12-3-1973

Cape Verdean Oral History Project: Interview with Sonyia Andrade by Alberto Torres Pereira

Sonyia Andrade

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CAPE VERDEAN ORAL HISTORY
Tape #15

Monday, December 3, 1973
Miss Sonia Andrade
Interviewer, Alberto Torres Pereira
Tape running...

000- Introduction

016- Subject's name and birthdate given: La Plata, Argentina, September 25, 1950 birthdate.

027- January, 1950, to Senegal. Parents from Cape Verde Islands. Leaves Senegal at age 19, enrolls at Brown University as student in Comparative Literature.

036- To Cape Verde for 3 month visit.

043- Parents born in Sao Vicente, Cape Verde Islands: educated in Portuguese language, speak Creole. Father left high school for sea. Mother left school. Difficult time, economically, in islands; parents move to Argentina.

061- Family to Dakar, Senegal; 5 children in family.

070- Father self-employed in shipping trade with Cape Verde Islands and in the United States. Subsequently, shipped only between Dakar Harbor and Cape Verde Islands. Name of father's ship, "Tangal," which means candy in Wolof dialect of Senegal. Eventually, ship renamed, "Maria-Sonia."

097- Ship ninety-feet long, three-master. Canadian made. Remains on run between islands.

125- Recent tensions between Portugal and African nations proscribe further shipping by interviewee's father.

156- Comments on Dakar, Senegal: family lived in mixed neighborhood; Cape Verdeans, Arabs, Senegalese and French.

160- In Senegal, all persons of mixed parentage considered "Mestizos."

200- Describes her social environment which was predominantly up to age 5. When she began school, adapted to new and more cosmopolitan society.
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Tape running...

238- Discussion of Cape Verdean social resources. No newspapers. Mostly gatherings to maintain Cape Verdean ties and culture. Colonialism in Africa, specifically Senegal. Rank of the privileged groups. No need to gather as opposition; 200 miles between Dakar and Cape Verdes, short distance negates any feelings of being "cut-off."

290- 1960's sees political independence but not economic independence in Senegal.

313- Jobs: skilled work given to Senegalese; education needed for a large illiterate population. Industry, commerce badly needed.

335- Cape Verdeans considered as foreigners unless they take Senegalese citizenship. Cape Verdean could stay in Senegal as refugees since beginnings of hostilities in Guinea-Bissau.

361- Amilcar Cabral: educated in Cape Verde's schools; went to college to study agronomy in Lisbon.

375- About 20,000 Cape Verdeans in Dakar; though many are leaving there is a movement to return to Dakar taking place.

385- Cape Verdeans in skilled jobs; carpentry, plumbing, etc.

402- Senegal grade school to college paid for by state. College fee, $20.00. Stiff competition for entrance to school and college. Description of school grade progression.

460- Competition is severe: few get to college. High school diploma usually enough to secure decent job.

470- U. of Dakar Polytechnic compared to M.I.T. Approximately 5,000 students, including foreigners. Units of curriculum described.

481- Population of Senegal, 5 million. Senegalese students go to Russia, France, U.S. to study. Interviewee received private scholarship to Brown University. Discusses reasons for coming to United States.

522- Works as waitress, in factory and on Brown campus.
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600- Cape Verdenese spread throughout city of Dakar; school and city a melting pot.

617- Intermarriage takes place, but if rejected, is done so on religious grounds. Marriage between French and Senegalese is prominent. Race is not problem. Interracial dating takes place.

655- Socializing mostly mixed among the young. Preferred music, African, Latin American, Afro-American and French.

680- Urban structure of Dakar creates sophistication.

700- Climate: tropical, interior is hot and coast cool. Nine months dry season; three months heavy rains and humid. Senegal becoming popular tourist mecca. Interviewee describes Sao Vincente geography, activities near sea. Clothing influenced by both European and African cultures. Islamic religion. Description of Senegalese fashion. French fashion especially influential.

796- Description of animal life in Senegal. The Boabab tree.

850- Common transportation, "mammy cars."

868- Housing and architecture: Mediterranean flavor. Doors and windows to create cooling drafts. Tribal huts, straw roofs.
INTRO

Introduction

017- Jobs held: Baby-sitting, factory work (does not remember name of factory, but recalls it was near main post office in Providence.

041- Factory work included working with furnace. Counter-girl at Brown University dining hall. Also worked in Stephen's Hair Specialists salon in downtown Providence for one summer. Worked in Cape Cod as waitress at Bishop's Terrace, in West Harwich.

070- Educational system in Senegal: French system utilized in Senegal. Discusses levels of schooling within the system preparatory to college. Intellectually oriented education. Memorization important.

184- Interviewee's response to Cape Verdeans in Rhode Island: felt no great relationship; her experience was really a CapeVerdean-Senegalese experience.

200- Cape Verdean concept and idealization the United States.

230- Interviewee considers herself cosmopolitan in outlook; Cape Verdean Americans more staid in outlook, quieter than Cape Verdean-Senegalese.

252- Has more friends from Senegal in Boston than friends in R.I.

280- She is not familiar with tradition of longshoremen work within Cape Verdean community here.

290- Does not know of many Cape Verdean college students here, but does have some friends on campus who are from other foreign areas.

close.