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## The Construction of Immigrant Identity

By Bela Feldman-Bianco and Donna Huse

### Saudade: Memory and Identify

The Portuguese are a world people, the discoverers and colonizers of new lands; they are also immigrants who settled in different parts of the world. This wanderlust, marked by the great age of discoveries and subsequent labor immigration, has been constitutive of the Portuguese experience.

*Saudade*, a word that originated in the sixteenth century, has been associated with the Portuguese unending wanderlust. While loosely translated as "longing" or "nostalgia," *saudade* is in fact a dynamic cultural construct that defines Portuguese identity in the context of multiple representations of space and (past) time.

*Saudade*, on the level of the self or the person, has been viewed as "the uprooted experience located between the desire of the future and the memories of the past" or simply as "the memories which touch the soul—not only its longing, it is also belonging," as one New Bedford immigrant put it. These memories are associated with the layers of time and space prior to emigration, that is to say, with *saudade da terra*, or *saudade* for the homeland. Symbolic representations and social practices of the homeland's everyday life further shapes differentiated Portuguese regional identities.

*Saudade*, as the collective memory of Portugal, has been narrated as the basis of the Portuguese imagined national community. Temporally, the collective national imagination dates back to the discovery era and to the history of immigration; encompassing, spatially, the maritime explorations and the long separations from relatives around the world.

Popular immigrant poetry, as well as philosophy and literature, often portrays *saudade* as central to the Portuguese collective experience.

Consider this poem by the late poet João Teixeira de Medeiros of Fall River:

*the word saudade  
who felt it who made it  
made it fit the Portuguese heart at large  
saudade has happiness and sadness  
feeling and voice  
saudade is very Portuguese  
it is an offspring of all of us  
saudade gives flavour to entire nations  
it is part of our daily life  
saudade will be present*

*in any place where there are  
Portuguese flags  
saudade travelled with us in the sea  
as well as in the thousands of hinterland  
saudade traveled with us on the air  
it is with us in the airplanes  
saudade god help us  
has such deep power  
it is like a hurricane spreading us  
n the little corners of the world*

The dynamic cultural construction of *saudade* is certainly a constitutive part of everyday life in southeastern Massachusetts, one of the oldest Portuguese "little corners of the world." Portuguese immigration began in the whaling era with mostly Azorean males. Mass immigration of Portuguese families from the Azores, the continent and Madeira, and the formation of Portuguese neighborhoods in a network of New England towns began at the turn of the twentieth century. At that time, the Portuguese were among several immigrant groups, including English, French-Canadian, Irish, Polish and Italians, which settled in the region as a result of the demand for cheap labor in the flourishing cotton mill economy. Since the 1920s, the Portuguese have become the predominant ethnic group of the area. Later, between the 1950s and the mid 1980s, with the arrival of new immigrant contingents from the Azores, continental Portugal and Portuguese Africa, the Portuguese neighborhoods of southeastern Massachusetts were renewed and expanded.

Immigration to southeastern Massachusetts has changed the rhythms and the ways of life of Portuguese women and men. In contrast to their experiences in an agrarian world, the majority of these immigrants were confronted, for the first time, with the time-discipline and physical confinement of industrial work; first, as workers in the mills and later in the needle trades or garment assembly, as well as in fishing and other types of industries.

What are the meanings of the cultural construction of *saudade* in the lives of Portuguese immigrants? We present the voices of fifteen women who have narrated their life experiences at the intersection of Portuguese and American cultural borders, in the context of three dramatic events: the decision to leave Portugal; the first years of settlement and work in southeastern Massachusetts; and the decision (with its accompanying ambivalence) to stay in the United States. These moments, epically narrated, bring to the fore the juxtaposition of lyric and realistic narratives, interposed by the endless search and construction of utopias.

These women were born in the Azores and came to the United States in the course of the second major Portuguese mass migration to southeastern Massachusetts, from the late 1960s to the mid 1980s. Their ages range from their twenties to seventies. Most of them came from rural settings and, despite their varied social backgrounds prior to immigration, most started their lives in southeastern Massachusetts as factory workers. A number of them became professionals in later years and have since served as cultural brokers between Portuguese immigrants and American institutions.

## ***Saudade* in the Immigrant Neighborhoods**

While dramatic experiences have marked the lives of immigrants, in the Portuguese enclaves of southeastern Massachusetts there is a sense of a certain immutability of time; different representations of time and space seem to unfold into the present. *Saudade*, as the collective historical memory of Portugal, has been reconstructed as part of political mobilization by community leaders through community rituals and the ethnic media.

Symbols of earlier layers of Portuguese time include the many *caravelles* (the sailing ships of the discoverers) displayed in storefronts and homes, the Prince Henry Monument in Fall River,

the fifteenth century costumes of the regional Prince Henry Society (a type of Portuguese Rotary Club, formed in the 1980s) and the Dighton Rock in Taunton [sic], the inscriptions on which suggest that Portuguese explorers arrived in America before Columbus. The annual celebrations of the "day of Portugal, Camões and the Portuguese Communities" invariably bring the memory of the great age of discoveries back into the present.

Other layers of time and space refer to the ways in which immigrants have reelaborated symbolic representations and social practices of their past as a way of resisting total submersion in industrial America. These are reflected in the spatial organization of homes, with an American upstairs (represented by the symbols of consumption in the United States), a Portuguese downstairs filled with Portuguese artifacts and photographs of relatives living in different parts of the world (which is the major setting of everyday interaction and of social practices associated with the homeland) and the yard reproduction of Portuguese gardens, indicating how immigrants adapt their rural traditions to an industrial setting. In the neighborhood outside the house are Portuguese stores.

Leisure-time activities include the continuance of the *serões*, storytelling and musical gatherings out of a strong oral tradition. The use of time and seasons may also place immigrants within a Portuguese world. Industrial work shapes the lives of many during the entire year but, during the summer, immigrants continue to ritualize their collective memories of the homeland in a succession of regional folk-religious festivals, reminiscent of the harvest season in rural Portugal. Discussions between family members, neighbors, and coworkers are filled with stories from the ethnic media (newspapers, radio, television), bringing the homeland into the everyday life of immigrants.

The incorporation of the past into the present is characteristic of immigrant enclaves. In a way, these neighborhoods resemble still photographs of a past that was already lived and does not exist anymore in the homeland. Yet, in these multiple layers of Portuguese time and space are dynamic representations of the ways in which immigrants cope with changing conditions of existence.

### **America as Utopia**

While the multiple representations and symbols of Portuguese past seem immutable, personal testimonies reveal dramatic changes—the movement from the known to the unknown the encounter with new cultural codes and values and the process of living at the intersection of Portuguese and American cultural borders.

America is present in the everyday life of the Azores just as the Azores is present in the everyday life in America. Immigrant women narrated histories of chain migration and the constant move of people back and forth between the United States and the Azores; relatives living in America who helped them to immigrate and so forth. The experience of living in the Azores was marked by the constant emigration of relatives, friends and neighbors to the United States (as well as to Brazil, Canada and elsewhere) and encompassed the ever-present possibility of their own immigration. "Hello...Goodbye...my time to leave has come," is the beginning sentence of a song that narrates how emigration was constitutive of daily life in the Azores. From the perspective of constant emigration, an abstract image of America as the land of opportunity emerged as a promise for the future. America will solve all problems, but no picture of the future came to mind. The formulas were simple—better opportunities, jobs, money, schools. But America was still unseen, yet to be manifest.

Almost invariably there was one terse announcement pronouncing sentence on the old country. One disabled factory worker said, "I decided to come to America because there was no future for me in the Azores." A young social worker elaborated about life before emigration: "In one way...I think life was easier (in the Azores). It was easier because there were no options."

Images of "no future" and "no options" set limits to life in the Azores. For some, the limits were set by extreme poverty—two-room houses with dirt floors, no electricity, no bath or toilet, no

matches to light fires, plenty of food some of the time, shoes maybe if you were lucky. The one-room schoolhouse had no pens and little paper; the child had to leave school early to work in the fields or as maids to help the family survive. But the volcanic nature of the islands was also experienced as a limit to building a future, as when a woman remarked, "There is something of life there being so uncertain that it doesn't matter where you are....If there was a hurricane, we'd accept that. I think that being a child and living with this, you were so powerless toward nature."

Since women's reminiscences tend to be intertwined with their female conditions, this "lack of options" may also be linked to the rigid construction of gender roles. The younger women, particularly those who pursued professional careers in the United States and became cultural brokers between immigrants and the American institutions, perceived gender roles in the Azores as being fixed by inflexible limits.

*All the girls dreamed of being teachers...but the possibilities were few...and we ended up doing housework and working in the fields. Then we waited...to get married and start our own lives. That starting was nothing new; it was just an impression of starting something new. Once married, life was the continuation of the life we had lived with our parents.*

Given the multiple limits for a future in the Azores, these women turned their hopes for a future in America. And America burned brightly with a promise both material and spiritual, yet completely abstract.

## **The Homeland turns into Utopia**

Just as a new event such as a conquest, a revolution, a new leader can rewrite the history, so the great event of leaving and arriving often rewrites the history of the immigrant. Initial reactions to America varied, but almost no one reported that reality met their dreams. Contrasting with the Azorean paradise, industrial America appeared shockingly gray! "The houses were all gray," remarked one woman. "I didn't like that." Another said, "I got to...Boston and all I see is gray! Gray smog, gray buildings, everything gray! And I'm like, 'What is this? Limbo?'"

The move from the Azores to southeastern New England was particularly dramatic because it was from the countryside and village to the heart of old industrial cities and from agricultural work, cottage labor and domestic chores to the factory. Although in the Azores these immigrant women had learned from childhood to work hard, sometimes from dawn to dusk, their work followed the rhythms of agriculture.

In America these women were immediately confronted with the rigid time discipline of industrial work. Work dominated life and the images that unfolded were "gray." Women reported starting to work in the factory a day or so after arrival. The day started as early as 4:30 AM, getting breakfast for the family members that made the 7 AM shift. Some family members made a second shift as well. Wives and husbands worked in different shifts. One woman remarked that for the winter months she never saw the light of day, and another said, "My life in America has been constantly to work."

A characteristic chronicle of the first years in America followed; they did not speak the language; they moved from tenement to tenement; they got a car or made do without; they worked in this factory or that so much a week; they encountered prejudice both outside and within the Portuguese community. To describe the opening years, realistic stories were told in the spare language of survival:

*Our first decision was to look for work...we found jobs at Columbia Cable...my husband and I found jobs there in different shifts...my husband worked during the day, I worked nights. Then I enrolled my children in school and a church, and I started to learn English, five days a week from 9 to 12. With all these chores, life was not easy and I am not ashamed to tell you that I used to cry a lot, that I was disappointed, nervous because life was so difficult and I had to make so many sacrifices to take care of four children, cook, attend English classes and work from 3:30 PM to midnight.*

In reaction to their specific experiences of life and work in the depressed industrial towns of America, immigrant women reconstruct utopian images of the Azores. The new images bring to light a romantic nostalgia or *saudade da terra* for a timeless time of childhood or youth of non-industrial labor. A woman whose immigration experience is marked by her fragmented life between Brazil (where her Italian husband, who did not adapt to life in the United States, lives) and the United States (where she was a factory worker before retiring and where her children reside) elaborated on the meaning of *saudade da terra* in her life:

*I left São Miguel forty years ago, immigrating in 1949 to Brazil and, later, in 1972, to Fall River. I always remember the farewell.... I had the feeling I never would return and in fact I never went back. Then I try to remember my childhood, bringing to memory everything that happened as if it were an image writ large on a screen.*

The center of this image writ large or, in the words of Bachelard the poetic "space of memory and imagination" may be simply the childhood house.

*If I were to describe my home to you, it's...a dream or a paradise. It's set in such a way that I would wake up in the morning with the sun rising in the east. We had a verandah which was very high, and we could actually look across and see a little island...the view was absolutely gorgeous. The ocean was right in front of my house, so I could see it all the time. And to the north of the house were the mountains.*

In those nostalgic recollections of a timeless time of childhood or youth spent in the farms or small villages of the Azores, the abstractions on America and the terseness of the descriptions of Azorean working life and poverty disappeared and the females's autobiographic memories expanded and pulsed in a lyric fashion. The island appeared on those women's memories to be seen, felt and touched, and some narratives sounded like a poem dictated by sensations. A social worker who immigrated to the U.S. at fourteen remembered:

*What I loved most was looking through the grapevines at the pretty designs the leaves would make with the sky. I used to say, "My God, that is absolutely fantastic...the beautiful colors, the blue sky with the white puffy clouds and the green from the green leaves...." I would try to peek through the leaves to catch a ray of sun trying to see just how much sun I could catch.*

For some, but not all, these new images emerge from a nostalgia for "a time when time did not count." Women (as well as men) whose migration history includes the transition from pre-industrial task-oriented activities in the Azores to industrial work in the United States, developed a romantic nostalgia, or *saudade da terra*, for their immediate past of non-industrial work. This *saudade da terra* tended to be absent from the testimonies of those who either experienced conditions of extreme poverty in the homeland or managed to leave industrial work and become businesswomen in the United States. Accordingly, the most lyric reconstructions of the past prior to emigration were present in the narratives of female factory workers of rural backgrounds who worked and liked to work on their family's farms. In an explosion of sensory memories, these women recalled how agricultural work was intermingled with sociability and aesthetic dimensions of life. "It was fun working the fields, especially if we were a group of girls. Sometimes we sang. Other times we laughed about anything. Life was happier."

These new images hardly ever remembered the collective historical memory of Portugal. Even for women involved in community affairs, the images of Portugal that came to mind reflected mainly their everyday life proper to emigration. Their *saudade* was for the pleasure, the colors, the sensuality of the community life they left behind when work was a part of, rather than separated from life. "But I miss those walks in the morning and the smell of that pure air which was a mixture of wet grass, beech and incense." Weaving a tapestry of sensory memories, these women recalled the rhythms of non-industrial work: "We could hear young people singing or whistling...while they were working in the fields. That was the sound of the new day, people singing along with the noise of the hoes digging and cutting the fields."

From the intercrossing of these multiple memories on their experiences of immigration and confrontation with industrial America, there emerged a shared memory which brings to fore the human dimension of a time of non-industrialized labor. More than a romanticization of the past of a mere fragmented operation of remembering, this collective memory is directly related to their struggles in the United States. As they recalled their first and hard times in the the depressed industrial towns of southeastern Massachusetts, they tend to remember, in a lyric and sensorial fashion, only the those beneficial aspects of the homeland they would like to see restored.

This lyrical reconstruction of the homeland represents a strategy to resist total immersion in industrial time and, at the same time, provides the basis for the reconstruction of the self. *Saudade da terra* made them forget the multiple and fixed limits of life in the Azores which made them emigrate in search of the American utopia.

### Living in-between Utopias

In the process of living in-between the Azores and the United States, immigrants continue to pursue their share of the American Dream which in most cases is symbolized by house ownership, American consumer goods and the possibility of providing a "future" for their children. The ownership of a house allows them to juxtapose symbolically America and the Azores utopias. Invariably, in these immigrant dwellings, the *upstairs* tends to concentrate the symbols of American consumer goods, representing the attainment of at least a share of the American dream. In contrast, the *downstairs*, including the yard, represents the utopian reconstruction of the communal life lived once upon a time in the homeland.

This dual organization of time and space in the immigrant dwellings often masks the changing relations between women and men, as well as between generations. These changing relations are the result of women's entrance into the industrial labor force as well as the increasing dependence of non-English speaking parents on their bi-lingual children. The reinvention of Azorean times and spaces allows women and men to recreate, in somewhat exacerbated fashion, cultural value associated with the construction of gender which were transmitted to them through generations. Older women, in particular, functioned as the extremist arbitrators of moral value constantly reaffirmed by the traditional Catholic Church which (which at least until the 1974 revolution and the subsequent acceleration of social change in the Azores) were recurrently passed on from mothers to daughters.

Younger women are dramatically confronted with changing roles and power relations in the domestic sphere. These experiences are particularly painful for those who act as translators for their parents who do not speak English. As a woman recalled, "When you came her, as the oldest, you were literally the spokesperson for the family. You went to doctors when you had privileged information that you shouldn't have heard or known. You had to translate for financial matters, for all types of problems that were really not meant to be, as teenager or a young girl, to be worried about..."

But while delegation responsibilities to their daughters, parents continued to demand from them gender behavior that limits their insertion into the American milieu. The same woman remembered, "My parents were very strict. I could not date. I couldn't go to evening events at the school. That was a no-no. And I couldn't do this and I couldn't do that. That was America, but they were bringing me up the way they knew, especially my father..."

Women who were still children or teenagers when they come to the United States, and whose life experiences were marked by simultaneous exposure to diverging cultural codes, dramatically remembered their confrontation with the "clash of cultures." A woman who emigrated at twelve, recalled her intense feelings of loss of identity and the sense of fragmentation of the self: "If you came (to the U.S.) at an age when you already had quite an understanding of your culture, and now you have to learn a whole new set of rules, and a totally new language, it sometimes gets to a point when you don't know who you are."

These younger generations of women tended to make diverse choices. Some opted to break free from family traditions and to live only in the American milieu. Others adjusted to family pressure and to the traditions transmitted to them through generations. Bilingual and bicultural women, in particular, who play brokerage and translation roles for their parents tend to live double and parallel lives—one in the Portuguese domestic and communitarian sphere, and another as members of American society. This duality of lives, which magnifies self-fragmentation comes to fore in personal memories and poetry:

*The world that we discover  
Cannot be revealed just by chance  
It is made of electrifying contradictions*

*The continuous reconstruction of  
identity in America*

The meanings created by the immigrants for both their Portuguese and American experiences continued to unfold as they became established in the United States. As more of the conditions of the American dream were fulfilled—the language learned, the house purchased, the children educated, the career advanced, older immigrant women began to give voice to a new contentment, phrased in a realistic style:

*My sons already completed military service (in the United States)...they are married to wonderful goals....I have a granddaughter who is a gem. We are already teaching her to speak Portuguese. We are now preparing the wedding of my daughter who is about to finish college. And I will pray to God at the altar for her to be a good wife and mother for her children....I think, today, that my mission as a mother is more or less complete since I did everything I could for them.*

Other women began to assess the meaning of their achievement in America in a new vocabulary which defines success not so much in material goods as in terms of evolution of the self— independence, a sense of competence and self-determination. One professional woman with a family commented that her life in the United States has always been a continuous rush and strenuous labor. However great the price, she embraced her passage between two cultures:

*I wouldn't change my life right now. I've learned too much in this country. I've learned a lot about myself. I like working and I've learned to be independent. This is one thing it took awhile for my husband to accept. I learned a woman has a lot of rights....I've got more self-confidence. I speak more openly, especially because I was in the union. I speak at conferences, at a lot of meetings and with the media. I learned how to have confidence in myself.*

Those who worked hard, made families, made homes and sometimes rose to positions of authority in business, labor and politics enjoyed this new sense of empowered self. As one woman put it, "You learn how to make your own world...in this country." The individual power to make a world is for some sufficient compensation for the loss of a soulful connection to nature and community.

Other women, however, continue to live in-between cultural codes and values:

*Living in between cultures, I try to maintain a balance...I can grow in different directions.... It is not easy! There was a time when I did not know which direction I should follow. I do not have problems now.*

For many of the younger immigrants who became cultural brokers between the immigrants and American institutions, the reconstruction of their personal identities resides precisely in the junction of their Portuguese and American experiences. For them, as Manolela da Costa sings in *Os sonhos de Dona Dores (The Dreams of Dona Dores)*, biculturalism and bilingualism became the basis of their individual growth:

*I have two cultures  
and two languages*

*two paths to choose  
a woman's virtue is in her growth*

An intense feeling of belonging to Portugal can be resolved by returning. What is the fate of those who tried to go home again? The statement of a well-known community leader traced out several stages in perception of her experience in the homeland, all evolving after a sixteen-year conviction that she belonged in Portugal, not the United States.

*I felt I belonged in Portugal. I mean that was where I was brought up. I had all my friends I'd grown up with there....But actually when I went back in 1976...things were just the same as they were. My friends were still there...married now with their own children, and we tried to carry on conversations, but it was very strange and superficial relationship. They could not comprehend where I was coming from, what I had experienced....It made me realize that I didn't belong there either. So I was like a child without a country.*

This woman was confronted with the stereotyped images of America which prompted most immigrants to come, and she realized that these stereotypes were completely inadequate to encompass the complexity of her long voyage to the United States—the initial hardships, the struggles with bosses, priests, husband and father, the increasingly responsible positions of authority which she accepted and developed. Her old friends were unable to fathom her hard-won maturity and her real achievements were hidden behind the old slogans.

However beautiful her islands, however dear the old community, there was no one there who could understand the self she had become. The old country had not provided avenues for the particular kinds of growth which had made her the person she is. Her conclusion was that she belonged to both countries. She is born of two mothers.

*Portugal is the mother that gave me my birth and America is the mother that adopted me and nurtured me and brought me up to what I am today. And I love them both dearly. Very dearly.*

#### **About the Authors:**

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With permission  
*The Portuguese Spinner: An American Story*  
Marsha L. McCabe and Joseph D. Thomas, Editors  
Spinner Publications, Inc., pp. 60-73.

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From the *Bulletin Board* editor:

The italicized portions of the above story were italicized in the original.

**If -06 follows your membership number on the mailing label, your membership has expired.**



# Azorean Ancestors: Making the Connection (Part 6)

## João Afonso Pimentel: Aristocrat or Peasant?

Pimentel and his wife, Isabel Gonsalves<sup>1</sup>, who lived in the hamlet of Grotas Fundas between Ponta Garça and Ribeira Quente, are the ancestors of many with the surnames Pimentel and Resendes, especially those with roots in Faial da Terra<sup>2</sup>. Based on the notation on the back of the last will and testament of João's son (and namesake), genealogists Rodrigo Rodrigues, Ernesto de Canto and Carlos Machado concluded he was the third son of the third Count of Benavente. Gaspar Frutuoso, whose lifetime avocation was the study of the archipelago's first families, says only of his lineage that he was Castilian—nothing more. Given Frutuoso's prodigious talent for snooping, it is strange he failed to discover this claim. He knew well the aristocracy's genealogies and must have known that many males in the succeeding generations of the first count, carried the Juan Alonso Pimentel name.

Why João Afonso senior left his father's comfortable palace to live in a straw hut in a rugged out-of-the-way place can only be conjectured. He died on 2 September 1512 and was buried in the parish church of São Miguel Arcanjo. In his will he left a considerable fortune<sup>3</sup>.

If he was the son of the Count<sup>4</sup>, he ancestry includes Portugal's King Dinis and his queen, St. Elizabeth. The third count's ancestry can be traced back in Gaio's *Nobiliário de Famílias de Portugal: Pimentéis*. D. Denis's lineage can be traced back in Marilyn Lewis's *Elizabeth of York* (available on CD-Rom). João Afonso Pimentel's descendants can be found in Cortereal's work cited in the endnotes and Machado's *Genealogias*, pp. 57-58,95-98 and Dr. Manuel Monteiro Velho Arruda's *Famílias Antigas da Povoação*, pp. 19-38.

## The Curvelos of Santa Maria

Curvelo is one of those names unique enough to presume a common ancestor. According to Frutuoso, Henry the Navigator appointed *Mestre* António Catalão to organize the sugar cultivation in the early stages of the colonization of São Miguel and Santa Maria. In Vila Franca de Campo, his initial efforts were successful, but short-lived for reasons Frutuoso leaves unclear. António and his wife then settled in Santa Maria and were the parents two boys: Genes and Francisco.<sup>5</sup> The Curvelo family name was nicknamed Catalão (i.e. the Catalan) for the father's place of origin. Arruda, the Mariense genealogist-historian cited above, believes the family name was probably originally the Italian "Crivelli."<sup>6</sup> António, like the biblical prophets, was blessed with a long life, living to 110.

Genes Curvelos settled in Santo Espírito with his wife, Maria Nordelo of Madeira, where they reared five sons and five daughters. Brother Francisco and his wife, Guiomar Gardeza also had several children. Although primarily represented on Santa Maria, a branch of the family (three brothers, Pedro, José and Manuel Curvelo), eighth generation descendants of the Catalan, settled in São Miguel's Vila Franca-Povoação area at the end of the seventeenth century. Their descendants are listed in Arruda's cited work, pp. 56-66.

Other Curvelos predated the three brothers on São Miguel, but their vital records haven't survived and proving a connection without other documentation (wills and property and entailment deeds) could well be impossible. It is known that Sebastião Curvelo and Catarina Dias were living in Vila Franca in 1639 when a daughter, Ana, was married in Santa Cruz da Lagoa. In Ribeira Grande there were Curvelos even earlier.<sup>7</sup>

## The Quentals

Antero de Quental is one of Portugal's greatest poets; many consider him second only to Camões. He was born in Ponta Delgada on 18 April 1842, a descendant of one of the island's oldest families. His hauntingly beautiful poetry has been translated into several languages, including English. He was a tortured soul suffering from real or imagined physical ailments which were symptomatic of undiagnosed depression. Although he never married, he adopted two children who were the center of his life. But his

devotion to them was not enough to help him overcome his final struggle with a particularly devastating bout of depression. On the evening of 11 September 1891, while sitting on a park bench beneath the anchor, the symbol of hope, fixed to the facade of the Esperança Convent, he placed a revolver in his mouth and pulled the trigger. He lies with his ancestors just inside the entrance of Ponta Delgada's S. Joaquim Cemetery. His most popular sonnet is probably "No Mão de Deus." Following is a translation by S. Griswold Morley, which appeared in his *Sonnets and Poems of Antero de Quental*, published in 1922 by the California Press, Berkeley.

In God's Hand

In the hand of God, in his right hand  
My heart has found a resting-place at last  
A down the narrow stairway I have passed  
That leads us from Illusion's magic land.

(3)

As a small child, upon a gloomy day  
Whose mother lifts, smiling distantly,  
And bears him, at her breast, upon her way,

Like to the mortal flowers with which a band  
Of children vainly deck them, I have cast  
Away the transitory figment, and the vast  
Deceit that Passion and the Ideal demand.

(4)

Past woods and seas, o'er desert sand and sod...  
Sleep thy deep sleep, O heart of mine now free,  
Sleep thou forever in the hand of God!

Francisco Botelho de Novais Quental was a nobleman from Castile whose daughter, Maria de Novais, was lady-in-waiting to D. Isobel, queen consort of Afonso V. Maria married Ambrósio Alves Homen Vasconcelos and, according to Frutuoso, the king rewarded them for their service to his sister by retiring them to Terceira.<sup>8</sup> Their sons, Pedro de Novais and Fernão Quental, are the ancestors of the Azorean Quentals.

Fernão was an assistant to Captain-Donatary Rui Gonsalves da Câmara. He and his wife, Margarida de Matos, paid for the construction of a side chapel to the present Church of São Jose in Ponta Delgada, the construction being completed by their sons in 1544.<sup>9</sup> In a strange irony, they also donated the land where the Convento da Esperança was built—where Antero killed himself 350 years later.

João Castanheira, Margarida de Matos's father, had been a leader on Santa Maria and briefly arrested a company of Columbus's crew when the *Niña* stopped for repairs on its 1493 return to Spain.<sup>10</sup>

More on the Quentals and their descendants can be found in José Carreiro's work cited in the endnotes and Rodrigues's *Genealogias de S. Miguel e Santa Maria*.

Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Previously married to Martin Vaz, by whom she had at least one son, Gonçalo Martins, married to Catarina Fagundes.

<sup>2</sup> According to Miguel Figueiredo Cortereal in *Descendentes dos Condes de Benavente Radicados nos Açores Desde o Século XV: Estudo histórico-genealógico*, all the Resendes of Faial da Terra to the end of the seventeenth century, when another member of the same family moved there, were the descendants of Capt. João Afonso Pimentel, the elder, the son of João Afonso.

<sup>3</sup> *Arquivo dos Açores*: XII:100.

<sup>4</sup> The brief version of the genealogy is:

(1) Afonso de Pimentel, (3rd Count; d. 1461) m. Maria Virgil de Quinones y Toledo

(2) Rodrigo Pimentel (2nd Count; d. 1440) m. (3) Leonor Enriques

(6) Alfonso Enriques (Lord High Admiral of Castile; 1354-1429) m. (7) Joana de Mendonça

(12) Fradique Alfonso (1335-1358)

(24) Alfonso X, King of Castile and Leon (1311-1360) m. (25) Leonora de Gusmão

(48) Ferdinand I, King of Castile and Leon m. 1302 (49) Constança of Portugal

(98) Dinis, King of Portugal (1261-1325) m. 1282 (99) Isabel of Aragon (1271-1336)

<sup>5</sup> *Saudades da Terra*: III: 7.

<sup>6</sup> Footnote cited in *Famílias da Povoação*, p. 53.

<sup>7</sup> Freguesia de Santa Cruz da Lagoa, *Registos Paroquiais: Casamentos*: 24-12-1639 and Freguesia de Nossa Senhora da Estrela da Ribeira Grande, *Registos Paroquiais: Casamentos*: 7-9-1605.

<sup>8</sup> *Saudades da Terra*: IV: 50.

<sup>9</sup> José Bruno Carreiro, *Antero de Quental: Subídios para a sua Biografia*, p. 49.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

Submitted by John M. Raposo of Massachusetts

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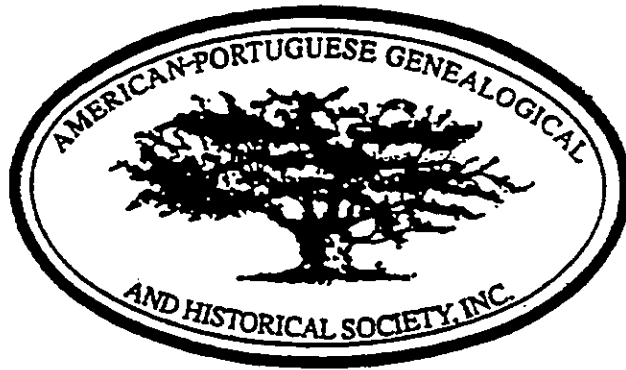
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