



MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL
FOLK & TRADITIONAL ARTS PROGRAM

AUDIO TAPE LOG

Accession No.: LO-01-03 Date(s): May 15, 2001

Fieldworker(s): Laura Orleans

Interviewee(s): Ana Monteiro

Event: --

Place of Recording: home of Ana Monteiro

Recording Equipment: Sony TC-D5-M Microphone(s): RE 508

Recorded in: mono Tape Brand and Format: Cassette, 60 minutes

Amount Tape Used: Cassette: 1 DAT: ABS time:

Related Accession Numbers:

Brief summary of tape contents: a chronicle of Ana Monteiro's childhood in Brava, Cape Verde and her involvement with the Festa do Coroa da Espirito Santo

Counter/ABS	Contents
001	Introduction
009	Family background: born in Matinho da Ville, Nova Cintra (outskirts of Nova Cintra), Brava, Cape Verde 3/15/1955. Village consisted of 7-8 houses. Family owned land and lived as subsistence farmers, bartering goods and services. Speaks of problems with recurrent drought. Crops included corn, beans (rock beans, lima beans pigeon peas), cucumber, squash, manyaca.
027	"We used to give to people, because we had people that would come and work for my father so instead of paying them money we'd pay them the crops. And I remember one incident. This couple they were very poor they lived in another distant village called Baleya. And they had so many children. And one day I remember I was still a little girl and my Aunt, at the end of the day when we they worked we feed them all day. We feed them three meals a day when they work for us. And then at night they would give them supper to bring home. And my Aunt had a bag full of manyaca for him to take to his family. That man cried, he dropped on his knee to thank my Aunt. And my Aunt said "no, no, no don't do that. It's because I wanted to give it to you for your family." But that man was so thankful for that, he was not expecting it . . . And still today, we still have touch with those people. Some of them came to Rhode Island and they gave my Aunt, my father, my mother and I, we were all godparents to their children. . . It's like they grow so close to us that they become part of the family. That's how it is in Cape Verde. We care for each other so much. We can see the need of others. We can see it."
041	Tells another anecdote about helping a poor boy.

055 Helped mother to prepare meals for the farmhands and sometimes carried the food on her head out to the fields.

057 Speaks of schooling. Attended through quarta classa (fourth grade) and then stayed home for several years learning home skills such as embroidery, crochet, sewing from her mother. And then went on to attend Escola Mater (sp?) (a school established by Padre Pio c.1961) for three years. Then went on to work as a student teacher at the school.

095 Mother is Maria Baptista da Pina and lives in Boston. She was born in Reis, Brava, CV January 6, 1928. Father is Emanuel Tavares di Pina and was born in Matinho da Ville, Nova Cintra on Brava island November 22, 1920, died in 1993.

108 Family came to U.S. in 1975 shortly after independence at which point visas were easier to get. They were sponsored by an Uncle living in Boston. Worked with Aunt as a seamstress in a factory in Boston. Later went to school to study ESL and clerical and got a job in Norwood and worked there for 3 years.

133 Met husband, Joao Monteiro at a party. Married in Boston and moved to New Bedford where husband had been living. Returned to factory work initially. Then stayed home with children and later went back to school to get GED and took some courses at BCC.

160 Eventually hired to work as a long-term substitute teacher, but after five years, because she didn't have her teaching certificate she was let go and then went on to work at Casa Saudade where she has been working for 7 years. Has some regrets that she is no longer teaching. "Certain people are born to be certain things. We have it. It's a vocation or God gives you certain skills." Her mother was also a teacher. Talks about her desire to teach since childhood.

200 Espiritu Santo means holy spirit. The holy crown of the holy spirit. Festival has its roots in Portugal with Queen Isabel. "She loved to feed the poor and that's where the tradition started. And she used to ~~where~~^{use} the crown as a queen. So when she would go and feed the poor she would take her crown and crown them." She also originated the symbol of the dove which appears on a small staff that always accompanies the crown. The altar and the priest's cape are also traditionally adorned with the dove symbol.

216 "But how it got to Cape Verde to the island of Brava is this way: There was this merchant that they were travelling from Brazil by sea. And he had a devotion to the holy spirit and he used to carry the crown with him wherever he goes. . .

223 Discussion of the crowns. There are today many crowns that represent the original crown of Queen Isabel.

227 "So he used to bring that crown as a reminder so he would carry the crown wherever he went. So they were travelling by sea and they got into bad weather and they saw that they were almost gonna die and they were praying to the holy spirit. And he said to himself, if we get saved, the first land that we're landed safe, there I'm gonna leave this holy crown and there I will start this holy feast. And that's what happened. They got to the island of Brava and he left the crown there. And still today that same crown that he left is still there. It's old, but it's still there."

238 Uncertain about when that event happened.

239 "And that's how this tradition got to the island of Brava and ever since it's still celebrated there today."

243 In 1983 Maria Freitas had the idea of establishing the feast in New Bedford. She ✓ talked with Padre Pio (who was based at St. Patrick's church in Roxbury) who was coming to New Bedford once a month to celebrate mass.

249 Speaks of Padre Pio: "Father Pio to us was a great person that even now that now that he's passed on I still see Jesus in him, in his person. He was a person of God. Not only that, but he was a friend, he was a father, he was everything to the Cape Verdeans. We respected him and we loved him dearly and his presence is so wonderful everytime I speak of this man I have this energy in me that's, it's unbelievable, I feel, I transform, I am transforming right now as I am speaking to you I feel, I feel good, I don't even know how to explain to you."

263 "I remember when he first got to the island of Brava, my mother told me this story, she said 'the elderly at that time says, now we have a saint, a live saint coming to our island, because he reminded them of a saint, saintly person'"

273 Describes the beginnings of the feast in New Bedford: Then in 1983 we started this feast of the holy spirit. It was very simple. It started with 12 couples."

280 Recalls celebration in Brava. "Each year a person is the feistero, or mordom. A person that will celebrate that year. It passes from one person to another. And that person would have an altar set in her house where we put the holy crown with the candles and fresh flowers. It's beautiful, they make it so beautiful. The ornaments so wonderful, it gives you a good feeling when you go. So then we will go to that house. We pray a little, we sing a little. We bring the holy crown in procession to the church. At the church the mass is celebrated and then after the mass again we'll bring the holy crown to the same person's house and we put it in the altar which is with all the ornaments and that person will have food and drink and then after the prayer, people gather just to be with each other and have a good time." The crown then stays with that person for the whole year.

301 Talks about how the mordom is selected. It has to do with a personal devotion. "It's a devotion. You have a devotion to the holy spirit. Or if something had happened to you and if you got sick or now you are better, it's a way of thanking God. And you'll say ok I'm gonna celebrate the holy spirit and I want it to come to my house, it's like a kind of a blessing."

311 At that time it was people living in or around Nova Cintra who celebrated the holy spirit.

318 The altar is made with boxes and wood. Typically the altar would contain candles, flowers, pictures of the crucifix and Virgin Mary, rosary, holy Bible. The altar did not contain food, drinks or incense.

350 Red and white are symbolic colors. Red symbolizes Christ and white symbolizes the purity of the soul and yellow/orange is used to symbolize the fire of the holy spirit.

373 Tells a legend about Queen Isabel "One day she was coming with food in her apron, holding food in her apron and the husband caught her and says 'What do you have there?' and she says, 'They are roses, my husband, they are roses.' And she let go the apron and they turned into roses. It was like (side ends)

001 "That's how it happened."

004 Today many different kinds of flowers are used, especially red flowers.

010 "Here in New Bedford, we couldn't do it the same way we did it there, because we were afraid we might not find the person that would say this year I would like to celebrate the holy spirit. So we said, if we don't find anybody, so we will be responsible to put everything together. But here even if you decide say oh I would like to have the holy spirit coming to my house, the holy crown to be there for the feast, but still we are the twelve that will help you because you have to spend money to prepare the food and all that. So you won't have all that burden on you. The twelve of us will put together everything that is needed like each one

of us prepare a plate for that day, for the food afterwards after the mass and all that."

020 The original twelve couples were chosen at Padre Pio's suggestion. The group meets monthly on the last Sunday of the month at one of the couple's homes to pray and talk about the readings of the gospel and various community issues and problems.

050 Twelve couples ^{we've} ~~where~~ red skirts which are made by Maria Freitas. These may be phased out in favor of sashes. They also carry flags made ~~also~~ by Maria Freitas.

066 Discussion of singing which takes place as part of festival. Group sings religious songs which are dedicated to the holy spirit.

070 Sings a bit of one song.

073 Food eaten after the mass is a combination of traditional Cape Verdean food as well as American fare. There is nothing special that is eaten just on the day of the festival.

079 Sometimes the feast gets a musical group to play for the social time. Sometimes there is impromptu singing of different Cape Verdean songs. There is no dancing.

086 For the procession there is occasionally a musical band leading the procession (Ivo's band did this one year). There is traditionally a drummer.

089 "This is the part that I enjoyed the most with this feast in Cape Verde as a child. Because you know, you see everything else, but during the procession, this person will be carrying a drum. In between the songs, I probably have the song, we sing this beautiful song in Latin, I love that song . . . so during the procession we pray the holy rosary and in between we sing Venite Adoramos (sings). This is Latin. So we sing that. It's beautiful, it's beautiful, it's beautiful. After we sing one verse and the drum will strike three times. Tum, tum, tum. And then we start praying again."

103 Describes the procession which includes other Espiritu Santo Cape Verdean groups from Brockton and Boston as well as the group from New Bedford. The feast is typically celebrated by several hundred people in New Bedford: "Our OLOA is not a big, big church, but that day it will be full." Most people begin with the procession in Washington Square and walk to the church.

123 Some of the first communion children dressed in white bring the candles, and one child brings the crown, then the flag and then the group of 12 couples. The procession begins with a cross carried by an altar boy and several other altar boys lead the procession. After them are the first communion children in white and other children dressed in red robes.

134 "It's part of my religious belief. It is the thing I believe the most. I think without the holy spirit. . . it leads my spiritual life. I think spiritual life has great meaning to me. I believe that we are body, mind and spirit and our spirit needs to be fed the good stuff. And I think religion is the way to lead you to spirituality, not to feed your spirituality."

End of Interview (143)