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Cape Verdeans in Cova da Moura, Portugal, an ethno-historical account of their destinies and legacies

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Publication date

2014

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Valadas Casimiro, E. M. (2014). *Cape Verdeans in Cova da Moura, Portugal, an ethno-historical account of their destinies and legacies*.

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IX. Discussion and Concluding Remarks

This section summarizes my empirical findings in an attempt to answer the research questions posed; it links the findings to significant theories and presents the researcher's reflections that underlie this study. This study has portrayed the lives of three Cape Verdean immigrant families and their extended families over three generations through ethno-historical stages and has identified the social, cultural, educational and political factors that challenge them in Cova da Moura, a neighbourhood near Lisbon, Portugal. Consequently, it focuses on the changes and transformations these families are currently undergoing and describes the arrangements they make to stay or leave their community and how their lives are sustained in Cova da Moura.

The findings of my study can be summarized under each of the four research questions which addressed the ethno-historical evolution of these three target families over a thirty year period from their pre-migration to migration, adaptation, settlement and accommodation stages in Cova da Moura. These are listed as they appeared in the Introduction section:

1. How have the people of Cova da Moura, who are mainly Cape Verdeans, and often in irregular situations, constructed their livelihoods over thirty years during the continuous process of their community's reconstruction through diverse Government policies and practices?
2. How have they adapted socially, culturally and what coping strategies have been developed by these families in this time frame, together with their relatives, neighbours and other inhabitants of Cova da Moura?
3. What role does transnationalism play in terms of their households and activities?
4. How have the Portuguese government and the local administration responded over the years to the settlement of immigrants on privately owned land and what have been the residents' responses over time?

To answer these questions, the context of Cova de Moura is revisited, identifying significant factors which have influenced the lives of these Cape Verdean families. Following such

contextualization, I link the research questions to the theories I used and how they help explain their situation. Finally, I reflect on the findings from my ethnographic perspective and share some of my own thoughts on the future of these families.

IX.1 Cova da Moura Revisited

Cova de Moura is a very poor, slum-like immigrant neighbourhood near Lisbon, Portugal, to which working-class Cape Verdean and immigrants of other nationalities have gravitated. The poor quality of houses and bad living conditions caused the city council to intervene and embark on a large-scale revitalization program (Redevelopment Program) which started in 2007. The promises to improve the residents' living conditions, by rehabilitating the area and attracting visitors to this multicultural neighbourhood have yet not been accomplished.

Currently, the neighbourhood is in a worse shape, although it has not grown in the number of residents or new constructions over the past five years. The improvements in garbage collection, recycling and lighting promised by Amadora City Council still remain to be fulfilled. Instead, residents have solved these problems by creating their own adjustment strategies and making do with less. Furthermore, restrictions in connection with the Redevelopment Program have prevented Cova da Moura residents from improving or renovating their houses and from finishing buildings in construction. Residents remain in limbo, insecure about their future not knowing whether they will ever own the land where their homes were built, but in the hope that this may happen, they continue to pay taxes to the City Council of Amadora.

When I began my study five years ago, Cova da Moura represented an enclave that was distant and isolated and had a bad reputation. Having entered the field and using an ethno-historical approach to collect data about the neighbourhood residents, it became clear that more threaded ethnographies of communities need to be made in order to study longitudinally what adjustments are made by families over three generations. However, through interviews with the family members, contact with the residents and participation in cultural and social events during my frequent visits to the neighbourhood, I became aware of many of their daily interactions and unique networks which served to mitigate the negativity with which they have been viewed.

Now in retrospect, with my fieldwork completed, I realize there have been several changes in the lives of the residents in general and of the target family members in particular. These have to do with acquired legality, rising poverty, needs of the elderly, diminished criminality, transnational communication and growth of associations.

Over the past five years, many residents including members of the target families have become legally documented, which implies attainment of rights meaning access to free education, health care and mobility. However, in the current economic crisis those rights are being seriously diminished and poverty is on the rise in the rest of Portugal.

Elderly dwellers have increased¹¹⁸ in the neighbourhood and as these first generation immigrants hardly received labour contracts, they report that they are not eligible for social support. With the rising costs of health care, particularly in these difficult economic times, many residents do not have sufficient economic resources to help their aging parents and kin. Such a situation becomes a difficult social issue, because not to support family members is highly shameful and strongly reproached by the community. Despite this moral imperative, the interviewed social workers reported the requests for financial and social aid from both old and young are at an all time high.

Even though, petty crime and drug trafficking goes on, Cova da Moura is still not a dangerous area. Residents live with a sense of solidarity since they interact daily on a social basis, integrating neighbours, visiting each other and relying on each other.

Remittances of money and other inter-generational commitments towards close relatives who remained in Cape Verde also suffer from the difficult economic situation in Portugal. The amounts remitted are small but do affect the receivers' standard of living. However, their transnational contacts and visits are a continuous practice maintained via phone, internet or Skype.

In terms of the residents' organizations, the Clube Social e Desportivo da Cova da Moura and Moinho da Juventude continue to be the key associations for the community. They still offer legal services and cultural, economic and social help, particularly to vulnerable families. While both run after school activities, Moinho da Juventude provides dinner for children

¹¹⁸ Census, 2012, Instituto Nacional de Estatística.

whose parents arrive late from work and in many cases have two jobs to make ends meet. This association also employs residents to work for the community and offers vocational training courses (some of them in collaboration with the EU such as the project DiverCidade, 2006). If selected, the participating residents are afterwards employed by the association or by partner organizations, such as Buraca Community Council, the City Council of Amadora, or the educational centre of Padre António Oliveira in Caxias.

These initiatives make Cova da Moura a unique example of a poor neighbourhood with strong local organizations aiming to empower the community by channelling their participation into productive work.

IX.2 Revisiting Research Questions

Question 1 on the settlement of the three Cape Verdean families, shows that they found an unprepared State unable to incorporate them or provide needed services. The Portuguese government developed few institutional measures to facilitate integration of newcomers and support their settlement. As Lourenço Sousa expressed, “Emigration is always difficult and uncertain”.

In Cova da Moura the first generation established links with other immigrants who had already settled in the neighbourhood without difficulty. This social network provided immediate support upon arrival and was the basis of extensive mutual-help ties which ensured these members a sufficient pool of family and friends on whom they could rely. In this sense, the wide extent and range of Cape Verdean kinship and neighbourly networks introduced an element of stability into situations which had been marked by precariousness and hardship.

This support materialized into housing the family members until they had their own place to stay. However, continuing economic hardship, together with undocumented migrants’ inability to find accommodation in the formal housing market, forced these immigrants to search for available plots in Cova da Moura in order to build their shack. The Ferreira family could afford to ‘buy’ an illegal house and the Costa family rented the ground floor of a house in the neighbourhood. Others, such as the Sousas, built their homes with their own hands yet feared demolition by the municipal authorities. Without financial resources, they depended on

kin and neighbours who joined forces in a *djunta mo* which means ‘working together’. Their homes were built within a few weeks like many others in Cova da Moura.

Aggravating their feeling of insecurity was their ‘illegal’ status. The restrictions of the Portuguese nationality law (Law 308-A/75 of 24 June) made it impossible for the Cape Verdean families to obtain Portuguese nationality. Some, unable to obtain a Residence Permit, faced uncertainty, with fears of repatriation, being exploited at work, suffering from bad working conditions and receiving no welfare benefits.

Only after the amendments (237-A/2006 of 14 December)¹¹⁹ were made in 2006 did the majority of the target family members, second and third generation, opt for Portuguese nationality while others kept Cape Verdean nationality. For many immigrants, the social rights acquired with the regularization of their status came late, and the elderly or undocumented were still not entitled to a pension or, as in the case of Judite, to other social benefits.

In Portuguese society, African males are associated with construction work and women with domestic work. The ‘new immigrants’ were caught between their undocumented status and employment without contracts making acceptance of a subordinate role inevitable, which in turn rendered them powerless, in many cases emasculated, while confronting unscrupulous employers and an impermeable state bureaucracy. In fact, the economic precariousness they experienced after their arrival and settlement was repeated later by the adults of the second generation because of new employment laws, short-term working contracts and no unemployment subsidies, thereby showing hardly any or no evidence of far-reaching social mobility in terms of occupation.

Living on the margins of society has turned these residents into easy targets for exploitation which is borne out by the fact that while the second generation had more educational opportunities, they remain in relatively low status and low-paid jobs.

In terms of educational advancement, the first generation had low educational attainment while living in Cape Verde. Schooling was mostly limited to primary school. Two female

¹¹⁹ The 2006 Law establishes the right to Portuguese nationality for those born in Portugal to parents who are non-nationals, do not have legal immigration status and were also born in Portugal. Children of foreigners born in Portugal, even if they are undocumented, can naturalize as long as they have habitually resided in Portugal for the previous ten years.

members improved their qualifications through professional courses after twenty years in Portugal. In one case this decision brought a change for a better and a more satisfying job.

The second generation improved their educational attainment by completing on average at least nine years of schooling, but none enrolled in post secondary education. However, this upgrading of the second generation has not resulted in economic benefits¹²⁰. Some continued to experience badly paid jobs while others decided to emigrate to other European countries seeking better employment conditions.

The third generation now attending nursery school and primary school has yet to show whether they can complete their primary and secondary education.

As far as health is concerned, immigrants' access to healthcare is foreseen and safeguarded by law. For the first generation, the use of healthcare services seldom exceeded emergency care due to linguistic barriers and the difficulties in obtaining information about the SNS (National Health System). On the other hand, members of the second and third generation use the SNS services on a regular basis.

From these three families' life narratives, their stories reflect the acceptance of subordinate roles out of necessity (work relationship, interaction with the mainstream) and subverted by multiple forms of resistance, for example, demanding personal rights in their roles within families, and being motivated to seek work. All the females in these three families represent examples of courage and hope, facing segregation, lack of work or poor working conditions, domestic violence and little financial support from the fathers to raise their children. They have the strength to continue their lives under these circumstances and, within their limitations, keep finding appropriate solutions for their families without losing their dignity.

However, their resistance indicates a development towards collective action. Several of the target family members were not just passive elements of society, as these narratives have shown. Instead, by joining forces they believed change could be achieved and this was demonstrated by their struggle to get access to water and electricity in the neighbourhood, which constituted a collective mobilization leading to political action with a positive outcome. This activism continues with demands for legalization of their houses, permanent residency and neighbourhood safety.

¹²⁰ The second generation faces financial difficulties with high unemployment rates of 17,4%, and of those applying for their first job in March 2013, 44% remained unemployment (INE, 2013¹).

The second question on adaptation and coping strategies is answered with the already pre-established idea of these families' adaptation to the host country when they arrived, driven by economic motivations and in the course of which they underwent painful separation from close relatives and friends who remained in Cape Verde.

To arrive in a host country implies adaptation. It means getting used to new neighbours, a new home, a new neighbourhood and a new job, a different language, aiming to obtain a better life individually, and for the family migration was considered an investment in a future the target families did not have in Cape Verde. In Judite's case, her return to Santo Antão and adaptation to the Berlin community after thirty-three years in Portugal meant a successful return to her roots. The tensions she expected with her family and friends did not arise, and in fact coming back was accepted as loyalty to her homeland. For Deolinda and her daughters, the adaptation to a new neighbourhood and a new school was not satisfying. She misses the solidarity of her kin in Cova da Moura where she still works and where she still feels at home. Her daughters return to Cova da Moura to visit relatives, yet keeping a distance from their former neighbours means they prefer to stay in the new neighbourhood without much socializing.

In the host country individual and collective coping strategies were developed, whether personal, family or involving a wider network. Family members reported that their options and decisions were conditioned by changing laws and administrative procedures, such as the restrictions in acquiring Portuguese citizenship.

This relates to the discussion presented in chapter VII where the target family relations are based on mutual attachment, regular social contacts and a reciprocal flow of material and non-material benefits (cf. Sorensen, 2004: 111). In both generations the word *família* was often mentioned: "The doors are always open for the family" was an assumption underlining not only the sharing of happy moments and the discussion of problems but also the lending of money for journeys, housing for newcomers and joint work projects, such as building and repairing their houses. This mutual support and solidarity are the basic coping strategies to overcome the lack of financial resources which is extended to neighbours who helped family members in their adaptation process on arrival in Cova da Moura.

For the first generation, mutual support and non-conflictive neighbourhood relations are strong values which continue to this day. Yet social investment in local ties is not without tensions. On the one hand, the neighbourhood ties are strengthened in all of the three families,

providing a sense of belonging, support and identity. On the other hand, especially in the second generation, there is a noticeable weakening of these ties caused by new working patterns and a different way of life. The great extent of assistance provided by neighbours is not needed as it was three decades ago. When the first generation arrived in Portugal, none of the associations existed. As residents grow older and are unable to perform the same tasks as before (cooking meals for the children or taking care of them), they do not have access to family networks as before. School and associations have replaced some of the services and functions once provided by families, such as free meals for students whose parents have low incomes and organizing after-school activities.

The associative movement began in Cova da Moura in the 1970s. The first, the Associação de Residentes (Residents' Association), was founded in 1978. This Association claimed rights in Cova da Moura and formed pressure groups to improve neighbourhood infrastructures such as water, electricity, sewage, paved streets and garbage collection – which were gained in 1979. It was followed by the Clube Desportivo e Social da Cova da Moura (1981) and Moinho da Juventude (1984). They provide a space for socialization, social organization, reinterpretation of traditions and mediation between the country of origin and the host nation (Sardinha, 2002: 3). Both associations, which are part of the Redevelopment Project are, today developing activities related to housing. They offer integration-related activities as well as judicial support and legal advice, highly appreciated services due to the great number of undocumented residents. More recently they have begun providing food and clothing to the most vulnerable families.

The efforts of the associative movement in Cova da Moura had a positive outcome for all members of the target families. The collaboration of the Association Clube Desportivo e Social da Cova da Moura with state authorities resulted in the construction of the Primary School of Cova da Moura in the late 1980s on an allocated plot of the Association. The Moinho da Juventude's workforce consists mainly of the inhabitants of Cova da Moura, including members of the target families (Deolinda, Josefina and Daniel). To keep in touch with culture and news updates from the islands they provide Cape Verdean books and newspapers.

Close ties with the Cape Verdean Diaspora in other places are maintained mainly through cultural exchanges. Furthermore, on an educational level the Association offers a nursery school and professional courses for teenagers and adults to improve their skills. This initiative

had repercussions in the development of individual coping strategies and provided professional training for two first generation members, Deolinda and Josefina.

The third question on transnationalism is answered by using the concept of transnationalism from below, which is at the community level from Smith and Guarnizo (1998) and Portes *et al.* (1999). These target families and particularly the first generation not only have extended networks and use ICT, but are also engaged in sending remittances, and in transnational entrepreneurship.

These families have relatives in countries such as the US, Luxembourg and Switzerland. The findings show that the existence of this scattered network provides a multiplicity of contacts among the different elements of the network, maintained both directly (visits, gatherings) and by indirect communication (phone-calls, e-mails). Compared to previous periods of emigration these contacts are technologically faster and more easily maintained through mobile phones, the internet and Skype. For example, this enabled Paulina to leave her children with her mother-in-law in Cova da Moura while working in Rotterdam. It also allowed family members to take care of an ill relative, to organize family gatherings, make decisions and build houses in the country of settlement and in the country of origin

Yet the physical movement of people across state borders is limited because of the undocumented status of several females in the target families. This challenges their role as transnational mothers. Unable to visit family in Cape Verde or to bring children to visit, this means they have to deal with unexpectedly long separations from their family members and with feelings of tension and guilt.

Remittances from the first generation females to their relatives in Cape Verde offer economic relief to the receivers. In the absence of a social welfare system in Cape Verde, the family has to take responsibility for the economic survival of their kin. Furthermore, their remittances also respond to traditional expectations concerning the fulfilment of family and social commitments. Such assistance implies a variety of obligations for those who stayed in the home country in that they are obliged to supervise the building process of a house or the management of economic interests (investments in Cape Verde) and provide financial support.

The fourth question, which deals with the Redevelopment Project, is answered by revisiting the historical, legal and political context of the residents of Cova de Moura.

The political negotiations with the City Council of Amadora need to be understood in light of the legal negotiations. So far, these negotiations have not solved the problem of legalized ownership of the dwellings and the land they are built on.

The first generation of the target families had expectations of 'real' ownership of their houses and that this legacy would pass to their children and grandchildren.

Most members of the second generation disbelieve or mistrust the alleged intentions of the government to 'give' the land to the residents whose parents built their houses under hardship and sacrifice more than thirty years ago.

The majority of the representatives of the local associations as well as other observers following the process tend to believe that the Redevelopment Program aimed to upgrade the area according to the inhabitants' needs and preferences.

The question of the land and construction / urban issues was regarded as the most delicate and challenging, but this remains unsolved. However, the long history of negotiating land ownership has made the local residents painfully aware of the incompatible and different interests concerning the future use and ownership of the area.

Speculators have economic interests in the land where the neighborhood is situated, whereas the inhabitants are hoping to stay and become the owners of their homes and the land in order to develop the area into a more attractive community for all.

There are conflicting interests concerning land-ownership and decisions of what to rehabilitate, demolish and rebuild. Furthermore, the rehabilitation and demolition/rebuilding process will imply temporary relocation of residents. However, an understanding exists that only those willing should be re-housed outside the area.

When the process entails deciding which house and area can be rehabilitated and which cannot, the representatives must deal with different interests which often result in conflict.

Many residents will certainly find it hard to accept that their homes do not measure up to the standards of the engineers who evaluate home construction. For those who invested much of their money and work in self-built homes, rehabilitation will eventually compensate them for their investment in the building process. Demolition, on the other hand, means not only

destroying the house, but also the affective value attached to it. Whether there will be any kind of compensation for their private investment is not yet clear.

The Municipality representatives were of the opinion that inhabitants who did not have houses suitable for improvement could not become owners of the land they do not possess. The same applies to business-people, whose small cafés, restaurants, hairdressers, groceries, etc. have been located in the neighbourhood.

Until 2013 and compared to the initial time schedule, progress of the Redevelopment Program has been delayed. There has been a relatively long interval of 12 to 18 months between formal agreement of the action plan and the first steps of implementation. Two years after the previously established date for completion there are still no solutions in sight and the residents are losing hope. In this limbo of legislative and financial uncertainties and without permission to improve their homes, insecurity grows. The entities responsible have not proceeded with the negotiations and the families keep hoping for a favourable outcome of this project.

IX.3 Theoretical Linkages to the Ethno Historical Account

Understanding the relationship of the major theoretical approaches mentioned depends on various particular societal factors of the country of origin and the host country, as well as on individual traits and motives of the target family members distinguished in three generations and includes both the first and second generation. Without doubt the previously discussed concepts of ‘Culture of Poverty’, ‘Underclass’, Segmented Assimilation, Transnationalism and Lusotropicalism are highly relevant, because they can be linked to the findings and can serve to explain the complexities found therein.

When thousands of Cape Verdean families emigrated in irregular ways and settled in an ‘illegal’ neighbourhood without any sort of infrastructure, the general image transmitted to the public was that ‘black people’ could live in poverty, because they were used to doing the same in Africa (Machado, 2004). But neighbourhood poverty can have cultural consequences for both individuals and neighbourhoods as a whole.

These first generation migrants who pioneered their way into an idealized land for the sake of their family were also seduced by the potential gains expected to be made in Portugal. Their idealized image of the host country was mainly transmitted through their own connections with migrants who shared information and displayed wealth upon return to Cape Verde.

Poverty continued to dominate their lives in Portugal after working hard for low wages for more than thirty years, being marginalized and isolated physically by the fence constructed around Cova da Moura and socially for not relating with the mainstream. This precariousness in economic and social fields accompanied their lives.

The discussion about the nature of poverty today is as important as it was in the 1960s. In Europe, this debate is closely associated with social exclusion¹²¹. Similar to Lewis' accounts of fifty years ago, impoverished people live in inadequate, poor neighbourhoods, have limited access to resources and opportunities and restrain their participation in social and cultural life. Segregation leaves them marginalized, powerless and discriminated. Regarding their migratory plans, evident poverty was the most relevant factor in their decision to leave.

Oscar Lewis' 'culture of poverty' concept (1969) clearly applies to the circumstances and conditions of the target families' lives trajectories in both generations. The families in this study formed a rather homogeneous group. Although they came from different Cape Verdean islands, they had similar backgrounds, the same levels of literacy and education, the same family structures, socio-economic status and the same level of 'poverty'.

In Portugal these families continue to experience poverty as they did in their Cape Verdean islands. More specifically, these families remained in poverty not merely as a result of their economic condition (unsteady low-paid jobs or no retirement pension, segregated neighbourhood, precarious housing) but also because of cultural values and behaviours (an orientation towards present and instant gratification, a tendency to value family ties) they took from their way of life in their islands, which made the escape from poverty difficult even in the host country. Economically, their main objective when emigrating was not accomplished. They could not move upwards but rather stagnated in terms of economic mobility.

Living in this segregated neighbourhood characterized by a lack of living wage employment and resources (such as health and limited employment services) means an increased concentration of poverty that accompanies racial and ethnic segregation together with the lack of political power experienced in both generations. Neighbourhood poverty triggers

¹²¹ In 2011, 23 % or 26 million EU citizens were at risk of poverty (Eurostat, 2012). In Portugal the rate was higher than the average in the Europe of 27 countries, as 1,8 million or 24,4 % of the population were considered poor or at risk of social exclusion. In 2012 poverty in Portugal increased to 25,3 % (INE, 2013); the rate among the active employed population is 10,3 % and 300 thousand depend on solidarity institutions to survive (Relatório Social Watch Portugal, 2013).

socialization mechanisms which provide fewer role models for the second generation who are subject to discouraging treatment by teachers and other institutional actors. Furthermore, neighbourhood poverty restricts contact with middle-class people, limits the amount of information available about acquiring a job and the number of resources available to access one.

Members of the second generation still face a similar scenario, implying a perpetuation of poverty (unsteady jobs, various sexual partners, early pregnancies). They search for meaning in various aspects of their lives, which includes childbearing, because having a child is a source of self-esteem, recognition and respect in the neighbourhood. Some remain unmarried to preserve their autonomy but have several partners who should guarantee financial support. These cultural orientations intersect with the structural factors discussed by Wilson (1987), such as social isolation, to explain the high rate of extra-marital births among poor families.

This generation, now mostly adults in their thirties, holds slightly better jobs, not in terms of wage gains, but less stigmatized work, although with the same precariousness as that of their predecessors. Their achievement has not produced perceptible economic effects in terms of job offers and social stability – as a result, migration has become an option for some.

This group remains low-skilled with a high job turnover and alternating periods of work with periods of unemployment and restricted access to welfare. With few skills, they find themselves near the bottom of society's socio-economic hierarchy, and often, to avoid poverty, a common objective is to eventually work in another European country. Those who already left Portugal (Albertino, Luisa, Debora and Martin) managed to succeed financially, but do not have the specific skills that would enable them to obtain higher positions. Yet, unlike their parents they are not part of an 'underclass'¹²². Obviously, they were affected by de-industrialisation but benefited from economic opportunities and developed strategies to escape poverty, such as moving out of a segregated neighbourhood.

Apart from each family member's personal economic status, the influence of their poor, multi-ethnic and segregated neighbourhood reduces the opportunities for upward mobility. As soon as they gave their address in job applications, most of the target family members of the

¹²² The 'underclass' concept complements Oscar Lewis' 'culture of poverty' thesis. The primary issue the 'underclass' discusses is "joblessness reinforced by an increasing social isolation in an impoverished neighborhood" (Wilson, 1993: 20).

second generation did not get hired. Situations like these led to attitudes of (self-)isolation, which encourages social exclusion (cf. Malheiros, 2002).

Their isolation from the middle class makes it difficult to engage in practices likely to lead to higher educational attainment. The ‘segmented assimilation’ concept of Portes and Zhou (1993) focuses on the current processes of socio-economic mobility among the second generation of immigrants, and on the role that is attributed to socio-cultural aspects. Accordingly, structural barriers, such as poor education, cut off access to employment and other opportunities, being obstacles particularly for the most disadvantaged members of immigrant groups. Such impediments lead to stagnant or downward mobility. However, some immigrant children find pathways to mainstream status, while others like the second generation members find such pathways blocked, often as a consequence of racialization (Portes, Fernández-Kelly, and Haller, 2005).

Obviously, their identities, aspirations and academic performance are affected by this, but there are further constraints like living in socio-economically disadvantaged families with low-paid jobs that lower the rate of mobility.

Comparing the occupational attainment of the first generation with the second generation members, I detected stagnation of the second generation, as they do not occupy very different or much better working positions than their predecessors. They held precarious low-paid jobs resulting from their low school achievement (early drop-out or leaving during or after high school). These findings correspond to the predictions of ‘segmented assimilation’ in that they assimilate downwards.

I find that the paths of mobility across generations proposed by Portes and Fernández-Kelly (2008: 14) while useful do not entirely explain what I have found in my ethno-historical account of the target families. Analysing my findings, namely that the first generation had low human capital with no specialized skills, low status jobs, low educational attainment and difficulties with the Portuguese language, and applying the different assimilation paths (consonant, selective and dissonant acculturation), I come to the following conclusion: the second generation growing up in these highly disadvantageous conditions still managed to avoid deviant street life and continued their educational attainment using a fluent bilingualism. These family members are surpassing their predecessors educationally. The majority completed compulsory education (nine years of schooling) and two completed

secondary education (twelve years). However, one decade after leaving school, none of the second generation improved their qualifications with further education.

Compared with the Ferreira family (a nuclear family) the structure of the two single-parent families has proved not to be significant in determining second generation outcomes. All are able to use resources and networks in their ethnic community and retain strong ties to their parents' culture.

The analysis presented above leads to the conclusion that the second generation is positioned in selective acculturation. However, they did not achieve a high educational level, growing up in a segregated area and experiencing racial exclusion. They only acculturate partially and are consequently confined to dissonant acculturation.

This statement contradicts what scholars such as Warner and Srole (1945), Gordon (1964) and Gans (1992) emphasize. They suggest that "no significant downward assimilation exists among today's second generation and that whatever incidents of such trend exist tend to be random individual anomalies not a social phenomenon" (cf. Portes and Fernandez-Kelly, 2008: 13).

Not only the target families' second generation but also many descendents of other immigrant groups have assimilated downwards in Portugal. This downward assimilation is more likely to happen in a poor neighbourhood with a high ethnic concentration and presents a methodological challenge for the analyses carried out in this study. Deolinda, for example, was aware of the dangers downward assimilation brings and developed a strategy to minimize it by moving to another neighbourhood. This move allowed her children to have a better education in a different school.

I also find that the conclusions of Portes and Rumbaut (2001), who report that dissonant acculturation leads to a breakdown of communication and generational conflicts, may not be the case for these Cape Verdean families. My results show the opposite: the second generation interacts without relevant conflicts with the previous generation; both generations keep supporting each other. Assimilation outcomes depend on ethnicity, socio-economic status and family cohesion. Assimilating only partly into Portuguese culture and preserving their parents' culture did not have the negative consequences expected for the second generation members. They presented an educational upgrade compared with their predecessors. In the near future two members of the second generation (Cristina and Luisa)

will enrol in a university course in France, if they get the scholarships expected due to their good grades. They practise transnationalism not only at the family level, as her sister will host them, but also at an institutional level, using the increasing transnational tendencies in European higher education.

The ties and interaction of the members of three target families of both generations are not restricted to the host country, but extend to Cape Verde or other countries where relatives live (transnationalism / cf. Boyd, 1989; Vertovec, 2001). These transnational practices, referring to relations and ties established across borders, are an essential part of their life in Portugal. The decision to emigrate, relying on the help of their kin, creates obligations towards them, fulfilled, for example, by remittances to provide for old parents or ill relatives, or for other family members, as in Maria's case or in Paulina's case. Caregivers are important for children's well-being in transnational families. In Paulina's case, the caregivers are relatives whom she cannot visit regularly, due to the geographical distance and travel costs. Furthermore, she is expected to provide financial support for her family.

The second and third generations of the target families have always been involved in transnational activities even as undocumented citizens. In her role as a 'transnational mother' Francisca, undocumented in Portugal for more than two decades, could not visit her daughter for six years and had to endure this separation of unexpected length with feelings of tension and guilt.

Discrimination and precariousness in social and economic domains were the most frequently mentioned complaints in interviews with members of the target families from both generations and in my conversations with other residents of Cova da Moura. The distance kept between the natives and the 'black' immigrants constituted a form of conduct that had dire consequences in the daily life of the members of the families, more specifically in Deolinda's case.

Although immigrants from Portuguese-speaking African countries can formally claim the equal rights proclaimed by the Portuguese Constitution of 1976, in practice few were treated the same way as natives, because they belong to a different race.

The widespread belief in the union between races confirmed by the lusotropicalist myth¹²³ of racial-cultural intimacy, which continues to be idealized and politically instrumentalised, does not correspond to reality. In many Portuguese minds, this discourse created a rather positive self-image which was ultimately counter-productive for a necessary critical approach to their colonial past. The idea that Portuguese colonialism was ‘not so bad’ also determined their attitude towards African immigrants even after the Revolution of 1974.

Lusotropicalism determined and still determines not only the self-image of much of the host country’s population and consequently influences their way of receiving immigrants from Portugal’s ex-colonies at several levels. It also marks the minds and perception of the Cape Verdean immigrants, with pre-established values, status and hierarchical orders even among different national and ethnic groups of the former colonies.

IX.4 Concluding Remarks:

This thesis has shown that the lives of these Cape Verdeans are fraught with precariousness in many respects. What can be learned from this ethno-historical account is that migration at family level comes with a great deal of pre- and post-migration complexity, accentuated by settlement on illegal ground, creating a suspended state of existence which inevitably marks the Cape Verdeans as a group and as a target of racism.

Portuguese society needs the Cape Verdean workforce and it allows their settlement adjacent to Lisbon as a way to access manual labour. However, Lisbon’s city dwellers keep Cape Verdeans at arm’s length, situated in Cova da Moura, isolated, marginalized, but effectively significant for their participation in the workforce.

For the target families, Cova da Moura represents a home, a place of fraternity and a place to return to, even after leaving the neighbourhood. Judite always visits the area when she comes to Portugal and so do the second generation members, either to use the facilities provided, or just to meet friends.

¹²³ Freyre claims that the Portuguese colonizers could preserve “... qualidades essenciaes de cordialidade e de sympathia [...] nas suas relações com as gentes consideradas inferiores” (essential qualities of cordiality and sympathy in their relations with people considered inferior” (Freyre, 1940:42).

Whether the neighbourhood will survive is a key aspect of the networking and social ties Cape Verdeans develop, both within the community and also on the outside with those responsible for the Redevelopment Project and other influential groups. For the time being, they are here to stay, having moved upwards both physically in their buildings and by using the social and economic opportunities presented to them mostly by their networks. Furthermore, they have created their own unique community.

While the first generation in my study showed resilience in confronting their own illegality in obtaining their homes and their legal status, the research confirms that it is not without tremendous labour and intense hardships that they succeeded in retaining the land, their homes and the rebuilding of their community.

As for the second generation, access to schooling has opened doors, yet the study indicates that for the adult members such schooling does not translate into more favourable jobs than those of their parents. In fact, there is a degree of stagnation except for two members of the three families, and interestingly, both women.

The third generation now attending school will show whether the education, exposure to Lisbon life and the educational models of their parents move them into a more favourable position of upward mobility. If anything, segmented assimilation appears to be a strong mode of incorporation towards downward rather than upwards mobility.

Different forms of racism targeted all the members of the families through both generations. Situations ranging from open to institutional forms of discrimination were often reported to me but these experiences are transversal to many immigrants in Portugal. The Racial Equality Body¹²⁴ in Portugal, in line with the Directive for Equality of the European Union Council was only brought into effect in 2004 and forbids discrimination at a workplace, in education, social welfare and health, as well as in access to and provision of goods and services, including housing. None of the family members openly complained about discrimination, as they were unaware of the existence of legal mechanisms to punish these acts by law¹²⁵.

While writing this dissertation, I realized how public and government interest in cultural and social projects have begun to diminish and obtaining financial support for initiatives

¹²⁴ The Racial Equality Body is an organization that registers and alerts to claims of racial discrimination.

¹²⁵ However, the complaints presented to the High Commission (ACIDI) or the Commission for Equality and Against Racial Discrimination (CICDR) by the injured parties or associations go through a complex and slow procedure.

concerning social integration has become more difficult. This downgrading of the social and political relevance coincides with cuts in social benefits for the members of the target families' second generation. However, in the present economic crisis, most of the Portuguese population, especially those on a low income, are suffering greatly from austerity measures.

The lives of these three families followed different patterns. First generation: after working hard abroad the Sousas could accumulate the necessary funds for constructing a house in Cova da Moura and one in Santo Antão. Despite the hardship of their lives, Judite does not regard economic success as her most relevant achievement; her idea of self-fulfilment implies the return to Santo Antão and an active life in her old age surrounded by her kin.

The Costas still reside in Amadora, but work and socialize in Cova da Moura. Going back to Santiago is not an option; their closest relatives live in Cova da Moura, in Europe or in the US, and Portugal is their meeting point.

The Ferreira family is the only one remaining in Cova da Moura. They decided to stay for two main reasons: they like the neighbourhood and the neighbours and Josefina continues to work there. The Ferreira family has no close relatives left in São Vicente, although Josefina visits Cape Verde every two years to fight 'sodad' (homesickness).

In the second generation five members emigrated to European countries in search for jobs they could not find in Portugal. Those who stayed endure short term work contracts, hoping these will be renewed. Some chose to move away from Cova da Moura, but continue to socialize in the neighbourhood.

All family members are still waiting for the solution indicated by the Redevelopment Project. It may never happen, but they know that they can always count on their kin in good and bad times. Nevertheless, several members of the three families continue their lives in Portugal, while having their islands on their minds.

The sentences in Crioulo which introduce the Cape Verdean novel 'Chiquinho'¹²⁶ illustrate their love for their homeland and the pain of separation: "Corpo, qu'e nego, sat a bai,

¹²⁶ Baltasar Lopes da Silva was a Cape Verdean poet and novelist who described in his book *Chiquinho* (1947) the people, their customs and the landscape of the islands.

Coracom, qu'e forro, sat ta fica (the body which is a slave, departs; the heart, which is free, remains).

This corresponds with the painting on a wall in Rua 8 de Dezembro / Cova da Moura. In this case the proverbial sentence is written in Portuguese, which is rather uncommon in the graffiti of the neighbourhood. It illustrates that for the inhabitants, Cape Verde may be out of reach, but not out of touch. However, the last part (perto do coração / close to the heart) has faded a symbol of assimilation of the third generation?



Figure 20: Cabo-Verde Longe da Vista – Perto do Coração / Out of Sight – Close to the Heart (Photo: Elsa Casimiro, 2012)