Cape Verdean Oral History Project: Interview with Frank Baptista by Alberto Torres Pereira

Frank Baptista

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019- Baptista identifies self - name, age, place of birth (Brava)
Left in 1967, to Lisbon, till 1969 before he could come to the U.S. due to illness

025- has been in States 5 years

034- Village "mata grande" in Brava. Brava and other islands arid; Brava least populated island, 9 miles from Fogo.

050- describes viewing Fogo from Brava on clear day; average distance island to island, 9 miles.

064- communication between islands, airports

072- air travel

081- 5 hours by jet from Sal to Lisbon; Lisbon to States, 8 hours

088- ferry between Praia, Fogo and Brava

094- ferry privately owned; at present, ferry between islands, owned by government (monthly trips)

098- education - illness prevented completing school

108- discusses grading systems; single grade per year
feels Portuguese education he received is equivalent to junior college education

133- class size; non-coed; average age 12 years old, 35-40 in class 2 levels in same room. Large building, similar to U.S., but on a smaller scale. More schools being built on islands, better education

160- teacher and aide in each classroom; purely academic (no trades taught); strictly in Portuguese
agriculture, nursing, taught on Praia

183- education of a high quality; education stressed on Cape Verde Islands; most literate population of a Portuguese possession
Frank Baptista

cont...

208- Azoreans less educated than Cape Verdeans; believes Cape Verdeans more motivated

233- climate, vegetation, housing, etc.
Each island has different climate. Moved to Praia for health reasons, climate suited his needs.
Houses - single floor, white, made of stone; roofing of some houses of leaves (financial considerations decide stone or wood house)

268- changes taking place
Discusses government of Cape Verde, administration, mentions Macao. No Cape Verdean governor in Cape Verde.

306- clothing - western (African in some parts of Praia)

322- individual island culture
festas, dress, language (each island different in dialect, different way of cooking food, etc.)

THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 1974

355- culture of Cape Verde Islands, recapitulation. St. Vincent most progressive island in Cape Verde because of position as major seaport among islands.

380- Santiago (Praia)

408- felt Cape Verdean identity major discussion point at conference

433- Cape Verdean Conference proposals
immigration quotas discussed, problems of immigration

450- illegal immigration cause, in part, for low immigrant quota; immigration authorities alarmed at numbers of illegal residents

471- immigration quotas discussed, in terms of racial overtones.

480- Convention

497- color range of Cape Verdean, from white to black skin

515- interracial mixture; young Cape Verdeans consider themselves as black; hostile attitudes of American Blacks toward Cape Verdeans

537- says no racial problems between mainland Portuguese and Cape Verdeans; but racial animosity (social-cultural?) does exist between Cape Verdeans themselves. Discusses animosity between towns.

574- Cape Verdeans as homogeneous group may come about through carrying on Crioulo language (orally)
Frank Baptista

574 cont....
sees Crioulo as dialect, mixture of various languages
consists of fractions of Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, French
and African words

608- compares Crioulo and Portuguese and Spanish and Portuguese
comments on similarity of dishes

631- would teach his children Crioulo (orally)

654- some Cape Verdeans do not know their heritage

668- Creole literature would be beneficial. Songs, dances, total
cultural programs might attract young Cape Verdeans and elicit a
new interest in their ancestral background.

708- Population of Cape Verde Islands - 200,000. People leaving the
islands more than ever. Past 17 years, Cape Verden emigration to
Holland, Lisbon, France, Senegal, Spain. Younger people leave
and do not return because of being drafted into service (to
fight in Africa?)

750- more schools being constructed on islands; more Portuguese settling
in Cape Verde. Sees progress, sees need for more jobs.

770- Cape Verdeans are born travelers, "in their blood". Settle in
America, and in old age, return to Cape Verde Islands.

792- need rain, more production of goods before Cape Verde can have
viable economy