maintain or even intensify control over their children who resisted to varying degrees. Other parents allowed their children much more social freedom. As adults, many of these subjects retain an interest in Portuguese culture and traditions. Some limited comparison is made with other subjects in Kitimat, Penticton, and Toronto.

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I have been fortunate to work under the guidance of two scholars in two fields. Dr. Neil Sutherland provided solid advice based upon his considerable experience and writing in the field of childhood history. He never forgot to scribble a word or two of encouragement on even my poorest drafts. I owe a great deal to Dr. J. Donald Wilson who devoted considerable time and effort introducing me to the literature in the field of ethnic studies. I thank Dr. Jean Barman for the interest and enthusiasm she has shown for my research.

Last but certainly not least, I must recognize my two children, Christopher and Brittany, whose lives in the present I often overlooked as I tried to poke about those others in the past.

Chapter 1 -- Oral History and the Construction of Adolescence

"History cannot be written unless the historian can achieve some kind of contact with the mind of those about whom he is writing."<sup>1</sup>

Tiago, a fatherless, fifteen year-old boy from a tiny village in the mid-Atlantic Azorean archipelago, had been working full-time, doing "almost a man's work" for five years to support himself and his mother when he emigrated with her to Canada in 1975. As an adult in 1992, he remembers that from the moment he landed in Vancouver, British Columbia, his eyes were opened wide; as he says, "I thought I'd died and went to heaven -- I was so amazed with everything." For Tiago, Canada became a veritable heaven of material prosperity; indeed, using the overworked expression, he praised Canada as a "land of opportunity" and "the best country in the world."<sup>2</sup>

What is typical about Tiago's case is that some of the decisions he made here reflected his homeland frame of reference.

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<sup>1</sup>E.H. Carr, What is History, 2nd. ed. (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 24.

<sup>2</sup>M16075.

He had just won a scholarship enabling him to continue past the fourth grade on Sao Miguel when his father died suddenly. Out of a deep sense of responsibility to support his mother, he turned down the educational opportunity and turned to full-time work. He was ten years old. Five years later, in Vancouver, he continued to feel the same responsibility, and despite his mother's hopes that he enter school, he did not do so. One consequence of his decision is that he never learned how to write well in English. Regardless of their socio-economic mobility, for Tiago as well as for the other children and youth of Portuguese descent in this study, Canada became and remains a "world", a land, "more theirs than their parents."<sup>3</sup> Whether immigrant or Vancouver-born, these subjects became more familiar with the English language, as well as anglophone schools, customs, symbols, literature, and the wider popular culture than did their parents.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, and despite the fact that they generally enjoy higher socio-economic status than their parents, it is significant to remember from the outset that some have not entirely embraced Canada as their own.

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<sup>3</sup>Elliott West, Growing up with the Country: childhood on the far western frontier (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1989), 132.

<sup>4</sup>While it is not the purpose of this thesis to undertake a systematic comparative study of immigrant childhood and adolescence in Vancouver, there are probably considerable overlaps in the growing up experiences of immigrant children.

## I

This thesis is an oral history of the growing up years of some of the first Portuguese children and adolescents living in Vancouver between 1962 and 1980. These emigrant Portuguese began to grow up in Portugal and finished the process in Vancouver. In all, I conducted interviews with twenty-one adults of Portuguese descent. Of these, sixteen subjects, now aged 28 to 44, emigrated as children or youths from Portugal, and were adolescents in Vancouver at some point between 1962 and 1980. A seventeenth subject, aged 28, was born to Portuguese parents in Vancouver. I also mined interviews with four adults from Penticton, Kitimat, and Toronto for brief comparisons.<sup>5</sup> Though all but one of the seventeen were born in Portugal, I think much of what is said in this study may resonate rather loudly for many others born here to Portuguese parents. Parental length of stay in Canada, their socio-economic status in Portugal, as well as their personal disposition as parents, probably had more impact on parental child-rearing notions and practices than the fact that a child was "Canadian-born."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>One was a Canadian-born woman who grew up in Kitimat; another, a man who emigrated as a seventeen year-old to Penticton; a third was a woman who grew up in Toronto after emigrating there before her second birthday; and a fourth was a man who had emigrated as an eighteen-year old to Toronto.

<sup>6</sup>A shorter study of five other Canadian-born girls suggests to me that many Portuguese-born and Canadian-born girls could face pretty much the same parental expectations. Isabel Pinto, "Growing up Portuguese in Canadian Schools: social and cultural conflict between parents and their children" (unpublished paper: UBC, 1988).

This sample is not necessarily representative of the Portuguese community in Vancouver or Canada. By 1964, an estimated sixty percent of Portuguese in Canada were from the Azorean archipelago, thirty-eight percent from the Continent, while only two percent came from Madeira. In 1976, some thought this figure had "remained constant, if indeed, the Azorean majority has not been accentuated."<sup>7</sup> In chapter two, I discuss more specifically what sources say about the Azorean and Continental constituencies in Vancouver. I need only mention here that the Azorean constituency, largely from the island of Sao Miguel, has been placed at, or over fifty percent. Eight subjects emigrated from the Continent: a brother and sister and two others from Lisbon; two from small rural towns; and two from very isolated settings in the countryside. Eight emigrated from Sao Miguel: two sisters, and one other from small cities; and five from tiny villages. The remaining subject was Vancouver-born to parents who emigrated from another Azorean island in the late fifties. This sample may over-represent Continental Portuguese and those who emigrated from better, what subjects usually described as "middle-class", Portuguese families.

Most subjects were found by snowball sampling. A few others responded to my advertisement for subjects. All candidates either contacted me, or had agreed through a subject or a

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<sup>7</sup>Grace M. Anderson and David Higgs, A Future to Inherit: A History of Portuguese Communities in Canada (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart in association with the Department of the Secretary of State, 1976), 21.

contact, to be contacted. At approximately the half-way point of the research, I attempted to balance out the geographic and class skew that I thought was occurring. Informants were assured complete anonymity before the interview began and were asked to give their written consent only after the interview was over. Half of the subjects consented of the use of their full name in this thesis, and almost all wished to donate the recorded interview to an oral history collection (see Appendix I-III for Consent and Recruitment). In the interest of maximizing confidentiality, interviews are cited by number and do not necessarily appear in their proper order within each footnote.

Oral testimonies provided me with valuable insights into various aspects of their growing-up years: family, school, work, friendships, and church and spirituality. I also asked subjects to recall other forces in those years, particularly, their hopes, fears and world view. Most interviews ranged in duration from about two to five hours with a formal taped portion of between one to just under three hours. Two taped portions conducted at places of business, however, lasted just under an hour. A more typical interview demanded an entire evening in the subject's own home. All interviews but one were conducted in English except in one case where a subject was more comfortable speaking in Portuguese.

I made three assumptions in the construction of this history. First, I assumed adolescent histories were a product of where children and youth grew up, where they studied, played,

worked, went to church, and what they thought, dreamt of, and feared -- whether in Canada or Portugal. Thus, listening to their description of school life in the liceu in Ribeira Grande on Sao Miguel, or in a Lisbon private school, becomes critical to an understanding of their attitudes and responses to Canadian schools.

Second, I assumed, especially in the case of older children and youth, that the emigration fact was a watershed event in their lives. I assumed emigration wrested them away from familiar contexts -- some pleasant, some not. I thought I might better understand their Vancouver adolescence if I knew something about this central event.

Third, I sought to understand the homeland as these subjects themselves had probably seen it in so many backward glances. The "there" I most sought to understand was a subjective image: it was the "there" they remembered as they faced a present "here".

## II

I undertook this history because it appears there has been little systematic treatment of Portuguese childhood and adolescence in Canada and especially in Vancouver. The general works concerning the Portuguese in Canada discuss children, youths and families in broad terms.<sup>8</sup> Those describing the

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<sup>8</sup>The study by Anderson and Higgs remains the single most comprehensive historical and sociological treatment of Portuguese communities of Canada. They provide indications that the Portuguese family is in a state of dynamic flux, as women assert themselves in the new world and children "exert strong pressures on

Portuguese communities of British Columbia do not investigate children on their own terms.<sup>9</sup> This local study is but one step toward a pan-Canadian synthesis of Portuguese-Canadian childhood history, if indeed, the latter is possible.<sup>10</sup>

Portuguese immigrant adolescence in Vancouver was characterized by a considerable diversity of experiences,

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the family for change" (pp. 131-2) As a commissioned text, of course, it had to accomplish tasks other than the construction of Portuguese-Canadian childhood and adolescent history. See A Future to Inherit. Another study accords the family similar weight, though the authors expanded upon the observation that Portuguese immigrant parents were pre-eminently concerned with their children. See Joao Antonio Alpalhao and Victor Manuel Pereira da Rosa, A Minority in A Changing Society (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1980). The large bits of undigested oral testimony unabashedly places some of the first immigrant men in the centre stage in a third large study: Domingos Marques and Joao Medeiros, Portuguese Immigrants: 25 Years in Canada (Toronto: Marquis Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1980).

<sup>9</sup>The exception is one study which I found very useful: Isabel Pinto, "Growing up Portuguese in Canadian Schools: Social and Cultural Conflict between Parents and their Children (unpublished paper, UBC 31 March, 1988). Two studies were also useful for my purposes: See Ana Paula Beja Horta, The Saliency of Ethnicity: occupation and ethnic manifestations among the Portuguese in Vancouver (unpublished M.A. thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1989); and Rosa Maria Batista Pereira Munzer, Immigration, Familism, and In-group Competition: a study of the Portuguese in Victoria (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Victoria, 1982). Two were less so: Alison Isobel Boulter, Constituting Ethnic Differences: an ethnography of the Portuguese immigrant experience in Vancouver (unpublished M.A. thesis, UBC, 1978); and Annamma Joy, Accomodation and Cultural Persistence in the Okanagan Valley: the case of the Sikhs and the Portuguese in the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia (unpublished M.A. thesis, UBC, 1982).

<sup>10</sup>For example, Roberto Perin agrees with Robert F. Harney's observation that "given Canada's intense regionalism" a synthesis of the immigrant experience would be more of "an intellectual construct than a reality." Roberto Perin, "Writing about Ethnicity," in John Schultz, ed., Writing about Canada: A Handbook for Modern Canadian History (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada, Inc., 1990) p. 223.

something not too different from what Deborah Gorham found in her study of middle-class Victorian girls.<sup>11</sup> Sometimes the experiences these subjects described differed from those described by other Canadian and New England sources examining Portuguese children.<sup>12</sup> By focusing upon the adjustment problems Portuguese children and youth no doubt encountered, those sources seem to have paid little or no attention to investigating other experiences, or changes in their lives over time. One offering from Southern Ontario, Papers on the Portuguese Community, is so saturated with "problems" that had translated copies been sent to the Azores and northern Continental Portugal, forward-looking parents might have remained within miseria, or emigrated elsewhere in greater numbers.<sup>13</sup>

The informants in this study emigrated with different sets

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<sup>11</sup>See Deborah Gorham, The Victorian Girl and the Feminine Ideal (London: Croom Helm, Ltd., 1982).

<sup>12</sup>For studies which deal more closely with Portuguese children and the family in Canada, see, for example, Fernando Nunes, Problems and Adjustments of the Portuguese Immigrant Family in Canada (Oporto: Secretaria de Estado das Comunidades Portuguesas, Centro de Estudos, 1985); For the American context, see, Fernando de Meneses, Entre dois mundos: vida quotidiana de crianças portuguesas no america [Between Two Worlds: The Daily Life of Portuguese Children in America] (Cambridge, Mass.: National Assessment and Dissemination Center, 1977) ERIC, ED 179075; Cornelius Lee Grove, "Six Non-Language-Related Problems Facing Older Immigrant Portuguese Students", paper presented at the [3rd] Annual Symposium on the Portuguese Experience in the United States, (Garden City, NY: November 17, 1977) ERIC, ED 151447; as well as his "Cross-Cultural Problems Facing Older Portuguese Students in American Schools" [1977] ERIC, ED 151472.

<sup>13</sup>Coelho, Ana-Maria and Fatima Peres et. al., Papers on the Portuguese Community (Toronto: Multicultural Development Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation, 1977).

of childhood and adolescent experiences from varied geographic and socio-economic backgrounds. They emigrated at different ages and spent varying lengths of adolescence in Vancouver. Their parents held varying expectations of class, motives for emigration, and horizons of child-rearing philosophies. Many Portuguese parents attempted to prevent their children from engaging in the wider Vancouver youth culture. Some of their children abided by such strictures. Some resisted and won concessions. Others seemed to live with values that "made sense" to them as adolescents, whether these values were Portuguese or Canadian. A few, finding little that suited them, little with which they could identify within the Portuguese community, simply ignored its supposed tangible and intangible boundaries, and propelled themselves into the wider youth culture. These led lives remarkably different from "other" Portuguese they saw here. Some testimonies lent credence to the view that ethnicity is not always the most important variable in one's life. In sum, I have more confidence in the range of experiences I have uncovered than in any "typicality" that may be suggested by this study.

### III

Oral interviews have generated most of the primary evidence which informs this history. Robert Harney advocated its use in finding the voice of hitherto silent people,<sup>14</sup> cautioning that

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<sup>14</sup>Robert Harney, "Italian Immigration and the Frontiers of Western Civilization," in John Potestio and Antonio Pucci, eds., The Italian Immigrant Experience (Thunder Bay: Canadian Italian

"oral testimony is a historical source, not history."<sup>15</sup> Studies involving histories of childhood, adolescence, as well as the immigrant experience, are particularly suited to investigation through oral history for three reasons. First, these historical actors leave fewer "footprints" in the form of written records such as diaries, journals, memoirs, than do, say, political figures. Second, these mutes may offer a perspective which differs markedly from what adults observing them perceived. For example, one Vancouver teacher who had taught in the sixties remembers that many Portuguese youths in his school "had been in the system since grade one ... they were Canadian kids -- not like foreigners",<sup>16</sup> though that is not how some of these subjects themselves felt. Third, as Neil Sutherland pointed out, written sources such as police reports, census-taking, and reporter interviews begin in oral form, and even the diarist

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Historical Association, 1988). Roberto Perin makes a similar plea in "Writing about Ethnicity," Writing About Canada: A Handbook for Modern Canadian History. Peter Li suggests oral histories provide a "fresh insight" into a past which normally escapes the attention of historians and social scientists in "The Use of Oral History in Studying Elderly Chinese-Canadians," Canadian Ethnic Studies 17: (67-77), 69. In particular, Franca Iacovetta made extensive use of oral interviews to construct an exciting history of the living and working conditions of emigrant South Italian women. See "From Contadina to Worker," Jean Burnet, ed., Looking Into My Sister's Eyes: an exploration in Women's History (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1986).

<sup>15</sup>Robert Harney, Oral Testimony and Ethnic Studies (Toronto: The Multicultural History Society of Ontario, [n.d.]) [p. 5].

<sup>16</sup>Interview, August, 1992.

"overhears the conversation of her youngsters."<sup>17</sup> As he suggested, in order to find out what growing up was like, one has to go to the subjects themselves. Fourth, the oral interview has the advantage of two-way communication with a living subject<sup>18</sup> - - not the one-way communication that is left open to the researcher sifting through sanitized biographies, journals, diaries, and autobiographies. Each of those sources was written with the knowledge, and therefore the prerequisite caution, that these documents might one day be read.<sup>19</sup> Instead, two-way, face-to-face interaction increases the possibility of approaching a mutual, or as E.H. Carr put it, an "imaginative understanding for the minds of the people" with whom the researcher is dealing -- "for the thought behind their acts."<sup>20</sup>

I approached the research as an "outsider-insider" with respect to the Vancouver Portuguese community. I was an outsider

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<sup>17</sup>Neil Sutherland, "When You Listen to the Winds of Childhood, How Much Can You Believe?" in Curriculum Enquiry 22 3 (Fall 1992): 7.

<sup>18</sup>"Historians prefer their people safely dead." Everett C. Hughes made this unkind comment in his review of Oscar Handlin's classic, The Uprooted. See American Journal of Sociology 59 (1953-54): 583.

<sup>19</sup>Elliott West, for example, places too much trust in his sources when he says, children's "diaries went week after week without any hint of heavy hands." Growing up with the Country. Linda Pollock, while distrustful of other "overwhelmingly secondary" sources, places too great a trust upon diaries and autobiographies in order to build an argument that, in part, parents were not so severe with their children. Linda A. Pollock, Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

<sup>20</sup>Carr, 24.

because when I first began the research, I knew only one Portuguese person in Vancouver. I was an "insider" as I had first-hand experience of growing up under Portuguese immigrant parents in Manitouwadge, Ontario, in the 1960s and 1970s. I became familiar with folk culture in what was a relatively-sizeable Portuguese community. In 1977, as a young adult, I returned to visit the Azores for six weeks and spent a week in Continental Portugal. I considered myself an informed interviewer wielding some of the "levers" that "lift into consciousness and expression the more abstruse and out-of-the-way facts or series of facts" that Beatrice Webb and Paul Thompson thought important in interviews.<sup>21</sup> In retrospect, I feel I sometimes jostled a subject's guard, and was made privy to one or two of the unspeakable treasures -- as well as albatross skeletons that have lined the unopened vault all these years. I could triangulate both within and outside the interview. Live subjects can, and did, evaluate, substantiate, or correct a previous statement they, or others, made earlier.

On the other hand, I remained concerned about some of the pitfalls associated with the tradition of oral history. Subjects were far more successful in recalling for me even intimate details tied to particular events, than in recalling childhood and adolescent hopes, dreams, fears and adolescent points of view. Perhaps they did not wish to tell me particular aspects of

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<sup>21</sup>Webb, cited in Paul Thompson, The Voice of the Past, Oral History (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 167.

their lives -- just as they might not wish to reveal certain facts to the police, census-takers, or reporters. Perhaps some did forget aspects of their youth. Perhaps some had recast memories with an adult perspective. One woman who said she recalled few childhood dreams added wistfully she "had changed so much since then."<sup>22</sup> Karen Fields pointed out that "memory fails, leaving blanks and memory fails by filling blanks mistakenly."<sup>23</sup> If this is true, there cannot be a better argument to capture childhood and adolescent memories before memories fade, mutate further, or the subject dies.

#### IV

Aside from the problem of memory is the general question of reliability. Before the research commenced, I was reminded of the need to stay clear of leading questions.<sup>24</sup> (See Appendix IV for Interview Schedule). In the interviews, I did probe subjects' responses and reworded questions, but otherwise I tried to refrain from intruding upon the interview. I also knew it was not possible to be a "neutral medium,"<sup>25</sup> which I thought would

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<sup>22</sup>F16400.

<sup>23</sup>Karen Fields, "What One Cannot Remember Mistakenly," Oral History Journal 17 (1989): 44.

<sup>24</sup>See Appendix I for the interview questions. Some questions were suggested by a guide: Harney, Oral Testimony.

<sup>25</sup>An often-consulted university text on research states: "interviews are essentially vocal questionnaires"; and further along, "to mitigate the disadvantages of interviewing, the interviewer should be thought of as a neutral medium through which information is exchanged." James H. McMillan and Sally Schumacher,

remain an ideal position. Robert Harney pointed out "a good interviewer will try to minimize the effect of his presence while using it to ensure honest results"; for example, an interviewer should interrupt "to challenge something which seems patently wrong" or "to mention contradictions or similarities in others' testimony which might encourage the interviewee to enlarge on central themes."<sup>26</sup> I encouraged, rather than discouraged, subjects when they departed into longer stories. Nonetheless, I made it a point to ask every subject the same set of questions -- though I sometimes varied the order if I thought it was more natural to do so. The interview schedule, therefore, often acted as a "landing field" from which to embark, and return. With some more "passive" subjects, I took great comfort in the fact that I could consult a ready-made schedule for the next question. In my first interviews, I tried to make notes, but I quickly abandoned this artificial and self-conscious act and relied upon a very small microphone and recorder set up as inconspicuously as possible. I took up a folded-hands approach thinking I would get a better interview if subjects were looking me in the eye instead of watching my pen.

I began every interview with general questions of what it had been like to grow up in the homeland. From that point on, whether discussing the variables of family, school, or

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Research in Education: A Conceptual Approach. 2nd ed. (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1989) pp. 265-6.

<sup>26</sup>My emphasis. Harney, Oral Testimony, [p. 3-4].

friendships, some continued to refer to their experiences "there" as opposed to "here." I wondered if this in itself was a skewed response -- if the aspects of the methodology had caused them to give such responses. I certainly wanted to understand some of their experiences "there" if they were important "here", but some continued to make this comparison without being asked to.

I transcribed all the Vancouver interviews except the two added late in the study, though I did not transcribe every word. In the end, the requirements of analysis demanded the sacrifice of individual stories. The narratives were atomized to bits of data, which I coded and assembled by category in order to check for emergent patterns. It seemed to me there was a time to listen to individual histories and a time to distance oneself to seek the broader contexts.<sup>27</sup> As one graduate student advised me, "it is now your story and not theirs."

Though tapes and transcripts survive, the existential reality and intimacy of the interview within which I thought I understood their lives is gone. Here were stories I thought I heard which I have synthesized for further transmission to a variety of future readership, and horizons of understanding, over which I have little control. Yet I have made judgements about those lives. My interest lay in establishing a range of experiences and I tried to maximize incorporation of as many verbatim "phrases" to provide more "transmissions" from a greater

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<sup>27</sup>Jean Barman, "Constructing the Historical Ethnography of Childhood through Oral History" (unpublished paper: UBC, 27 March, 1979), 28.

sample of people. Thus, rather than illustrating my analysis with well-chosen, but fewer, lengthier narratives, I compromised between two needs: providing "historical evidence" as well as analysis.

Thirty years from now, when the sixties and seventies are well behind us, when the Portuguese have been in Canada for seven decades, the surviving tape recordings of the interviews will transmit the voice of these historical actors with more freshness, nuance and transparency than any analysis or transcript. Perhaps the tapes most consented to donate to an oral history collection are the greatest merit of this research.

## Chapter 2 -- Emigration from the Homeland

Gazing at Pieter Bruegel's "Peasant Wedding" one wonders what other forces underlay that medieval scene. Similarly, scenes of Azorean and Continental women conversing or singing as they husked corn, of Continental children in afternoon sestas under olive trees safe from the blazing sun, or of men drinking rough red wine in corner stores are too simple a portrait.<sup>1</sup> That patina overlay less than pastoral forces which pushed and pulled many Portuguese parents and children out of familiar contexts.

This chapter examines three aspects of that process. First, it considers Portuguese settlement in Canada as one manifestation of a global Portuguese diaspora. Second, it views emigration to Vancouver as an artifact of general economic and political adversity in the homeland. Third, it illustrates the varying motives as well as expectations parents had when they emigrated, these shaped by class as much as by geographical context.

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<sup>1</sup>M15971; M15367: F16177. As I have pointed out (p. 5), interview citations are not necessarily arranged in proper order of citation to help preserve subjects' anonymity.

## I

The Portuguese had a centuries-long tradition of emigration.<sup>2</sup> Only recently did they favour Canada as a target.<sup>3</sup> In the era of the Portuguese commercial empire, 1497 to 1612, 400,000 Portuguese left for India, only ten percent of these ever to return.<sup>4</sup> In the late nineteenth-century sojourners ventured into Spain from northern Portugal. They migrated to France in droves after the First World War, and by 1980, there were over 800,000 Portuguese living in France, and Paris with half a million Portuguese had become the third largest "Portuguese" city in the world.<sup>5</sup> Azoreans and Madeirans had looked elsewhere to escape homeland conditions of adversity in the form of compulsory military service, impoverishment, crop failure, and

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<sup>2</sup>See the collection of migration essays in David Higgs, ed., Portuguese Migration in Global Perspective (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1990). The Portuguese are not unique in this respect. See for instance, Harney, "Italian Immigration and the Frontiers of Western Civilization"; Peter D. Chimbos, The Canadian Odyssey: The Greek Experience in Canada (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart in association with the Multiculturalism Program, Department of the Secretary of State, 1980).

<sup>3</sup>In contrast, the Italians had established a Little Italy in Vancouver in the area of Westminster, now Main Street, at least by 1910. Gabriele P. Scardellato, "Beyond the Frozen Wastes: Italian Sojourners and Settlers in British Columbia," Roberto Perin and Franc Sturino, eds., Arrangiarsi: the Italian immigrant experience in Canada (Montreal: Guernica Editions, 1989), 148.

<sup>4</sup>Higgs, Portuguese Migration, 9.

<sup>5</sup>William Graves, "After an Empire ... Portugal," National Geographic 158 (Dec. 1980): 818, 822.

overpopulation.<sup>6</sup> They settled with families in Brazil particularly in the early nineteenth century,<sup>7</sup> and by the midway point of that century, had begun to cast their eyes toward New England and Hawaii.

Most Portuguese migrants to the United States and Canada were Azoreans.<sup>8</sup> With a population peak of 327,421 in 1960, this archipelago furnished, officially, 146,899 emigrants to global targets between 1950 and 1975.<sup>9</sup> The Azorean phenomenon of emigrating to North America to improve their material status in the homeland was well-rooted in their psyche and folk culture, as it was in other sojourning cultures.<sup>10</sup> In the early decades of the twentieth-century, Michaelense (those from Sao Miguel) families saw such material evidence as superior houses built by

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<sup>6</sup>Jerry Williams, And Yet They Come: Portuguese Immigration from the Azores to the United States (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1982), 59-80. See also Lyman H. Weeks, Among the Azores (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1882).

<sup>7</sup>Maria Beatriz Rocha-Trinidad, "Portuguese Migration to Brazil in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," Higgs, Portuguese Migration, 30-1.

<sup>8</sup>Anderson and Higgs, 21, 23-4. Jerry Williams, "Azorean Migration Patterns in the United States," Portuguese Migration in Global Perspective, 145.

<sup>9</sup>Williams, And Yet They Come, 107, 109. Williams estimated that the 1904 population of the Azores would have been 300,000 to 350,000, instead of 247,686, had there been no emigration. pp. 70-1.

<sup>10</sup>By 1816, Italians "dreamed dreams of going to the new continent across the Atlantic, already a subject of folk myth." Harney, "Italian Immigration", 12.

retornados from America.<sup>11</sup> Emigration as a theme even found its way into a 1953 dance on the island of Faial.<sup>12</sup> That theme had certainly infiltrated the conversation of youths at least by the 1940s as families received remittances from America. These consisted of not only money, but used clothing, shoes, even nylons, stuffed into long pillow cases and sent through the mail, a practice one Vancouver subject herself adopted in 1973.<sup>13</sup>

Whether Continental or Insular, emigrating with a view to return, emigrar para voltar,<sup>14</sup> was for many, a family strategy; indeed, as Rudolph Vecoli said of the Italians to America, it was often a "mission."<sup>15</sup> Even in 1980, the "dream" for those Portuguese who went abroad from Douro in northern Portugal, for example, remained the same: to sojourn and return "to build a house in Douro and retire."<sup>16</sup> Those who returned sometimes

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<sup>11</sup>Based upon my own recollections and conversation with Dialina Furtado Arruda, July 12, 1992.

<sup>12</sup>Francis M. Rogers, Atlantic Islanders of the Azores and Madeiras (North Quincy, Mass.: The Christopher Publishing House, 1979), 412-3. Rogers, a long-time observer of Insular and Continental Portugal, is of Irish and Portuguese descent. He traces his name to a Portuguese-American immigrant, "da Rosa."

<sup>13</sup>My recollections. Also F15773.

<sup>14</sup>Caroline Brettell, "Leaving, Remaining, and Returning: The Multifaceted Portuguese Migratory System," in Portuguese Migration, 72. Women were active participants in every aspect of that diaspora. Caroline Brettell, We Have Already Cried Many Tears: The Stories of Three Portuguese Migrant Women (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing Company, Inc., 1982).

<sup>15</sup>See Rudolph Vecoli, "Italian-American Ethnicity: Twilight or Dawn? Italians in the U.S.A., A Comparative Perspective," Potestio and Pucci, The Italian Immigrant Experience, 132.

<sup>16</sup>Graves, 809-10.

built houses of desenho 'importado' (imported design) and critics worried such architecture transformed regional character.<sup>17</sup>

Portuguese began to emigrate to Canada, and later to Vancouver, when this country was added to their mental maps. Faced with a post-war shortage of labour, Mackenzie King announced Canada's need to "foster the growth of the population of Canada by the encouragement of immigration" in 1947. Legislation and "regulation" would ensure immigrants could be "absorbed in our national economy" and that the national character of Canadians be preserved.<sup>18</sup> Canada's "historical ties with Europe", her "obvious Atlantic orientation in foreign policy", together with the "absence ... of deliberate promotion and encouragement for immigrants in other parts of the world", determined who should come.<sup>19</sup> Though the 1962 immigration regulations "abolished discrimination in general", the Chinese,

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<sup>17</sup>This theme is found in a Portuguese reader stamped as an offerta (gift), from the Portuguese Ministerio da Educacao e Cultura, to the Vancouver Portuguese supplementary school where it is in current usage. Maria Alzira Cabral and Maria Ermelinda Ribeiro, O Menino Azul: Portugues - 2. Ano do Ensino Preparatorio (Lisboa: Platano Editora, Sa, 1988), 98.

<sup>18</sup>Mackenzie King's Statement included, a cautionary note, "'there will, I am sure, be general agreement with the view that the people of Canada do not wish as a result of mass immigration, to make a fundamental alteration in the character of our population.'" Quoted in Canada, Canadian Immigration and Population Study: 2. The Immigration Program (Ottawa: Dept. of Manpower and Immigration, 1974), 206.

<sup>19</sup>Freda Hawkins, Public Policy and Public Concern (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1972), especially pp. 59-61.

for example, suffered restrictions until the 1967 point system.<sup>20</sup> Until that year, immigrants to Canada were mostly those from northern as well as southern European countries, though the large numbers of Italian "unskilled" workers who entered had some Canadians worried.<sup>21</sup>

Between 1946 and 1951, only 267 Portuguese immigrants had, officially, found their way to Canada.<sup>22</sup> In 1951, a private Lisbon initiative failed to secure the emigration of 2,000 Portuguese for the farms and forests of Canada. Yet, the exercise opened eyes wide to the possibility of Portuguese emigration into Canada. Lisbon saw Canada as a destination for the excess population of her Azores particularly, the overcrowded Sao Miguel, and for its part, the Canadian government saw the Portuguese as much-needed farm labourers and railway workers.<sup>23</sup> Portuguese families saw only a new opportunity. The leading destination for Azoreans became North America. The overpopulated agrarian Sao Miguel thus "emerged as the principal recruitment centre of cheap labour for the American continent."<sup>24</sup>

From 1952, when 1,903 Portuguese immigrated into Canada, Portuguese immigration increased steadily in all years but one to

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid. See also, Peter S. Li, The Chinese in Canada, Studies in Canadian Sociology (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1988), 88-9.

<sup>21</sup>Hawkins, 61-63.

<sup>22</sup>Anderson and Higgs, 267.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 23-29.

<sup>24</sup>Alberto Viera, "Migration from the Portuguese Atlantic Islands," Portuguese Migration in Global Perspective, 44.

a peak of 10,478 in 1967 for a total of 89,585 immigrants by 1970.<sup>25</sup> Between 1946 and 1950, Portuguese constituted the twelfth largest immigrant group entering Canada; between 1963 and 1967, they ranked sixth; at the end of the 1968 to 1973 period, Portuguese and Italian immigration figures compared very closely (Italy: 54,556; Portugal: 54,199), though both lagged considerably behind American and English immigration.<sup>26</sup> By 1964, the problem of visitors applying to stay permanently "got badly out of hand", especially among the Italians, Greeks, and Portuguese.<sup>27</sup> After 1967, the immigration point system emphasized the education and work-related experience of immigrants. Subsequently, fully seventy-five percent of the 64,699 Portuguese who entered between 1968 and 1974 were sponsored and nominated immigrants.<sup>28</sup>

Three characteristics of Portuguese migration to Canada and

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<sup>25</sup>In every year from 1962 to 1965 and again in 1974, Portuguese emigration to Canada exceeds that to the United States. Portuguese statistics cited in Horta, 90. In every year, emigration figures from the Emigration Board in Portugal are lower than Canada Immigration statistics. Anderson and Higgs, 25.

<sup>26</sup>The largest number of immigrants in this period came from the United States -- 139,857; from England -- 117,322; followed by that from Greece (35,621), France, Scotland and Germany. Canada, Immigration and Population Statistics (Ottawa: Department of Manpower and Immigration, 1974), Table 3.2, 32.

<sup>27</sup>Canada, Canadian Immigration and Population Study: 2. The Immigration Program (Ottawa, Department of Manpower and Immigration, 1974), 30.

<sup>28</sup>The sponsored category includes immediate family (fiance, spouse, unmarried children under 21, parents, and grandparents over 60); the nominated category referred to sons and daughters over 21, brothers and sisters, grandchildren, aunts and uncles, nephews and nieces. 1974 Green Paper on Immigration.

Vancouver must be examined more closely. First, the Vancouver Portuguese community like others in Canada has its roots deep in sojourning. Many early sojourners escaped the isolation, and hard work of railway camps and Central Canadian farms and began a second internal migration within Canada to large cities offering higher pay, and sometimes better working conditions in construction and factory jobs.<sup>29</sup> Some sent for family and settled in the British Columbia communities of Vancouver, Victoria, the Okanagan, Terrace, and Kitimat.<sup>30</sup> By 1976, Vancouver, with 15,000 Portuguese, was the third largest Portuguese community in Canada after Toronto and Montreal.<sup>31</sup>

Second, while Continentals constitute the majority of the Portuguese in Montreal, Sao Miguel, with over half the archipelago population, furnished almost eighty percent of Azorean emigration to Canada and provided the bulk of the

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<sup>29</sup>A Toronto priest in 1970 wrote that they had "rushed to the cities after factory and construction work" because "they found Canadian farm machinery and techniques too sophisticated for their skills." Cited in Anderson and Higgs, 30. See Marques and Medeiros, Portuguese Immigrants, for immigrant men's own stories.

<sup>30</sup>See Anderson and Higgs. For a discussion of social networks, see Grace M. Anderson, Networks of Contact: The Portuguese in Toronto (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University, 1974). In one study of Osoyoos-Oliver, fully 91% of those from "mainland" Portugal originated from one province, Beira Baxia. Rosa Pereira Munzer, "Immigration, Familism, and In-Group Competition: A Study of the Portuguese in the Southern Okanagan," Canadian Ethnic Studies XIII 2 (1981): 99-111, 103.

<sup>31</sup>Anderson and Higgs, 103. The 1986 Census enumerated only 10,955 in 1986 while Horta cited Portuguese Consulate 1988 figures at 16,000. This under-representation is probably due to illegal immigration, failure to complete census forms, and the option provided by the 1981 Census of self-identifying as "Canadian." Higgs, 143; Horta 123-4.

Portuguese population of Toronto.<sup>32</sup> In their 1976 study of the Vancouver Portuguese community, Anderson and Higgs reported one estimate that Azoreans constituted thirty percent of the community, while "others" had suggested they formed fifty percent. In her 1974 study, Isobel Boulter cited a Portuguese source that claimed "'the major group which comes here is from the Azores and is rural,'" while Ana Paula Horta found that the "majority" of Portuguese immigrants arriving in Vancouver in the 1960s were from the Azores and the rest from the Continent. These conclusions are more in line with what subjects suggested: between fifty and seventy percent Azorean, the rest Continentals, with few Madeirans. A home-school liaison worker with Portuguese families estimated sixty percent were Azorean, the remainder Continental, with many from Lisbon.<sup>33</sup>

Third, Portuguese families hailed from different socio-economic niches. Not all led the same kinds of lives in Portugal and not all came to escape harsh impoverishment. As subjects explained, some emigrated with a view to improve the quality of middle-class lives they led in Portugal. Others emigrated in order to save their sons from the matadouro, the killing fields of

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<sup>32</sup>David Higgs, The Portuguese in Canada (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1982), 3-4.

<sup>33</sup>Anderson and Higgs, p. 107; Alison Isobel Boulter "Constituting Ethnic Difference" p. 74. Horta, 124. The Azores provided three-quarters of the adult emigrants to Victoria, while the remainder were mostly from "northeastern" Portugal; in Osoyoos, exactly the reverse is true. In both cases, few come from large cities or from southern Portugal. See Munzer, "Immigration, Familism, and In-Group Competition."

Angola and Mozambique.<sup>34</sup> The political oppression in Portugal may have been another factor. Some came out of a sense of adventure and ambition. Whatever the case, emigrant parents were looking backwards to Portugal as much as they were looking forward. Looking backward, they did not forget the contexts into which they had been born. Looking forward, Portuguese emigrant parents could not be expected to abandon traditional child-rearing attitudes and practices, long-fashioned within the familiar milieu of Portuguese families, churches, and schools.

## II

Many Insular and Continental Portuguese experienced the effects of regional disparity and poverty. By 1979, for example, annual remittances from Portuguese abroad, estimated at 2.4 billion American dollars, constituted the single largest source of income for the country. This sum overshadowed revenues from even the most rapidly expanding tourist industry in Europe, from "a leading sardine fishery", from agriculture, and from the famous cork industry.<sup>35</sup> From the late 1970s through the early 1980s, remittances made up between 6 and 12 percent of Portugal's

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<sup>34</sup>This term was used by M15565. Rocha-Trindade cites a nineteenth-century source illustrating to support her statement that "historically, it was not uncommon" for young Portuguese boys to emigrate. She says, "many young emigrants left Portugal before reaching fourteen years of age at which time they would have to pay a special tax to exempt them from conscription." They emigrated to Spain in the second decade of the twentieth-century from northern Portugal to escape enforced military service. "Portuguese Migration to Brazil", 68.

<sup>35</sup>Graves, 809-10.

GNP and between 20 and 46 percent of the value of her exports. After the 1974 Revolution, remittance levels rose to an unprecedented level.<sup>36</sup>

Many families subsisted on the earnings of a lavrador, a livestock herder, or a campones, an agricultural labourer, whose earnings were low. In 1960, a lavrador on Sao Miguel was paid the daily wage of about 20 escudos, or 65 cents. This had risen by 1970, to about 40 escudos; by 1980, to 100-150 escudos; and by 1990 to 1000 escudos.<sup>37</sup> In 1977, wage increases were insufficient to meet the generally-high cost of consumer goods. One store empregado, employee, who earned 6,000 escudos monthly, then about 200 Canadian dollars, was "unsatisfied with the salary system" at a time when some commodity prices rivalled or exceeded Canadian counterparts.<sup>38</sup>

A child's labour might be vital under marginal conditions as described and many turned to full-time work after a few years of compulsory education. Some parents never completed even the three years of required residency in schools. Consequently, in

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<sup>36</sup>Helen Graham, "Money and Migration in Modern Portugal," Portuguese Migration, 82-4.

<sup>37</sup>In 1964, when most owned little, if any of their own land, a hectare sold for 2,000 escudos, or 60 Canadian dollars. In 1977, following the revolution in Portugal, the same land sold for 20-25,000 escudos in 1977. These estimates were provided by Evaristo Arruda who owned some land until the late 1970s.

<sup>38</sup>A "small frozen chicken" cost 55 escudos, almost two Canadian dollars, while a simple SLR camera in Ribeira Grande, was priced at twice its Canadian counterpart; a woollen overcoat -- made in Portugal -- was purchased at the equivalent of eighty Canadian dollars. Antonio F. Arruda, Ribeira Grande, Meu Diario, 20 January, 5 February, 1977.

1968, Portugal had the highest illiteracy rates (thirty percent) in Europe.<sup>39</sup> In 1960, illiteracy was generally higher in "Continental Portugal" (40.1 percent) and the "District of Ponta Delgada", which includes Sao Miguel (44.2 percent), than Lisbon (28.1 percent).<sup>40</sup> Subjects themselves attested that many children simply finished the four, and in 1967, six years of compulsory schooling and began to assist in the family economy. In fact, five subjects, one Michaelense girl and two Continental and two Michaelense boys, completed the required four years of compulsory schooling and had been assisting the household economy when they emigrated. One boy's father was working in Canada.<sup>41</sup>

Portugal also had the highest infant mortality rates of Europe: 58.0 per thousand in 1970 and 44.8 in 1973. A geographic breakdown of the 1970 rate reveals regional disparity: Lisbon, 40; continental Portugal, 57; and the district of Ponta Delgada (which includes the island of Sao Miguel), 74 deaths per thousand.<sup>42</sup> Even though there were five hospitals in the Azores in 1977, they were in the small cities sometimes only accessible by paths or the sea when calm.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Anderson and Higgs cite UNESCO figures, 141.

<sup>40</sup>Rogers, 345-6.

<sup>41</sup>F15773; M15565; M16075; M15367; M14862.

<sup>42</sup>Rogers provides Infant Mortality rates for 1970, 1973 for comparison purposes: Sweden -- 11.0, 9.9; Ireland -- 19.5, 17.8; Spain -- 27.9, 15.1 (Spain excluded Ceuta and Mellilla figures from '71 on); Italy -- 29.5, 25.7; Greece -- 29.6, 24.1. Atlantic Islanders, 375.

<sup>43</sup>Anuario Estadístico, cited in Rogers, 365-66.

Finally, an ethos of mistrust, even fear of the State, pervaded Portugal during this period of study, especially during the 1960s.<sup>44</sup> In the sixties, adults sanitized their speech thinking they might be "scrutinized" by the PIDE, the Policia Internacional e de Defesa da Estado, the state police, who would put "certain people" "away in jail".<sup>45</sup> The PIDE had a well-known reputation for "brutality" and politics became "too dangerous a proposition" for the "average" person.<sup>46</sup> Many continued to distrust the government even after long-time dictator Antonio Salazar's death in 1968. There had always been graft: payment of a special tax once freed a son from military service,<sup>47</sup> and even in 1968, an affluent Continental parent paid a considerable sum under the table to allow her child to emigrate to Canada before his seventeenth birthday.<sup>48</sup> After the peaceful Revolution of the 25th of April, 1974, clergy and peasant in northern Continental Portugal, feared a leftist

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<sup>44</sup>See Antonio de Figueiredo, Portugal: Fifty Years of Dictatorship (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1975).

<sup>45</sup>M15971. One Portuguese subject feared that research on this Vancouver community, undertaken in the late eighties, was being done on behalf of the PIDE. This subject had a "vague idea" of the 1974 coup and was generally-unaware of the structural changes in Portugal. The researcher was an employee of the Portuguese Consulate. Horta, "Salience of Ethnicity", 19.

<sup>46</sup>De Figueiredo, 137, *passim*.

<sup>47</sup>Williams, And Yet They Come, 72-3.

<sup>48</sup>M25168.

Lisbon.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, Azoreans, particularly the Michaelenses, talked of Azorean independence. At least one parent who had become involved with the FLA, the Front for the Liberation of the Azores, slept nightly in full clothing expecting to be picked up in the night as others had.<sup>50</sup> Radical young Michaelenses had once examined Azorean annexation to the United States in the late eighteenth-century,<sup>51</sup> and now one had little difficulty obtaining the blue and white Azorean flag.<sup>52</sup> In 1976, a new Constitution of the Portuguese Republic was enacted to turn the country "into a classless society" and the Azores and Madeira each gained their own Regional Assembly and government.

Homeland conditions were reflected in sage folk expressions. Such expressions were historically rooted upon material hardships which household after household had faced for centuries "in the atmosphere of medieval Europe."<sup>53</sup> Indices of poverty commonly heard in households included: guarda a tua saude, "guard your health"; "mas vale a saude que o dinheiro", "value health more than money"; mas vale pao duro que figo maduro, "better hard bread

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<sup>49</sup>See Tom Gallagher, Portugal: A Twentieth-Century Interpretation (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983).

<sup>50</sup>F16377.

<sup>51</sup>See Weeks, Among the Azores, 1882, 226-7. In that century, even the US Consul to the Azores predicted these "Western Islands" and the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) would be annexed. Rogers, 13.

<sup>52</sup>Rogers, 14.

<sup>53</sup>For one traveller's detailed description of the "medieval" conditions prevalent on the Azores in the late nineteenth century, see Lyman, 1882, 12.

than soft figs"; and there existed a fundamental understanding within families that to eat any meal sim-pao, "without bread", was simply the privilege of os ricos.<sup>54</sup>

### III

My subjects grew up in a variety of contexts which merit description at this point. They emigrated from the rural Continent and Lisbon, as well as from tiny villages and small cities of the Azores. One Continental subject began life in a single, isolated home, a casal. Another grew up among a cluster of perhaps "eight or ten houses." There, a ten-year old never enjoyed a single store-bought toy, and like others of his class, made his own toys and games. He had completed school and was assisting as he could in the household economy. With only a younger brother to play with, his playground extended for hundreds of feet and was easily surveyed by parents, or grandparents who lived nearby. There, families worried about the possibility of natural disaster in the form of drought or rain. On nights of "heavy rain" this man remembers his father getting up early to see if crops had been washed away by the rain and overflowing river. In another area around Serra do Santo Antonio in central Portugal which sent "80" or "100" families to Vancouver, people often lived in houses made of stone and families survived mainly by farming wheat and corn. Here, another boy from a more "middle" home also completed his

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<sup>54</sup>F16170.

schooling at the age of ten and assisted a grandfather in the fields and his father with carpentry.<sup>55</sup>

In such settings, there was conformity. Though one subject described people from these rural areas as "very friendly", another told me of the stares she received when she returned to her native rural continental village as a fourteen year-old. In a village "where there were a lot of people who couldn't even afford to wear shoes," she explains, it was "scandalous" that she should go barefoot and wear a miniskirt -- "people literally stopped." People in that small village had "very narrow lives." They met their "simple" needs of eating and sleeping. Children were "expected" to grow into a lifestyle characterized by "four years of education" and work on the land. According to this subject, "you found a mate and you married and you had children", which was similar to what another woman from the rural Continent said.<sup>56</sup> Divorce was virtually unknown,<sup>57</sup> but that fact clouded another: some women dreaded marriage while others preferred

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<sup>55</sup>F15356; M15565; M15367.

<sup>56</sup>M25168; F15356; F15570.

<sup>57</sup>In 1974, the divorce rate was 1% for Horta district (Faial); .6% for Ponta Delgada (Sao Miguel); .8% for Angra (Terceira), 5.7% for Lisbon; and 6.4% for Setubal, just south of Lisbon. More dramatically, these percentages translate to just 4 divorces on Sao Miguel; even in greater Lisbon with a population of 1.58 million, there were 519 divorces in this district. Calculated from Portugal, Anuario Estatistico; Continente e Ilhas Adjacentes, 1974, 19.

widowhood, or spinsterhood, to a life of dual labours.<sup>58</sup>

Life in rural areas did not always consist of "hard work." Around Serra, "most people" took shelter from the hot sun, some taking sestas (sleep), perhaps under an olive or fig or "in the barn", while women would "gather at someone's house and talk." People also awaited festas (festivals), "the highlight of the season", which centered about patron saints days and involved firecrackers, fireworks, and music. In Serra, the feast one "really looked for was Domingo Gordo (Fat Sunday) -- that was a great feast" with Mass and marching bands from several neighbouring areas.<sup>59</sup> The apparent simplicity of rural life in northern Continental Portugal is reflected in a popular and descriptive travel guide of 1955; for example,

Minho is the province where one finds the most colourful costumes, the liveliest holidays ... [a] vivacity and flair for living which is all the more remarkable because it is so poor .... Life would be grim in Minho if these people did not know how to combine pleasure with work. Each task is an excuse for a game.<sup>60</sup>

Other guides illustrate that there were inequities between Continental regions. The Tejo district is a "fertile and

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<sup>58</sup>Some single women, even widows, were not powerless. See Caroline B. Brettell, Men Who Migrate, Women Who Wait: Population and History in a Portuguese Parish (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

<sup>59</sup>M15367; M15565; M25168.

<sup>60</sup>I speculate that if it had been this author hauling grapes along roads through the "hot dust" raised by ox-drawn carts, he might have felt a grape harvest less "gay", and less "like a ballet scene!" See Eugene Fodor, ed., Spain and Portugal (London: Newman Neame, Ltd., 1955), 430.

beautiful valley",<sup>61</sup> while the Alentejo is "one enormous wheat field, the granary of Portugal", harvested by the "groups of farmhands" from the poor regions of Algarve and Beira.<sup>62</sup> The northeastern province of Tras-os-Montes, literally, "beyond the mountains", is considered the most impoverished:

The dour region ... is like a world apart ... rendered more remote by poor roads, the mountaineers of this region have kept a curious, medieval character, rich in tradition ... a rare if bitter, charm ... not a land for tourists. And endless space of rocky terrain, windswept crests, from time to time the crumbling tower of a ghostly chateau, towns of somber granite, flagged streets, present a savage profile.<sup>63</sup>

One Continental man was probably right in thinking this arid region was in more dire straits than the Azores.<sup>64</sup>

In contrast, children and youth from "working-class" Lisbon districts grew up, and congregated, amongst buildings from the "past century." Older children and youth played in the narrow streets. A parent might accompany a youngster to one of the few "green" patches available, a local playground left unlocked during the daylight hours. An engineer's son lived in a co-operative duplex rented from the government with the option of subsequent purchase. A pharmacist's son said only a "few" Lisbon families lived in a "bungalow." More frequently, they lived in

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<sup>61</sup>Baedeker's Touring Guides, Spain and Portugal (Frieberg: Karl Baedeker, 1959), 12.

<sup>62</sup>Fodor, 1955, 436-7.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., 433-4.

<sup>64</sup>M15367.

multiple-story buildings, often above commercial enterprises in apartments featuring running water, hardwood floors, and the ubiquitous blue hand-painted tile covering walls. A brother and a sister came from a newly-built middle- and upper-class suburban Lisbon neighbourhood featuring "beautiful open spaces." There, children played with purchased toys such as handpainted sets of toy soldiers, or bikes, or they read "excellent" comic collections. One middle-class boy was a member of the Escouteiros, "Scouts." As early as 1961, he watched "Rin-Tin-Tin" and BBC adventure shows like "The Saint" on the family television. The sea was a "constant -- a very pleasant constant" in his growing years. Together, middle-class youths from three Lisbon families enjoyed long automobile forays into the countryside, annual vacations at a relative's farm or vineyard, or even a month at a seaside resort town.<sup>65</sup>

Children and youth on Sao Miguel also grew up in different neighbourhoods and with different experiences and expectations of their class. Unlike the rural Continent or the terraced Madeira, the Michaelense lived in villages or towns. Some subjects grew up in small cities such as Ribeira Grande, or Ponta Delgada, the district and Azorean capital. Others emigrated from small freguesias, once the limits of a parish, and now the smallest

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<sup>65</sup>M15967; M15870; M15468; F15668. The Penticton youth from a smaller Portuguese town, vacationed at Nazare by the sea. M25168. For a British parallel of the middle-class "seaside" vacation, see Steve Humphries, Joanna Mack, and Robert Perkins, A Century of Childhood (London: Sidgwick and Jackson in association with Channel Four Television Company, 1988).

civic administrative unit. In Ponta Delgada, an "official's" daughter recalls that in 1970, it was generally boys and not girls who played in narrow streets without sidewalks. As a nine-year old, she played with other girls in the protected environment of small backyards. Sometimes she conversed with a boy across the street on his own verandah. Along with other more "middle-class" girls, she played with bought dolls and made clothing for them. On trips to the small rural village where her relatives lived, she noted children played openly on the streets without strictures. Here, through traffic was more likely to be a donkey or a horse than a car. In this village, the same girl played with home-made "ragdolls" or even corn-husk dolls; in others, boys might spend a Sunday afternoon kicking around a soccer ball comprised of a bundle of rags by a cord.<sup>66</sup>

Within Michaelense towns there were class contrasts. In 1977, Ribeira Grande was a small, clean city with cafes and stores, a cinema, and a fine jardim (garden). Two sisters from a wealthy entrepreneurial family congregated with children and youths of all ages about that garden. They also swam unchaperoned in mixed company consisting of other youths from the liceu (high school), and along with even young children, enjoyed evening dances initiated and run by youths. Yet in that city as elsewhere on that island, one could encounter women and girls washing clothes in one of the many streams flowing down from the

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<sup>66</sup>F16170; M16075. A photo of such a doll said to be in use on Sao Miguel is found in the Portuguese reader, O Menino Azul, 9.

lagoas (crater lakes). One could find the poor cooking atop a small, single-burner, kerosene stove.<sup>67</sup> As in the rural Continent, some still went barefoot; one child from the tiny Fateira Grande where poverty was more visible, had only one pair of shoes, which he used "to go to church." Nonetheless, he had "fun" growing up there. In the early 1960s, poor fishermen from Rabo de Peixe, literally, Tail of the Fish, shuffled barefoot into Ribeira Grande, pained by the weight of fishbaskets.<sup>68</sup> Years later, there were still "a few" children without shoes in this impoverished fisher village, and some children "in the nude ... playing with the little pigs!" From the age of ten on, many poorer boys walked barefoot from their homes with their fathers out to bocados de terra (pieces of land), to put in a day's work. They helped cultivate cash crops such as bataral (sugar beet) and peanuts, as well as vegetables such as potatoes, corn, or kale for home use. Produce was also bartered for items such as flour and butter, which families couldn't produce themselves.<sup>69</sup>

The concept of a family economy allowed marginalized, traditional Portuguese families to survive. Fernando de Meneses explains the vitality of this institution to the Portuguese:

Since in agrarian society, parents provide for the future of their children through inheritance, these children will work for the father in his land or business so that later they will inherit the fruit of their labour ....

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<sup>67</sup>Arruda, Meu Diario, January-February, 1977.

<sup>68</sup>Dialina F. Arruda. July, 1992;

<sup>69</sup>F16170; M14862; M15971.

In their minds, the old agrarian structure is still functional.<sup>70</sup>

This may help explain one's loyalty to family as opposed to non-kin. The Vancouver-born woman recounted "one of the most vivid" stories she can remember being told as a child which originated on her parent's island -- and it takes as its theme, undying loyalty for family.<sup>71</sup>

In the process of work, Michaelenses and Continentals also socialized. Thus, there was a natural integration of work and play in small geographic settings,<sup>72</sup> whether they gathered at the harvest, or for the washing of clothes, or in order to cook for funerals and festas. One man recalled with fondness the matanca, the annual pig slaughter, which yielded the family's meat for a year. Relatives would gather during the day, while "neighbours would come by at night ... to check out the fat [on the pig] ... the more fat there was, the better it was." Michaelenses prepared for festas centered ostensibly about

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<sup>70</sup>de Meneses, Entre dos mundos: Between Two Worlds, i.

<sup>71</sup>This was one of the rare stories subjects were able to recall despite an occasional statement that parents had told many stories. "There's one that sticks out in my mind. My grandfather used to tell it to my mother" [My summary follows] A man whose father was dying took him to the top of a mountain. He wrapped the father in a blanket and left him there. As he began to walk down the mountain, the father called out, 'my son take the blanket' to which the son replied, 'no father, you take the blanket because you'll be cold and you'll need the blanket.' At this the father said, 'no, no, you take the blanket because you'll need it when your son carries you up here.' The son turned around and carried the father back down the mountain. F16400.

<sup>72</sup>See de Meneses, Entre dois mundos: Between Two Worlds.

religious processions. Towns would be decorated and a statue taken out of the church to be paraded among the faithful lining narrow cobblestone streets and whitewashed houses. As on the Continent, festas were also occasions for merrymaking, and were probably the most visible manifestations of an intense sociability. What one woman said of life in the tiny village of Porto Formoso, "everyone always knew what you did and who you were", was not too different from what the two Continental women remembered about their own birthplaces.<sup>73</sup> Thus, on feast days, families sometimes climbed the volcanic mountainside through vegetation "lush and wet from continuous rainfall and drizzle even in the summer" to "picnic away a festa afternoon."<sup>74</sup>

The Azoreans had long-favoured the Americas with good reason. Continental matters were seldom on their minds, though it is likely that Continentals were even more ignorant of the mid-ocean islanders.<sup>75</sup> The Continental Portuguese never knew the "ilheus, 'ocean hicks'," claims Rogers, "in fact, they really did not care about them."<sup>76</sup> For Azoreans, Continental Portugal "appeared to occupy the position vis a vis the motherland of a

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<sup>73</sup>M15971; F16377.

<sup>74</sup>Ribeira Grande, Meu Diario, 1977.

<sup>75</sup>This theme of centuries of neglect is found in Lyman, 1882. It pervades Rogers, 1976.

<sup>76</sup>Rogers, 12.

forgotten stepchild."<sup>77</sup> Control of Insular Portugal had been given to donatarios, members of the royal family, in the fifteenth-century. These remained absent from the islands and ruled through agents, capitães (captains) do donatarios. Neither donatarios, nor Salazar, ever visited these colonies,<sup>78</sup> though in 1951, when "colony" had become an unfashionable term internationally, they were renamed "provinces."<sup>79</sup> One Michaelense subject reported that an Azorean male returning from military service in Africa had tried to book a passage to the Azores and was offered a train ticket!<sup>80</sup> A Continental subject probably didn't realize just how much he was saying when he said,

I am very proud to be Portuguese, European ... I look on the map and Portugal is a very special place, I think -- it's in Europe, it's near everything, and far from everything."

It was in Vancouver that many Michaelenses and Continentals met each other for the first time.

Michaelenses had long been born into villages where they married, raised children, and where they were later interred, many without ever having seen the whole island, let alone ever leaving it.<sup>81</sup> In the experiential literature of the Azores,

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<sup>77</sup>Estellie M. Smith, "Portuguese Enclaves: the invisible minority" (Wrightville Beach, N.C.: paper presented at the Southern Anthropological Society Meeting, March, 1973), 5.

<sup>78</sup>Rogers, 39.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., 59-60.

<sup>80</sup>M15367; F16377.

<sup>81</sup>Dialina Arruda.

Francis Rogers found a narrative probably as significant for those on Pico or Sao Miguel, as for those in remote Continental villages. Consider the "push" factor in Black Robes, written by the Pico writer, Dias de Melo, in 1964,

Do you see these paths? To be living in an island is to live in a prison ... no one dares to go by land to any place whatsoever, except out of absolute necessity, for all of us are appalled by those horrible paths. Thus every precinct [freguesia] is a cage, within the larger cage which is the Island.... We die there like dogs.<sup>82</sup>

#### IV

According to their children, parents emigrated for a variety of reasons. A few subjects said their parents left "for a better life" or "to see what was around the corner" or "over the hill." These seemed relatively imprecise reasons compared to the literature, as well as conventional wisdom, both of which suggest many uprooted for economic reasons.<sup>83</sup>

Others were more specific. Altogether eight of the nine males stated that the existence of compulsory military service was a factor in the decision to move; of these, five males stated explicitly it was the main reason for the family's emigration.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup>Rogers, 402.

<sup>83</sup>For example, see the essays in Higgs, Portuguese Migration in Global Perspective, as well as Anderson and Higgs, Alpalhao and da Rosa. See also, Rosa Maria Pereira Munzer, "Immigration, Familism and In-Group Competition: A Study of the Portuguese in the Southern Okanagan," Canadian Ethnic Studies.

<sup>84</sup>M15565; M15367; M15971; M25168; M15870. My question was phrased, "How did you come to Canada?" or "Why did your parents emigrate?" The Penticton youth said his widowed mother emigrated

Two males from relatively humble backgrounds said their families emigrated because of that service and not because of poverty. Two women who had younger brothers did not cite it as a reason for emigration.

Families with sons had reason to fear military service. Tom Gallagher reported that between 1961 and 1974, an estimated 110,000 conscripts failed to report for service, most having emigrated to France. With a population of just over eight million Portugal saw one out of every four men in military service, a ratio exceeded only by Israel, and North and South Vietnam. More importantly, the number of Portuguese soldiers killed in Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Angola was proportionally larger than the numbers of Americans killed in Vietnam.<sup>85</sup> Ana Paula Horta concluded that military service together with an oppressive Salazarist dictatorship resulted in heavy emigration by the mid-1960s.<sup>86</sup> Of the five fathers aged 35-45 interviewed for Isabel Pinto's study, "most came to get away from the army."<sup>87</sup>

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to marry in Canada while he, approaching military service, was left behind with grandparents: "you could not escape the draft in those years ... we paid our way through to get a military licence .... paid a lot of money." The cost of the "military licence itself was insignificant. He came to Canada and later became a Canadian citizen for the sole reason he wished to avoid the draft forever. Of his mother's remarriage, he says, "to this day, I think she was doing it for me." M25168.

<sup>85</sup>Gallagher, Portugal, 182-3.

<sup>86</sup>Horta, 97-8.

<sup>87</sup>Conversation, 10 September, 1992.

At least two families came for economic reasons. For Tiago, the draft was "years" away and not really on his mind at the time. A wealthy businessman facing the loss of his business in Portugal also emigrated with an economic mission. In the latter case, emigration cost both parents considerable hardship and humiliation, forced the mother out into work, and resulted in an immediate and dramatic loss of socio-economic status for the family including their two adolescent daughters.<sup>88</sup>

Others offered a variety of unique explanations for their family's emigration. An officer's said "we were fine" in Portugal; rather, her parents emigrated for "freedom." The Vancouver-born daughter was born to a young couple who emigrated as newly-weds from the Azores in the late 1950s. She said her father, "really, really, really, wanted to come." He had "ambitions" and "came to stay" even though her mother who had to accompany him "cried every night for the first six or seven months." In contrast, it was the wife of a Continental landowner living in a lonely casal who pushed her own husband into migration and thus wedged her family through Mackenzie King's door. Infant in hand, she waited for her hesitant husband to complete the immigration interview and upon hearing that he would not be accepted, she pushed into the office with her baby and "pleaded" with the official. Her daughter said her parents came to provide better "social and educational opportunities" for their children. Two parents who worked together in an office on

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<sup>88</sup>M16075; F16377; F16177.

Sao Miguel migrated, according to their son, "to see how great this place [wa]s." A pharmacist in Lisbon emigrated probably because he was curious and "adventurous" and "of course, there was the draft." Another Lisbon middle-class family emigrated because the father exhausted himself with two jobs in order to maintain a more middle-class lifestyle. This father actively sought out a Canadian destination through the immigration office. Vancouver was suggested to him because of his work and he emigrated independently in 1967. He secured a rental home and sent for his family within months. His son was the only one male to state explicitly that they had emigrated because of his father's long working hours, too little time with family, and not because of impending military service.<sup>89</sup>

Only three of the Vancouver families emigrated to Vancouver independently: the landowner from the casal, an academic, and an engineer. All the others were sponsored by a close relative, almost always by the brother or sister of one of their parents. These emigrants generally resided with sponsors for longer, rather than shorter periods of time, periods varying from one or two to eight and ten years. Two families left before a year was up, one of these because life with relatives "drove mom crazy."

Most fathers except two, entered new occupations in Canada. Regardless of their homeland occupation, whether they were

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<sup>89</sup>On this issue, he said, "the draft was five years away"; furthermore, he had "glasses" and might have gone "into some sort of officer's training as some of my friends did." The draft was a "low risk" and "not a heavy factor." M15468.

carpenter, stone mason, agricultural worker, landowner, pharmacist, customs officer, policeman, or agricultural workers, their work in Canada involved either railway work away from Vancouver, at least for a period of time, or janitorial work, or work in the construction industry. One middle-class father from Lisbon became immediately employed in his chosen profession. Another middle-class father from Lisbon had once had been a crucial part of a large electrical company. Here, he laboured "breaking cement" for months before establishing himself in a related business.

Three mothers had worked outside the home in Portugal: a secretary, a teacher, and an "office" employee. Here, only the teacher did not enter a formal work setting. The other mothers had never laboured for wages outside the home in Portugal, especially in the Azores where they generally were not seen even in the fields. Eight of these women stepped out into dishwashing, kitchen work, and janitorial services in Vancouver in order to contribute to the family economy.

Poverty, illiteracy, and worry for crops, were found on both the Continent and Azores. Historically, overpopulation, crop-failures with accompanying near-starvation, violent seismic and volcanic activity, and centuries of neglect characterized life on the Azores.<sup>90</sup> Together such factors probably justified these

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<sup>90</sup>Ibid. See also Williams, And Yet They Come.

islanders' sense of acorianidade (Azoreanity),<sup>91</sup> something closely related to the more general Portuguese sense of fatalism where "'it was not worth taking one step to reach anything on this earth ... because everything resolved itself ... in dust and disillusion.'"<sup>92</sup> Those factors certainly constituted ample justification for emigration. Yet according to their children, it is clear that these were not the only reasons that parents came to Canada.

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<sup>91</sup>Rogers, 34.

<sup>92</sup>The Maias, cited in Sarah Bedford, Portugal (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973), 23.

Chapter 3 -- From Portuguese Homes to Canadian Homes

"Here in the big city, you could grow up being Portuguese."<sup>1</sup>

Traditional Portuguese families had certain attributes. Though this is an oversimplified composite, a typical family was characterized by clearly-differentiated male and female roles over which a father both assumed and was ascribed master status. It was child-centered, and featured close and constant contact between offspring and parents, especially the mother. Older children and youth contributed to the family economy often up to the day of their own marriage. Parents exerted control over children, especially daughters, when it came to courtship and marriage. A traditional household often included grandparents, sometimes cunhados and cunhadas, brother and sister in-laws; if not, these usually lived nearby. In past times, if there were more mouths to feed,<sup>2</sup> there were also a greater number of hands to assist during illness, childbirth, funerals, or the preparation of foods for festas. Padrinhos and padrinhas were godparents at a child's birth and then sponsors at their

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<sup>1</sup>M15367.

<sup>2</sup>One Continental man told me that two of his father's brothers had gone into the seminary for no other reason than "there were two less mouths to feed." M15967.

confirmation. Later, standing for the bride and groom, they became compadres and comadres of the parents, and the close circle of friendship and intimacy might tighten further.<sup>3</sup>

Subjects themselves emphasized the centrality of the family, and almost all described their family life in Portugal as a generally happy time despite the problems of the homeland. Whatever parental strictures existed there also mattered less, probably because they applied to others of their socio-economic niche and region.

Some may think the Portuguese concept of the family with its reciprocal rights and obligations was "transplanted"<sup>4</sup> into this immigrant North American community. It is probably best to view it, like the local Portuguese newspapers,<sup>5</sup> or the local Portuguese church, as a transformed institution. Emigration to Vancouver immediately exposed these families to child-rearing practices most had not known. Many parents resisted those practices they believed to be morally wrong, or those they felt

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<sup>3</sup>I base this upon the interviews, my own experience, as well as the literature: Anderson and Higgs, Alpalhao and da Rosa, Coelho et. al., and Rogers.

<sup>4</sup>Globe Magazine (April 1960) cited in Coelho et. al., 11

<sup>5</sup>Despite its subtitle, The Portuguese Newspaper For Western Canada, the Portuguese newspaper, O Mensageiro, published bi-weekly in Vancouver probably interests older immigrants rather than the second generation. It is in its "25th Year." Not only is it written almost exclusively in Portuguese, but it is largely made up of homeland politics, and sports reports -- these are placed adjacent to advertisements for local business. A second newspaper, Periodico News, tackles more local issues such as "multiculturalism" and "teenage suicide" reporting in English and Portuguese. See Vol. 1 No. 3 Fevereiro (1992) February.

threatened the traditional form of the family, courtship, and even philosophy of life. Some of their children abided by new context-specific parental strictures. Some children were more resistant. Other children, as well as parents embraced aspects of Canadian culture that their Portuguese compatriots did not.

This chapter discusses four aspects of growing up within Portuguese families among that first wave of family emigration to Vancouver. First, it describes some impressions children and adolescents formed of the migration process as well as some of the adjustments families made in this new context. Second, it illustrates some child-rearing philosophies and practices found in their Vancouver homes. Third, it sheds some light on the general quality of family life and family relationships. Fourth, it examines traditional practices maintained within the household. Family emerged as the bedrock variable in the lives of many subjects.

## I

The process of emigrating itself did not seem to worry most children or adolescents. Many in fact regarded the prospect of emigrating as an adventure. Three said it was "exciting." Others remember that as children they simply went along with the parental decision without giving it much thought, while several, as adolescents, anticipated being united with a father. Of course, some held stereotypes of Canada. As a result of his studies and a postcard, a twelve year-old middle-class boy from

Lisbon looked forward to Canada, but anticipated a country that was "a piece of ice", "an icicle." A twelve year-old middle-class girl from that city was excited because she "was going to be a movie star 'cause that's what they did in the Americas." Another Lisbon teen thought "it was sort of exciting .. akin to [going] to the United States ... this was '67, '68, summer of love, flowers in the hair." At thirteen, the younger of two Michaelense sisters was the only one in her family excited at the prospect of emigration. She had attended many funerals on her island and had been of the opinion that "people in Canada didn't get old and didn't die."<sup>6</sup>

All arrived by airplane and were driven into Vancouver. Most who remember their arrival were favourably impressed, even "amazed" with the city, one thinking it "looked like one giant Christmas tree." Another arrived at the airport to encounter the "whole town was there" ("about fifty people") from his native Serra do Santo Antonio in the rural Continent, as it was then a "custom" to greet new arrivals. Overall, their first impressions were of spacious, paved, "organized" city streets with wide sidewalks. Even those from Lisbon faced more cars, larger cars, and garages. They, along with others, also noted the presence of manicured lawns with a purely ornamental function, something they were largely unaccustomed to seeing. Those who had lived in small, white-washed stone houses with few rooms, or an urban apartment were surprised to see large, detached, multi-bedroom,

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<sup>6</sup>F15668; M15468; M15870; F16377.

multi-storeyed houses.<sup>7</sup>

Not all were impressed upon arrival. Compared to his Lisbon neighbourhood, the pharmacist's seven-year old boy considered his new surroundings to be "rough, unfinished", even "ugly."<sup>8</sup> Vancouver had "very ugly buildings", had "no gardens" and with its "one-storey" "wooden" buildings, "looked like the wild west." One boy from Lisbon was one of four adolescents who continued to make comparisons between "here" and "there" from the start; according to him, "there", the beaches were a "hundred times better than here", buildings were "older", and there was a "lot more history."<sup>9</sup>

Children and their parents made adjustments soon after arrival. For most, this meant adapting from a closely-knit, agrarian context to a more populous, impersonal and urban one. They were escorted about Vancouver by automobile soon after their arrival in order to be shown the sights: the beaches, Stanley Park, even Mount Seymour in winter where one sixteen year-old girl stood "in awe" of small children on skis. There were the

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<sup>7</sup>M16075; M15367; F15668. At least six of these adolescents had lived in flats or homes with plumbing and electricity, the Michaelense sisters prominent among these with a "beautiful" five-bedroom, two-kitchen stone home.

<sup>8</sup>The first Portuguese settled in the area bounded by the port and the CNR tracks where many Portuguese were employed. Census Tract data has been used to construct the spatial boundaries of the Portuguese "community", that area wherein at least 1.7 percent of households are Portuguese. It now extends, roughly, from Main to Boundary and Terminal to 49th. See Horta, 126; Carlos Teixeira and Gilles Levigne, The Portuguese in Canada: A Bibliography (Toronto: York University, The Institute for Special Research, 1992), 16.

<sup>9</sup>M15967; M15870; M16370; M15565; F16377.

inevitable encounters with snow and the quick adaptation to its delights and hazards. One boy had seen occasional frost in the rural Continent, while another, anticipating snow, was surprised to find snow in Vancouver was actually "wet." Within the home some children were quickly instructed to substitute "knife" for faca, and "corner" for canto -- even while speaking Portuguese within the private sphere of Portuguese family and community. Encountering a larger supermarket, a Safeway, one mother who had previously purchased "fresh" foods in Lisbon now served "canned products for the first few years."<sup>10</sup>

It was soon apparent that people here behaved, even looked different. "Here", said one, strangers did not acknowledge you as they did on the Azores. A girl felt people in Lisbon were "warmer and closer." It was in Vancouver that they, even the Lisbon-born, say they encountered different nationalities. One Michaelense had "never seen people from the Orient or black people." A rural Continental had "never seen a Chinese person." One adolescent who immediately went out to work full-time remembers he was perplexed when a man, who later turned out to be a judge in the Supreme Court, made it a habit of stopping to speak to him as he swept the floors of a large office tower. "I was so amazed", he said, for there, "lawyers and doctors" didn't talk to "the little people." Almost immediately upon his arrival, one seven year-old Michaelense who had been prepared by his parents to expect Canadian people to be different, remembers

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<sup>10</sup>F16177; F15570; M15565; M15870.

asking his father what was "so different" about Canadians. In his case, this was a perception that soon changed.<sup>11</sup>

It was in Vancouver that these emigrants developed a sense that they, themselves, were different. A boy from a middle-class Lisbon home remembers feeling different at first because he was wearing "flannel wool pants when all kids had jeans." It was language, however, that posed the greatest difficulty. For most, but not all adolescents, leaving friends and relatives in the Azores or mainland, seemed less difficult than learning a new language and making new friends. Two younger boys who were very happy in their birthplace found life lonely here throughout the teenage years and sometimes fought with others in their elementary years. One seven-year old had been outgoing in the Azores and became more "cautious" and sensitive to how others treated him in Vancouver. A ten year-old developed an aversion to being called insulting names here, a practice he thought was unusual on the rural Continent. This led to fights in elementary school. Some managed to maintain a strong sense of self which they were unwilling to compromise.<sup>12</sup>

Not surprisingly, some harboured saudades (a pining), for the homeland. They missed friends and relatives, the mild weather of the Azores and the hot sun of the Continent, at least in the beginning. Writing frequently to friends in Portugal was typical at first, and adolescents wrote to friends and cousins

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<sup>11</sup>M16370; M15668; 15367; M16075; M16370.

<sup>12</sup>M15967; M16370; M15565; F16377; M15870.

while children sometimes included a short note among parents' letters to Portugal. Two sisters wrote frequently and faithfully to their friends about Canada. The younger sister was the only person to keep a diary throughout most of her teenage years. She had little time or opportunity to make friends and her diary was the only place where "she could talk to someone" about her loneliness. Meanwhile, her older sister's "main goal for the first six or seven years" was to return to Portugal. Others felt differently about Vancouver. One male fourteen year-old who had claimed the draft "was the primary reason" for emigrating said, "I never felt that [saudades]. Incredible. I just felt comfortable here." Of course, here he was reunited with family and neither of his parents ever regretted the move.<sup>13</sup>

## II

Being "Portuguese" in Vancouver was perhaps less a factor for some parents and their children than others.<sup>14</sup> Within the

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<sup>13</sup>F16377; F16177; M15367. The Penticton youth pined for "the beach, Nazare", friends, and wrote to a "sweetheart" he planned to marry -- feelings that dissipated after a year. Faced with few Portuguese his age, he made a deliberate effort to integrate fully with other Canadian youth. M25168.

<sup>14</sup>Ana Paula Horta found one's ethnicity was a matter of degree. Portuguese who enjoyed higher socio-economic status in Vancouver generally had less involvement with the Portuguese community and greater involvement with the wider Canadian context. In view of their greater choice, she stated, "if the ideal 'multicultural person' exists, perhaps he/she is to be found among these individuals." "The Saliency of Ethnicity," 227. Fernando Nunes acknowledges patterns of young immigrants' responses to "pressures of assimilation", but like Coelho et. al., overlooks the class variable among immigrants. See Problems and Adjustments [1985].

private sphere of family, many immigrant Portuguese parents probably felt their child-rearing principles and practices were correct, if not superior,<sup>15</sup> to those they witnessed as practiced by non-Portuguese parents. In fact, observations and conversations that took place in other Canadian geographical contexts suggest many working-class Portuguese in Canada chatted in a decidedly condescending tone about Canadians. For example, many spoke derisively of canadianos and canadianas being protestantes -- akin to their being pagan. They despised the liberdade (liberty) they saw in their child-rearing practices. They worried about sons who acted like cabritos (male goats) and especially, of daughters free-ranging like promiscuous cabritas.<sup>16</sup>

In Vancouver, some immigrant Portuguese parents not only disapproved of the freedom extended the children of canadianos, but they levied that disapproval upon some Portuguese children and adolescents whom they perceived to have a similar freedom. Village eyes had simply moved to a larger context. At least two

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<sup>15</sup>Ronald Louis Fernandez, The Social Meaning of Being Portuguese (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1979)

<sup>16</sup>I heard this among several families in northwestern Ontario during the 60s and 70s. In Toronto, one woman born of Continental Portuguese parents who emigrated in the fifties to Canada, became a reporter for the Toronto Globe and Mail. She wrote of her growing up years in Toronto: "my mother and aunts spoke disparagingly of the canadianas, Canadian women who (they were sure) [sic] knew nothing about how to keep a clean house or cook a decent meal .... she and my aunts teased my brother, saying someday he'd marry a canadiana and would end up doing all his own housework." Isabel Vincent, "Finding a nationality that fits," Globe and Mail, 3 December 1990.

adolescents, both males from more middle-class backgrounds in Portugal, felt themselves under the scrutiny of Portuguese eyes in Vancouver.<sup>17</sup> Perhaps they drew attention because of their dating practices, long hair, fashionable dress, and the considerable freedom they enjoyed relative to other Portuguese youths.<sup>18</sup> A third middle-class subject from Lisbon, however, remembers it was not easy to win over parents. He remembers the "first fight" with his own "father" was over long hair while the "second one" was over bell-bottoms. Immigrant Portuguese parents in Vancouver, as well as elsewhere, probably worried about what other Portuguese thought about their children, because their "appearance and behaviour" reflected the "image of the home."<sup>19</sup> Accusatory parents may have been ignorant of changes in Portugal

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<sup>17</sup>One comparative study of child-rearing values among immigrant parents (Greek, Italian, Portuguese, and other groups) in New England, concluded that immigrant Portuguese parents (all Azorean), unlike their Italian and Greek counterparts, "model more on American working-class standards" than their middle-class standards. Immigrant Portuguese parents remained "harsher in their reactions to social temper" and were less tolerant of "autonomy displays" in their children. Fathers were "more vigilant than mothers with respect to sex-role differences." One of the variables this study did not hold constant was level of parental education. See Wallace E. Lambert, Josiane F. Hamers, and Nancy Frasure-Smith, Child-Rearing Values: A Cross-National Study (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1979), 274, 281, 308-9, 13.

<sup>18</sup>M15468; M15967. The Kitimat girl had considerable social freedom. She thought her father "got flak" from his Portuguese friends over this. Her mother, a "feminist", was well-liked by her daughter's many Canadian male and female friends. This household was a popular congregating area for all types of youths whom some non-Portuguese parents would have scorned; however, when her daughter brought a Portuguese girl home unexpectedly, the mother became decidedly worried that this girl would go home to tell her mom the house had been a mess. F36500.

<sup>19</sup>Alpalhao and da Rosa, 138.

while those who visited the homeland saw changes for themselves. Some may have been unable to accommodate the changes they heard about.<sup>20</sup>

Most women spoke of strict parental control in their adolescence. The shift in parental attitudes towards a daughter's freedom in Canada is epitomized by the two middle-class sisters' experiences in Vancouver. Scant weeks before they went to the first Portuguese dance here, accompanied by their father, they had enjoyed the unchaperoned companionship of male and female friends, something that poorer children and youths at work in households or on fields had less opportunity to experience. In the case of the older sister, a boyfriend walked her to school and she sometimes had "coffee" with him. In Vancouver, "a fellow asked us to dance and my dad took us home." The father had been warned by a brother, who had emigrated earlier to Canada, "not to let us out" for girls could quickly earn "a bad reputation in the Portuguese community" and thereafter "not be able to marry." Almost immediately from the moment of their arrival, the two sisters, together with siblings older than ten, worked either before or after school in order to assist their father out of his financial woes on Sao Miguel. The younger sister made it clear that, as far as she was concerned,

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<sup>20</sup>On Sao Miguel, in 1977, long hair on boys was certainly not ubiquitous, but it was seen and boys were already pressing their parents to allow it to grow. Arruda, Meu Diario, 1 February, 1977. Also see Horta, "Salience of Ethnicity".

"Canada was a prison for girls."<sup>21</sup>

Other girls were also kept at home. One man's younger sister "was never allowed out", and "was over twenty-two" when she went out "to go see a movie with her friends." Sometimes the brother spoke up for more freedom for his sister and sometimes he did not: "She ha[d] to learn life on her own. I didn't have control over that." Another from a more middle-class home on the Continent harboured one simple adolescent dream: "I wanted to be big enough to get out of the house." She perceived her situation was "temporary, it would change" and that teenage years were "stepping stones" to another life:

I wanted to get past my teenage years as fast as I could. I always wanted to be thirty.... I was independent as I could be until three o'clock in the afternoon and then [I would] have to be home after school.... I had a strict mother. I had a terribly-strict mother.

This adolescent was denied "a lot of opportunities" because of this parent: track and field, though she was athletic; an "opportunity to go to France with my French class"; even a chance "to go and study there." In her family, "a lot of things" "just weren't allowed ... w[ere not] talked about."<sup>22</sup>

In Vancouver, some parents probably did see "only disgrace and shame in the new freedom of the new land" or accused

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<sup>21</sup>F16377; F16177

<sup>22</sup>M15971; F15570.

daughters who wanted to go out of "promiscuity."<sup>23</sup> While no woman in this sample said she was "beaten senseless", one youth's relationship with her parents was a continuous fight for more social freedom.<sup>24</sup> One daughter from another more middle-class Azorean home remembers quite specifically that what she wanted was not more time with family, but with her friends. A lot of tears were shed in her bedroom and she would say to her mother who "was more understanding" than her father:

Well, if you expect me to get married, you can't lock me up inside the house. The boys are not going to knock at the door and ask 'do you have a daughter for me to go out with!' I used to tell her that all the time.<sup>25</sup>

Three women admitted that their experiences, like their parents, were probably atypical of the Portuguese community. They spoke about Portuguese peers and many other "quiet" teenage Portuguese girls who, indeed, were not permitted to go out except under close supervision, or in cases where the parents approved of the destination. The Kitimat girl, for example, remembered Portuguese girls enquiring about what a high school dance had

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<sup>23</sup>Correll, Toronto Daily Star 7 June 1969, cited in Coelho et. al., 12.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>When her parents discovered a clandestine relationship she had maintained for years, her Portuguese boyfriend came with his father to secure permission for the courtship to continue. She remembers the warning her father gave her boyfriend in the form of a rhetorical question which she translated to mean, in her words, "are you coming to be serious, or to have a good time?" F16170.

been like because they were prohibited from going.<sup>26</sup>

Of course, there were ways for teenage girls to escape parental eyes. One "sneaked out" while another maintained a clandestine romantic relationship with a Portuguese teenager for three years, someone who worked full-time and had his own car. When he became the "most important" person in her life, she dropped some friendships, and particularly avoided establishing close friendships with other Portuguese girls purely out of the fear that such girls would tell their mothers and it would get back "through the grapevine" to her own mother. She was the best example of an adolescent in "full revolt against parental authority" in this sample.<sup>27</sup> She feigned errands to the store to meet her boyfriend. She developed a routine of attending school in the mornings, and going truant in the afternoon to ride around in his car. She trusted loyal friends who championed her cause to inform her of missed work. She smoked -- "God forbid if my mom and dad knew" and "talked back to the teacher." Her teenage years were "a dangerous time" because "you tried almost anything." Only the academic's daughter and Vancouver-born girl had more freedom simply because they, in fact, lived under fewer parental strictures. Like the Kitimat girl, these two took part

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<sup>26</sup>F16170; F16400; F36500. M15971.

<sup>27</sup>F16170. Toronto Daily Star cited in Coelho et. al., 12. One girl not only began to "hate" her father as she grew up, but lied to parents telling them she was "with Portuguese friends" when she was really out "at Canadian parties," Pinto, 10. The Kitimat subject said the other Portuguese girls fell into two general categories: the "nerdy" group, and the "bad" group. She was a member of the "in" group, which was atypical.

in after-school sports, and socialized, with non-Portuguese friends. At sixteen, for example, the Vancouver-born had a steady boyfriend. She would have to phone home only if she was staying out past midnight or one o'clock in the morning.<sup>28</sup>

Teenage boys, generally, suffered fewer restrictions, but some probably not by much. Frequently, boys had curfews of nine or ten o'clock. At least three didn't go out much after school. One from Sao Miguel "didn't see the need" to stay out late as the friends he associated with didn't stay out late. Two other adolescents were from the continent; one had a sunset curfew -- home by dark, summer or winter, while the other didn't leave the backyard much until the age of sixteen. Nonetheless, this last youth resisted his parents' control. He had a girlfriend whom he saw at school. Sometimes he sneaked out, pointing out, "as they say, where there's a will, there's a way"; moreover, he said, "she was Italian and she couldn't go out either!"<sup>29</sup>

There were exceptions to this scenario. Two of the three Lisbon males were generally unencumbered by parental strictures, and like many other non-Portuguese youths, they came and went as they pleased, associated with whomever they wished, and dated. It appears their parents didn't say much about whether they wore

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<sup>28</sup>F15668; F16400. The Kitimat woman admitted she "was not very typical" of the Portuguese girls in that town. She was in the "cool" group, played tennis, was active in extra-curricular activities and went on out-of-town road trips. She probably represents the pinnacle of an already small minority of Portuguese girls in Kitimat who had more liberal parents. F36500.

<sup>29</sup>M16170; M15468; M15565.

beads, bell-bottom pants, or longer hair. The pharmacist's son had no curfew, but came home "when he was tired" and one story situates his parents' disposition which probably contrasted sharply with that of other Portuguese parents. Once on a visit to his home, another man, after "a few glasses of wine", remarked about the son's longer hair to the father. "Look at your boy", he said, to which this adolescent promptly replied, "Fuck you." Uttered in front of two sets of parents, there was no repercussion then, or later, even though the offended couple soon left the house. His mother had been "hurt" and his father "embarrassed", but this subject pointed out his parents usually defended his actions, and that he had been a "spoiled brat."<sup>30</sup>

Sometimes parents enforced their authority with corporal punishment. Usually, this was left to the father, but in one household, a sister and her brother who had an upbringing that was "a little stricter" than most were "both very disciplined -- by mother": "If you looked at my mother the wrong way, you would be under the table." One Lisbon adolescent observed that other fathers would "slap" adolescent sons "on the side of the head or pull their ear." This subject had one Portuguese friend for a while whose father he found "almost like a bully to me. My father being so liberal ... I found this parent to be sort of revolting." One sixteen year-old was talked into going downtown for the evening with a cousin and when he returned about midnight, found "Dad was waiting. He had a belt." His father

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<sup>30</sup>M15468; M15967; M15870.

was "setting an example" for his younger brother and sister. At least three adolescents experienced harsh discipline at the hands of parents. One argued "continually" with his father until the end of elementary school about having to come home immediately after school. His father would "belt me continually", he recollects, and "I had to bend my thoughts" to his wishes. He thought his parents treated him "almost like a European girl" into his mid-teens. Another father would "never hit me without a reason" and "usually would give me a choice." If the son had "a bad exam" in "Math", for example, and the father had thought this was due to the son "being lazy ... he would say either I give you a spanking .. or you won't go play for a week"; he went for the "spanking." Sometimes the beatings were "pretty bad" he said and his mother interfered on a few occasions. Then, "the beatings would be worse because it wouldn't be just us, it would us and her." This individual's narrative was characterized by unquestioning respect for his parents. He would never have sworn in front of his parents, just as "you wouldn't go into a church and spit on the floor."<sup>31</sup>

Two scholars considered parental "recourse to corporal punishment" as being "rarely a sign of ill treatment." Admitting, "it might be considered a questionable disciplinary method", Alpalhao and da Rosa explained it was "a manifestation

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<sup>31</sup>F15570; M15967; M15971; M15565; M15870. The Toronto teen said her mother, was "really great" and was "always in the middle". Though she was "always kind of afraid" of her husband whom she "obeyed", her mother did at times step in between the father and the children. F97072.

of the parents' interest in their children."<sup>32</sup> A counsellor employed by the city of Vancouver to work with the Portuguese community during the 1970s was closer to some of the worst cases of abuse of children, adolescents, even young adult daughters.<sup>33</sup> This counsellor also thought that Portuguese parents often had the best interest of their children at heart when they resorted to corporal punishment, though she thought alcohol sometimes obscured the purity of that intent. Several subjects spoke of the Portuguese tradition of drinking in moderation from an early age. For young children, a fraction of wine was mixed with a greater fraction of water. With age, "the wine got a little more; the water a little less."<sup>34</sup> None were critical of what that might lead to.

Parents appeared to relax their hold on the reins as their Canadian residency lengthened. An older son admitted that it was he who "broke some of the laws" making it "easier for the others." Another said he knew of a family where the younger sisters had a "more liberal upbringing" than a brother. A photo of one middle-class teenage son in long, thick hair was accompanied by a verbal qualification: "my [older] brother did all the fighting and then we all benefited from it." Another said "dad changed slowly": he was "very strict" with the older

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<sup>32</sup>Alpalhao and da Rosa, p. 138.

<sup>33</sup>Conversation, July; Interview, September, 1992. For one perspective of the dark side of parent-child relations, see Lloyd de Mause, History of Childhood (New York: Harper & Row, 1974).

<sup>34</sup>M14862; M15870.

brother, "a little looser with me and with my younger brother he was looser yet." Again, their narrative reveals that most considered the father as the ultimate lawmaker -- and enforcer.<sup>35</sup>

Many of the subjects said their parents wanted them to marry other Portuguese.<sup>36</sup> One man said "the first girl I brought home, I kept." Some others also knew the first girl or boy they brought home was the one that parents expected them to marry. One subject referred to another mother who had "promised the church that she would give the church a hundred dollars if her daughter got married as a virgin." One man born in the rural Continent said that his parents had never actually specified that he should marry a Portuguese girl, "but it seemed to be imprinted in me, like if you bring this girl home, she has to be the one", and the experiences of his other two brothers were the same. A middle-class daughter thought her father would have been pleased if she'd become interested in a particular, well-educated Portuguese man. The Penticton youth, also from a better socio-economic background in the Continent, said, "my mom always expected me to marry a Portuguese girl." A Continental woman said her parents had wanted to get her out of Canada before the

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<sup>35</sup>M15971; M15870; M15367.

<sup>36</sup>This is not unique to the Portuguese. Endogamy generally appears strongest among first-generation immigrants. Jean R. Burnet with Howard Palmer, Coming Canadians: An Introduction to a History of Canada's Peoples (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart in association with the Multiculturalism Directorate, 1988), 98-9.

issue of marriage arose.<sup>37</sup> A priest with the Portuguese parish in Vancouver said parents were concerned about exogamy, though some viewed a marriage to Italians to be the second-best alternative.<sup>38</sup> The size of Vancouver's Portuguese community was probably a factor in the persistence of endogamy.<sup>39</sup>

### III

I was interested in the quality of relationships within the family. Fernando de Meneses suggested immigrant Portuguese families in North American urban settings faced a more discrete division of work and play than they had known in the homeland. Many parents who disappeared into a "factory children never saw" failed to integrate "other aspects of play, enjoyment" and did "not plan these activities into the day."<sup>40</sup> Alpalhao and da Rosa thought that working-class Portuguese in Quebec probably

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<sup>37</sup>M15565; F16377; M15367; M25168; F15570.

<sup>38</sup>Interview with Father Antonio Deangelis, 7 July 1992. See Burnet and Palmer, 98-9. Chimbos states that the Greeks, "like the Portuguese" are "predominantly endogamous." This may be more true for the first generation than others. Peter D. Chimbos, The Canadian Odyssey: The Greek Experience in Canada (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1980), 112-3.

<sup>39</sup>Citing a Hull study, Alpalhao and da Rosa suggested endogamy appeared to increase "in proportion to the density of ethnic concentration." 141.

<sup>40</sup>See de Meneses, i-iii. This was precisely the scenario the Toronto teenager faced; in fact, both of her parents worked in the same factory. F97072. There were few mothers working outside the home among working-class Portuguese in Manitouwadge.

reduced their entertainment "to its simplest expressions."<sup>41</sup>  
This may have been true in Vancouver as well.

If there were fewer factories to swallow parents in the Vancouver context, there were other ways parents might disappear. Only three of the Portuguese mothers had worked outside the home in Portugal. At least eight stepped out of Vancouver homes, and except for one woman, all performed janitorial and kitchen work. One daughter noticed that the fracture which had developed between her parents in the homeland widened "just shortly" after arrival. Throughout the whole period of her parents' residency in Canada, the mother worked evenings in a restaurant while the father laboured in a railway camp in the interior. As a teenager, she remained responsible for her younger brother with whom she ate simple meals. This woman spoke sadly about her relationship with her parents. When her father returned for short weekend visits he'd "go off to the coffee shops" to seek male friends, or simply watch television with the children. She knew her mother loved her, "but she's never told me ... she's never kissed me ... she's never shown it", yet she didn't feel like "an unloved child." Similarly, a middle-class father preoccupied himself in his janitorial service and his son "saw very little" of his father from the age of eleven on. His mother displayed physical affection toward her son, but his father "never hugged or kissed" him after he was eleven or twelve years

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<sup>41</sup>For this theme of a lack of creative use of leisure time by parents, see Alpalhao and da Rosa, 185-7.

of age. He remained "very cold", and "very stern", "even when he was happy." In another case, the "tenderness" which had been there between a father and daughter was lost after the daughter's puberty. As a child in Vancouver, she used to walk "hand-in-hand" with her father through his construction sites and had attended soccer games with him. In her pre-teens, she had even accompanied him on weekend trips into "the interior [to] go hunting with his friends" for "rabbits, venison, bears ... it was the only thing I could share with my father because I was a very quiet and respecting child."<sup>42</sup> In her teens, he became silent with her, spoke to her through his wife, spent evenings in silence watching television before going to bed early. In this way her father became "very much background material." Conversely, the mother who was "very gay" and "very theatrical" became her daughter's "best friend."

A few Portuguese parents, however, took a greater interest in drawing upon Canadian leisure-time activities. One set hailed from a new Lisbon suburb where neighbours were judges, lawyers,

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<sup>42</sup>F15570; M15967; F15356. The adolescent in Toronto took up watching hockey regularly with her father -- the only thing she could share with him. She later wrote that her father was "very authoritarian" and "demanding and whatever he says goes." He placed "high value on external characteristics, such as obedience, cleanliness and neatness"; there was "very little communication between us because of my fear of not pleasing him." F97072, "The Influence of my Childhood and Adolescence on my Adult Character" (unpublished paper, UBC, 20 March, 1992) The Kitimat girl was much closer to her mother than her father. The Penticton teen whose mother remarried in Canada felt he didn't have much of a relationship with his mother or his step-father, especially the latter, who "stepped aside" as far as discipline was concerned. F36500; M25168.

and doctors -- people that were educated "and in touch with the world." The Portuguese their son encountered here were "not the Portuguese I knew. Here most of the Portuguese at the time [1960s] were more concerned with material wealth than adapting to Canada." His family invested money and time in things that had "intrinsic value" such as going to the theatre and the cinema. In his words, "we had a good life in Portugal so our lifestyle didn't change in coming to Canada." In his view, "what did change was my dad's availability to the family and himself." This father not only encouraged his son to take up Judo, but actually participated in one lesson. Similarly, the Vancouver-born woman whose father had emigrated with "ambitions", joined his teenage daughter and her neighbourhood friends in throwing baskets in their driveway as her mother watched.<sup>43</sup>

If children found faults in a parent, they sometimes also pointed out their other qualities. The two sisters who put long hours into the family janitorial business actually discussed with siblings "how much [they] hated" their father and "what he had done" to the family. A "lot of in-between fighting" sometimes clouded the "common goal", and the younger sister thought that "if my father had not died when he did, my family might have split up." Nonetheless, siblings "loved working" with him "because he was so funny."<sup>44</sup> On late summer nights, this father

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<sup>43</sup>M15468; F16400.

<sup>44</sup>One of the very first Portuguese children in Vancouver worked in the family restaurant from the age of ten, the younger brother from the age of seven. The first cherishes the memories of the

would take the children out for a soft drink after the work was completed, even at midnight, and "we would all talk about the days in Portugal and the things we did." Alternatively, they often stayed up late as a family, drinking, eating, and talking. For this family, the integration of work and play probably intensified in Vancouver and they simply became closer than they had ever been on Sao Miguel. An engineer, like a retired teacher who tutored her son daily in Portuguese, seemed to be one of the few parents with the skill, as well as the endless patience for teaching his children. He was also capable of waiting into the early hours of the morning for a "rebellious" son to return -- with whom he would only talk. They would "sit there and talk and talk all night till four, five, six o'clock in the morning", and would "spend as much time as was needed", with his children.<sup>45</sup>

There appeared to be a segregation of male and female spheres within their households.<sup>46</sup> All in all, what some said was not too different from what one scholar noted in Portugal where the law and the church both worked to "uphold the authority of the husband in the conjugal unit" while "a woman's maternal

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smells and general ambience of the restaurant and loved the work. See The Canadians: The Portuguese Community (CBC British Columbia, 1984), video.

<sup>45</sup>F16177; M15870.

<sup>46</sup>The Toronto subject wrote, "Growing up, I remember my parents emphasising the importance of learning 'how to be a good housewife.'" "The Importance of My Childhood and Adolescence," 4.

role remained supreme."<sup>47</sup> As one Portuguese migrant woman said of the relationship between Portuguese husbands and wives:

It is over a woman's behaviour that a man has control. For that we have a saying in Portugal, Em casa manda ela, mas nela manda eu. ("In the home she rules, but I rule her").<sup>48</sup>

Despite studies which suggest that sojourning may have encouraged men to assist in household tasks while women's work outside the house led to greater emancipation,<sup>49</sup> what subjects said, suggested that most fathers probably dominated their household, though mothers were not powerless. The father of the two sisters made all the "financial decisions", decisions which threatened the very cohesion of the family. Three sons said their fathers were the decision-makers, one saying, this was the "ultimate decision" in the house. A second son said the father was the authority figure, though the son "never saw my dad bossing my mom around ... or bossing us around ... we knew [there] was an authority in the house and it was my dad." A third son thought his mother

would have to be in very harsh disagreement before she would speak back to him [the father]. But she could speak back to him .... when he saw she was really in disagreement, he would respect that."

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<sup>47</sup>Brettell, We Have Already Cried, 34-5.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 103. See also, Alpalhao and da Rosa, 132-5; Anderson and Higgs.

<sup>49</sup>Alpalhao and da Rosa, 132-7. See also Brettell, We Have Already Cried, and Anderson and Higgs.

The Toronto woman said, in fact, her mother "obeyed" her father and was "afraid of him."<sup>50</sup> Two others, however, made it clear that their mother ran the household and made the decisions. A third father defaulted on any authority he might have had in the household when he absented himself in railroad camps and Vancouver coffee shops.<sup>51</sup>

It appears many mothers and fathers maintained emotional and physical distance at least when their children were around. One man "never saw them kissing each other." His parents hugged openly when they departed on a trip to "Europe". In his opinion, "the so-called Canadian family had more affection." Another said, "I don't see any Portuguese adults being as affectionate as Canadian adults are." A third subject said there was affection shown between his parents and put it this way: "between my mom and my dad, yeah; between my dad and my mom, not so much." That was typical of Portuguese families he thought where "the woman would cater to the husband like a maid" and say, perhaps, "get me a glass of water, get me this, get me that."<sup>52</sup>

A few subjects mentioned marital problems between their parents. One woman thought her parents had a "dysfunctional relationship." She recalled her mother's humorous attempts to disengage her father from the television set. One father left

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<sup>50</sup>F16377; M15870; M15967; M15367; F97072.

<sup>51</sup>F15356; M25168; F15570. The Kitimat father did not appear to have master status. F36500.

<sup>52</sup>M15367; M15870; M15971.

for Portugal for a time and only later did the mother leave to join him. One subject learned in Canada that the father had been "jealous", and had "probably spanked" the mother in Portugal, something which apparently changed in Vancouver. From virtual non-existence in the homeland, the divorce rate was climbing among the Vancouver Portuguese just as it had in other New World contexts where women were becoming more emancipated.<sup>53</sup> In Vancouver, some married Portuguese women also learned to assert themselves even more when they were left at home while "the guys are going all night" at the "pool halls" and watching the "strippers." One subject observed a few couples divorced in their "thirties and forties" in Vancouver, not because of extra-marital affairs, but because wives were neglected while men went "hunting" and "weekend after weekend the wife sits at home."<sup>54</sup>

Only a few spoke of relationships with siblings. Some had good relationships. Three did not. One girl "never had a sisterly relationship" with her older sister, who had "a beach party sensibility." What she recalled "very clearly" was accompanying her sister and her boyfriend in the car: "he used to throw quarters at me in the back to look the other way." Another girl said she "didn't have a good relationship" with a brother

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<sup>53</sup>F15356; M15367; F15570. In Fall River, Massachusetts, the divorce among the Portuguese who have been found there for several generations became "a real epidemic": in Bristol County, Massachusetts, 60% of all divorce cases were among the Portuguese-Americans though only 35% of the total population was of Portuguese "stock". Leo Pap, The Portuguese Americans (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981), 129.

<sup>54</sup>M15367.

whom she felt had treated her "with disdain" and hadn't done as much housework as she did. Another girl became closer to a sister six years her junior than to a brother who was closer to her own age. The fact that her brother got a bike though neither of the sisters ever did was particularly "frustrating" for her. The teen who sometimes stood up to his parents on behalf of a sister was "good friends" with his younger brother who became his best man at his wedding. As an older teen, he felt his father put pressure on him to advise the younger brother, and so he "was more like a father" to him.<sup>55</sup>

Adolescent outlooks were probably shaped to a degree by family members. In most narratives, references to fathers overshadowed those made to mothers who seemed to have been forgotten somehow. One woman developed a keen sense of responsibility toward a younger brother, an artifact she attributed to being the oldest child. Her interest in working with children continued past her adolescence. Another subject said she maintained the "same ideals" in Vancouver, ideals forged in part, by family as well as a priest in the homeland whom she had admired. Here, both sisters remained "very much" in the presence of family. The older one "didn't have much peer pressure" stimulating change. She recollected that in school she "would voice my ideas ... I guess because of the way we were brought up -- we knew what we wanted." In contrast to a childhood dream, her younger sister "didn't expect" and "didn't

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<sup>55</sup>F15668; F15356; F16170; M15971.

want" to get married or have children "because I didn't want to love anybody as much as my family." One woman thought a more feminist mother had helped foster her independence while she thought her father had not contributed any sense of ambition to her. And, of course, one fifteen year-old denied himself schooling in Vancouver because of his sense of responsibility to his mother.<sup>56</sup>

However strict their upbringing had been, adolescents thought that growing up in a Portuguese family had value. One subject "never rebelled" against his parents. He had been "curious, a risktaker" and "could have got into drugs" as a youth if he hadn't listened "what my dad has taught me." He remembers fondly sitting and listening "for hours" to the stories that "built character" told by "older folks, the wise men" there in Portugal as well as here in Vancouver. Another attached the same merit to the folklore he remembers being told, especially "there." A third reminisced about the long conversations that took place consistently at the dinner table in Vancouver. The Penticton subject thought the family unit had been useful during his adolescence for practical reasons. He thought any sense of career drive he may have had was not an intrinsic one. It was "a drive not from myself, but from my parents -- the same thing that Chinese kids are going through right now ... the drive is a family-oriented drive".<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>F15570; F15356; M16075; F16400; F16177; F16377.

<sup>57</sup>M15367; M15565; M15870; M25168.

## IV

Portuguese families maintained some important traditional practices in Vancouver. For many, Sundays consisted of church, and family gatherings. The Vancouver-born woman said it "got extremely important to my father in my teens" that "every Sunday was family day." The family took Sunday drives "as far as Chilliwack", and had picnics in parks and beaches, sometimes even spontaneously on a weekday "as soon as Dad would walk in the door." For a middle-class Lisbon family, "Sundays were pretty much a Portuguese day", consisting of church followed by cozida portuguesa, Portuguese cooking. This family often spent the day with other Portuguese families with whom they might go iceskating, for example. Car trips on weekends, and longer holidays in general remained important to those families who had enjoyed that in Portugal. Another Lisbon subject, however, didn't think much of similar excursions in Canada. Gone were the numerous automobile trips into the small villages of the continent, even Spain, to sample the wine and the good food he remembered the family had enjoyed. He considered this to be a critical difference between "there" and "here" as far as how his family spent their time together. He explained, "our whole society revolves around food, everything we do revolves around food, not great quantities ... but the quality, the taste, the atmosphere." In Canada, the entire family missed the "typical little places ... I think that's the biggest thing that we lost." They tried to maintain the extensive Sunday drives they had once

enjoyed, but "we'd drive to Hope -- what is there, a drive-in and a hamburger."<sup>58</sup>

One Portuguese tradition that did not disappear within Vancouver homes was the serving of Portuguese food. In one family: "We still had our bacalhao [salt cod], our caldo verde [soup with potatoes and kale]." Many families continued to eat chorizo (spicy sausage), cozido a portuguesa, carne asada, roast meat marinated in wine and garlic. Another ate "cuzidos [stews] of pigs' feet, meats, potatoes, cabbage, chorizo" all boiled together as well as "a lot of spicy" foods. One family's fare remained "predominantly Portuguese": batatas con bacalhao (potatoes and salt cod), sardinhas, as well as cuzido portuguesa and quizado (another stew). In one Continental household pigeons and quail were sometimes served and occasionally they drove to a Portuguese-farm in Richmond for rabbits or for a cabrito, a kid. Even the Vancouver-born teen ate caldo verde and she "loved" favas (stewed broad beans), but "hated" salt cod. Mothers who worked in restaurants probably influenced the family's dinner fare. One "started making a lot of soups" while another began serving apple pies.<sup>59</sup>

Whether they emigrated as children or adolescents, these subjects continued to speak Portuguese in the home. The pharmacist's son spoke "always Portuguese, never English," to parents at home, even when his anglophone friends were in the

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<sup>58</sup>F16400; M15870; M15468.

<sup>59</sup>F15570; M15870; F16377; M15367; F16400; F15570; M25168.

house. He remembers translating for his friends which he did without any embarrassment. Some were aware their parents spoke poor Portuguese and one adolescent who spoke "a working Portuguese" took steps to learn formal Portuguese as an adult. A Michaelense admitted to a difficulty understanding the conversation of some Continental Portuguese, notably the Consul, to this day. Another father, "always made us speak Portuguese at home and my Dad never learned to speak English properly." His father became more fluent in English after a six-month stint in a northern railway camp, a skill he quickly lost once back in Vancouver. One man who emigrated as a youngster spoke only Portuguese to his parents with whom he lived until an adult.<sup>60</sup>

Over time, there was a general decrease of Portuguese language use, and fluency, particularly among younger siblings.<sup>61</sup> One man said his brother blended English and Portuguese, which some term "Portingles", when he spoke to his parents. Another subject continues to speak only Portuguese to his parents while his younger brother "speaks in English and they return in Portuguese" -- a pattern followed by a brother and

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<sup>60</sup>M15967; F15356; M15565. M16170. Also CBC, The Portuguese Community, video.

<sup>61</sup>In 1971, the Portuguese were represented as having the highest mother-tongue retention rates of the ethnic groups studied followed closely by the Greek, Chinese, and Italians. Of course, given their time of arrival in Canada, the Portuguese also had the lowest numbers of second- and third-generation families, followed closely by Greeks. One can expect mother-tongue language retention to be higher in Toronto with a greater number and density of Portuguese. K.G. O'Bryan, J.G. Reitz, and O.M. Kuplowski, Non-Official Languages: A Study in Canadian Multiculturalism (Ottawa: 1976), 211; 34, 208-9; 56-7.

sister when one was angry with the other.<sup>62</sup> As one subject noted, the presence of an offspring's disability might shift the family "focus" from the fact that a family were "immigrants" to an intensification of the desire to learn English.

The traditions in the home subjects remembered best were those clustered about Christmas. A Michaelense family continued to follow the homeland Advent custom of setting wheat to sprout. A custom among some Continentals seemed to be the serving of salt cod before Midnight Mass which continued in Vancouver. One Lisbon family then opened presents after Midnight Mass and served a "traditional" meal of fried pork, steamed clams mixed with onions and sauce and lima beans.<sup>63</sup> Christmas Eve was one of the rare times a daughter witnessed parents spending time together. The two would take up the evening making sugar-sprinkled filhaos, flat dough fried in a cast-iron pan. One man said Christmas here involved "the turkey dinner", "visiting friends" and "storytelling", but there was a less religious tone than in Serra. Here, probably fewer families built a prezapió, a nativity scene, while more of them set up a Christmas tree -- a practice which did not seem to be new to some Lisbon families. Birthdays were celebrated, but I had the sense, as one man in

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<sup>62</sup>The Penticton youth quickly immersed himself in anglophone culture. There was probably "a tiny bit" of anti-Portugueseness when he began to answer his mother in English. His sister, later born in Canada, "did the same thing." M25168.

<sup>63</sup>M15367; M15971; F15570; F15668.

fact said, "it wasn't a big thing" in many homes.<sup>64</sup>

Parents had varying expectations towards the social freedom they permitted their children, dispositions that seemed to have more to do with socio-economic status in the homeland than geographic origin. Some, cherishing memories of the homeland they remembered, appeared to intensify parental controls in Vancouver even as Portugal -- and Portuguese parents changed. One man whose family was "the first Portuguese family" in Vancouver pointed out that when his grandmother later visited she remarked, in his words, "boy, these Portuguese people here are backwards." In the Portuguese church, she also noted differences: "it's like when you guys left the old country."<sup>65</sup>

Here, many parents simply did not want their children to grow up like other children they saw about them and they were very specific in their strictures. They did not want their children to stay out late, and some did not even want them to socialize after school. They were especially afraid that their adolescent children would resort to drugs and that daughters would date. Yet it is obvious that some Portuguese children, probably a minority, were granted considerable social freedom. For others, such freedom was only possible when they were free from the parental gaze. Some fell upon the use of deceit while others clearly looked forward to the school day.

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<sup>64</sup>M15367; F15570.

<sup>65</sup>CBC, The Portuguese Community, video.

#### Chapter 4 -- Portuguese Children in Vancouver Schools

Portuguese children and adolescents found their Vancouver schools to be different from those they remembered. Three emigrants who had finished their Portuguese schooling discovered that most Vancouver children under the age of fifteen were engaged in school labours, as working-class families had "increasingly" come "to view high school graduation as the natural end of schooling."<sup>1</sup> These three subjects returned to school. Two other emigrants, one fifteen, the other sixteen, immediately began to work full-time. This chapter first investigates emigrants' early experiences in Vancouver classrooms and differences between Portuguese and Canadian schools that seemed to remain important. It also reports some of their positive and negative school experiences here. Finally, it examines parental perceptions of Vancouver schools as well as parental attempts to involve themselves in their children's formal education.

During the Portuguese parliamentary republic, 1910-26, some

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<sup>1</sup>"The 1951 Census found only 437 boys and 70 girls under age 15 in full-time work" in the province. Yet some children under fifteen were working "virtually full-time, especially in domestic situations." Neil Sutherland, "'We always had things to do' the Paid and Unpaid Work of Anglophone Children Between the 1920s and the 1960s," Labour/Le Travail 25 (Spring 1990): 135, 110.

progressive educational reformers "were proud to have substituted the ABC for God" in Portuguese curriculum.<sup>2</sup> Even within Salazar's Estado Novo, 1932-69, progressives criticized the poor state of Portuguese education as "the principal obstacle to national development."<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, between 1902 and 1960 only three years of compulsory education were required. In 1960, a fourth year of attendance, but not necessarily completion of the quarta classe, was added. In 1967, six years were made compulsory, though this was enforceable only after 1972 and only on the Continent. In 1973, larger cities experimented with eight years.<sup>4</sup>

The Portuguese state seemed intent upon ushering students into simple classrooms as much to make pacific, deeply-patriotic and Catholic citizens, as to provide a rudimentary education.<sup>5</sup> A few facts attest to this. Portugal had the highest reported illiteracy rate in Europe in 1968.<sup>6</sup> Primary teachers had low education levels relative to their university-trained liceu counterparts and relied upon simple rote teaching. There was an insufficient number of schools, and facilities were generally

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<sup>2</sup>Gallagher, Portugal, 99.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. For the New State: 65, 168.

<sup>4</sup>Anderson and Higgs, 141.

<sup>5</sup>Gallagher, 99. Compare with the early twentieth-century British context where schooling consisted of "school work devised to produce an obedient and unquestioning labour force for the new factories and offices," and learning hovered about the "Three Rs." See Humphries et. al., A Century of Childhood, 27.

<sup>6</sup>Anderson and Higgs, A Future to Inherit, p. 141.

inadequate.<sup>7</sup> From 1940, the Church had control over religious education in all schools.<sup>8</sup>

Within such schools, teachers delivered a highly-centralized and nationalistic curriculum without parental and teachers' "managerial input."<sup>9</sup> Among other subjects, Portuguese children learned the nationalistic epic poem of Os Lusíadas by the celebrated writer, Luis de Camoes, and they memorized the history of Portuguese kings, navigation, and padrões (stone markers) erected along the African coast.<sup>10</sup> Even in 1974, at least according to the Minister of National Education,

National education ... cannot not help having as a goal of molding of good Portuguese -- creating in them a love for the Fatherland and habits of work, initiative, discipline, fulfilment of duties, and correction of manners.<sup>11</sup>

Portuguese schools moved rapidly through the curriculum. A Michaelense in primeira classe, grade one, received a History, Mathematics, and Science book. She "learned to write, not print." In this first year, students also learned multiplication and division; in the second grade, syllabication.<sup>12</sup> In grade two a student learned "all the different dynasties ... and you

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<sup>7</sup>Rogers, 363.

<sup>8</sup>Brettell, We Have Already Cried, 34-5.

<sup>9</sup>Rogers, 347-8.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 291.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 344.

<sup>12</sup>Cornelius Lee Grove, "Cross-Cultural Problems Facing Older Portuguese Students in American Schools" [1977], 3ff.

[had] to know all the kings in order, what happened during that time."<sup>13</sup> Students who went on past quarta classe were taught French in the fifth grade and English in the seventh.

My informants saw or experienced far more frequent corporal punishment in Portuguese schools than they would later encounter in Vancouver. In one Lisbon state-run school where "teachers were all heavy disciplinarians, they strapped at will," one young boy witnessed "kids being strapped pretty well every class -- every day." Punishment seemed to be meted out spontaneously: one boy who turned in a library book with soiled pages was "hit" first and "then" asked for an explanation. Children were slapped with an open hand across the forehead, or were "whipped" across the palms by rulers, yardsticks, or a rubber strap. The threat of physical punishment hung over even the best students who could suffer for making errors on a dictation or for failing to listen to the teacher. Sometimes, they were even selected to punish their own classmates.<sup>14</sup> However little pedagogical freedom they experienced within the classroom, they enjoyed considerable social freedom the minute they stepped outside those walls.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>F16377.

<sup>14</sup>One exceptional student was made to "kneel on rocks" when she resisted a teacher's order: F16377. M15565; F15570; M15967. Another study reported that two fathers had sent young daughters to Portugal to attend school. There, both experienced similar punishments. Pinto, "Growing up Portuguese in Canadian Schools," 8. This rigid authoritarian atmosphere is not too different from that reconstructed of early twentieth-century British schools. See Humphries et. al., A Century of Childhood.

<sup>15</sup>See Grove, "Cross-Cultural Problems", 3-7.

The two Michaelense sisters were the only ones to emigrate after the 1974 Revolution. According to them, younger teachers, some with radical ideas, began to take their turn in front of classes. At least one school on the island was paralyzed by a strike that lasted several months. Classrooms became places of debate, some students became quite political and "fourteen, fifteen" year-olds not only debated party platforms openly, but claimed to belong to "such and such a party."<sup>16</sup>

## I

Most subjects attended Vancouver public and not Catholic schools. Within the public school, many spent varying amounts of time in multi-age New Canadian classes to learn English before entering regular classes. If they did not go to such classes, they were generally placed with younger children until they could pick up the language after which they might be accelerated to more age-appropriate classes. In the 1969/70 school year, however, at least two Portuguese females in Vancouver would leave their grade nine class at, or very near, the age of seventeen.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>F16377; F16177.

<sup>17</sup>A scan of Vancouver School Board Registers of Britannia, Vancouver Technical, Gladstone, Windermere, and Charles Tupper Secondary Schools revealed some "Portuguese" surnames. But in the 70s, Portuguese and Italian names are clearly overshadowed by Chinese ones. In 1986, a random sample of 653 students in East Vancouver schools was broken down into the following "Cultural Groups": Chinese, 281; English, 153; Italian, 45; Indo/Hindu, 35; Vietnamese, 27; Sikh, 21; European, 21; Portuguese 14. The breakdown for the South Vancouver sample is roughly similar. Table IX, Vancouver School Board, Evaluation Report on the Vancouver School Board's Race Relations Policy (Donald Fisher and Frank

The two sisters and their siblings entered the Vancouver public school system, split between two east-side Vancouver elementary schools. The two sisters entered regular and not New Canadian classes, but the younger still thought:

The school board had made a mistake and sent me back to grade four even though I had completed it. I had just won an award [in the Azores] two months before for being the best student of all the islands and they put me back in grade four and not even anywhere close to my home.<sup>18</sup>

Not all parents wanted their children in public schools, of course. One set of parents opted to enroll their daughter in a Catholic School as well as paying for a tutor when they found out their nine year-old daughter would not be accepted in a regular class in a public school because she "didn't know a word of English." The Vancouver-born girl was enrolled in a catholic high school because her parents "always thought catholic schools were better than public ones ... I really had no choice ... education was always important to them." In another case, a young girl was enrolled in a Chinese catholic elementary school probably for the practical reason that it was closer to her home. For a time, this girl believed that Jesus Christ was "Chinese."<sup>19</sup>

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Echols), March 1989, 27.

<sup>18</sup>F16377. She later corrected her story: she was the first Michaelense to receive a full "20" marks in Mathematics. 6 October 1992.

<sup>19</sup>F16170; F16400; F15356.

There were mixed feelings about first experiences in Vancouver schools. A seven year-old who had spent only a few months in a Portuguese elementary class which he now characterized as "rigid", thought there had been less emphasis on learning in his Vancouver school. He had resented the "naps" he was forced to take. Emigration had interrupted a "fifth year" of strenuous studies on Sao Miguel for one boy and here he spent "one year watching Sesame Street" in his New Canadians class for an hour every day, in addition to reciting "1, 2, 3s, ABCs." One subject pointed out that in his first year of "high school" in Lisbon, he "was doing the new Math, infinitives, and all that stuff." He didn't think much of the "kindergarten stuff" presented to him in the New Canadian class. A few, however, said they didn't mind being with younger children. One subject who completed Grade 12 at the age of nineteen said his school had acted prematurely in their decision to advance him to another grade. Whether he felt that way as a child or not, he now felt that others who had remained behind a little longer had had more success later in school. One Lisbon youth's experiences in a New Canadian class seemed almost pleasant. In his multi-aged class, immigrant students were largely European. Some could converse in French which he knew and they shared an interest in soccer. Along with others in that class, he had observed that Canadian students generally did not seem interested in discussing politics much. He recollects there were no particular problems fitting into the New Canadian class; indeed, he summarized his

experiences, but not those of others, with the statement, "children being children, everyone gets along."<sup>20</sup>

Attempts to forge friendships met with varying levels of success and frustration. In one catholic school, a teacher "introduced" a nine-year old to "an Italian girl", which was of little use, because "I didn't speak Italian and she didn't speak Portuguese!"<sup>21</sup> Emigrating from a milieu where the school was the nucleus of close friendships, the younger of the two sisters felt alienated at her east-side public elementary school. It was not the numbers of "Chinese" students per se that made her feel this way; rather, it was because "there [was] nobody that we could talk to not even in English because the Chinese kids didn't speak English either."<sup>22</sup> The seven-year old who had entered kindergarten was never really comfortable in elementary classes here. He even dreaded going to those classes where some "isolate[d] you as being different" and "would be there picking on you again." After an "odd scrap or two", this boy "started staying away from the bad kids" and he continued to look towards teachers to create a "certain environment" of safety and learning. This is not too different from what Cornelius Lee Grove summarized, through his fictionalized student, as the

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<sup>20</sup>M16370; M15971; M15565, M16170; M15468.

<sup>21</sup>F16170.

<sup>22</sup>F16377. According to the 1977 VSB Task Force on English, 28% of secondary students were ESL. The number of Chinese-speaking students was rising and accounted for 14.9% of total VSB enrolment. Cited in Mary Ashworth, The Forces Which Shape Them (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1979), 88-9.

differences between an Azorean school context and the American one:

In my opinion, the best situation of all would be to be in a school where the students were disciplined as they are in Portugal, but where the teachers taught as they do in America. In Portugal, I feared my teachers. In America, I fear my fellow students.<sup>23</sup>

These emigrants quickly realized that the intent behind punishment in Vancouver schools was different. Two subjects said they were strapped here -- but for social misbehaviour such as "fighting." In Portuguese schools, however, corporal punishment had been administered for substandard academic performance: "if you didn't know something, especially one of them, would hit you across the forehead ... with their hand." Or, "if you didn't do your homework ... for every misspelt word you'd get whipped on your hand ... if you couldn't read properly ... actually for anything they would whip you with that yardstick." Consequently, one ten year-old was "scared, really scared" during his first dictation in a Vancouver school and began "crying, hollering", petrified that the "teacher was going to slug me."<sup>24</sup> The Lisbon girl had disliked her "depressing" "grey" and "militant" state school, but here, was "really shocked" by "the lack of discipline in the classroom ... how a teacher could not have control of the students." She found it "really disgusting" that students were "really unruly, very rude." Her brother, on the other hand,

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<sup>23</sup>M16370. Grove, "Cross-Cultural Problems", 15.

<sup>24</sup>M15967; F15668; F16170; M15565.

thought that student deportment in Canada was probably "better" than that exhibited by those in his class of repetants (repeaters). Another Lisbon youth despised being treated "like a kid" in his Vancouver school. In his liceu students had been well-dressed, conducted themselves properly, and had been extended greater social freedom and "respect." Older students were even permitted to order and consume a beer in the cafeteria, though most would not. "There" he "was a somebody" and was treated with more dignity; even the janitor of the school addressed him as "Senhor."<sup>25</sup>

There appeared to be consensus on the matter of the provincial curriculum not being as academically-demanding as the Portuguese one. Some were not only proud of this, but wished schools here had been the same.<sup>26</sup> Subjects consistently made reference to an elementary grade in Portugal being equal to a numerically-higher grade in Vancouver. One boy who would have gone "only to grade four" if he had not emigrated from the rural Continent suggested its Canadian equivalent: "it wouldn't be a grade four level, it would be more like a grade ten level." Another who had finished schooling on the rural Continent had "quarta classe, fourth class, whatever that means here, grade six or seven, maybe." One bright female student also from the rural Continent, found her "college" there, "a lot harder ... when I

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<sup>25</sup>F15668; M15468; M15870.

<sup>26</sup>M16370; M15971; M15870. For similar complaints, see Grove, "Cross-Cultural Problems" as well as his "Six Non-Language Related Problems Facing Older Immigrant Portuguese Students."

came here, I found school super easy." The Lisbon girl thought "school here was a lot easier than school there ... scholastically, I was way above their [other non-Portuguese classmates'] knowledge .... I didn't have to work too hard to get good marks." Here, said the pharmacist's son, "I noticed that everyone passed the first few years. If you showed up, you passed. I didn't know any English -- I passed .... In Portugal I remember a lot of kids didn't pass into grade two." A "lot" of his "street friends" stayed in grade one.<sup>27</sup>

Those informants who had attended Portuguese schools emigrated well-prepared for some subjects. Mathematics, in particular, was touted by many to be taught at a much higher level than here in Vancouver schools. One arrival "understood" only the "Math, the arithmetic" which was learned at such a "faster rate" that "grade two" Mathematics in Portugal "was good for [grade] five." The thirteen year-old sister said she arrived already familiar with English grammar and could read English only months after her arrival; moreover, she thought "compared to Portuguese grammar, English is a laugh." However, many other subjects cited difficulty with language in the beginning as their biggest problem in school. A home-school liaison worker with Portuguese families in Vancouver in the late 1970s also thought that language generally remained the salient problem for the first five years of residency.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>M15565; M15367; F15570; F15668; M15967.

<sup>28</sup>F16377; M15367. Interview, 1 September 1992.

A few subjects did not appreciate fully the intent of some of the "fun" activities, or those involving operational thinking, in Vancouver schools. Grove concluded that "virtually without exception," immigrant Portuguese students considered schooling in America "comparatively very easy" and that they tended to "react poorly" to films, filmstrips, and "other activities which are intended to be enjoyed by the students." He cites one student who, disgusted by the "fun" features of American education, said, Ja não somos crianças! ("we are no longer children").<sup>29</sup>

There were other youths like Tiago who harboured a desire to go to school here, but did not do so. A fourteen year-old who emigrated to Vancouver in 1962 said that many others his age did not finish high school. One subject's older brother was one of those who began to work to help repay a father's "debt." The Penticton subject pointed out that it was "very unusual, very unusual" and "very tough" for a seventeen-year old emigrant youth to complete high school as he did.<sup>30</sup> Such testimony was but a small window into the lives of other Portuguese teenagers who faced another set of circumstances in the world of work.<sup>31</sup>

## II

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<sup>29</sup>Grove, "Cross-Cultural Problems", 19-22.

<sup>30</sup>M14862. M25168. M15367. In one "problem" inner-city Toronto Catholic school where Portuguese (Azoreans) predominate, even youths with good grades dropped out to support the family economy. See Peter McLaren, Schooling as a Ritual Performance (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986).

<sup>31</sup>M14862; M15367; M25168.

Those subjects who were permitted more social freedom by parents seemed to integrate more fully into the social life of the school while two others from restrictive families viewed schools as an ideal opportunity to socialize more freely. These generally had more positive things to say about Vancouver schools. Others saw schools differently. An athletic girl with a very strict mother participated in Vancouver track and field meets, and "some basketball", but not in the evening. She was never allowed out "until my parents went to Portugal and I got married." Even away from parental eyes, she socialized little. In grade ten, incoming grade eight students would butt out cigarettes when they saw her entering the washroom "because I dressed and carried myself as a teacher." The thirteen year-old sister "hated" Canadian schools, "felt stupid" and disliked the prejudice she saw "when all the racial fights started ... fights with bats between Chinese and whites." She sometimes tried to set things straight, particularly in one History class where she thought the teacher gave her free rein to do so. Her story is worth telling, because this vocal adolescent dared utter what other immigrants probably thought, but did not say:

After we'd been here eight months, my dad bought a house and when I told some of the kids at school they got mad because they said that we came here and stole their jobs and we were making all this money -- that we could afford to buy a house and a car and yet their parents couldn't. So I got really mad and I told them all off ... I told everybody exactly what my life was all about and I said, if you think I'm stealing your job, you can go clean toilets any day for me, but you don't want that kind of job, so don't tell me I

stole those jobs from you.<sup>32</sup>

A few were even more negative about their overall experiences in Canadian schools. One middle-class son was adamant that "from grade eight to grade twelve, [he] never learned one thing about the history of Canada." He pointed out he had come from "a very challenging system" where the "teachers didn't give a shit" if you passed or failed, to another context where "you could just talk your way through grade twelve." Here, there was "no motivation -- at all. There was no challenge." Here, he made up his "own story" as a book report at the last minute to get a "C, C plus -- just enough to pass." According to him, he had one goal in high school: "to finish the stupid thing and get out of there." Another middle-class adolescent didn't seem to have great difficulties in Canadian schools but thought that high school "here" left him with "very poor work habits" and did not "prepare you for university." One subject who had emigrated in the late fifties as a young child thought that schooling at her particular high school "was pathetic to say the least for a woman." She thought, "being of the female gender had a lot to do" with being steered into a commercial stream" for she had always been a very academic student. A six-month long visit to Portugal had jeopardized her school year. She chose a "pass" with the condition that she enter the "commercial" program that

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<sup>32</sup>F15570; F16377. Of course, admitting that as an immigrant, she did a dirty job, she probably did little to bridge perceived differences that were already there.

"most women went into" and felt the nature of the counsel she received "was definitely an East-end thing."<sup>33</sup>

Some had positive experiences in Vancouver schools. For these, invariably, it was because they integrated more fully into social aspect of school. The pharmacist's son who had enjoyed considerable social freedom at home said he "really looked forward to going to high school" after an early morning run, and "an hour blow-drying" "shoulder-length hair" which "had to look just right every day." "School was a big social event" for this youth and he did not recall that there were negative experiences. While the Penticton youth viewed his school as much more "lax" than his Portuguese one, it was clear he also appreciated its "freedom." The Vancouver-born woman said her experiences "were generally quite positive", and she had been treated with "quite a bit of respect." She considered herself a class "leader", had served on the Student Council, and had participated in extra-curricular activities such as dancing, music, basketball, scorekeeping, and counselling. Unlike a few others, her "lunch hours were socializing times." Her negative experiences "were mostly related to the fact that it was a Catholic high school" she attended. Like the Kitimat girl, the Lisbon girl was active in sports, went to "all the basketball games" and track and field meets and also became involved in a major fund-raising campaign in her school.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>M15468; M15870; F15356.

<sup>34</sup>M15967; M25168; F15668; Emphasis in narrative, F16400.

High school was an opportunity to escape parental eyes. One youth whose "fighting years were only in elementary school" and whose parents restricted his socialization well into his teens, considered "high school probably my most favourite time of all in Canada." He skipped classes with friends. The girl who had maintained a clandestine relationship with a boyfriend for three years, and was restricted from going out of the house, maintained a discrete and separate sphere at her east-side secondary school. There, she "was always accepted in the 'in' group ... the popular group." She could not think of another Portuguese girl in her school that was as integrated as she was, but saw "loners" who "were always by themselves."<sup>35</sup>

Often a teacher or counsellor was influential in their school life.<sup>36</sup> Despite her "horrific memory of high school" which was "a prison to me", the woman who had gone into the "commercial" stream, said two teachers nurtured her academic side, "this whole other area that wasn't touched." These were "very extraordinary teachers who made me, who kept me there somehow." One teacher in particular was "quite a remarkable woman ... my earliest recollection of a feminist woman and she made a big impression on me." The younger of the two sisters described having two counsellors "who were the best", who would "stick out in [her] mind forever." They pulled her out of class

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<sup>35</sup>M15565; F16170.

<sup>36</sup>Five of the subjects, all female, said that they had thought of teaching as a career while growing up. None became a teacher.

"just to talk." They also requested teachers not to put so much pressure on her because she was "not a regular kid" but was working in the evenings as well, and therefore could not always complete homework. One youth from a Lisbon private school admired his public school teachers for their approachability and the interest they took in him. In "only my second year in Canada" his "artistic abilities" in literature received "a lot of support" from one English teacher who helped him develop that interest. One adolescent continued to look for fair and sensitive teachers who could provide a safe learning "environment" and continued to feel "learning was a bit easier when a student felt good being in that class." He clearly preferred those teachers that had used a simple approach, and "took time to explain certain concepts." He resented those who employed methodologies that "always" seemed to have a "piece missing."<sup>37</sup>

Informal interviews with two teachers who taught in East-End and south Vancouver secondary schools in the mid-1960s, resulted only in one teacher's observation that Portuguese kids, generally-speaking, did "well" or "very well" in school. One teacher could not recall any particular "social problems or language difficulties" among the Portuguese who were in Vancouver classes during this study period. While "there may have been

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<sup>37</sup>F15356; F16177; M15468. M16370: this theme of caution arose variously in this particular interview. Of course, this subject did not mention that had he continued in an Azorean school he might have encountered less safety and teacher explanation at the hands of some of his teachers.

family problems", this teacher "never saw that in the classroom," and recalled, these "kids fit into both of their worlds." Many had been "in the system since grade one ... they were Canadian kids, not like foreigners." The other teacher added other minority students were more visible in multicultural classrooms; in fact, the "Portuguese" this teacher recalled best were two Brazilian youths who had been good students.<sup>38</sup>

### III

Some Portuguese parents took a keen interest in maintaining their children's fluency in Portuguese as well as their familiarity with Portuguese culture, a position researchers have recommended for immigrant children, including the Portuguese.<sup>39</sup> Some parents placed their children in the Portuguese Saturday school<sup>40</sup> -- while others even sent their children back to Portugal to attend school there for a few years.<sup>41</sup> The supplementary school was started in 1968 by Mario Cipriano; it received "three qualified teachers" from Portugal in 1971 and

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<sup>38</sup>July, 1992; August, 1992.

<sup>39</sup>See Wallace Lambert "Persistent Issues in Bilingualism," The Development of Second Language Proficiency. Birjit Harley et. al. eds. The Cambridge Applied Linguistics Series. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 218.

<sup>40</sup>Again, the Portuguese are not unique for setting up Saturday Schools. There is a much larger Chinese school operating on the same premises on Saturdays. For examples of Croatian and Lithuanian Saturday schools in Toronto, see Robert F. Harney, ed., Polyphony: Toronto's People 6 1 (Toronto: MHSO, Spring/Summer 1984), 59, 105.

<sup>41</sup>Conversation, F16377, 29 September 1992. Pinto, 8.

enrolled 100 students the next year.<sup>42</sup> It was officially recognized by the Portuguese government in 1979 to the grade four level, which meant students "could enter grade five in Portugal" if they returned to the homeland. This had been a motive of some Portuguese parents, particularly in the past.<sup>43</sup> Students were taught Portuguese language, history, and culture and older students were also taught Portuguese geography. Certificates of Portuguese Studies were issued through the Portuguese Consulate in Vancouver which also provided all texts as offertas, gifts.

During this period, only two of these subjects were enrolled in this Portuguese language school. One woman said she wasn't "even familiar with it at the time." The man who sought "fairness" and more explanation from Canadian teachers, attended for "two or three years", but wasn't impressed by it. He "did well in it", but added, "all they did was, you would read the passage, memorize the words and regurgitate it ... that wasn't learning ... I didn't find it very useful."<sup>44</sup>

The Saturday school changed over time. Whatever the parental motive in the past, the current Director thought that the probability of "return" to the homeland had greatly diminished over time. The Portuguese Church in Vancouver was "involved" with the school until the mid-1980s at which point

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<sup>42</sup>Anderson and Higgs, 138-9.

<sup>43</sup>Information on this school was provided by a Director of the Saturday School centered at Sir Charles Tupper Secondary. Taped interview, 27 January 1992. Also F16377, 29 Sept. 1992.

<sup>44</sup>M15367; F15570; M16370.

some wished to separate education from the church. With time, Continental, rather than Azorean children were more likely to be found in their classes.<sup>45</sup> The school continued to provide basic instruction in Portuguese language and culture. In Vancouver, as in Toronto, some of its language teachers no doubt served as "sympathetic" "anchor points" who worked to build "bridges of understanding" between Portuguese children and their parents.<sup>46</sup>

Portuguese have raised families in Canada for over three decades, but men and women from this group continue to be found at the bottom of occupational mobility tables.<sup>47</sup> One Toronto priest thought the Portuguese had not taken full advantage of the Ontario educational system.<sup>48</sup> As late as 1986, even a short Portuguese publication levelled the following statement at emigrant Portuguese parents who "do not project themselves" into the "life" of host countries, because

They come from such low horizons that, when they have been able to amass a sum of money, they believe

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<sup>45</sup>The Director said much the same thing in different words: "I am not sure I have even one [Azorean] student in my class."

<sup>46</sup>Prates, speech, p. 50. Interview with Director.

<sup>47</sup>The Portuguese exhibited the lowest occupational status for all three census years, 1971, 1981, and 1986 (except for males in 1986) while Greeks held the second-lowest status. See Neil Guppy and H. Lautard, "The Vertical Mosaic Revisited: Occupational Differentials Among Canadian Ethnic Groups," 189-208, Peter Li, ed., Race and Ethnic Relations (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1990), 202.

<sup>48</sup>He pointed out that there were Chinese, Spanish, and Italian doctors in that community, and remarked, "we should have by now a number of lawyers and doctors." McLaren, 77.

that they have arrived at a final triumph of life.<sup>49</sup>

In their burning desire to purchase a home and realize this "final triumph of life", some parents may not have been present to attend to other non-material aspects of parental responsibility such as overseeing their children's progress in school. Not only was "communication between teachers and parents often impeded by the language problem",<sup>50</sup> but there remained the very low level of education among Portuguese immigrant parents themselves who probably had an average of four years of formal education or less if they immigrated between 1953 and 1973.<sup>51</sup> One Vancouver father was ashamed to show a daughter how little he knew about some subject matter while another confessed, "I forgot about family and thought only about making money".<sup>52</sup> Caught between the dual labours of wage-earner and homemaker, mothers could not help.<sup>53</sup> Finally, many parents may have absented themselves from a more active role in their children's education because these parents simply did not take such a role in either the Azores or the Continent. Perhaps many employed a "faulty

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<sup>49</sup>Anderson and Higgs, cited in Fernando Nunes, Problems and Adjustments of the Portuguese Immigrant Family in Canada (Porto: Secretaria de Estado das Comunicades Portuguesas, 1986), 16.

<sup>50</sup>Nunes, 23.

<sup>51</sup>Anderson and Higgs, 136.

<sup>52</sup>Pinto, 7; Anderson and Higgs, 46.

<sup>53</sup>See Fernando Nunes, "Portuguese-Canadian Women", Jean R. Burnet, ed., Polyphony: Women and Ethnicity (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1986) 8 No. 1-2: 65.

frame of reference" when they worried over being called in to a principal's office,<sup>54</sup> but subjects had a more simple explanation: "there" lawyers and doctors did not talk to the "little people." Social distance was maintained between many parents and teachers. One woman said parents in Portugal "didn't confront the teacher" if their children were punished, "because the teacher had more education -- there was always that gap of having more education."<sup>55</sup>

Some of these subjects remembered their parents had been critical of Vancouver schools. One mother who had taught in Portugal considered her son's school "pathetic because she was used to that heavy-handed discipline." Furthermore, "she wanted Math, English, History, lots of discipline" and "said it was silly" that her son did "art in school" and had a "camera class" though "she didn't mind woodwork because she thought it was something I could use later." This mother's attitude also softened "because my marks were good and that's all she was interested about." Other parents, notably fathers, were concerned about how academic the work appeared to be, rather than how relevant it was. One father "saw some of the work I was doing here and he was taken aback" while another said, "you're still doing this?" Another would often say, "boy, we did this in grade one, you guys are still doing this in grade five?" One

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<sup>54</sup>Speech by Antonio Prates, Portuguese-Canadian Congress, New Canadians and Schools (Toronto: Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship), 50.

<sup>55</sup>M16075; F16170.

middle-class father, however, did not criticize beyond, "gee, these guys don't teach anything"; rather, his emphasis was less on the school, and more on how much effort his sons made within the system.<sup>56</sup> Other parents were probably concerned about the fact that schools taught sex education.<sup>57</sup>

According to most subjects, their parents were virtually uninvolved in their schooling. One remembers that her parents were "not really" involved with her schooling, though her father "would help" her with homework. Another adolescent used to write his own notes if he needed to stay home; report cards were read on his own and later "explained" to his parents. It was through his own initiative that he graduated, he said. He had hoped to be "pushed a little" into post-secondary education to which he had given some thought, by his father or even "an older brother to look up to." Two Lisbon parents took a very active role in teaching their children, but these appeared to be anomalous cases. The Penticton man said his mother "didn't have a clue" about his schoolwork. He "never did any homework at all. Never. And somehow I passed."<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>M15967; F15570; F16377; F16170; M15870.

<sup>57</sup>Schools taught "bad things" like sex education, a taboo subject in Portuguese families. "It's at school that they learn sex education, and (according to mothers), it's there where they learn to practice it." Dating was one of the "bad" ideas strictly disallowed by Portuguese parents. See Coelho, et. al., 16. This concern is echoed in Isabel Pinto's study of how Portuguese fathers viewed their daughter's education in Vancouver schools. Her five subjects, all fathers aged 35-45, emigrated in the sixties. (p. 2). They fit the biographical profile of many of my subjects.

<sup>58</sup>F15668; M15971; M25168.

Interviews with six Portuguese parents in 1991, three of whom were parents of school children in the 1960s<sup>59</sup> yielded some surprising attitudes towards Vancouver schools. There were some criticisms especially from two parents who still had children enrolled in school. One had enrolled her children in a Catholic school hearing there were "gangs" and too much liberdade in public schools. Another was very disappointed in the school's apparent failure to warn of an offspring's chronic truancy problem. One older subject thought students should be "pushed more in elementary school" and "schools and teachers should be more watchful for drugs" and criminal activities.

Those parents who had sent children to Vancouver schools during the sixties seemed less critical of schools. Some of the views these older parents held in fact countered what subjects remembered their parents had said and done, and what two studies show.<sup>60</sup> One older mother concluded that public schools in Canada prepared youth not for a job, but "for life." In her view, "this is what schools here do better than Portuguese schools -- schools should prepare a person for anything that

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<sup>59</sup>Three parents were retired; three others in their early forties. Taped interviews, five in Portuguese, March, April, 1991. Antonio Filomeno Arruda, "Portuguese-Canadian Parents view Anglophone Public Schools" (unpublished paper, UBC, May 1991)

<sup>60</sup>Pinto; Coelho et. al. Some change in parental perspective over time has probably taken place in the minds of older Portuguese parents. Anderson and Higgs suggested that over time, schools may have had a "Canadianizing" effect upon parents. p. 140. Long before this, of course, others had viewed schools as such a tool. James Thomas Milton Anderson, The Education of New Canadians (New York: R. M. McBride & Company, 1918).

arises." Activities such as field trips, sports, and TV programs in schools were not time-wasting according to this woman; indeed, she placed considerable emphasis upon "art" as "very important in a child's development." One older man said he had been concerned that a son had received insufficient learning assistance. He was aware of an ongoing teachers' strike and appeared to sympathize with teacher's demand for a decrease in class size. Another parent with a special needs grandchild had a very high regard for the Canadian educational system and postulated that the same child would not have received such attention from the Portuguese "government." She dismissed the notion that there was too much liberdade in schools and placed emphasis on the fact that her "children always came home content."

What these three parents said was not too different from what a few academic critics of the 1960 Royal Commission on Education once thought.<sup>61</sup> And those views were also more in-line with what a home-school liaison worker had observed: that by the end of the 1970s, at least, Portuguese parents were taking a vital interest in their children's education. Many had pushed their children toward post-secondary education; indeed, she said, "it breaks my heart when parents cry when they see the kids are not doing well" in school.<sup>62</sup> This source thought dropping out of school had been less of a problem among Vancouver Portuguese

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<sup>61</sup>See A Critical Evaluation of the Chant Commission Report on Education, reprinted from the Vancouver Sun (Delta Chapter, Phi Delta Kappa [1960]) especially, 22, 30, 32.

<sup>62</sup>Interview, 1 September, 1992.

adolescents, at least during the late seventies, compared to what she had learned was the situation in Toronto.<sup>63</sup>

This chapter can only begin to examine the schooling of Portuguese children in Vancouver. As the period of family residency in Vancouver lengthened, parental attitudes toward Canadian schools probably changed. For some parents the homeland wisdom of having one's children invest in the family economy surrendered ground to the wisdom of investing in their education. On the other hand, middle-class parents, some of whom had considerable education in the homeland certainly knew the value of education. Nonetheless, it appears only a few parents in this sample were active in their children's schooling. Emigrant children and adolescents perceived their Vancouver teachers and schools differently especially in the area of curriculum and classroom discipline. A few made comparisons between schools "there" and "here", but one cannot ascertain how long they made such comparisons as children and adolescents. Whatever else they were, schools were also places where teens could associate more freely with peers. The level of integration into the general school culture could not be determined by parental strictures. Those adolescents who could, or chose to, integrate into the social life of the school had the most positive things to say about their schooling in Vancouver.

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<sup>63</sup>Ibid. Retention rates for British Columbia were higher than those in any other province. British Columbia, Report of the Royal Commission on Education (Victoria, 1960), 48-9.

## Chapter 5 -- Growing up with Work

Work was an important feature in the lives of many Portuguese children and young people before as well as after their emigration to Vancouver. This chapter examines three aspects of growing up with work: the paid and unpaid work children and adolescents performed; the purpose of earnings; and the role of work in their young lives.

Work dominated the lives of youths and even children from poorer homes in Insular and Continental Portugal. Some children, along with many others they saw around, fulfilled the requirements of three, then four, and later six years of schooling and were working from the age of ten in agricultural and domestic, pre-industrial settings.<sup>1</sup> On Sao Miguel, Tiago, suddenly fatherless at the age of ten, turned down a scholarship to board and study "in the city" and thus closed the door on his dream of becoming a lawyer. No one blinked an eye over the fact that, beginning in 1970, he worked full-time in the forest six days a week, eight hours a day with "five or six" other boys his age, "trimming trees" and clearing rivers. He was "doing almost

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<sup>1</sup>Five had completed four years of schooling: M14862; M15565; M15367; F15773; M16075. None who discussed child labour spoke of settings such as sweatshops and factories, or of homes turning out piecework -- which is not to say children did not labour in such places. F16377; M15971; M15870.

a man's work" for which he was paid fourteen escudos, then about thirty cents a day, and had other tasks including daily gardening and weekly barbering. But "everybody else was the same", he explained, illustrating this with a contemporary parallel he had witnessed in Mexico.<sup>2</sup> There were "quite a few" other Michaelense boys working "full days" as agricultural labourers from the age of "ten, nine, even eight" in return for wages or for commodities "like wheat or corn."<sup>3</sup>

Girls from the poorer homes with "no money to buy shoes", without ever having a "new dress", did sometimes play "in the streets", but work is probably what they remember best. From a very young age, two sisters from a family of twelve would rise early at five to guard the crops from the praga ("plague" in the form of birds) for daily wages of between ten and twenty escudos. There were other daily tasks for children. They fetched water from "so far away", roved the hillsides scrounging sticks to return with a heavy load and scratched limbs: "and wood had to be dry -- not wet, nor green -- or we would receive pancadaria [a beating]." Diapers torn from old clothing had to be bleached by ashes and boiling water. If ever they had a spare moment, there was always ivy to gather and sell door-to-door as chicken feed and poor girls such as these were visible in the fields whenever

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<sup>2</sup>For a useful theoretical framework of child labour in an international context, as well as an intense account of details, see Roger Sawyer, Children Enslaved (London: Routledge, 1988).

<sup>3</sup>M15971.

a quick harvest was needed.<sup>4</sup>

Girls from poorer families sometimes lived and worked in better homes as criadas (domestic servants) for which they might be paid a daily wage of twenty escudos in 1970. Vital as this was to a household, "a lot of them didn't really care about the salary -- they were living in a nicer house." Some "old-money" families probably maintained social distance from criadas, but the two wealthier sisters ate with their adolescent servants and went everywhere with them. Given the sociability in their home, one's station was sometimes forgotten and "they would have arguments with us ... like little kids." At the age of twelve, one subject abandoned household and agrarian tasks and stepped into a teacher's household as such a live-in servant. She performed almost all chores in this household and supervised the teacher's children. From the age of fourteen until her emigration at sixteen, she performed limpezas (janitorial duties) in the Ponta Delgada hospital, boarding with many other girls in a large room, in the middle of which slept two vigilant nuns.<sup>5</sup>

Meanwhile, children and youth from the better homes of the island of Sao Miguel generally went on with their schooling and did not work outside the household. Younger children, in fact,

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<sup>4</sup>F15773. F16377, 29 September, 1992. Compulsory education merely delayed their visibility and vitality in agricultural settings from the age of seven to ten. See Colin Heywood, Childhood in Nineteenth-Century France: work, health and education among the 'classes populaires' (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988)

<sup>5</sup>F16177; F15773.

appeared to be safe from work even within their homes. One seven year-old boy did not work at all while a nine-year old subject from a Ponta Delgada middle-class home sometimes ran errands or fetched the odd item for her mother, and made her own bed. In the case of older children and adolescents, however, parents who could easily afford to forgo their labour perceived that certain work had utility. They believed that work, and learning to like work, was an important part of an older child's, and especially, an adolescent's informal education. This was something that Portuguese and other parents generally continued to believe in Canada -- and which was not too different from what other North Americans had thought at an earlier time.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, the two sisters were "always made to do our work" by the mother, work which helped fashion housekeeping skills: some cooking, cleaning, and being "responsible for our rooms."<sup>7</sup>

Those from Lisbon middle-class families said little about work. What one did say, however, was that there were some Lisbon children whose labour, "maybe to deliver milk", for example, was needed by their families. This subject recognized the vital role

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<sup>6</sup>M16370; F16170; F16377; also M15565. According to J.J. Kelso, "'Boys should learn to work and love to work'." John Bullen, "Children of the Industrial Age: Children, Work and Welfare in Late Nineteenth-Century Ontario" (unpublished Ph.D dissertation: University of Ottawa, 1989), 362. In the early decades of this century, there arose a notion among middle-class Americans that while children should not "labour" for wages, household chores were "good work." Viviana A. Zelizer, Pricing the Priceless Child: the changing social value of children (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1985).

<sup>7</sup>See Sutherland, "'We always had work to do.'"

of their work in "the provinces" where "they were just old enough" and "strong enough" at "ten or eleven" to work. According to this source, children from agricultural families had a basic knowledge of reading and writing, "and that was enough, and really, for that kind of life, that was enough."<sup>8</sup> Like their Michaelense cohorts, many rural Continental children entered the world of work after fulfilling the minimal educational requirements. They too performed agricultural tasks or had chores in and about the household. In one household that "never even had a donkey", but which was considered "middle, average" for the area, a father brought in "the family income" while the mother took care of the household as well as chickens, rabbits, pigs, sheep and goats. Had a ten-year old boy not emigrated "that would have been my job.... At the age of twelve, I likely would have been out in the pasture with the goats and the sheep, that's what most kids did." Younger children were definitely present out on the fields also, but "not likely by themselves", though this subject's own father had been forced out into the pasture before grade four.<sup>9</sup> He considered his work as carrying water, or gathering, as a "help" to his mother and

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<sup>8</sup>Emphasis in narrative. M15870.

<sup>9</sup>This man's father had attended school inconsistently and unable to keep up with schoolwork would be "beaten by the teacher." He had pleaded with his own father, "'either you send me to the school every day ... or send me out with the goats.'" He had been sent out with the goats. The significance of this is that this subject's father later vowed to him, "there's one thing I'm going to do and this is give you an education." M15565.

father and insists he did "not labour". Another rural lad irrigated "by hand, by pail" with his mother<sup>10</sup> out of a reservoir with treacherous banks which meant two had to perform the dangerous task. By the time he emigrated at the age of twelve, he had been out of school for two and a half years and was kept busy milking, picking olives, and generally working "on the farms mainly with my grandfather." His work indoors seemed to consist of assisting his father in his "little business", making doors and windows. This was hardly sweated labour and he "was only helping" with the woodcutting while remaining "careful" in the presence of machinery. The family was far from wealthy but there was always time for play and he remembers operating the machines to "make my own go-carts." In contrast, a more middle-class daughter, also from the rural Continental, remembers more chores. She irrigated a vegetable garden "a fair distance from the town" early in the morning before going to school. And then there was household work:

I did everything in the house. I did everything in the house. I raised my brother and I'm only five years older than he is. I washed his diapers. I dressed him, I fed him -- ever since I can remember.<sup>11</sup>

## II

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<sup>10</sup>According to him, Continental women performed agricultural tasks. See Brettell, Men Who Migrate, Women Who Wait, 25. Though Michaelense women's labour was vital during harvests, Azorean women were generally "exempted from the heavy labour of the fields." Rogers, 123-4. Also F15773; F16377, 29 September 1992.

<sup>11</sup>M15870; M15565; M15367; F15570.

For some Portuguese children and young people, work was an important feature of their growing up years in Vancouver. Most went to school and performed some type of work outside school hours. Some contributed earnings or their labour to the family economy while others undertook work voluntarily and in the interest of securing personal spending money. Two who emigrated from less humble backgrounds as children said they did little, if any work as adolescents, either in or out of their home. In her adult years, one of these subjects felt "lost" when her mother died, as it had been her mother who had always done "everything" in the house.<sup>12</sup>

In Vancouver, Portuguese parents, like other parents in the city, generally expected their children, especially girls, would help around the house.<sup>13</sup> The number and nature of the tasks accorded their children appeared to be sexually-differentiated. Younger sisters enjoyed less freedom from work than younger brothers in households. In one family with older girls, the brothers "only did their rooms." In another household with a younger brother and sister, the brother did less work: "[my brother] had to make his bed just like we made our bed." He

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<sup>12</sup>M16370; F15356. In comparison, the Toronto girl only worked in the house, her parents making it known they were teaching her housewife skills. F97072, "The Importance of My Childhood and Adolescence on my Adult Character."

<sup>13</sup>In Vancouver, children between the 1920s and 1960s ran errands, gathered firewood and worked in gardens. In both working- and middle-class families, there was a sexual division of labour. Child-minding, and work involving the preparation of food were important constituents of many girls' household work. See Sutherland, "'We always had work to do,'" 110-112.

would sometimes "dry the dishes", but otherwise, "had to look after himself" and "clean up his room." The mother worked on Saturdays and left the cooking up to her eldest daughter, then aged fourteen. She "would teach me" and it was "something I liked to do." She remembers her "first big meal" was "roast chicken ... with stuffing and potatoes." One daughter supervised her younger brother and cooked the evening meals because her parents were absent in the evening. Tasks appeared to be shared more equitably in another family: "we all did everything ... the yard work whatever ... I always recall seeing my mother and my father doing the same things." This subject later thought perhaps her mother did a little more of the household work, while her younger brother "never did very much ... he was the baby of the family. I had more responsibility than he did." In at least three families, girls looked after a younger brother or sister to some extent; in all three, the mother was working outside the house. In one unique case, however, a boy was left without his mother when she returned to Portugal because of illness in the family. This became an extended leave and his words says it best: "guess who does all the housework?"<sup>14</sup>

Some subjects who had not worked outside the home in Portugal as adolescents did so here. The two sisters who had never worked outside the home in Portugal were suddenly faced with prolonged labour almost immediately upon arrival as the entire family buckled down to fulfill an economic "mission" of

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<sup>14</sup>F16170; F15570; F16400; F16377; M15367.

saving their business. The younger sister performed janitorial work at the age of thirteen, "my second day of being here." According to her, "we all started to work from the age of ten up" while her parents worked sixteen-hour days. With memories of a beautiful home and criadas no doubt still fresh on her mind, her mother took a dishwashing job (already arranged before her arrival) and supplemented this with a second job -- also janitorial work. Two months after their arrival, the two sisters were assisting in the cleaning of "five" restaurants even before going to school. Over the long term, their daily schedule included school and supper after which the family performed janitorial services split between several locations. Allowances were made for school as the younger sister wrote: "whenever one of us had an exam, someone else would go to work for us." Here in Vancouver, one twelve year-old son seemed a willing companion for his father when they went to "repair stoves and do electrical wiring" after school. On weekends, they would "wire houses and basements." Of his summer jobs he said, "everything was electrical" though he had "never liked electrical" and excelled in "mechanics" in school.<sup>15</sup>

For the boy who likely would have become a "shepherd", work in Vancouver only assumed other forms. Here, his first job as a ten year-old must have been somewhat bewildering considering the new urban context. He guided a blind man about the West End while the man sold baskets and belts door-to-door. He made "a

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<sup>15</sup>Diary, F16377; M15870.

dollar a day, but that was good enough for my parents." At the age of eleven, he used to get up at four on summer mornings five days a week to catch a bus along with others to Langley where he picked strawberries "for the whole day." This time he earned "three or four dollars a day, but to mom and dad, that would be a lot of money." At the age of fourteen, his father secured him "a most dreadful job" at a car-wash where the father worked to supplement another job. This job paid a dollar an hour and consisted of,

eight hours a day ...mist blowing, there's tons of wind .... It was so noisy, they put cotton in my ears, but that didn't help. When I came home, I couldn't hear anything.<sup>16</sup>

Others under fifteen who went to school embraced part-time work for more personal reasons and were allowed to keep all, or some of their earnings, for their own purposes. In his first year in Canada, a Lisbon subject prepared real estate advertisements for a Portuguese real estate agent. He considered this a "great" job for it paid "twenty dollars a month" which was his to keep and "kept me from doing my homework." Between the ages of fourteen to sixteen, he spent "three or four hours" of a Saturday assisting his father who made a little extra income in a second job. Of the wages he might have earned in this case, he said, "I don't think he [father] passed it all onto me." What earnings he did receive were all spent on himself on items such as clothes, records, and a record player. A daughter from a more

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<sup>16</sup>M15565.

middle-class Michaelense home began to work Saturdays and Sundays at fourteen and "full time in the summer holidays." She too was allowed to keep a portion of her earnings, her tips, "to buy things."<sup>17</sup>

Work became more important to adolescents in their mid-teens. At fifteen and sixteen respectively, Tiago and the criada had each been out of school and working from the age of ten to support a poor family on Sao Miguel. In Vancouver, it was full-time work that they entered, and not school, but this was generally a new, and more pleasant, form of labour. For Tiago, who "didn't know English, didn't have an education", and yet felt he had to support a mother, janitorial work was "the only thing" he could do "because it's night time and you don't have to speak with nobody." Compared to work in the forest, where you could be soaked "as soon as you step out of the door" at daybreak, this indoor work was "a beautiful job." For the sixteen-year old who emigrated alone without parents, the first job scouring numerous encrusted cooking utensils left her with broken nails and tears. After two weeks, however, she secured work in the laundry of a large hotel, a job she enjoyed. In the company of other workers, older women, she also learned much about important matters.<sup>18</sup>

At least five adolescents worked in restaurants after their mid-teens while enrolled in school. At sixteen, the daughter who had "raised" her brother, began to work in a restaurant "full-

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<sup>17</sup>M15468; F16170.

<sup>18</sup>M16075. F15773: see chapter six.

time, five days a week till two in the morning." She attended school the next day which meant that lunch hours and spare moments at school were spent alone in the auditorium with homework, a scenario similar to the one the younger Michaelense sister faced. At sixteen, one boy began to work where his mother did: she washed dishes full-time on weekdays while he took over on weekends. At seventeen, he initiated the formation of a band which was soon contracted for some Portuguese weddings, feasts, dances, and other functions to play a variety of music: "Portuguese the most", "English next" as well as Italian, Spanish, Central American and Brazilian. This "paid more than dishwashing", and launched a career.<sup>19</sup>

A few older teens performed more physical waged labour during their summer vacations.<sup>20</sup> The boy who had picked strawberries entered construction at eighteen when his uncle "got me into the union." One youth also worked in a restaurant for a year "in grade eleven, twelve", and then worked out on the railroad near Abbotsford "where my father was." After grade 11, the academic's son and a "Canadian" friend took a summer job on the Pacific Great Eastern Railway, 72 miles out of Prince George

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<sup>19</sup>For restaurant work: F15570; M15367; M15971; F15668; F16170; M15367.

<sup>20</sup>In comparison, the Penticton seventeen year-old did little housework and did not work in his first year. In the next, he took up diswashing and restaurant work in the next to avoid orchard work. The Kitimat girl took summer jobs with the municipality while others worked for higher wages at Alcan. The older Toronto male and his 60-year old mother soon left a brother's home, took up their own flat and both entered their first factory jobs. M25168; F36500; M96179.

"in a little place in the middle of nowhere called Angus Mack."

Here two "slight-built" boys encountered backbreaking work:

Of course, there you would have to do a hell'uva lot of work ... laying railroad ties ... doing all sorts of things that I thought I'd never have to do in my life and I thought I'd die the first day.

He had to stay "until [the] first paycheck", unable to manage the "physical workload" without the assistance of "other Portuguese" men there who took an interest in helping him: "actually, that's how I survived." This summer job offered important growing-up experiences for this "very clean-living kid." He not only "learned how to swear", for example, but recalled that it "changed [his] life" at "sixteen."<sup>21</sup>

### III

Most teens worked under the understanding that money earned was, as one woman put it, "not mine to keep." The subject who had picked strawberries did not begin to keep a portion of his earnings until his late teens. This "used to really make me mad ... I'd hand him [father] the cash and he'd say, here's ten cents for tomorrow." That was "bus fare." His parents never charged him for "room and board" but received his "whole pay cheque." As much as he had resented this, he "couldn't turn against my parents. That's one thing you don't do in our culture ... I just accepted it." Meanwhile, his friends "had money, they could do

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<sup>21</sup>M15971; M15468.

things", and they "earned money which was theirs to keep."<sup>22</sup> At eighteen he approached his father to ask if he could have a bank account, but "my dad wasn't the kind of person who would listen -- he was the kind of person who would hit first and talk later, and he says, don't even think about it." Eventually the youth spoke to his uncle and this combined with the fact that "I would bug him and bug him and bug him" netted him his first bank account.<sup>23</sup>

Others felt differently about contributing earnings to the family economy. The Vancouver-born girl gave music lessons at sixteen. She remembers she felt "good, I felt really good" about giving the money to her parents who "took care of it." With her, however, whenever she "needed anything, they would give me the money", something lacking in the former case. She liked the "philosophy in our house that whatever we had was ours ... all [were] going to benefit .... I felt I was contributing to the home." Another youth gave his restaurant and railroad earnings to his parents "to pay the mortgage or whatever." And asked what he did with his earned money, a third said,

I gave it to my dad. No questions. No arguments.  
It was expected, you knew that was the thing to do.  
Priority is family. If you ever got a job, the money  
goes to your dad -- stand up and give it to him ... it's

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<sup>22</sup>The "Friday" or "Saturday penny" was seen by most British children as "their right" in the "new childhood." See Humphries, A Century of Childhood, 30. In Canada, of course, weekly allowance was something many children also looked forward to. In Vancouver, "many" working-class families in the post-war period allowed children to keep "some or all of their earnings." Sutherland, "'We always had work to do,'" 130.

tradition, before anything you have to help the family. I didn't mind. I didn't mind.

Like the Vancouver-born girl, and a few others, he too felt there were compensations for having given up financial autonomy: "you see, Dad had a car ... I asked him to use the car, softly, carefully ... I got some of that money back." One daughter who wanted to work for personal spending money said, "Dad gave us an ultimatum ... you either give us, give me your paycheck and keep your tips, or you keep everything for yourself, but one day when you're older, you're on your own." She said she was willing to comply because "it was a better deal" and the "money he [later] gave" in the form of a wedding, she would never have saved. She "would have blown it all." Neither she, nor others mentioned that many other Canadian parents were expected to pay for at least a portion of a daughter's wedding whether or not she had contributed earnings. The daughter who began to work in restaurants "full-time" as well as going to school was never asked for her earnings, but "it was understood" that her earnings were not hers to dispose of. Sometimes she used her money to purchase "groceries for the house" on a "voluntary" basis, but otherwise, her checks "went right into the bank." She had about \$10,000 in the bank in her late teens, but as she explained, "you don't have all this money and it's your money .... you've earned it and it's in an account, your account, but you don't touch it."

Later, in fact, the money was spent on her wedding.<sup>24</sup>

The two adolescents who never entered school in Vancouver contributed significantly to households back in Sao Miguel. At "sixteen, seventeen", Tiago's "goal" had been to "raise \$8,000 to send to my brother in Portugal to buy a dairy farm so he could do well in life." He maintained two full-time jobs enabling his brother to purchase a dairy farm. Throughout her adolescence, the other consistently forwarded almost her entire paycheck along with used clothing and other commodities to her impoverished family on that mid-oceanic island.<sup>25</sup>

At the same time, a few adolescents did not have to turn over earnings to parents at all, but the possible skew of this sample must be borne in mind. At least two teenage girls were allowed to keep tips. At fifteen, the pharmacist's son worked half-days on Saturdays and Sundays "bagging" popcorn and "cleaning up" at a drive-in cinema. His earnings were his to spend -- "and I got allowance", he says. The son who had worked near Prince George, and later in a large department store, also worked in a sawmill "chipper." This was "very hard work" which sometimes left him unable to move. His purpose in working: to purchase a sports car his mother had refused to co-sign for -- a car that "was quite popular with the girls." His sister worked first as a busgirl at sixteen and later cleaned banks which she

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<sup>24</sup>F16400; M15971; M15367; F16170. Emphasis in narrative, F15570.

<sup>25</sup>M16075; F15773.

didn't enjoy, all for personal money. "Everything I made was mine to keep", and hers to spend in any way she wished. Her adult perspective was that this was, in fact, a "shame" because she couldn't manage money at the time which is almost exactly what another woman had said.<sup>26</sup>

Most adolescents in this sample seemed willing to comply with traditional expectations regarding their earnings. Eight Portuguese households in Vancouver felt the burden of emigration debt, mortgage and other payments somewhat, sometimes significantly, lightened by their contributions.<sup>27</sup> Two subjects also sent considerable remittances to households in Portugal. If others did not actually contribute earnings, their labour was probably important, and in the case of the two sisters probably vital to their family's material wealth.<sup>28</sup> Undeniably, most probably saw at least part of their investment in the family returned to them in some form. One subject, however, disregarded the fact that parents were paying for his food, shelter and clothing. He remained frustrated that they denied him any portion of his earnings throughout most of his adolescence. In view of the fact that some Portuguese and many "Canadian" cohorts

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<sup>26</sup>Emphasis in narrative, M15967; M15468; F15668. The Penticton youth was older than any of the Vancouver subjects when he began work. He used his earnings to purchase a 1956 Ford -- in his high school, "there w[ere] only two kids with cars, I was one of them"; he "never saved a cent, blew all the money on food, on going out ... again, I was very average Canadian." M25168.

<sup>27</sup>M15565; M15971; M15367; F16170; F16400; F15570; F15773; M16075.

<sup>28</sup>M15870; F16177/16377.

seemed to have more money of their own to spend, and more opportunity within which to spend it, one may wonder just how straight another youth stood when he gave his earnings to his father.

This sample is very small and probably under-represents those who came to Vancouver from poorer homes in Portugal in this time period and either did not go to school, or dropped out without graduating. Nonetheless, it seems many Portuguese parents as well as their children, still regarded investment in the family economy as having "survival value" just as it had in the homeland. A few adolescents devoted considerable time and energy to domestic chores which may have made it possible for two parents to work outside the home. Within households, boys generally did less, sometimes far less, work than their sisters, at least two of whom found this frustrating.

Some families who demanded the wages from their children's labour in Canada probably could have foregone those amounts. Two subjects both perceived that their parents were particularly concerned that their children developed good work habits. One remembered his parents "often mentioned how in Canada, a lot of the people don't mind living on welfare."<sup>29</sup> This was something they, like other non-Portuguese parents, clearly didn't want for their sons. Eyeing the canadiano's welfare lines, parents such as his probably continued to perceive work had intrinsic merit,

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<sup>29</sup>M15971; M15565.

in other words, it was "good work." For them, strawberry fields were probably at least as important as classrooms in a son's education.

## Chapter 6 -- "Friends, Courtship and Free Time"

Nowhere was the diversity in Portuguese adolescent experience in Vancouver more apparent than in the areas of their friendship formation, courtship, and free time activity. That diversity ranged between two anchor points. Clustered about one point were those adolescents whose social freedom was closely regulated by parents. In some cases, the juxtaposition of parental and personal desires led to frustration. At the other mooring were those few who enjoyed much more freedom from parental strictures relative to others. This was, in part, because what they were allowed to do "here" was not too different from what they had been allowed to do "there."

In Portugal, children and adolescents from poorer homes had different expectations than those from more affluent homes when it came to friends, courtship, and leisure time. Those from humble backgrounds grew up with toys and games they made rather than bought. They found free time increasingly restricted to Sundays as they grew past the age of ten and entered the world of work. And they found themselves increasingly segregated by gender as well as class as they left childhood. One Michaelense observed, "girls when they're ten years old, they graduate and go home. They crochet and things like that -- they didn't go work

on the farms." He added, "how could you have a girlfriend there? You might dream of one." According to him, if a boy "chased a girl" at a festa, she would "go running to her dad" for they were never far from family. What this man alleged was probably true of girls from poorer homes such as those in the criada's village, where she said most remained inaccessible to boys. Not only were poorer boys and girls preoccupied by work when they left school, but as older youth interested in courtship, they were governed by strict protocol. She described a visit made by her sister's boyfriend:

My mother said, 'half an hour only -- I'll not give you more than half an hour'. She went into the room and my mother then opened the curtains wide for all the passersby to see that she [the daughter] wasn't doing anything. And then my sister went over the half-hour. My mother began to slam the doors ...<sup>1</sup>

However romantic, most relationships remained platonic. The criada also had a boyfriend before emigrating, but she made it very clear "it was for fun ... everyone had a boyfriend. I also wanted one. For fun." Sex was the furthest thing from the criada's mind; in fact, according to her, as well as another woman, it wasn't on their mind at all. The latter was almost thirteen before she emigrated from the Continent. Besides attending a segregated school, she was generally kept in the company of her mother and "older women". She said, "at that age, the way I was raised, you don't even know there is a difference",

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<sup>1</sup>M16075. Emphasis in original, F15773. Her sister was, in fact, present during part of this interview.

while the criada claimed variously that "a man could have done it to us and our belly could have gotten bigger and we would have said, oh Jesus, what is it?" According to these two sisters, there was "no opportunity" for sexual encounters and virtually no sexual knowledge among peers. In short, there was silence. Sexuality never became a topic of discussion among her girlfriends. There was no hope of being told anything by parents; indeed, at the time of menarche, the younger sister thought she was dying and approached her mother -- "my mother said nothing."<sup>2</sup> At sixteen, she knew nothing of sexual intercourse, much less of its possible consequence. She now thought, "we were raised -- oh, I don't know -- we were raised like bichos (beasts):

At that time, a guy could have got us pregnant and we would know nothing about it. We didn't know nothing. How can I say it? We lived in the dark, that's it. We could marry like that and not know what was happening .... maybe the man knew but the girls didn't.

Only once did she and her sister hear of a teenage pregnancy -- "in the city, in Ponta Delgada", where a distraught girl, scorned by her family, had thrown herself into the sea: "in the city, she would be no good for anything, so what [wa]s the use of life?"<sup>3</sup>

Four years later, that was certainly not the experience of the two middle-class sisters. Unfettered by work, both sisters

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<sup>2</sup>F15570; F15773. Isabel Pinto cites a similar incident in Vancouver. "Growing Up Portuguese in Canadian Schools."

<sup>3</sup>F15773.

had participated in a seemingly-idyllic youth culture centred about the desegregated (in 1973) liceu by day. In the evening, they congregated about the jardim. Both were enjoying the privileges of their class within the new and freer social context wrought through political revolution; neither were ready for the strictures that awaited them in Vancouver when they emigrated in 1977. With its cafes in the four corners, the treed garden overlooking the sea was the social centre for young and old, even "babies and mothers." Depending upon "whether it was summer or school", teens would be out in mixed company under this limited scrutiny until "ten o'clock, eleven o'clock", walking and conversing in groups in and about its perimeter. They seemed inextricable from a closely-knit group of "twelve to fifteen" adolescents, some "five boys" and "five or six girls" swam in mixed company in the ocean. During summer vacation, they stayed at each other's houses. The younger sister, however, also associated with children and youths from "poorer" homes. The older sister had a boyfriend with whom she would spend some time alone if they chose, perhaps to "have a coffee" and she was even walked to and from school. Even so, as her younger sister who was "'boy-crazy'"<sup>4</sup> attested: "you have a boyfriend. You never do anything with them." The older sister, however, remembered hearing of teenage pregnancies even in "smaller towns" after the 1974 Revolution. Though "guys talked to girls through the windows", there were still "a lot of sixteen, seventeen year-olds

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<sup>4</sup>F16377, Diary.

who were getting pregnant and getting married ... about [19]76", something that "was not as much of a problem with those who were going to school." More frequently, her circle of friends chose to remain together as a group: the "schools would have dances" or the young men would organize dances "upstairs in the cafes" where "all kinds of kids ... from ages nine to sixteen" would attend.<sup>5</sup>

Those from more middle-class Continental homes also had considerable social freedom and were also found in mixed company even in the late sixties. The Lisbon girl who emigrated at twelve remembers she was "seldom bored" and playing outdoors "an awful lot", playing with boys and girls, climbing hills and exploring construction sites. Both sexes were also found together in her brother's group of friends, though after the age of "nine, ten" he "took more of a romantic interest" in them. They played monopoly and other board games together and he says, "we wouldn't have thought of doing without girls at that time."<sup>6</sup> One subject remembers that Lisbon neighbourhoods had their own gangs -- "not like now [here] with knives", though there were "sticks, rocks, and fistfights." There were "a couple of girls" in his neighbourhood gang, the sisters of some of the boys and they "sort of became like boys." Gangs excluded some like "gays"

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<sup>5</sup>F16377; F16177.

<sup>6</sup>M15468; F15668. The Penticton youth maintained a secret romantic relationship for "three or four years" in his small town in Portugal during the mid-to late sixties: "the kind you see in the movies, the kind of romance that was beautiful, very naive." He would knock on her window at night, and they used to "meet secretly -- Portugal was very backwards in those days." M25168.

and those who were known to drink and take drugs as drugs were "already" available "at that time". As pre-teens, they plotted and executed raids on fruit trees, and made war, but they also spied in groups upon soldiers who had picked up their girlfriends, criadas, from the houses and took them to the park where they could be alone. At twelve, he knew about sex, a topic which was discussed among friends; as he says, "women's parts were discussed all the time."<sup>7</sup>

One important feature of growing up within these particular affluent families was that these parents had the desire and means to travel and take lengthier family vacations. In Vancouver, their use of family and leisure time may have differed from how other Portuguese parents spent time free from work.<sup>8</sup> The Michaelense sisters enjoyed island excursions with relatives on rented buses, for example. The sea was accessible and "a very pleasant constant" for one Lisbon family who would spend a month's vacation south of Lisbon and more time at a relative's winery in the port wine region. The Penticton youth enjoyed an annual month-long vacation in the seaside town of Nazare. Another Lisbon subject remembers spending time on his grandfather's farm where there was "wide open space" where one "just ran", as well as renting a summer cottage elsewhere with his mother. A third Lisbon family made numerous, spontaneous

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<sup>7</sup>M15870.

<sup>8</sup>Alpalhao and da Rosa suggested that Portuguese working-class parents had to be more "creative" in their use of leisure time. pp. 185-7.

weekend and longer trips about the countryside. The son reminisced about a church-sponsored summer camp among the old convents of forested and hilly Cintra: "oh, what a beautiful place ... oh beautiful times."<sup>9</sup>

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A few of these Portuguese children and youth integrated successfully into the wider youth culture of Vancouver. The pharmacist's son said,

By the time I hit high school, I was a full-fledged Canadian child. I don't think you could tell me apart from any child who was raised in this country.

Citing various influences upon him, not the least of which were parents that didn't restrict his activities, he said he became "just like a Canadian kid." He "watched a lot of television" and "imitated probably some of the characters." His "teachers were all anglo" and he was influenced by "a lot of Chinese children, a lot of Italians, and a lot of Canadian-born kids." Like some others from more middle-class homes in Portugal, his activities reveal he "became just like them."<sup>10</sup> He entered into teenage rituals that for one reason or another may have been closed even to canadianos; in fact, he may have become what some other

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<sup>9</sup>M15468; M15971; M25168.

<sup>10</sup>Though an older youth, the Penticton male encountered little resistance from his mother and step-father. He went to school, hung around with the boys, [went] to parties" and got into the "whole Canadian scene.... I integrated completely into the system." M25168.

"Canadian" youth would not have been allowed by their parents to become. He "dated ... played in the band ... shoplifted, not because I needed it ... liked cars, cars with wide tires ... took guitar lessons .... camped." He was in the "in-group": "we were the jocks, and the rest of the time we were the guys everyone wanted to hang around with, but some of them weren't cool enough to hang around with us." He "drank a lot, not hard liquor, but a lot of beer." He wore his hair "long" and wore "ripped jeans", and "was a rebel .... against any system." He "started hanging around night clubs in grade 11 ... bars and nightclubs because we were too young to get in and we shouldn't be there." He had "two or three" Portuguese friends:

I wasn't trying to avoid them. I wore my hair long ... They went to church. That was a bad thing in the Portuguese community -- I was a bad kid because I didn't go to church. I wasn't a bad kid.<sup>11</sup>

Others were also aware they were "being looked at" by some of the Portuguese community.<sup>12</sup> Another Lisbon subject pointed out he was "more on the hippie side" and he had "glasses with gold tint -- the nice-looking girls at school liked that." Like the former subject, his choice of friends was eclectic: one was Portuguese, another "British" with "very long hair ... not an over-achiever in school." Yet another friend was of ethnically-

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<sup>11</sup>M15967.

<sup>12</sup>The Kitimat girl could not recall a single Portuguese girl who had a more liberal upbringing than she did; she was aware that some parents probably spoke disapprovingly of her.

mixed ancestry "who was very intelligent." His taste in activities was also eclectic: he read "Kafka", listened to "Pink Floyd" and "Simon and Garfunkel" and was "into meditation."<sup>13</sup>

Two adolescent girls seem to have experienced fewer parental strictures than others -- girls or boys. The Vancouver-born adolescent was "really kept busy" with "music lessons once a week, dance lessons ... performances, sports ... games after school"; furthermore, she felt she had been "really encouraged to have social activities", by her parents. Another girl who had enjoyed mixed company in Lisbon didn't become one of the "most popular kids" but she was a "happy" teen "in the middle" of the teenage pack. She "like[d] to go to beach parties, to dances and stuff like that with the boys, but I wasn't too radical." She was "active", had "no time" to read for pleasure as two other subjects did. She "pushed" herself into school sports, which of course, she was allowed to partake in by parents. She played tennis after school, "went for ice cream" or walked around the school "to see if there were boys around." Her "best friend" was "definitely Canadian ... blonde, blue-eyes." Here, like a few others, she qualified "Canadian" immediately with, "there are no Canadian-Canadians -- except the natives." She immersed herself in the wider youth culture determined "to have fun" and remembers thinking: "It was great to be alive. It was fun. I enjoyed work in school. I liked high-school years. I liked everything that teenage-hood stood for." Like other youths, she also remembers

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<sup>13</sup>M15468.

she felt "a little bit different. I know I did. I was an immigrant." People didn't treat her differently, she "just felt different."

The other women told a far different story. Here, the younger of the two Michaelense sisters lost "everything." She had "nothing in common with the kids" that were going to school, and she lost her "self-confidence", a sentiment that resonated in other narratives. She plummeted on the "social ladder." Here, the two sisters discovered they were "allowed to go to weddings and Portuguese festas" but were not allowed out after school. And of course, there was work. For the older sister, returning to Sao Miguel remained her "main goal for six or seven years." The two sisters wrote continually throughout their adolescence to their group of friends who would often "all write in the same letter." The younger sister's diary indicates that what determined whether she had a "good" or "bad" day was dependent "upon who[m] I got a letter from, or if I got a letter. If I didn't get a letter, in my diary, it's all bad days, or if I got a letter, then life was great." For another teen, there were "not really" any Canadian friends. This girl had "two Portuguese ... one Italian" girlfriends and "didn't associate too much with anybody". With a mother working evenings and a father up north, she used to invite another Portuguese girl over and together they would "watch TV or play jacks, or eat Portuguese olives and loaves of bread." She did not sneak off: she had a younger brother to look after -- and there were "phones" with which her

mother could check upon her from afar. She said she had "no curfew" simply because she was "not allowed to go out." She returned home immediately after school or work, and was "not allowed to go to the cinema ... proms ... school dances."<sup>14</sup>

How many others were torn between parental and peer expectations -- "an impossible predicament" especially for daughters<sup>15</sup> -- is unknown, but at least two girls and one boy clearly developed and maintained a public sphere they kept hidden from parents. By grade eight, language was no longer a problem for one Michaelense daughter and she was "totally mixed in with the kids" by which she meant, the non-Portuguese kids at school. She remembers, for example that she was afraid of "nothing" while growing up. Her "only difficulty" was that she wasn't allowed "to go out to parties", "wasn't allowed to have a boy over at my house" or couldn't go to another friend's house "if mom knew there were boys there." It was "so frustrating" and "hard understanding" when her brother, her junior, not only got a bike, something the two sisters never got, but was "allowed to do those things" and she cried extensively over her parents' edict: "you're a girl, you're not allowed to do those things." She arrived at a very practical and simple solution: she "just wouldn't tell" her parents if boys were going to be at a party; wouldn't tell them for three years she had a boyfriend. Through persistence, she cracked the "in group" at school. No other

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<sup>14</sup>F16377; F15570.

<sup>15</sup>Interview with community worker, September, 1992.

Portuguese girl she can remember "was more integrated than me." Other Portuguese girls had jeans, "but were they Hash jeans ... the in thing then?" She had them, but she added, "God knows how much I had to go through to get these jeans that cost \$30 -- but I would nag and nag until I got them." And however much another girl dressed like and integrated into the "Mods" youth culture, she also returned home after school because "my parents were very strict about those things." She too adopted different strategies of getting around parental strictures. Given the "choice" of attending Portuguese social functions with her parents or remaining at home, she chose the latter, and "on occasion" allowed someone over. She had a summertime ten o'clock curfew, but would sometimes "sneak out" of the house -- and was "very good at it too."<sup>16</sup>

Most adolescent boys did not enjoy the level of freedom extended those from middle-class homes in Portugal -- or the two Canadian-born girls. The youth who had contributed all earnings to his father from the age of ten "wasn't allowed to party with my friends when I wanted to -- that's quite Portuguese." His parents wouldn't "let [him] out of the house" and they treated him "like a European girl" until around his sixteenth birthday. The exception to going out was that he was allowed to go out in the evening was when he went to school dances. He thought this was because dancing had been "a lot of fun" for his father in his own youth in Portugal. He admitted if such controls had not been

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<sup>16</sup>F16170; F15356.

present, he "would have gone out too much." He took up swimming and skating as a strategy to get away from the house -- and to socialize with girls: "that was probably one of the reasons I enjoyed skating most." Like one other subject, at least, he also intensified his socializing within the school day. He skipped classes and went to the pub, for example. By his late teens, he "had a lot of friends", had "a lot of fun" and was "doing a lot of things, mostly legal." It is small wonder he thought his high school years were "probably the best years of my life."<sup>17</sup>

At least four Vancouver subjects did not integrate much with Canadian culture for personal reasons. One community worker said Portuguese and other immigrant families experienced "double vision" a phenomenon wherein present circumstances are put into the perspective of those of the homeland.<sup>18</sup> Some of these subjects probably tried to reconcile the two cultures within which they had grown. Three subjects made it clear they abstained from some kinds of contact with other youth by choice. The youth who looked for "fairness" in a teacher repeated in different ways he did not discriminate between "Portuguese" and "Canadian" friends. He had been an "adventurous" child in his small village. In Canada, what he was most "particular" about in his friends was their "character." He "had some resistance" to "being forced or being molded to fit a certain type of image" such as "wearing those funny pants they wore in the seventies"

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<sup>17</sup>M15565.

<sup>18</sup>Conversation, July; interview, September, 1992.

and sporting longer hair. He disliked compromising his own tastes in order to get into "that little group that you want to belong to", the group that "always seemed to be doing the right stuff, the fun stuff." He did not go out much and furthermore, saw "no need" to stay out late. The "majority" of those with whom he associated "really never had those tendencies to go out and party, or drink beer, or things like that" and they wouldn't have been out late either.<sup>19</sup>

Age at emigration may have been a factor in how much one fought to maintain a sense of self-identity forged elsewhere. The "barrier of language" made at least one rural Michaelense teen "real shy." He narrowed his social circle to those he could "communicate" with: "over here, I just closed down to just a certain amount of people." He had two good friends, both Portuguese, one of these a cousin. He used to go out to Portuguese dances as well as a "couple of high school dances" and went to dances and swimming organized by the youth group in the Portuguese church in the early seventies. According to him, he "wasn't the best kid, but I wasn't the worst." He never tried "pot" as a teen but "got drunk a couple of times" on weekends as an older teen. Another who emigrated just before his teens "wasn't really looking for friendship ... I had my own ideas ... I didn't need friends." He "never had a friend, per se ... a lot of people I knew, but no friend -- not what I would have considered in Portugal as friends." He continued to miss the

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<sup>19</sup>M16370.

conversations "about anything" he had once known. "Discipline" made "a lot of sense" to this youth and he devoted five years of his youth to the Royal Canadian Sea Cadets until he faced an ultimatum: cutting his hair in order to receive his badges, or dropping out -- "so I quit." Not until he was "eighteen, nineteen", did he have a "couple" of friends, "Portuguese guys", with whom he "enjoyed" driving around and going to the discos. One dominant theme in his narrative was his disapproval of the use of drugs and alcohol by Canadian teens who would have been excluded from his Lisbon gang; as he said, "I think that was really what put me aside." He saw his brothers "doing it ... to me they looked like bums ... like nobodies." It remained a "very big struggle" to understand why Canadian youth would want to take a "case of beer to the park" instead of going to his home for a drink which he would have been allowed. Yet those whom he criticized did not ostracize him for this hardline attitude. He remained in their company while "they popped a joint around", but he wasn't ever afraid to tell them "you guys are a bunch of idiots." Here in Vancouver, he explained, "my mind was so far away from all of that experimentation that it wasn't funny -- I mean, I was more like a priest. I felt like a priest." Only once did he relent: he tried marijuana, just before a Math test, and later he confronted his friends to ridicule their use of the drug. His narrative often came back to this point:

I was Portuguese and I happened to live here ... but my mentality was still there ... I liked what happened to me in Portugal.... The whole experience in Portugal made sense ...

the whole Canadian thing didn't make sense -- kids were treated like kids -- they were always trying to run away from the adults. In Portugal, it was different, kids were always trying to be adults ... trying to be with adults -- it was a complete opposite.<sup>20</sup>

Some encountered prejudice, either directly, or vicariously. Silence on this issue could mean a reluctance to discuss childhood unhappiness and "'miseries.'"<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, many may have felt themselves less excluded than those of other ethnic backgrounds.<sup>22</sup> The younger sister fought hard to maintain her Portuguese values in what she termed this "prison for girls." She "could have" had Canadian friends if she "had wanted to" but she "didn't because it was all very cliquy here. It was all in how you dressed, and what kinds of things you did and I didn't want to bother getting into that." What she didn't like was "the way people talked about one another." Her narrative, like that of some others, revealed a certain sensitivity, if not affinity, for different cultures. She recalled one instance she had found repugnant. When a black girl won the beauty pageant, an Italian boy had said, "'oh God, I'd never kiss a black girl'." Her reaction to this was to say to the boy,

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<sup>20</sup>M15971; M15870.

<sup>21</sup>Barman, "Historical Ethnography of Childhood", 18.

<sup>22</sup>See Dione Brand and Krisantha Sri Bhaggiyadatta, Rivers Have Sources, Trees Have Roots: Speaking of Racism (Toronto: Cross-Cultural Communication Centre, 1986), 61, 62, passim. as well as Montero, The Immigrants, 187-8, passim.

Well, you're Italian, you eat a lot of garlic and you eat onions -- why do you think anybody would want to kiss you? What's the big difference ... it doesn't matter what colour you are ...

Once she "punched" a male who had commented on "Chinese and East Indians and immigrants in general and how they should be shot." Being outspoken didn't win her any friends; as she says, "people didn't like me because I didn't bend, I was not too flexible ... I didn't bend to make a friend." Three other subjects spoke of experiencing prejudice more directly. One man's earliest "bad experiences" were of "when I first came here." Being called a 'pork chop'" or hearing others call "this guy a wop, a chink" caused him to reflect:

Right there, I started thinking deeply ... it shouldn't really be like that .... you and I are both from the world ... if you come from the far east and if your character was a character that I could appreciate -- I mean, if you're a nice guy, I couldn't care where you come from.<sup>23</sup>

This subject "had a good time" when his family visited other Portuguese families who "had other teenagers too." He was allowed to go to both high school and Portuguese dances, "felt comfortable at both" but the Portuguese ones made him feel "more like being back home." He saw others "doing drugs", considered himself a "risktaker" and had "wanted to experience these things." In the end, he had been "scared of the consequences" and had "listened" to his parents. His friends were Filipino, Chinese, Italian, and Croatian and they would go to each other's

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<sup>23</sup>F16377; M15367; M15971; M25168.

"ethnic dances." He had an affinity for particular friends:

Being from Europe, I sort of leaned toward people who had the same background as I did ... I spent the time with friends I felt comfortable with and we had the same backgrounds.

He probably gravitated to friends with whom he shared similar experiences rather than to those who were "European."<sup>24</sup>

One's interests or hobby could also dictate how much one socialized with others. The girl whose mother had pushed the family into emigration considered herself a very independent thinker whose parents often indulged her desires at home. She considered herself part of the "Mods" in her school, as opposed to the "Greasers" and the "Occupationals." This subject also discovered through "comments from people" that "didn't have to do with my culture so much", that she was different. Personal preference dictated that she "became a human sponge", read Sartre, made and wore avante-garde clothing, and chose jazz over rock music. Similarly, another subject who had a keen interest in music began lessons in Vancouver at fourteen, "two months" after his arrival. He played soccer informally, and listened to the "top 40", but "rarely" stayed at school or participated in extra-curricular because he "wanted to come home and practice my instruments."<sup>25</sup>

There may have been other adolescents, besides Tiago and the

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<sup>24</sup>M15367.

<sup>25</sup>F16400; F15356; F15668; M15367.

criada, who had adult worries and responsibilities. Like others who worked as much or more than they socialized in order to assist the family, these two not only performed adult roles, but accepted adult responsibilities well before the receiving society was prepared to confer majority status upon them.

In addition to their own sense of identity and responsibility to family, as well as personal preference, it seemed that the geographical location of homes and schools was a factor in friendship formation. Participation in this more spatially-diffused "Portuguese" community involved a greater effort and many could become invisible to its members if they chose. Some, who emigrated from a context where all social activities occurred within much smaller geographic settings, could feel isolated because the Portuguese they knew could only be reached by public transit. In Vancouver, one subject had to rely upon public transit which, in his case, mitigated against maintaining close friendships. According to the Vancouver-born woman, one of the biggest factors she faced trying to make friends in her junior years of high school was that the people she went to school with "came from all over the Lower Mainland." The Lisbon girl had non-Portuguese friends "because in our neighbourhood, there were no Portuguese kids ... the children I went to school with were Canadian." In high school, she made a friend that was Portuguese. The adolescent who read Kafka said, "my friends became the fellows I walked [to school] with ... of Irish, German, Hungarian and Dutch ancestry." It was not

academic achievement that bound them together, not common interests, he said, but "probably the walk to school and back more than anything else." The male who was quite restricted by his father might have found solace in the company of other Portuguese youth, but "there weren't too many Portuguese kids to hang around with or I would have." In Penticton, one youth who found it "humiliating" to "see Portuguese families on the weekend", found a Portuguese friend, someone he "really liked, but because he was in Oliver, I only saw him occasionally."<sup>26</sup>

One neighbourhood was intensely multi-ethnic. What the outgoing Vancouver-born girl had to say about who her friends were may have had its roots deep in that fact: "all my friends were Italian, so we all had that in common, we all knew we weren't Canadian." Though she never had a Portuguese friend,

There was always the feeling that I'm not Canadian, but then I'm not Portuguese either. I don't fit in with the people who are Portuguese -- with any of the kids I knew that were Portuguese, but then I knew I wasn't hot-dogs-and-beans Canadian.

There was "only one family in [her] neighbourhood that weren't first generation": the family "next-door" who were "hot-dogs-and-beans-Canadians" with "no sense of their heritage."<sup>27</sup>

### III

Clearly some Portuguese-Canadian youth, girls but especially

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<sup>26</sup>M15971; F16400; M15668; M15468; M15565; M25168.

<sup>27</sup>F16400.

boys, dated according to what were probably accepted Canadian conventions. Those that did, however, probably escaped the boundary of homogeneous "community" others insist on seeing.<sup>28</sup> A teen who emigrated as a fourteen year-old in 1962 dated non-Portuguese girls in his late teens. He also found a "rebellious" Portuguese girl to date. In one Lisbon family, an older brother was "popular" with girls. In a second, the son "dated a lot" between grades nine and twelve; indeed, he claims, "between my breakups, I dated everyone in sight." One girl turned out to be Portuguese: "she didn't look Portuguese -- Portuguese girls, I think, looked different at that time and they didn't go out very often, and this one did." He thought her ethnicity might have had something to do with shortening their romance:

I don't think I really cared for her as much when I found out she was Portuguese. I don't know why. Maybe because people were starting to say the only reason I was going out with her was because she was Portuguese. I wanted to prove them wrong. She was a great girl. She still is.<sup>29</sup>

A third son from Lisbon thought he was "fairly popular" with the girls: "the girls I liked certainly liked me." He dated "one girl at a time." The Penticton youth started dating Canadian girls "right away." Hot summers on Okanagan beaches reminded him of home and he recalls his first summer "was a lot of fun." He made "more friends, new people" and "we used to chase girls all over the place"; however, he added,

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<sup>28</sup>See Coelho et. al., for example.

<sup>29</sup>M14862; M15870; M15967: he later married a Portuguese woman.

Then came the problem of language and I became very introverted ... a lot of crying inside. Everytime I went out with someone, I'd end up not talking too much. I became very introverted.<sup>30</sup>

Other men spoke less about who and how they dated. One said he was "caught in this way of life back then" and "you couldn't really date." When he did date later, he took out Portuguese and not "Canadian" women and dates were "escorted." He pointed out, "remember, you're dealing with Portuguese parents. They were very strict." Yet, even so, the protocol was not entirely transplanted: "there" the man stood "outside the window" while "here",

You could talk with her at home in the living room and the mother and father would walk in every five minutes ... at least here we'd be allowed to go into the house!

He remembers "it took me a lot of time to be bad." He had a girlfriend in grade twelve but there was "no telling her [his mother] that I was with a girl -- I was too young for that." Others like the youth who resisted long hair and bell-bottoms never dated. He held a "concept of dating" which was "not like other people's." A date, to him, had non-sexual characteristics which consisted of "seeing a movie" and "having popcorn." Another said he had found "Portuguese girls here want to date some guy who speaks English." He "never dated a girl", but engaged in "one night" stands. Another said he was a "pretty quiet guy" with the girls but didn't say much else. The youth

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<sup>30</sup>M15468; M25168.

from a restrictive family said he "enjoyed the mixed company" but "never had a steady girlfriend" until he met his wife. He "didn't go out really looking for a girlfriend 'cause I knew I wasn't allowed out, so there you go."<sup>31</sup>

Some of these girls dated, though none seem to have "dated everyone in sight." The Vancouver-born girl had a boyfriend at fourteen and was "devastated" when he moved away which "ruined my whole next year of high school." She then "went out with friends" until a "serious relationship" developed later in high school. The Lisbon girl said she didn't remember going out with boys much, though she added, she thought "it was just me" and besides, she "had girlfriends then." The independent girl who "just knew" that she "could not bring a lot of people over to the house" emphasized that she "wasn't really that in-tune with the boys" in her school. She had "rejected them all" for "ninety-nine percent of them were male chauvinist" and "also very unappealing." Yet, she was "always attracted to a more sophisticated man" and "had a particular fascination for a student radical" who "wasn't popular" and who, in fact, was "considered quite nerdish." Although she didn't date much, she says, "as far as losing my virginity, I mapped that out really well ... I went through my whole list, my own personal list and then I had a relationship ... for two weeks" with a man who "seemed to have all the qualifications." Here in Vancouver, the adolescent who emigrated without parents soon met someone who

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<sup>31</sup>M16170; M16075; M15367; M15971; M15565.

asked her for a date and sought consent from her relatives. She remembered her great apprehension when she entered her date's car and realized she was so completely alone with a man -- for the first time in her life.<sup>32</sup>

Other girls' experiences parallel what is written in the literature.<sup>33</sup> In Vancouver, the two adolescent sisters "weren't allowed to date." The younger one "didn't date until I was twenty-one", though it seemed now that this was, in part, out of preference. A childhood dream of wanting to get "married at seventeen just like my mother" and having "twelve kids", changed in Vancouver and by the time she was in her late teens she no longer wanted to get married. Here, the older sister noted that the "comradery" and "friendship" between the sexes was gone and boys who "talked to you were interested in you in a different way." She said her father's attempts at their sexual segregation "definitely" intensified in Canada: "over here, he became very, very strict ... we didn't go out on our own, we didn't go out with our friends." "All of a sudden" the sisters were attending Portuguese dances with parents and "my dad would have to keep an eye on us all the time" and "we basically stayed around my mom." Another woman said that as far as parental fears of exogamy went, her father "wanted to get me to Portugal before that became an issue."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>F15356; F16400; F15773.

<sup>33</sup>See Coelho et. al., for example.

<sup>34</sup>F15570; F16177; F16377.

Portuguese families hailed from different classes in Portugal with the result that children grew up under varying parental and social strictures "there" as well as "here." As Isabel Pinto discovered, some parental strictures, especially those regarding a daughter's social freedom, long-fashioned in the homeland, seemed to die hard in Vancouver.<sup>35</sup> It now appears that they may have sometimes intensified. Furthermore, children grew up with their own preference and personality, an ephemeral, unquantifiable, and unpredictable combination. Some seemed to prefer at least some elements of the Portuguese youth culture they remembered as opposed to the one they saw "here."

For one adolescent, "family was everything." A diary which she maintained for years became a surrogate confidant because she had few friends due to a complex combination of work, family stricture and personal choice. Even within the school day where they were beyond parental eyes, she and a few others, say there were not many friends. Yet her older sister remembers a different adolescent emphasis: work became "the least of our problems ... friends were very important. I would say, at that time, more important than family."<sup>36</sup> One wonders, of course, how many among this first generation of Portuguese in Vancouver, and Canada, rejected its youth culture by choice, and how many others were subsumed by traditional values promulgated by family.

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<sup>35</sup>"Growing up Portuguese in Canadian Schools".

<sup>36</sup>F16177; F16377.

## Chapter 7 -- Spirituality and Adolescent Religious Beliefs

"A bola! a bola! Primeiro e a igreja! a igreja!"  
 "Soccer! soccer! First is church! Church!"<sup>1</sup>

According to Leo Pap, Catholicism was so "deeply-embedded in Portuguese cultural tradition" that the act of joining New World Protestant denominations might be viewed by other Portuguese as "in itself a major step of 'denationalization.'"<sup>2</sup> For well over two centuries, however, the Portuguese Church had been subjected to the ebb and flow of anticlericalism. The First Portuguese Republic, 1910-26, had abolished religious education in schools, seized all church property and had even "forbidden" priests and nuns from wearing "clerical garb."<sup>3</sup> This was something reversed by Salazar in the Concordat of 1940.<sup>4</sup> The Church was suffering yet another ebbing; as the younger Michaelense sister put it:

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<sup>1</sup>This translation does not fully capture the criticism one older Michaelense woman intended. Sao Miguel, Meu Diario, 1977.

<sup>2</sup>Leo Pap, The Portuguese-Americans, 182.

<sup>3</sup>Caroline Brettell, Men Who Migrate; Women Who Wait, 58-9. One nineteenth-century observer of Sao Miguel remarked that "many, especially the young men, are avowed free-thinkers and unbelievers". See Lyman, 1882, 214.

<sup>4</sup>Brettell, We Have Already Cried, 35. Salazar had abandoned study for the priesthood. See Luiz Teixeira, Profile of Salazar: Material for the History of his Life and Times (Lisbon: SPN Books, [1938]).

"Portugal did one fast turn-around after the Revolution."<sup>5</sup>

In the late 1970s, evidence of Portuguese Catholicism was still to be seen and heard in the north of Portugal and on the Azores, the traditional strongholds of the Church. A pilgrimage on foot to Fatima clutching a rosary remained the quintessential religious expression on the Continent.<sup>6</sup> On Sao Miguel, the Church paraded its own greatly revered image, the Senhor Santo Cristo dos Milagres (the Holy Christ of Miracles), which attracted thousands of emigrant Michaelense back to the island. Villages and towns still continued to have processions,<sup>7</sup> and some older Michaelense women still trailed the images "praying on their knees" seeking favours, or honouring promises. Young children continued to join in this public veneration dressed as "angels" while "quite a few" older students from the liceu "who wished ... went with black capes."<sup>8</sup>

Within the private sphere, Catholicism, if not the Portuguese sense of fatalism, still pervaded many homes. The phrase, se Deus quizer ("if God wills it"), sometimes accompanied by a pause, a nod, or even a sigh, was common in everyday speech. Religious images such as the portrait of the Sagrado Coração de Jesus (the Sacred Heart of Jesus), with a

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<sup>5</sup>F16377.

<sup>6</sup>See the pictorial guide, Severo Rossi and Aventino de Oliveira, Fatima (Fatima: Consolata Missions' Publications, 1981)

<sup>7</sup>Arruda, Meu Diario, 1977.

<sup>8</sup>F16177.

highly visible and radiant heart, hung in homes around which a family might gather to say the terço (rosary). The obedience of the child Jesus to Joseph and Mary was played up -- that he reprimanded his parents when they discovered him preaching in the temple was conveniently overlooked.<sup>9</sup>

Other religious rituals helped reinforce the solidarity of the family. Rosaries were well-thumbed out of daily use, for who among the Portuguese did not know the message communicated to the little shepherds -- that the regular and widespread saying of the terço would halt the spread of world communism? One certainly did not have to travel to Portugal to hear that Catholic expression, "the family that prays together, stays together." A rosary, a medallion, a photograph of one of the members of the Holy Family, or of a saint, might be blessed by the priest and find its way into the pocket or luggage of a beloved family member embarking for Canada. Later in Canada, many parents would miss the festas, the procissões, the almost incessant sound of church bells in the air not to mention the richly-adorned churches themselves.

One woman said, in a matter-of-fact way, "we were poor, but we had beautiful churches." She left the public elementary school after four years armed to face a future of constant work with a base of religious knowledge shaped by the subject, "Religion and Morals", in the school as well as the teachings within the church. Like a few other adolescents in Portugal, she

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<sup>9</sup>Rogers, 309.

held an unwavering, and unchallenged, belief in the Church's ability to communicate to her, the "palavra de Deus" (the word of God). A subject whose mother and father didn't go to church said, "I believed. I went to catechism. I sang in the choir." A Lisbon youth "believed in God quite heavily" and though his mother "made" him go to Confession when he did something wrong, he says he found it quite a "relief": "you said it [sins], you would be forgiven." Another Lisbon subject his religious perspective changed "more markedly" in Canada.<sup>10</sup>

In contrast, at least some adolescents enrolled in a liceu at approximately the same time confronted and debated Catholic teachings and practices in the mid-70s. They did so either directly in the course of instruction, or indirectly through association with peers. Some of these accepted the teachings of the Church while others selected what seemed to make sense to them out of those teachings. Others not only rejected those teachings, but also became atheists. Some young people must have wondered at the juxtaposition of the crucifix and the photographs of Salazar on their classroom walls during the 1960s, especially when some of their liceu teachers, retornados to native villages from Continental universities, "became extremely anti-clerical."<sup>11</sup> It was probably during such lengthy sojourns that Azorean eyes were opened with the consequence that "a lot of

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<sup>10</sup>F15773; M15565; M25168; M15971; M15967; F15570; M15870; M15468.

<sup>11</sup>Rogers, 306.

teachers", along with "some priests", became involved in politics. Students in one Michaelense liceu discussed abortion "once in a while" though it was "not too much of an issue." "Two or three" friends in their mid-teens who had been "brought up Catholic" were "rebellling against the whole thing" and discussions raged over whether humans had souls or not.<sup>12</sup>

Regardless of their point of origin, subjects were in general agreement that the Church "there" was, as a rural Continental man said, "a big part of one's life." Most said they "believed" in God in Portugal, though some added that they had already become sceptical of what the Church taught. One man said he had been "exposed to all the instruments of the Church" daily in his private school, yet, as a teen, what had "tormented [his] mind" was "priests not getting married." This is something a few others also remember they contemplated. This subject also recalled that his mother could go to the church and purchase a "document" permitting the family to eat meat on Friday; this was, in his words, "a dead giveaway." One other youth had also wondered "what kind of religion" exempted those who paid this "tax." The pharmacist's son, in fact, had developed a dislike of church as a boy: "I remember church. Constantly -- church, church, church."<sup>13</sup>

There were other indications that the Church was losing its grip over the Portuguese. The results of a survey published in

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<sup>12</sup>F16177.

<sup>13</sup>M15565; M25168; M15967; M15971.

1972, for example, showed varying levels of commitment to the Mass by geographic region. Between 15 and 35 percent of all Portuguese Roman Catholics attended Sunday Mass regularly; in the north, over 90 percent attended; in the centre, less than 20 percent; while only 5 to 10 percent attended in the south.<sup>14</sup> And there were more personal observations. Francis Rogers, a long-time observer of Portugal now thought that on the rural Continent, by the late sixties, men outnumbered women in Mass attendance as women became more politicized.<sup>15</sup> On Sao Miguel, one could find a magazine "'featuring a middle-aged couple in various erotic poses'" in a barber shop outside of which boys and girls walked freely without chaperons; meanwhile, "'erotic'" films continued to be screened though the priest made at least one announcement regarding pornografia following communion.<sup>16</sup> Youth spoke of the famous spot down by the sea in Ribeira Grande where lovers went to be alone.<sup>17</sup> And though the days were not too far gone when youths roamed the island with rosaries and black sackcloth as terceiros (pilgrims), one could obtain the birth control pill at any pharmacy in the Azores and condoms and

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<sup>14</sup>"Eighty-five percent of people questioned in 1972 declared themselves Catholic, and 12 percent stated they were atheists or merely indifferent to religion". Gallagher does not state whether or not the Azores was included in the survey he cites. Portugal: A Twentieth-Century Interpretation, 127.

<sup>15</sup>Rogers.

<sup>16</sup>Arruda, Meu Diario, 29 January; 7 February, 1977.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

vaginal cones were also available.<sup>18</sup>

The Church and its clergy may have lost some of their grip over the people, but like Portugal,<sup>19</sup> they too were transforming. Some of the faithful took these changes harder than others. Older women "scandalized" by schoolgirls in gym wear and running through the streets of Ribeira Grande approached the priests, only to meet an unexpected response. There, at least one priest who no longer wore a collar "outside church", but "wore jeans", spoke out from the pulpit in support of what young people were doing. Youth were not trying to "to seduce anybody" when they arrived in church clad in jeans and sleeveless tops and without "those veils." A priest was even approached by teens for his thoughts on whether or not it was "wrong" to enjoy "spin the bottle." Some young people could not fail to embrace those clergy who set out to "involve" them, whether they organized summer camps outside Lisbon or day excursions, sports events, and inter-island youth group meetings on the Azores. These were, admittedly, activities that had "little to do with religion ... a lot of us just went for the fun of it ... to meet

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<sup>18</sup>The "Monovar-D, the most widely-used in the Azores in 1973, sold for 36 escudos" for a one month supply. Francis Rogers recalls meeting a married Azorean woman from California whose mother sent her the pill from the Azores because Californian doctors, before prescribing it, insisted on regular medical examinations every three months! Ibid., 377. A Vancouver woman told me a similar story. August, 1992.

<sup>19</sup>Three Portuguese feminist writers of Cartas Novas Portuguesas (New Portuguese Letters), were arrested and brought to trial for their book which was "'an outrage to public decency'", but charges were dropped. Brettell, We Have Already Cried, 32, 117.

guys." Whatever other attachments they placed upon festas, many children and youth also anticipated church festivals as "just an excuse to party." One regarded such a feast as "a whole week of celebration." Whether in Lisbon, the rural Continent, or Sao Miguel, there would be brass bands and firecrackers and bonfires and even dancing -- under watchful eyes, of course.<sup>20</sup>

## I

The Baptismal Register for the Igreja Portuguesa da Nossa Senhora de Fatima in Vancouver reveals that as early as 1960, there were thirteen Portuguese baptisms performed by the Portuguese priest. Between 1960 and 1968, baptisms were performed in other parishes, however, because there was no Portuguese church. It was not until around 1964 that a formal "mission", Missão Católica Portuguesa, was begun at Saint Paul's Catholic Church<sup>21</sup> at 381 East Cordova by Father Geronimo Angeli, a Scalabrinian priest.<sup>22</sup> This mission later moved to Our Lady of Sorrows at 555 Slocan. Father Aquilino Magagnin supported concerned Portuguese in the drive to raise funds for the

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<sup>20</sup>F16377; F16177; M15367; M15468.

<sup>21</sup>Anderson and Higgs, 145.

<sup>22</sup>Interview with Father Antonio Deangelis, one of two priests in the Portuguese parish. 10 July 1992. Serving "'Italian emigrants'" since 1888, the "'spirit" of the order was later expanded to serving other emigrants integrating into "their" new countries. These priests went to Canada in 1953 and Portugal in 1971. Scalabriniani: Tappe Successive di Un Centario, Scalabrinians: Successive Milestones of Our Centennial (Roma: Direzione Generale Missionari Scalabriniani, 1986).

construction of the Portuguese church. Appeals for funds were sometimes placed in the local Portuguese newspaper. Money proved difficult to raise and one priest "chided" the Portuguese in their own newspaper, "'as money enters into the house religion leaves.'"<sup>23</sup> The church was finally built near the intersection of 13th Avenue and Main Street and was consecrated in 1969<sup>24</sup>. Scalabrinians from Brazil served as its pastors.<sup>25</sup>

Table 1.--Baptisms and Confirmations in the Registers of Nossa Senhora de Fatima Portuguese Parish in Vancouver, 1960-91.

Year	No. of Baptisms	No. of Confirmations
1960	13	-
1961	21	-
1962	33	-
1963	29	-
1965	41	-
1966	61	-
1967	67	-
1969	46	-
1970	77	-
1971	99	-
1972	98	-
1975	130	-
1978	[130]	94
1979	90	-
1980	98	66
1985	39	45
1991	49	41

Note: Compiled from the Baptismal and Confirmation Registers at this church by Father Antonio Deangelis, 10 July 1992. Confirmation was first authorized in this church in 1978.

<sup>23</sup>O Mensageiro, May 1968, cited in Anderson and Higgs, 150.

<sup>24</sup>Anderson and Higgs, 144.

<sup>25</sup>Father Antonio Deangelis.

The number of Baptisms performed in this church paralleled Portuguese immigration figures which continued to rise throughout the sixties. An annual peak of 130 baptisms was achieved in 1975. A record number of Confirmations, 94, were performed in this church in 1978, the first year Confirmations were authorized in the Church. Thereafter, both the numbers of baptisms and confirmations fell somewhat dramatically to a 1985 low of 39 baptisms and 45 confirmations, a level which remained stable to the present.

This decline in numbers is attributable several factors. First, housing costs have forced a number of families to relocate from their eastside homes to Richmond and Surrey.<sup>26</sup> Second, some have been drawn to a Portuguese Baptist Church as well as other churches. At least three subjects went to churches other than the Portuguese church, for example; furthermore, several sources suggested that a not inconsiderable number of Portuguese became Jehovah's Witnesses. Third, some families went to church less frequently in Vancouver while others stopped altogether.

Most subjects who went to church in Vancouver actually attended the Portuguese Catholic Church at least for a time. Some continued to attend this church despite the significant differences they say they found between it and those they remembered in Portugal. The subject who described his "concept" of a date as a platonic event did not think his relationship with the church ever really changed. In Vancouver, he had "always

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<sup>26</sup>See Horta, 125-6.

attended the Portuguese Mass" with his parents throughout his adolescent years. He had maintained more traditional views on what practices should be allowed in the Catholic Church into his adult years. He thought, for example, that "only the priest should handle that [chalice] .... you should never give it to the ordinary people to share that job."<sup>27</sup> Nor did he accept others' notions of divorce. He had "always look[ed] for consistency", and in his view marriage was forever -- a spouse was certainly not like a toy that did not meet expectations and that one brought "back to the store" for a "refund." Though he had emigrated as a child he thought priests "there" had "emphasized more." They were "more passionate", "more expressive", while "the substance" of what was said was "pretty much the same." There was no question about the existence of God for this subject: one's intellectual "knowledge" left room for "that unknown thing." The older sister who emigrated in her mid-teens maintained a strong sense of Catholicism in Vancouver. What changed was that while "there we could go to whatever Mass we wanted, we just had to walk ... here, it was a family thing to do every Sunday" and the family began going to church as a unit. Her father who had seldom attended in the homeland, "always went to church every single Sunday." Later during his illness, they

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<sup>27</sup>The Second Vatican Council, 1965, made changes in liturgical and other practices which "typified the Church's ability to adapt to changing circumstances." One provision was that "some sacramentals ... may be administered by qualified lay persons." John A Hardon, S.J. The Catholic Catechism: a contemporary catechism of the teachings of Jesus Christ (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1975), 556; 553.

"prayed every night with my mom -- not of our own free will -- my mom would make us." Her brothers didn't think "prayer was going to help" their father. She, however, had remained "very much black and white" about certain issues; for example, "abortion was totally out of the question" as far as she had been concerned. Catholicism had guided her actions, though she had also "cared a lot about what other people would say, people in the Portuguese community."<sup>28</sup>

Others saw their adolescent spirituality transformed in Vancouver regardless of the church they attended. The Vancouver-born girl had attended another church besides the Portuguese one. She was "sure ... very much so" that Catholicism had guided her adolescent actions, not so much because of church in particular, but because she also attended a Catholic high school: "I was surrounded by it [Catholicism] -- I was being taught by nuns." Yet she was "always very curious about other religions", particularly after one school assignment took her into the church of another denomination. Like others, the questions she began to ask about Catholicism focused upon divorce and priests not marrying, issues of "sex and marriage." One woman who had emigrated as a very young child and had grown up going to the Chinese Catholic church. As a child, she had thought that Jesus was "Chinese." On a visit to Portugal as a teenager, she had extolled parishioners in a church who were "concentrating and so focused." She herself had been "quite spiritual" while her

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<sup>28</sup>M16370; F16377.

adolescent friends "always seemed to be searching for something", for the "the ideas of Hari Krishna", for example. She maintained a fundamentally Catholic "basis", but one that "was always open to interpretation"; furthermore, she had a strong sense of "fatalism", "that things were going to be allowed."<sup>29</sup>

One teen from Lisbon continued to attend the Portuguese church, though his adolescent world view changed "more markedly." Catholicism had set a "very strong foundation" for his beliefs, but here, the "teachings of the Catholic Church combined with other philosophies" such as "existentialism" and "meditation." The younger sister said that the priest "here" had merely "explained" the two readings, while priests "there" had drawn more parallels between "what happened in the Bible" and how Biblical characters "handled" situations at that time. Considering how much her life had changed in Vancouver, the transformation in her adolescent religious stance was hardly surprising:

In the Azores, I totally, totally believed in God. Totally. I felt I could count on the Church, on God, on the priests ... when I came here, I felt abandoned by God.<sup>30</sup>

What guided her actions in Canada was not the Church, but more her own inner sense of responsibility, and that sense of "family" which was heightened in Canada.

A few subjects were quite disappointed by the Portuguese

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<sup>29</sup>F16400; F15356.

<sup>30</sup>M15468; F15356; F16400; Emphasis in narrative, F16377.

church in Vancouver. It looked different. It was of relatively simple construction and one Continental girl was struck by the oddity of a large wooden cross. But there were more important differences. One youth who had believed "quite heavily" in Portugal said all that church-going was "lost when we came to Canada.... the minute we came to Canada, we stopped going to church." This was hardly because he altered his fundamental belief in God. Rather, he remembers his father who had "studied church and theology for a long time" in Portugal and had been in "Christian groups" in Portugal thought "this church wasn't really Portuguese." The girl who had "believed" and had sung in the choir on the rural Continent went "a few times" to the Portuguese church but stopped after realizing it "was a social gathering for people more than anything." She had not thought "there was anything religious about it", but had considered it a place "to see and be seen." Her other remarks, however, suggest that her criticism may have been aimed at Catholic churches in general: the "Portuguese" she had seen at this church "needed a sense of belonging", needed "to ask forgiveness for all the horrible things they'[d] done all week." The notion of "Hell, forever and ever" was one of the things she "just couldn't understand." She also "didn't want to be in that environment of being controlled" and had found her "own God" "more fulfilling." Conversely, a Lisbon subject had thought "priests here weren't so bad." If ever one arrived from Portugal then there was a difference; in her opinion:

It would be fire and brimstone and a lot of emotion ... 'us immigrants' and 'saudades' ... saudades -- bleeding hearts for your country you left behind ... just pulling one's sentiment and people loved it because that's what they were looking for. I didn't like it when they came from Portugal and they made everybody cry. I thought it was pointless.<sup>31</sup>

Priests here made attempts to involve the youth. A woman who had considered a Michaelense priest to be her "best friend in the whole world" attested that priests "here" faced Portuguese parents who had become insulated from the changes in the homeland. She noted that for many Portuguese youth, the "dances" and the "movies" organized by the priests in the church were the "only social thing they [teens] were allowed to do" by parents. Priests tried to "get through to the parents", but many Portuguese parents resisted such efforts to draw youth out into social events. Some didn't think that churches should have been involved in such a role. Sometimes youths who wanted to go to such functions had to make careful proposals to parents:

It would have to be done on the sly, or to be put in such a way where parents wouldn't think, 'oh, they're going to be dancing together, or they're going to be ...'<sup>32</sup>

Some subjects participated in the youth group in this church. One subject was somewhat disappointed with the group in the late seventies. It was "totally a religious thing -- that's all we talked about ... parts of the Bible and stuff like that

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<sup>31</sup>F15668; M15870; F15570.

<sup>32</sup>F16377.

whereas in Portugal, we would get more into topics of everyday life, things that we, as teenagers, worried about." Others who had emigrated as teens a decade earlier took a different view. One youth was even granted fifteen minutes on local radio for a "youth slant" sponsored by the Portuguese church. He remembers one of the purposes of his portion of the program was to publicize its youth group. He also played music by groups like Santana over the air, "to let other Portuguese know that it was okay to listen to this type of music" -- and remembers receiving "calls from all the Portuguese parents who couldn't believe what they were hearing"! Another subject remembers the youth group in the Portuguese church met "once or twice a week" after which they might go "swimming." Sometimes, the group enjoyed soccer, volleyball, and dances with "other youth groups" such as the "Italian" one. It was "quite fun" and he "met a lot of different people." Another felt that "quite recently" there had been improvement in the youth group, that there was a priest who "was quite good with the young people" and that in the late eighties, there was a "good turnout" at youth group meetings. According to a current pastor, lay persons began to run the youth group and youth continue to be involved in the Portuguese church. The present youth group is "bigger" than in previous years. Mass is offered in Portuguese as well as English on Sundays and a choral group of teens sings, naturally, at the English Mass.<sup>33</sup>

There were other teens for whom it seemed the Portuguese

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<sup>33</sup>F16177; M15468. Father Deangelis.

church in Vancouver was primarily a social institution. One man said that "pretty well everybody used to go to church there ... whereas here ... half don't go." He went to this church, but "wouldn't listen to what was said", and sometimes "halfway through I would step out to talk to a friend." It was as an adolescent in Vancouver, he "started questioning ... why are there so many religions, cultures." Here, he said he developed a tolerance of other "religions." For him, as with most others, there remained important residuals of Catholic teachings. These were "always in the back of your mind" and emerged, "kind of came to my mind", whenever he "started making out with the girls." Another man went to church "every Sunday -- not because I used to believe in it that much" but because "I wanted to look at the girls -- it was the only time I used to see the Portuguese girls." He too remembers that "here" it was different: "in Portugal, you have one religion" but here there were "so many." In Vancouver, he remembers questioning whether the church was a "business" or a "religion" and being "confused" over which Church was the "right one." Learning that a priest had been "charged for raping a kid" and that another priest was "married" made him ask other questions; as he said: "I believe[d] until I came here ... and I still believe in God, but that's as far as I go." One who emigrated as an adolescent felt that the teachings of the Church hadn't shaped his ideas "at all." He remembers he didn't pay much attention to the priests' messages because he was "looking at the girls" and he only listened when the priest "went

into the deeper subjects." He "didn't follow" the teachings of the Church "much" and "didn't take them that serious[ly]", but had believed in God, and felt that there was "definitely" an "authority."

One son from a middle-class background whose father had been an atheist said his father "didn't coerce" him "into becoming like him." He arrived at precisely the same position on his own. He remembers he was "sceptical" and grilled Mathematics and Biology teachers for explanations. He had asked "a lot of questions" of Catechists even when he was "very small." They had been unable to provide "proof" and had "answered with answers of faith." He was curious about Scientology, read brochures, "but they didn't answer all my questions." Similarly, the Penticton youth never went to church "at all" upon arriving in Canada despite all the "instruments" he had been exposed to in his private school. Here, he "forgot all about it", despite his mother's encouragement and "church had no impact on [him] in Canada at all." A prime personal goal, of course, had been to integrate with "Canadian" peers, and "most of the Canadian kids didn't go to church." On the other hand, like almost all the Vancouver subjects, a belief in a "supreme" being remained throughout his youth and into his adult years.<sup>34</sup>

Most of these adolescents were not only practicing Catholics in the homeland, but many say they believed in the teachings of

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<sup>34</sup>M15971; M15367; M15967; M16075; M25168.

the Church. Yet even in the homeland, some in their adolescent years were beginning to re-examine Church teachings and practices. In Vancouver, some went to the Portuguese church, a few went to other churches including non-Catholic ones, while some discontinued going to church altogether. In a few cases it seemed the seeds of Roman Catholicism had been cast upon the proverbial stony ground. Yet, all but one subject, professed a residual belief in "God" or a "superior being" throughout their growing-up years in Vancouver. As another explained, religious instruction "stays with you for the rest of your life."<sup>35</sup>

Whether they emigrated before or after the Revolution, many spoke of the church here as being different, and they held varying opinions as to why that was so. Emigrating to Vancouver, not only exposed them to other Churches, but this urban, pluralistic, and more technological environment with television which many saw here for the first time, and the "top 40", posed challenges that accelerated that process. In Vancouver, some families no longer lived near a Portuguese church and they had to contend with English masses at other churches which must have been unsatisfying, if not frustrating, to many Portuguese parents. If they went to festas, they might later go "their separate ways" until the next social occasion.<sup>36</sup> Meanwhile, many of their children no longer had much interest in going to the festas held by the Vancouver Portuguese community. The

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<sup>35</sup>M25168.

<sup>36</sup>Anderson and Higgs, p. 74.

Vancouver-born woman was probably not alone when she admitted, such festivals were "not a place I necessarily belonged", but "a place where I observed rather than participated."<sup>37</sup> Some others found different words to say they had little in common with those whom they saw there.

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<sup>37</sup>F16400.

## Conclusion

Portuguese children are the central historical actors of this thesis and those who pushed them into the centre of their own lives, Portuguese parents, have remained the mutes on this stage. It is children, with their own perspective, who have given parents a voice by translating into English what they thought their parents had said so long ago in Portuguese. It is beyond the scope of this study to study parents on their own terms. Yet before arriving at any conclusion concerning growing up with Portuguese parents in Vancouver, one must reconsider those parents who invigilated that process.

Parents may have chosen emigration to escape poverty, compulsory military service, a Salazarist regime, or to provide better social and educational opportunities, all with the best interests of their children in mind. Yet it is likely that some parents, as individuals, may have viewed emigration as a means of satisfying intensely personal dreams. Some may have come with a mission -- and some may have come in order to rid themselves of the cage of the island or village. Life in Vancouver may also have been perceived as a permanent personal solution to the problems in the homeland.

Whatever the reason for emigrating, many of their children

also heard parents speak of their intention to voltar (return). In three of these Vancouver families, grown children said good-bye to their parents who returned permanently to Portugal. A fourth family (outside Vancouver) also returned to Portugal, but stayed only for six months -- because a pre-teen daughter could not bear to remain in a country that was not hers. In the meantime, thoughts and talk of return continued even among those Portuguese who had vastly improved the family's material prosperity in Vancouver. In one such family where a parent had emigrated three decades ago with "ambitions", parents still talk of return as much as they dismiss its improbability. They say, again, according to their child,

When you're an immigrant, you're a person in a lost land. When you're here, people are constantly saying that you're Portuguese. When you go back to Portugal, you don't belong there either because you're Canadian so you never really know where you belong, and this is the thing they have always struggled with and I remember that from way back.<sup>1</sup>

Many immigrant parents, whether Portuguese or not<sup>2</sup>, continued to feel different in this country. Many failed to learn English fluently. Many did not establish close non-

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<sup>1</sup>Elsewhere, an immigrant parent may say to a child, "Tu es que estas na America," literally, "you are the one in America". Grove, "Six Non-Language-Related Problems", 1977, 5. A theme of parents wanting to return runs strong in the narrative of some subjects as well as other emigrant Portuguese men and women. I heard similar phrases growing up. Another Toronto woman was told by her parents they came for her sake. Her parents investigated returning several times, but were still in Canada.

<sup>2</sup>Robert B. Perks, "'A Feeling of Not Belonging': Interviewing European Immigrants in Bradford," Oral History Journal 12 2: (64-67).

Portuguese friendships. In the past, those Portuguese parents who hoped to return probably tried to establish for themselves an equilibrium point between their Canadian bank accounts and skyrocketing living costs in the homeland. As they tarried, villages they had known emptied and their own childhood friends became citizens of Canada or other countries. As they ruminated about a life "there" instead of a life "here", many parents crossed a point beyond which they could not tear their children away from a land that was now more their own than their parents'. Parents sacrificed personal identity for their children.<sup>3</sup> One subject who deals extensively with Insular and Continental Portuguese in Vancouver said there were many parents who had failed to integrate into the life of this city. And there was a price: "not establishing yourself" in Canada was the "worst thing" one could do. It became the root cause of a lot of "turmoil".

Those parents that did not establish themselves in Vancouver probably affected some of their children who were the subjects of this study. Those in "turmoil" may have seen no reason to unduly expose their children to practices they not only did not comprehend, but also feared. Thus such parents probably maintained or even intensified strictures they had considered as child-rearing norms in the homeland -- even while those evolved

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<sup>3</sup>Robert Harney acknowledges that Italians, for example, who emigrated into a new context in "a flow of labour to capital", also paid a "cultural price", sometimes in the form of atimia (an ethnic inferiority complex). Harney, "Italian Immigration and the Frontiers of Western Civilization," esp. 3, 7-9.

to become more in-line with "Canadian" practices. Yet, the Portuguese family structure and practices within the household did not go unchallenged in Vancouver. Schools, youth culture, and television, for example, introduced children, and their parents to other philosophies and practices. As Canadian residency lengthened, parents relaxed the reins for younger siblings, and "Portingles" and English crept into the household. In some families, entire conversations continued with children speaking English, and parents, some of whom never learned much English, replying mostly in Portuguese. It is not too difficult to conceive of the parental heartbreak in such cases. The stories some Portuguese parents have to tell may be among the saddest ones of all.

As for their children who were the subjects of this study, many spent a significant portion of their growing years -- sometimes almost half of their own lives -- growing up "there" as opposed to "here." Some not only enjoyed discussing their growing up years in "Portugal", but compared circumstances they faced "here" with those they had experienced "there" without being asked to.<sup>4</sup> Whether from Sao Miguel or the Continent, boys and girls from poorer homes emigrated with different experiences and expectations of class and gender than their more middle-class compatriots. Evidence of this could be found in their schooling, work, socializing, courtship, and sometimes in their hopes for

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<sup>4</sup>In one study of immigrants, subjects thought the pre-emigration years as that period which had "most shaped their lives." Perks, "'A feeling of Not Belonging,' 66.

the future. In Vancouver, it appears those from more middle-class homeland backgrounds usually, but not always, enjoyed more social freedom than any of those from more humble ones. In fact, a few adolescents' experiences contrasted markedly from what the literature suggests Portuguese adolescents experienced.

Being Portuguese in Vancouver was probably not the most important variable in the lives of some of these subjects.<sup>5</sup> For some girls, however, gender and ethnicity were a frustrating combination, especially in the areas of parental expectations concerning their social freedom, or household work, for example. Yet, at least two girls were granted more social freedom than Portuguese peers, even boys. The level of parental strictures together with "personality", perhaps an amalgam of personal preference, ambition, and fortitude, propelled children and youth in different ways.

Some subjects expressed considerable attachment and pride towards Portuguese culture in their adult lives. In a few other cases, there were shifts in the attachment subjects felt toward things Portuguese as interviews wore on. One subject, for example, had grown up without Portuguese friends, had perceived some Portuguese functions as "a place to learn from", had known

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<sup>5</sup>In view of "ethnic cleansing" elsewhere, one must confine this view to the Canadian, and other similar contexts. Three scholars of South Asians in Canada assume a similar perspective. See Norman Buchignani and Doreen M. Indra, with Ram Srivastiva, Continuous Journey: A Social History of South Asians in Canada (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., in association with the Multiculturalism Directorate, Department of the Secretary of State, 1985), 206.

she "wasn't Portuguese" but like her Italian friends had felt she wasn't a "hot dog and beans Canadian either." Just before the interview concluded, she "remembered" that it was "so important" for other Portuguese adolescents to be "Canadian" that they didn't want "anybody to know they were Portuguese." She "never had that sense ... I never saw being Canadian as such a wonderful thing." Others still enquired about her ethnicity, whether she was "French" or "Italian":

I'm constantly explaining that I'm Portuguese and I have a lot of family in Portugal -- my grandparents are there, quite a few of my aunts and uncles, cousins. And I really have a desire to link with them somewhat and I am more interested now in the Portuguese culture than I was when I was growing up -- there's a part of me that is missing that sense of culture. It was almost so much becoming Canadian that a part of me is really lacking that, not having that culture ... I have this need to want to connect ... learn a little bit more about it ... it's the sense of identity, I think, and a sense of having been different and not having been in the main[stream].

The "experience of another culture" was important to this subject. She "remembered being ripped off", feeling "disconnected" without an extended family, without grandparents:

I don't want it to be that my sense of family starts here, starts with me, or starts with my parents. I want to have -- I want to know -- that I'm one of a long generation of people.

At the time of the interviews, seven of the sixteen emigrants had not taken out Canadian citizenship. Only one of the seventeen self-identified as a "Canadian." This person said she would "eventually" take out citizenship. All of the others

self-identified as "Portuguese" or "Portuguese-Canadian", virtually the same proportion Ana Paula Horta arrived at with a larger sample of Vancouver adults.<sup>6</sup> Of the seven, one still felt no sense of historical belonging to Canada. A second appreciated the "best parts" of both cultures, appreciated the basic Canadian political and economic infrastructure but found many aspects of Canadian culture "too loosey-goosey." A third had talked a parent out of taking out citizenship. A fourth was applying for citizenship -- in order to gain access to the United States. Some of those who had taken out citizenship qualified their citizenship. One subject who had enjoyed considerable social freedom as an adolescent, had only taken out citizenship years after other family members had done so, and said, I'm "a Portuguese living in Canada." Another was "Portuguese-Canadian with a strong tendency towards Portuguese." One said, I'm "both ... I will always, always, always be Portuguese", while another said, "I'm from the world ... maybe I don't want to choose." Two subjects now contemplated a return to Portugal, one of these having developed an acute affinity for its language and culture despite emigration at a young age.

The level of endogamy among them was not surprising

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<sup>6</sup>F15570. Five percent of her subjects identified themselves as "Canadian." They were primarily first-generation Portuguese who had resided in Canada for more than twenty years, the "majority" having received formal education in Portugal. Horta, "The Salience of Ethnicity," 234.

considering that almost all subjects were first-generation.<sup>7</sup> Six of the seventeen Vancouver subjects went on to marry Portuguese spouses. A seventh divorced from a non-Portuguese spouse had married a Portuguese person. An eighth subject married a Portuguese-speaking emigrant. A ninth now contemplated marriage in Portugal. A tenth married a non-Portuguese spouse who became immediately immersed in the Portuguese language and Portuguese became the exclusive language in the household. Three who had enjoyed the greatest social and dating freedom as adolescents were among these ten. Seven others comparable in age to the first seven, had married non-Portuguese spouses one of whom also took a great interest in Portuguese culture.

One must consider expressions of personal affinity for Portuguese culture, even a rekindling of that sentiment, in the light of Canada's official policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework. That policy, announced in October, 1971, offered "legitimacy" to ethnic activities and concerns.<sup>8</sup> In the least, it is an artifact of Canada's intent to move away from a more "Anglo-conformist and racist past into a more egalitarian pluralism."<sup>9</sup> One sees that pluralism expressed everywhere in Vancouver today where one is not actively

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<sup>7</sup>See Jean R. Burnet with Howard Palmer, "Coming Canadians": An Introduction to a History of Canada's Peoples (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart in association with the Multiculturalism Directorate, Department of the Secretary of State, 1988), 98-9.

<sup>8</sup>Burnet and Palmer, 174ff.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 228.

discouraged from admitting or expressing one's ethnicity. These Portuguese subjects who grew up in Vancouver among other cultures, simply have more freedom to find a self-identity more than ever before. Subjects who expected a more homogeneous and exclusive culture like the one they had known on the Azores or the Continent could mistake the very multiplicity of cultures for "no culture" or "a young culture." What one subject uttered was not too different from what several others said: "The Canadians, I am sad to say that, have no culture."<sup>10</sup>

One subject repeated he now considers himself "very lucky" to have grown up with an understanding of two cultures. Another who had worked at integrating into Canadian youth culture had now enrolled a child in the Portuguese Saturday school. For this subject, being Portuguese was "something from way back that gets passed from generation to generation." Some other adults of Portuguese descent who were not subjects of this study said they felt more drawn toward Portuguese culture now that they were older. One professional now had "a hunger" for Portuguese culture that she had previously straight-armed growing up in Vancouver. Another professional said she had not fit in with the Portuguese she had seen growing up in Toronto. Now she wanted to "pay back" the Portuguese community in Vancouver.

One subject who is very familiar with first- and second-

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<sup>10</sup>David Higgs also found that Canada "fulfilled the material dreams" of some of the first generation Portuguese, but "did not satisfy their need for a heart-felt allegiance." Higgs, The Portuguese in Canada, 16.

generation adolescents of Portuguese descent said he remembered a time when one went to a nightclub and refrained from admitting being Portuguese. He had even told people he was "South American", "Brazilian" -- "people weren't very proud to say they were Portuguese." He said, "five or ten years ago ... I thought the culture, the Portuguese culture, was dying and now I see it reborn." In his view, the "bickering" between Azoreans and Continentals who used to avoid each others' dances is diminishing. Now he saw Vancouver-born youth of Portuguese descent who "hardly speak Portuguese" returning to these functions. "They don't eat the food, they go to MacDonal'd's and come back [to the Portuguese dance] and that's the Portuguese way." Now there is a young folklore group run by people "born here."

This quest for Portuguese culture may be nothing more than the subjective reaction to the individualism and pluralism of North American society.<sup>11</sup> It may also be a personal response to a social and political context that encourages, rather than discourages, remembering one's beginnings.

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<sup>11</sup>For a discussion of whether italianita is waxing or waning, see Rudolph Vecoli, "Italian-American Ethnicity: Twilight or Dawn, Italians in the U.S.A., A Comparative Perspective" in Potestio and Pucci, Italian Immigrant Experience, 131-56.

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## APPENDIX I

## Explanation of Study and Statement of Consent

Thesis: "Portuguese Adolescence in Vancouver, B.C., 1960-75: an oral history".

Researcher: Mr. Tony P. Arruda (604) 224-8724  
[Supervisor: Dr. Neil Sutherland (604) 822-5286]

Purpose of the Study: I understand the purpose of the study is to investigate the history of Portuguese-Canadian adolescent experiences in Vancouver. In particular, it will try to establish the range of these experiences, and suggest, if possible, how typical a particular experience may have been among the subjects studied.

Procedures: I have been told by the researcher that I will be interviewed about some aspects of my youth: family life, school, work, play, spirituality, and world view. If I wish, I may share with him any manuscript materials (diaries, letters, journals, etc.) and photographs that I feel may assist him. I may also withhold any information, terminate an interview question -- or the interview -- for personal reasons.

Particulars: I agree to volunteer my time and effort toward this study for which I will not receive monetary payment. I agree to one interview which may take from one and one-half to three hours. Interviews will go no longer unless I extend it freely and willingly or suggest meeting another time. I can ask any questions I choose so that I might understand the proposed study and its procedures. I can refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time.

Consent and Confidentiality: Please initial either 'a' or 'b':

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ All audio-tapes and notes made will be kept strictly anonymous by the researcher. I have been told by him that he alone will hold the audio-tapes and any notes arising out of the interview. My name will not appear anywhere in the thesis, nor in any future work arising out of this interview. The data gathered may be used in the future, but only by the researcher himself and only under identical conditions of confidentiality. (I may strike out and initial this last sentence if I wish)

b. \_\_\_\_\_ I recognize the importance of this work and wish to contribute to a greater understanding of the Portuguese in Canada. Therefore I wish to permit any audio-tape(s) of the interview to be used in the following manner: (initial the statement(s) you give consent to)

i) \_\_\_\_\_ use of my interview and name in the thesis.

ii) \_\_\_\_\_ anonymous use of the interview in future works of this kind.

iii) \_\_\_\_\_ use of my name and interview in future works of this kind.

iv) \_\_\_\_\_ use of name, interview tapes and transcript as part of any library, or Oral History Collection, either existing, or created in the future, for the purposes of other researchers.

v) \_\_\_\_\_ (specify any restriction)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Written Consent: I understand UBC Policy requires my written consent if I am to be interviewed by the researcher. This consent form has been explained to me fully. I have received my own signed copy. I \_\_\_\_\_, therefore, do hereby consent to volunteer as a subject in the historical project named above.

(Date) \_\_\_\_\_ (Signed) \_\_\_\_\_

(Print Name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Telephone) \_\_\_\_\_

(Address) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX II

"PORTUGUESE ADOLESCENCE IN VANCOUVER, B.C. 1960-80:  
an oral history"

Subjects wanted for study: Were you a Portuguese-Canadian youth living in Vancouver at some point between 1960 and 1980? I am a graduate student at the University of British Columbia interested in the Childhood and Adolescent History and am looking for Portuguese-Canadian subjects for interviews. The research, when completed, may yield an important perspective and provide a useful comparison for other non-Portuguese adolescent histories.

- Particulars:
1. subjects should have been 12-19 years of age during this period.
  2. subjects may have been immigrants, or Canadian-born of Portuguese descent. (both are wanted).
  3. subjects may have only 1 Portuguese parent.
  4. I am especially interested in interviewing any children or youths who came to Vancouver before 1960.
  5. Voluntary basis.

Contact: Please call Tony at 224-8724 for more details.

## APPENDIX III - Recruitment (Portuguese)

**"ADOLESCENTES PORTUGUESES EM VANCOUVER, B.C., 1960-80:  
TESTEMUNHOS"****- Era adolescente (Luso-Canadiano/a) residindo em Vancouver entre 1960 e 1980?**

Sou um estudante graduado na Universidade da Columbia Britanica interessado no estudo da Historia da Infancia e Adolescencia e pretendo contactar Luso-Canadianos. A investigacao, quando terminada, fornecera uma importante perspectiva e servira de base a outros estudos sobre adolescentes.

## Informacao Detalhada:

1. As pessoas que procuro para entrevistar deveriam ter tido entre os 12 e 19 anos de idade no periodo de 1960-80;
2. Deveriam ser imigrantes ou descendentes portugueses nascidos no Canada (ambos sao necessarios);
3. Os pais dos entrevistados nao necessitam ser ambos portugueses basta que um deles o seja;
4. Estou especialmente interessado em entrevistar pessoas que tenham vindo para Vancouver antes de 1960 quando criancas ou adolescentes;
5. As informacoes prestadas serao tratadas com o maximo de confidencialidade.

Para mais informacoes, e favor contactar o Sr. Tony Arruda, telefone: 224-8724.

## APPENDIX IV

## Interview Questions

These interviews are not highly-structured. I plan to ask 7 general questions. Subsequent questions, or others in the subset, may be asked to clarify or seek expansion of the general question, or redirect a "tranquil" interviewee.

Biographical data: a) place of birth and nationality; b) size of village, town, city; c) details of land ownership/tenure; d) details of migration: age, date, itinerary and intended destination, other relatives in Canada; e) education and employment history; f) did you write letters to friends in Portugal? g) did you maintain a diary/journal?

Broad Questions and subset alternatives:

1. What was like for you in the Azores/Portugal?
  - a) Describe your village/town/neighbourhood
  - b) How well off were you? What did your father/mother do?
  - c) Describe your house (property)
  - d) What was life like for you in the Azores (or Portugal)?
  - e) Did you work? Describe your school (schooling) (teacher)
  - f) Did you socialize/play -- tell me about that.
  - g) Did you go to church -- recall an incident.
  - h) What did you think of yourself then as a child (youth)?
  - i) What about the opposite sex?
  - j) What were some of your dreams/fears for the future at that time -- do you remember them changing?
  - k) Describe what you did on festas? Christmas? Easter?
  
2. Explain how you came to emigrate to Canada (Vancouver)
  - a) Why did you leave -- explain your thoughts about that.
  - b) Did the existence of the draft affect this decision?
  - c) Tell me about your arrival in Canada (Vancouver)
  - d) What were some of your impressions upon arrival?
  
3. What was it like for you in Canadian schools?
  - a) In general, can you recall how you felt you were

- being treated at that time by school/teachers/peers?
- b) What did you expect about Canadian schools? What surprised you about Canadian schools?
  - c) What did your parents say about Canadian schools?
  - d) What activities did you participate in?
  - e) What stands out as a positive experience (negative one)?
  - f) How did you spend your lunch and after-school hours?
  - g) Did you go to Saturday school (Portuguese) (other?)
3. Did you work as a youth?
- a) Describe the paid work you did (hours, pay, duties)
  - b) What did you do with the money?
  - c) What work did you do that was unpaid?
  - d) How did your father feel about work you did?
  - e) How did your mother feel about work you did?
  - f) Were there different jobs (paid/unpaid) for boys/girls?
  - g) Did you encounter prejudice/sexism at the work site?
  - h) Were there other Portuguese at the site? Explain.
4. Describe your friendships.
- a) Did you maintain contact with any friends in Portugal?
  - b) What activities did you share with Portuguese friends?
  - c) " " " " " " "non-Portuguese" ?
  - c) Who did you associate with more -- P or C? Why?
  - d) What problems did you have as a youth that you would care to share with me?
  - e) Did you date? When? Who -- P or C? When did you first bring home a date to introduce to your parents (explain)
5. What do you remember about the quality of your family life in your youth?
- a) What changes occurred to that quality in Canada?
  - b) Who was the boss in the house? Explain. Has it changed?
  - c) Were there different expectations for children?
  - d) When did your parent(s) get a job? car? TV? telephone?
  - e) What were some traditions in your house? (your feelings?)
  - f) What stories did your parent(s) tell? Recall one.
  - g) What foods did you eat? Was there a change? Explain.
  - h) Whom did your family want/expect you to marry?
  - i) Was money sent to the homeland? How often?
  - j) What language was/is spoken in the home? What was/is the quality of English spoken by parent(s)
  - k) Did you have a curfew? other restrictions?
6. Did you go to church?
- a) What were the differences/similarities between C/P churches? their teachings? their importance?

- b) How important was the church to you in Portugal? In Cda?
  - c) Did your relationship with the church change?
  - d) Did spirituality guide/have no effect on your actions?
7. What do you remember was your adolescent philosophy of life in the Azores? In Canada?
- a) What important changes in such outlook were there?  
Can you remember why, when, or how, these changes occurred?
  - b) What important changes in world view do you remember occurred only after your youth?
  - c) Self-Identify: Portuguese/Portuguese-Cdn/Cdn? Explain.