

Collecting Portuguese Ballads¹

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À memória de meu tio Manuel Soares, (†1984), que tanto ajudou com a recolha do *Romanceiro da Ilha de S. Jorge*.

The Spanish began to publish extensive collections dedicated exclusively to their ballads in the middle of the sixteenth century (see Rodríguez-Moñino 1973). These collections included versions of many poems that had already become traditional, for they were being sung by common people throughout Spain. Although the Portuguese were also singing ballads at that time,² nothing of the sort was done in Portugal. This lack of ancient documentation renders the modern Portuguese tradition even more significant. Without the poems that have been transmitted from generation to generation throughout the centuries, our knowledge of the ancient Portuguese tradition would be very limited indeed.

The systematic collection of ballads was begun by Almeida Garrett in 1824. Having been forced into exile for political reasons, he was inspired by the example of the English Romantics, and made his early findings known through the publication of *Adozinda* while still abroad (London, 1828). Since he was the first to publicize the fact that ballads from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance were still being sung by common people in Iberia, he is the “father” of all subsequent fieldwork undertaken in Portugal, Spain, and in the other Pan-Hispanic traditions as well (see Costa Fontes 1983-84b:54-55).

My own fieldwork began among the Portuguese in California in 1970. Although I had heard ballads being sung within my own family since childhood, I became aware of their importance only when I took a course on the Spanish ballad from Professor Arthur

L.-F. Askins at the University of California, Berkeley in that year. I told him that my grandmother, Delfina Augusta da Costa, from the island of Terceira, who was then living with us in Tracy, California, knew *Bela Infanta*, *Febre Amarela*, and other “old songs.” Advised by Professor Askins, I recorded everything that she knew, and began looking for more informants in Tracy and nearby communities in the San Joaquin valley. It was truly fascinating to discover that poems that could be traced to the Renaissance and even to the Middle Ages were still remembered by Portuguese immigrants in California.³ The fieldwork in that state continued, on a sporadic basis, until 1975 (see *Cal* 1983b). In 1977 I explored practically every village on my father’s island, São Jorge (see *SJ* 1983a), recording a few ballads on my native Terceira as well. In 1978 I was able to form two collections among the Portuguese settled in New England (Massachusetts and Rhode Island) (*NI* 1980) and Canada (Toronto) (*Can* 1979b) together with my wife, Maria-João. She had begun to accompany me during my fieldwork in California, and her collaboration became increasingly important as time went on. In the summer of 1980 we traveled to Portugal, forming a very large collection in the northern province of Trás-os-Montes (in press).⁴ We also harvested a few ballads in Beira Alta and the Algarve at that time. In 1984 we returned to Canada, recording another 23 variants of 19 text types in Toronto and Montreal. In our efforts to salvage as many Portuguese ballads as possible before it is too late, we have interviewed more than 800 informants so far, gathering over 3,300 ballads and other traditional poems in the process. This paper will focus on the various methods of fieldwork that had to be devised for each area and on the functions of the ballads, as reported by the informants themselves, with emphasis on the province of Trás-os-Montes, where our largest collection was formed.

When I began to collect ballads in California, it did not take me long to find out that it was necessary to become thoroughly familiar with the Portuguese tradition in order to render my work as effective as possible. Since most of the immigrants were from the Azores, I put together a list of incipits taken from Teófilo Braga’s *Cantos Populares do Arquipélago Açoriano* (1869). This list was used to elicit as many ballads as I could from my informants, for people are often unaware of the extent of their respective repertoires. As a member of the Portuguese community in that state, I was in a privileged position to observe the

so-called “natural ballad-singing situation,” but such a course would have been utterly nonproductive. Had I followed it, I would still be trying to compile a collection in California today. I also learned very soon that the best informants are from villages, are advanced in years, illiterate or at most with an elementary education, and that, overall, women preserve the tradition much better than men. Since old people usually are very religious, a display of piety and asking for the rhymed prayers that they had learned from their mothers and grandmothers often helped to induce the most reticent ones to collaborate with us. Many thought very little of the rich tradition that they had inherited. When confronted with the tape recorder, a good number feared making mistakes, suspecting that what they knew was somehow “incorrect.” To counter this situation, it was necessary to convince them of the great value of the ballad tradition and to encourage them with an effusive, constant display of appreciation for everything that they contributed. Old people are frequently lonely, especially in the English-speaking environment that surrounds them in North America. On many occasions we had to spend quite a few hours listening to the history of their illnesses and other endless stories with evangelical patience. Although we wanted to record their ballads, this was also the human thing to do.

The methods of fieldwork had to be constantly adapted to local conditions. Whenever possible, we began by seeking the help of relatives and friends. Besides recording what they themselves knew, they often indicated other informants who, in turn, would try to find more people for us to interview. Some even traveled with us to various cities in California and New England. In Massachusetts and Rhode Island, it was necessary to seek the help of Portuguese priests and community organizations for the first time. We had only two months for fieldwork, and it was imperative to proceed as quickly as possible. In Taunton, Father Américo Moreira announced our project after a Portuguese mass. Although no one volunteered to collaborate with us after the services, the announcement facilitated several interviews a few days later. In New Bedford, East Providence, and Providence, priests gave us lists with the names and addresses of prospective informants, accompanying us to their homes on some occasions. In Bristol, Jorge de Ávila Gonçalves, from the Center of Assistance to the Portuguese Worker, went with us from door to door. In Pawtucket, an employee from the Center of Assistance to the

Immigrant found several persons for us to interview.

These tactics were also used in Canada, where, rather than traveling constantly from city to city, we were able to stay in Toronto, where there was a community of more than 90,000 persons from many parts of Portugal (see Anderson and Higgs 1976:69). We began by renting a flat in the Kensington Park area, where most Portuguese used to live.⁵ There are several Portuguese national churches in the city whose priests were most helpful. They would explain our project after one of the masses that were held throughout the week, reading three or four incipits of some of the most common ballads to insure that their parishioners understood what we were looking for. Those masses were attended mostly by old people. Besides praying for volunteers, Maria-João and I would plant ourselves by the door of the church as they were leaving, finding out which ones knew ballads, writing down their addresses, and setting up interviews. In this fashion we were able to discover many informants in front of churches such as Holy Cross, St. Helen's, and St. Agnes'. We also sought the help of organizations such as the Portuguese Community Center, a Catholic service housed in the basement of St. Helen's, Portuguese Free Interpreters, and the Portuguese department of the West End Y.M.C.A. St. Christopher's House, a social center for the aged, proved to be quite a find, for we recorded many ballads there. A few informants were discovered by less orthodox means. At times we would drive slowly through the streets trying to find old ladies to interview. The Portuguese ones usually dressed in black, but some of those we approached turned out to be Italian or Ukranian. The Italian ladies would reply with a swift "Non capisco!" that we understood, and the Ukranians probably answered the same thing, even though we did not really know what they were saying. During our second trip to Canada in 1984, we were more interested in recording folk tales. Since old men know many stories, we looked for informants in parks and malls where they gather to talk, to watch people go by, or to play cards. I even went into bars and barber shops while Maria-João waited in the car.

In North America we frequently appealed to the ethnic pride of prospective informants, pointing out that the ballads were, after all, Portuguese, and that they were condemned to disappear very soon. As they knew only too well, the young people, who often failed to learn the language of their ancestors properly, cared even less for their old songs. At times we took advantage of the fact

that the Portuguese tend to be very clannish, preferring to socialize with people from their own region of origin. For example, we would tell some Azoreans how poorly their particular island was represented in our collection, and explain to continentals and Madeirans that most of our materials were of Azorean provenience. Whenever possible, we made our purposes clear by naming ballads according to their respective designations in the informant's home area.⁶ We would also mention some of the most common ballads by their popular name or by incipit in order to get started. After a while, if the interviewee did not object too strenuously, we would go through our list in the hope of not leaving anything behind. Many people knew very little, but we also found a few outstanding informants.

This is how our three North American collections were formed. They reflect the fact that the majority of the Portuguese on this continent are from the Azores, for 208 of our 277 informants came from those islands, but we also interviewed 52 persons from the continent (Trás-os-Montes, Beira Alta, Beira Baixa, Beira Litoral, Estremadura, Baixo Alentejo) and 13 from the island of Madeira, collecting a total of 1209 ballads, rhymed prayers, and miscellaneous poems in the process. The task was not always easy. There were many days when, unable to find any informants, we were almost tempted to give up. In New England it was impossible to travel for several days because of the harshness of the winter. Although we were well received in most instances, that was not the case when we were suspected of belonging to the religious denominations whose representatives go from door to door trying to make new converts. Some people also seemed to fear that ballad collecting was a pretext to get into their homes in order to steal. In Modesto, California, an old lady who came to the door on crutches, upon discovering that I was looking for ballads, replied: "Songs? What do you want songs for, boy? Get yourself a job!" In Toronto, a woman from Figueira da Foz refused to grant a previously promised interview with the following words: "I really don't know anything and I do not have time to put up with you today!" It is only fair to emphasize, however, that cases of outright rudeness such as these were rare, for the vast majority of the Portuguese took great pride in preserving the hospitality which is so characteristic of their homeland.

The corpus of Portuguese balladry has been considerably

enriched by this fieldwork. The fact that the vast majority of our informants were from conservative lateral areas such as the Azores, Trás-os-Montes, and Madeira renders the three North American collections especially valuable (see Costa Fontes 1984b). Moreover, some of the poems that they preserve are extremely rare. The following version of *A Morte do Príncipe D. Afonso* was recited in Toronto on June 19, 1978 by Clementina Coelho, an immigrant from the island of São Miguel:

	A princesa estava à janela, casadinha d' oito dias; por lá passa um pombo branco, oh que novas le trazia!	The princess at the window, married for eight days; a white dove passed by, oh what news it brought her!
5	—Que nova trago à senhora, com vontade de chorar! O vosso marido é morto em reino de Portugal.	“The news I bring you makes me feel like crying! Your husband has died in the kingdom of Portugal.
10	Caiu dum cavalo abaixo, em cima dum lajeal; arrebentou fel e bofes, 'tá em pontos de expirar.	He fell off a horse, on top of some flagstones; bile and lungs burst out and he is about to die.”
15	A mulher, assim que soube disto, logo tratou de mandar, co'as suas aias atrás dela, sem as poder apanhar;	His wife, discovering this, left right away, her ladies-in-waiting followed, but couldn't keep up with her;
20	co'as suas saíinhas nos braços, sem as poder agüentar. —Donde vindes, mulher minha? Vens-me acabar de matar?	they lifted their skirts, but couldn't hold them up. “Where do you come from, my wife? Do you want to finish me off?”
25	Tu ainda sedes criancinha, ainda podeis casar. —Casar é qu' eu já não caso, 'tou no mundo sem abrigo;	You are still a child, and you can marry again.” “I will not remarry, I am alone in the world;
30	jà nã torno a encontrar a prenda do meu marido. —Chama-me aquele doutor que vai pel' aquela rua, qu' eu le quero perguntar	I will not be able to find a husband such as you.” “Call me that doctor who is walking on that street, for I want to ask him
35	s' o mal de amor tern cura. —O mal de amor nã tem cura, qu' é um mal inviolado; quem morre de mal de amor não se enterra em sagrado;	if lovesickness can be cured.” “Lovesickness has no remedy, for it is an incurable disease; whoever dies from it can't be buried in holy ground;
	enterra-se em campo verde donde forem namorados.	only in the green meadows where he fell in love.”

(Can no. 10)

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The princess who receives the sad news that her husband is about to die is Isabel, daughter of the Catholic Kings of Spain. Isabel had been married for eight months, not just eight days as

stated in the ballad, to Prince Afonso, son and heir of John II of Portugal. The prince fell from his horse on the shores of the Tagus and died on July 13, 1491. At that time Ferdinand and Isabel were besieging Granada, which surrendered the following year. They asked their grieving daughter to join them immediately. According to Ramón Menéndez Pidal (1973:411), it was in the nearby town of Íllora that she asked Fray Ambrosio de Montesino, a well-known poet at the Castilian court, to write a poem about her husband's untimely death (see also Bénichou 1975; Nuno Alçada 1982-83). Nowadays this poem is remembered only in the insular Portuguese tradition. Our version concludes with *Não me Enterrem em Sagrado*, a separate ballad which in Portuguese survives only as an ending to other text types (see Costa Fontes 1983a:xx). Note that *A Morte do Príncipe D. Afonso* has lost its historical meaning for the people who still sing it. To them, it is merely the sad story of a girl who is widowed shortly after her marriage.

Many other rare ballads were harvested among the Portuguese immigrants, but I shall mention only a few. *Batalha de Lepanto*, which perpetuates the memory of the great naval encounter between the Christian forces commanded by John of Austria and the Turks at Lepanto in 1571, is exclusively Portuguese today (see Costa Fontes 1979a). We recorded a good version in California (*Cal* no. 10) and a fragment in Stoughton, Massachusetts (*NI* no. 2). *A Filha Desterrada (Dona Maria)*, which includes two verses from the epic *A Penitência do Rei Rodrigo*, is found only among Azoreans. Its third, fourth, and fifth published versions are from North America (*Cal* nos.33-34; *Can* no. 65; see also Costa Fontes 1976). Before our work, there were only three known variants of *Lizarda*, which survives only in the Azores and Madeira. This ballad is derived from Gil Vicente's *Tragicomedia de Don Duardos* (c. 1525). We found two additional versions and a fragment in the United States and Canada (*Cal* nos.104-5; *Can* no. 198; see also Costa Fontes 1978-79). As noted by Samuel G. Armistead and Joseph H. Silverman in their preface to the New England collection (1980:x), the initial verses of the Canadian fragment embody a contamination with the epic *As Ameias de Toro*. The longest versions of the religious ballad *Barca Bela*, which seems to have been preserved only in the Azores, are clearly related to the famous ballad of *Conde Arnaldos*, first documented by Juan Rodríguez del Padrón) before the middle of the fifteenth century.

Thanks to the Azorean renditions, it was possible to demonstrate that *Barca Bela* in turn inspired *Remando vão remadores*, the poem composed by Gil Vicente to open his *Auto da Barca do Purgatório* (c. 1517) (see Costa Fontes 1983-84a). Seventy-nine-year-old Virgínia Valadão Serpa recited an excellent version in Stoughton, Massachusetts. Since the recording was accidentally erased, Mrs. Serpa was kind enough to repeat it on the telephone a few days later when we had already returned to Ohio (*NI* no. 125). *A Morte do Príncipe D. João* is not as rare as previously thought (see Costa Fontes 1983-84b:54 and n.19), but this was not yet the case when Joaquim Martins, born in the province of Trás-os-Montes, recited the following version on May 27, 1978 in Toronto:

	Tristes novas, novas tristes, que têm vindo de Granada: D. João estava doente, com pena da sua amada.	Sad news, sad news, has arrived from Granada: Don João was ill, and felt sorry for his beloved.
5	Foram chamar três doutores dos que havia em Granada; olhavam uns pelos outros, mas nenhum dizia nada.	They sent for three doctors that there were in Granada; they looked at each other, but not one said a word.
10	Disse o mais novo deles daquela boca sagrada: —Três horas tendes de vida, e meia já vai passada.	Then the youngest of them said with his blessed mouth: “You have three hours to live, a half-hour has already passed.”
	Depois a mãe perguntou-lhe:	(Then his mother asked him:)
	—Tu deves alguma honra a alguma menina honrada?	“Do you owe a debt to any maiden of honor?”
15	—Devo-a à D. Isabel, que a deixo desgraçada. Estando naqueles momentos, D. Isabel chegara, e, descalça e em cabelo,	“I owe it to Dona Isabel, I am leaving her dishonored.” At that moment, Dona Isabel arrived, barefoot, her hair uncovered, her face was shining.
20	seu rosto lumiava. —Tu que tens, D. Isabel, que vens tão atrapalhada?	“What’s the matter with you, D. Isabel, for you seem so afflicted?”
	—Venho de pedir a Deus que te erga dessa cama.	“I have been begging God to take you out of that bed.”
25	—Se eu desta cama me erguesse, eras mulher abençoada; eu levaria-te à igreja a fazer-te mulher casada.	“If I could rise from this bed, you would be truly blessed; I would take you to church and make you a married woman.”

(*Can* no. 13)

The hero of this ballad is Prince John, son and heir to the Catholic Kings of Spain, who died in October of 1497, not in

Granada, as the version above would have it, but in the city of Salamanca. Although this poem was not preserved in the ancient collections, there can be no doubt that it was composed soon after the prince's death (for bibliography see Armistead 1978:1:175).

It is abundantly clear that these ballads, together with many other rare themes in North America, testify to the importance of conducting field work among immigrants whenever possible.

The *Romanceiro da Iha de S. Jorge (SJ)* was formed during the summer of 1977. My relatives on the island often accompanied me. I am especially grateful to my recently deceased uncle, Manuel Soares, who gave me a considerable amount of his time. When I was working by myself, it was usually sufficient to mention my family name for people to try to remember everything that they knew. The jewels of the collection, which includes a good number of rare poems, are *Perseguição de Búcar pelo Cid (SJ no. 1)* and *Floresvento (SJ no. 2)*. Unfortunately, the lady who recited these epic ballads, while claiming to have learned them from two crazy old aunts who used to sing day and night, had also inherited a copy of what appeared to be T. Braga's *Cantos Populares do Arquipélago Açoriano (1869)*.

Our fieldwork in Trás-os-Montes began in July of 1980. Upon arriving in Bragança, we went immediately to the bishop's residence, where we were kindly received by His Eminence, D. António Rafael, who had already been informed of our project. He indicated the best areas to explore in the district and gave us the names of priests interested in local history and ethnography, including some who were teachers at the seminary. On the following day (July 14) we went to the village of São Pedro dos Sarracenos by taxi. We were not very lucky. The only informant we could find on that day knew a version of *Barca Bela (TM no. 1241)* learned in a school book and a fragment of *O Soldado + A Aparição (TM no. 203)*, but the rest of her repertory consisted of modern songs and rhymed prayers. Somewhat discouraged, we returned to the seminary the following day where we met Dr. Manuel António Gonçalves, whose name had been mentioned to us by the bishop. If my memory does not betray me, Dr. Gonçalves, who taught Portuguese at the seminary and at the high school, had put together a collection of local legends and proverbs, and was very much interested in the preservation of regional folk dances, which were in danger of disappearing. Thanks to him, our early investigations were rather successful. He took us to Rio de

Onor and to the Spanish half of that village, Rihonor de Castilla,⁸ as well as to Varge, Sacóias, Guadramil, Deilão, Baçal, Vale-de-Lamas, São Julião, Palácios, and Gimonde. Our number of versions of rare or relatively rare ballads such as *Floresvento*, *O Conde Preso*, *Morte de D. Beltrão*, *O Prisioneiro*, and *Morte do Príncipe D. João* kept on increasing.

Since Dr. Gonçalves could not continue accompanying us—in fact, we may have taken advantage of his generosity—we realized that it was absolutely necessary to rent a car in order to carry out the systematic fieldwork that we had planned. We went to Gimonde—it was already night—right after finding an old Volkswagen in Bragança. The car could barely move and, in addition, we lost the best cassette recorder that we had brought from the United States. When we explained the situation to the businessman who had rented us the car, he returned our money at once, and we sent for another car from Oporto. Then we went back to Gimonde, where we were told that the recorder had been found by the son of a “retornado” and an Angolan mother. The boy gave us the machine with the best of good will. On July 26, armed with an excellent map of the district offered by Dr. Gonçalves, we left the “concelho”¹⁰ of Bragança and went south towards Miranda do Douro, stopping to collect ballads along the way. We would look for a boarding house in a central area and explore the nearby villages during the day. Thus we covered the “concelhos” of Miranda do Douro, Vimioso, Macedo de Cavaleiros, Mirandela, Mogadouro, Alfândega da Fé, Vila Flor, Freixo de Espada-à-Cinta, Torre de Moncorvo, and Vinhais, recording ballads in a total of 114 towns and villages, but visiting a few more, for it was not possible for us to find informants everywhere. Of the “concelhos” that form the district of Bragança, Carrazeda de Anciães was the only one left out. On August 21 we collected our last ballads from Trás-os-Montes in Cabeça de Igreja (Vinhais). Although we had hoped to explore the whole province, we decided to relegate the district of Vila Real to another occasion, for we already had an excellent collection from Trás-os-Montes, and went south towards the Algarve. Since we found very little in that province, we drove to Beira Alta, where we were equally unfortunate. The chances are that we were simply unable to find good informants.¹¹ Be that as it may, there can be no doubt that the oral tradition of Trás-os-Montes is by far the richest in the country

There was some difficulty in exploring the district of Bragança due to the poor roads, some of which were still unpaved. This lack of communications and the resulting isolation have probably played an important role in the preservation of the rich tradition of the province. On the other hand, it is lamentable that the poor roads that circle the mountains which abound in the district, besides hindering further development, also render access to areas of great natural beauty, such as Alfândega da Fé and Vinhais, more difficult than it should be.

Since the villages of northern Portugal give the impression of being deserted during the day because almost everyone leaves to work in the fields, the best occasions to find informants are around noon, when people return home for lunch, and at dusk. Naturally we kept looking for informants throughout the day because the time that we could spend in Portugal was limited. There are more people in the villages on Sundays, but even then many are unable to rest because of the labor shortage caused by emigration. This phenomenon is not new. Four of our oldest informants had been born abroad (Brazil, France, Argentina). We also interviewed three of the “retornados” who had been forced to abandon the properties acquired through many years of hard work in Angola and return to Portugal due to the recent, hasty decolonization. Some had married women from the former colonies. We owe versions of *Delgadinha* (TM no. 607) and *As Filhas da Condessa* (TM no. 1235) to an attractive girl of mixed Portuguese and African parentage who sang them with two white friends. A few persons who had come from France and from Canada to spend their vacation in their homeland also contributed to the collection. The labor shortage is such that many decided to forget that they had returned home to rest in order to help with agricultural tasks that could not be postponed.

The people of Trás-os-Montes are extremely hard-working. If the province is really as poor as we were told before arriving, this is due to the lack of industrial development, or perhaps because of the poor condition of the roads, or because the land simply refuses to produce more. The women also worked in the fields beside the men. The few exceptions that we noted were limited especially to the villages said to have a great percentage of New Christians (people descended from the Jews who became officially “converted” in 1497), such as Vilarinho dos Galegos (Mogadouro) and Campo de Viboras (Vimioso), where we saw

groups of women tatting in the shade outside their homes. In Peso (Mogadouro) we interviewed seventy-seven-year-old Maria Loçana who, despite her advanced age, was traveling on her donkey from village to village in order to sell soap and other items. Although she resided in Azinhoso (Mogadouro), she was from Argozelo (Vimioso). After she left, we found out that the other informants considered her Jewish. This could very well be, for there are many Crypto-Jews in Argozelo. However, an informant from Carção, who had New Christians among his own ancestors, told us that some Old Christians were reputed to be Jewish just because they abandoned agriculture in order to dedicate themselves to commerce.

It did not take us long to realize that the people were so kind and hospitable that, in most instances, there was no need to seek the help of priests, although a few did assist us. As soon as we arrived at the center of a village and made our project known, everyone tried to help us with the best of good will. People were always offering us the famous ham and sausage of Trás-os-Montes as well as the excellent local wines. Although there were days of great discouragement when we could not find any informants, there were also days in which we recorded a great number of ballads. At times we would go from house to house, and on some rare and precious occasions a group of people would gather around us, each one awaiting his turn to recite or sing his repertory, while arguing with each other about the “correctness” of their respective versions. In some instances there were persons who refused to recite or sing a ballad because of having just heard someone else record a similar variant. On other occasions a ballad would be sung in chorus. Since we wished to harvest as many versions as we possibly could, Maria-João and I would separate, each with a recorder, when a group formed around us, so as to collect more ballads. If the group refused to divide, Maria-João would leave with a local woman in search of more informants. After a while we began to separate as soon as we reached a village. Our informants would frequently indicate others. In Constantim (Miranda do Douro) we found two former informants from Toronto, Albertina Esteves and Manuel Domingues, who had come to spend their vacation in Portugal. They helped us interview practically all the older inhabitants in the village. Some people went to considerable lengths to contribute to our collection. In Eiró (Vinhais) seventy-two-year-old Arminda do Nascimento agreed to be

interviewed while ill in bed.¹² In São Julião (Bragança), Imperatriz dos Anjos Pires was very sad. She had just heard that her daughter, who lived in France, could not come to Portugal that summer because her house in Paris had been robbed. Nevertheless, she made an effort to collaborate with us. The three women whom we interviewed in Bemposta (Mogadouro) were very tired from working all day in the fields under the burning summer sun, but they recorded their respective repertoires despite the fact that the husband of one of them kept calling her to make supper. She ignored him until she was finished. And so we recorded ballads in private homes, in village squares, in the fields when the farmers took a break, next to a house under construction when the workers stopped for a snack, in country stores, and even in taverns. In the city of Bragança we also collected a few ballads in the asylum.

Naturally we ran across some resistance at times. The interest of radio and television in various manifestations of regional folklore caused a small number of potential informants to suspect that we intended to commercialize what they told us, making money at their expense. Fortunately, it did not take long to convince them that our purpose was to preserve the ballads before it was too late, for, as they well knew, it would not take very long for them to be forgotten. Maria Augusta da Costa Lourenço (Carção, Vimioso), an excellent informant to whom we owe the only version of *A Filha do Ermitao* (TM no. 1145; see also Costa Fontes 1982b) that we could find, helped to convince her neighbors to collaborate with us, exclaiming: "Although we tell them the ballads, they still remain with us!" We noted that the mistrust increased when we returned to a village for a second time. People probably began to speak with each other after our first visit, concluding that it was doubtful that anyone would expend so much energy to collect ballads out of mere dedication. Some informants who were in mourning also thought it inappropriate to collaborate with us. Ballads are to be sung on happy occasions. In Angueira (Vimioso), Adelina Ester Martins Afonso had forgotten most of her repertory because she had stopped singing after her husband's death seven years before. In other cases modesty constituted an additional obstacle. A few women refused to record poems or parts of poems they considered obscene, such as *A Filha do Imperador de Roma* and *A Tentação do Marinheiro*.

Contrary to the Azoreans, who usually prefer to recite their ballads because they are embarrassed to sing in front of strangers,

the people of Trás-os-Montes love to sing and to listen to the recordings afterwards. We realized that this could constitute an inducement for them to collaborate with us, but we often had to ask them to recite the ballads, explaining that singing took a long time, especially when the harvesting melody (“moda da segada”) was used, and that this would cause us to run out of tape and batteries. Moreover, since that melody was invariably the same, at least to our untrained ears, we had no interest in recording it time after time, wasting precious hours in the process. However, there were those who had to sing in order to remember the words of a ballad.

Leite de Vasconcellos lists some of the terms used to designate these poems in Trás-os-Montes: “trobos,” “romances,” “remances das segadas,” “jacras,” and “jacras das segadas” (1:1-2). I only recall hearing the words “jacra” and “jácara,” but we did not make any effort to discover what ballads were called in the various locations listed. As soon as we arrived anywhere, it was enough to ask for harvesting songs (“cantigas da segada”) for everyone to understand what we were looking for. I believe that this name together with threshing songs (“cantigas das malhas”) constitute the most common designations for ballads in the region.

Most of our collection was recorded, but we also used a reduced number of materials that had been written in popular notebooks as well as ballads collected by one of Dr. Gonçalves’ students as part of an assignment. Two other students of Dr. Gonçalves continued our fieldwork in Babe, offering us several ballads later. One of them is the only version of *A Tecedeira* (TM no. 1224) in our collection. D. Clara Vitória Pires, a high school teacher in Bragança, besides sending for several aged ladies who came to record their respective repertoires on the veranda of her house in Baçal, also offered us three ballads that she herself had collected.

We came upon some truly outstanding informants. Mariana Preto (about 75 years old of Guadramil, Bragança) contributed 32 poems to our collection. Ana Gouveia (62 years old of Gimonde, Bragança) recorded 38 poems. She had to be interviewed twice; since it was already late when we arrived at her home, there was not enough time for her to record her full repertory. Florinda dos Santos Rodrigues (63 years old of Nuzedo de Cima, Vinhais), a former informant of Father Firmino A. Martins (see Martins 1928-39), spent a good part of an afternoon reciting and singing 29

poems while baking bread. In Carção (Vimioso) we were lucky to find António Albino Machado de Andrade (67 years old). A shoemaker as well as “regedor” (alderman) of his village, he recorded more than 30 ballads while working at his bench. Our best informant, however, was Cândida Augusta Ramos (Eiró, Vinhais), a beautiful and kind septuagenarian. When we first interviewed her, the poor lady was in tears because her daughter, who had come to spend her vacation in Portugal, was about to return to France. Two days later we found her sitting in front of her house alone, as often happens with old people whose children emigrate. Thoroughly studied, her 45 ballads would fill a thick volume. We owe to her versions of rare poems such as *Perseguição de Búcar pelo Cid* (TM no. 2), *Virgílio* (TM no. 98), *Quem Quiser Viver Alegre* (TM no. 99), *Abenámar* (TM no. 113), *A Serrana Matadora* (TM no. 547), *O Conde Preso* (TM no. 52), *Canta, Mouro* (TM no. 113), *A Morte Ocultada* (TM no. 1024), *A Esposa de D. Garcia* (TM no. 552), and *O Prisioneiro* (TM no. 117). When we asked her from whom she had learned so much, she replied with great simplicity, as if she were still a young girl, that it had been from her mother and father. We felt as if the years had not gone by, an impression that was repeated time after time in Trás-os-Montes upon hearing ballads that were already popular during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, old parallelistic songs, or rhymed prayers in which a mother, invoking God with the name Adonai, begged Him to protect her children and keep them safe from the Inquisition and the irons of the king.¹³ It was as if time had not changed, people had remained the same, and the passing of the centuries were a mere illusion. It is this impression which is felt with such force in Trás-os-Montes, the constant hope of coming upon “oceans never sailed before,” making new but old discoveries, that has caused us to return to fieldwork repeatedly, despite the fact that, in the inevitable moments and days of great discouragement, we often swore that we would never again investigate oral tradition.

Although we collected many rare ballads in Trás-os-Montes, I shall limit myself to three examples of epic origin. *A Perseguição de Búcar pelo Cid* is ultimately derived from the episode in the *Poema de Mio Cid* (vv. 2408-26) in which the Cid chases the Moor Búcar in front of the walls of Valencia, killing him as he reaches the ocean (see Armistead 1978:1:97). Our version was recited twice by the aforementioned septuagenarian Cândida

Augusta Ramos on August 16, 1980 in Eiró (Vinhais):

	Bem se passeia o mourinho de calçada em calçada, olhando para Valência, o qu'est'á d' enmuralhada!	The little Moor was walking from street to street, looking at Valencia, oh how strongly walled it is!
5	— Ó Valência, ó Valência, de fogo sejam queimada! Ainda ontem eras dos mouros, agora estás cautivada.	“Oh Valencia, oh Valencia, may you be burned with fire! Yesterday you were still Moorish, now you have been captured.
10	Quandas eras dos mouros, eras de prata lavrada; agora que és da cristandade, és de pedra mal talhada.	When you belonged to the Moors, you were of wrought silver; now that you are Christian, you are of poorly carved stone.”
15	E o rei, que aquilo ouviu d'altas torres dond'estava, chamou pela sua filha, pela sua filha Bernarda.	The king, who heard those words from the tall towers where he was, called for his daughter, his daughter Bernarda.
20	— Entretem-me esse mourinho de palavra em palavra; as palavras sejam poucas, d'amores venham tomadas.	“Entertain that little Moor for me with conversation; let the words be few, but as if you were in love.”
	— Como o hei-de entreter, meu pai, se eu d'amores não sei nada?	“How can I entertain him, father, when I know nothing of love?”
	E o pai foi-s'embora. E ela esperou o mourinho: (Her father left and she waited for the little Moor:)	
25	— Vai-te daí, ó mourinho, que vem o meu pai e te mata; os cavalos d'el-rei, meu pai, já tropelam na calçada.	“Get away, oh little Moor, my father will come and kill you; the horses of my father, the king, are galloping along the street.”
30	— Não tenho medo ao teu pai nem á sua gente armada, que o teu pai não tem cavalos como a minha égua Paira,	“I do not fear your father nor his armed men, for he doesn't have horses like my mare Paira,
35	a não ser um filho dela, que não sei por onde ele pára. — Vai-te daí, ó mourinho, não digas que eu te sou falsa;	unless it be a son of hers whose whereabouts I don't know.” “Get away, oh little Moor, don't say that I deceive you;
40	esse cavalo, mourinho, meu pai tem-le dado cevada. Palavras não eram ditas e o cavalo rochinava, e o mourinho, qu'aquilo ouviu, ele fugia que voava;	to that horse, little Moor, my father has fed barley.” These words were barely said and the horse began braying, hearing this, the little Moor ran so fast he seemed to fly;
	por a clara vinha fora, bem s'ele maniava.	through the good vineyard, he moved as fast as he could.

(TM no. 2)

Unlike some other Portuguese versions (cf. Leite de Vasconcellos 1:no. 4), ours fails to state that the Cid manages to kill the Moor.

A Morte de D. Beltrão is ultimately derived from the

Chanson de Roland. The following version preserves the reference to Roncevaux (“Rocesvale”), where the massacre of the rear guard of the French army occurred (for bibliography see Armistead 1978:1:104). It was recited by Mariana Preto (about 75 years old) in Guadramil, Bragança on July 18, 1980:

5	<p>—Quedos, quedos, cavaleiros, dos que el-rei mandou contar. Contaram e recontaram, só um le vem a faltare; era esse o D. Beltrão, tão forte no pelejare. Sete vezes que contaram,</p>	<p>“Be still, oh knights, be still, the king wants you counted.” They counted and recounted, only one was missing; it was D. Beltrão, who was such a brave warrior. They drew lots seven times,</p>
10	<p>todas sete lhe caíram ao bom velho de seu pai. —Volta atrás, velho triste, sem mais dizer nem falar; se a sorte não caísse, não teria d’ir buscare.</p>	<p>and each time the lot fell to his father, a good old man. “Go back, sad old man, without saying another word; if the lot hadn’t fallen to you, you wouldn’t have to look for him.”</p>
15	<p>De dia vai pelo monte, de noite vai pelos vales. Chegou àquela mortaldade onde fosse Rocesvale.</p>	<p>By day he travels in the mountains, by night in the valleys. He arrived at the massacre that took place at Roncesvaux.</p>
20	<p>Os braços já tern cansados de tanto morto virare; vira todos os franceses e D. Beltrão não pôde achare. Viu estar um perro mouro num ar a ver velare.</p>	<p>His arms are already tired from turning over so many corpses; he looks at all the French and can’t find D. Beltrão. Then he saw a Moorish dog standing guard on a battlement.</p>
25	<p>— Diz-me lá, meu pobre mouro, que me digas sem m’enganare: Cavaleiro d’armas brancas, seu cavalo sem igual, na ponta da sua lança traz um branco cendal,</p>	<p>“Tell me, my poor Moor, let me know without deceit: Did you see a knight with white arms, and an unequalled horse, on the tip of his lance a white sendal, embroidered by his lady, with royal stitches?”</p>
30	<p>que le bordou sua dama, bordado a ponto real? —Esse cavaleiro, amigo, morto está naquele fragal, co’as pernas entre as águas(?) e os corpos no areal,</p>	<p>“That knight, friend, is dead on those cliffs, with his legs in the water and his body on the sand, three wounds in his chest, each of which is mortal: the sun shines through one, the moon through another; through the smallest one a hawk flies.”</p>
35	<p>com três feridas no peito, qual delas seja a mais mortal: por uma l’entra o sol, por outra l’entra o luar; pela mais pequena delas um gavião a voar.</p>	<p>“I do not blame my son, nor the Moors for killing him; I blame his horse</p>
40	<p>—Não torno a culpa ao meu filho nem aos mouros de le matar; torno a culpa ao seu cavalo</p>	<p>“I do not blame my son, nor the Moors for killing him; I blame his horse</p>
45	<p>torno a culpa ao seu cavalo</p>	<p>I blame his horse</p>

	de não o saber retirar. Milagre, quem tal diria, quem tal pudesse contar! O cavalo quase morto	for not withdrawing him from battle.” And then a miracle happened, who would think of such a thing! The horse almost dead
50	ali se pôs a falar: — Não me torne a mim a culpa, que ma não pode tornar. Três vezes o retirei, três vezes para o salvar;	began to speak right then: “Do not blame me for it, you have no right to do so. Three times I withdrew him, three times so as to save him;
55	três vezes encurteu-me a rédea e alargou o peitoral; três vezes me deu espora co’ a sanha de pelear;	three times he pulled my reins back and loosened my girth; three times he gave me the spurs such was his fury to fight;
60	a terceira fui a terra co’ esta ferida tão mortal.	the third time I fell to the ground with this mortal wound.”

(TM no. 9)

Floresvento has its origin in the twelfth-century French *Floovent*. Since the published Galician version (Catalán 1979:241, n.63) depends on the Portuguese variants from Trás-os-Montes, and the Sephardic verses, although precious documents in themselves, constitute fragments (see Costa Fontes 1982a), this ballad, which is absent from all the early collections, is essentially Portuguese today. A comparison of the versions from the Azores and Trás-os-Montes with the French *Floovent* and its Italian prose derivative, *Fioravante*, made it possible to determine to some extent what the lost Iberian prototype, without which the existence of the ballads cannot be explained, must have been like (Costa Fontes 1985). The following version was recited by António Albino Machado de Andrade in Carcao, Vimioso on August 1, 1980:

	— Cruel vento, ó cruel vento, roubador maior!	“Cruel wind, oh cruel wind, you are the biggest thief!
	Roubaste as três igrejas, as melhores de Portugal.	You have robbed three churches, the best in Portugal.”
5	— Se roubei as três igrejas, dinheiro tenho para as pagare.	“If I robbed the three churches, I have money to make amends.”
	— Cruel vento, ó cruel vento, derrubador maior!	“Cruel wind, oh cruel wind, you are the biggest thief!
10	Roubaste as sete fortunas, as melhores de Portugal.	You have robbed seven fortunes, the best in Portugal.”
	— Se roubei as sete fortunas, com elas m’hei-de governare.	“If I robbed the seven fortunes, I’ll manage my affairs with them.”
	— Cruel vento, ó cruel vento, roubador maiorale!	“Cruel wind, oh cruel wind, you are the biggest thief!
15	Roubaste as três meninas mais lindas de Portugal	You have abducted three maidens, the prettiest in Portugal.”
	— Pois se roubei as meninas, dinheiro tenho p’r’às pagare.	“If I abducted the maidens, I have money to make amends.”

20	<p>—Cruel vento, cruel vento, a honra das meninas com dinheiro não se paga. Tu hás ir a pagare mas é às cadeias de Portugal.</p>	<p>“Cruel wind, cruel wind, the honor of the maidens cannot be restored with money. You’ll pay for your crimes in the jails of Portugal.”</p>
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Depois foi preso. E acabou.
(Then he was imprisoned. That’s all.)

(*TM* no. 62)

Since the very beginning of our fieldwork in California, we were acutely aware of the fact that the Portuguese ballad, at least in the form in which it has survived for centuries, was condemned to disappear very soon. Therefore, our main purpose was to collect as many ballads as possible, thus preserving and making them available for future studies. Given these objectives, I repeat, it would have been utterly nonproductive to remain in a given area over a long period of time in order to make a detailed study of their role at the individual and community levels. Such investigations can be undertaken by those who have the training and the inclination to do so. What I have to report on the functions of the ballads is largely based on what the informants themselves told us, for we never waited for the so-called “natural ballad-singing situations” to arise.

Having been born into an Azorean family where the tradition was preserved, I can confirm the obvious fact that the main function of the ballad is to entertain. My grandmother used to sing them to herself during her domestic chores whenever she felt like it, and so did my mother, together with other lyrical and church songs that they knew. Some women reported that, besides helping to while away the hours during endless domestic chores, ballads could be extremely useful when the time came to put children to sleep.

In the Azores these poems were transmitted from generation to generation, especially at the family level, but that was not always the case. Women also sang ballads when they got together to embroider and to card and spin wool during winter evenings, or to shuck corn, an occasion when the men also worked at their side. Some were sung to the viola during dances that used to be held in private homes. On the island of São Miguel, a reduced number of ballads seemed to play a role in the popular theater of some villages. In Toronto, Lígia Almeida reported that *Bela Infanta* (*Can* no. 37) and her second version of *Rico Franco* (*Can* no. 170)

formed part of plays. According to Manuel Moniz Graça, *Paixão do Redentor* (Can no. 426) was one of the ballads sung during the penitential pilgrimages in which groups of men would travel on foot around the island of São Miguel in eight days, stopping to pray in chorus in front of each church. On the island of Graciosa, men and women perform a type of narrative folk dance, “o bailado das espadas” (the dance of swords) during Carnival (see Fagundes 1976). The ballad *Veneno de Moriana* formed the basis for the dance entitled “A Juliana,” the usual name for the protagonist in the Azorean versions who poisons the faithless lover who invites her to his wedding with another woman. *Nau Catrineta*, a poem about hunger at sea, was sung in “Os Marujos” (The Sailors). Another ballad-singing situation was provided by the ancient festivities held yearly in honor of the Holy Ghost. Groups of men dressed as “foliões” (buffoons, jesters) sang religious ballads such as *O Lavrador da Arada* and *Barca Bela*. Joanne Purcell also heard them singing *Bernal Francês* in Ponta Delgada (Flores) (1970:236-37). Since *Bernal Francês* is a profane ballad about adultery, it is difficult to explain how it came to form part of their repertory. This is not the case with the rare *As Queixas de Ximena*, known in the Portuguese tradition through a single Azorean version.¹⁴ That epic ballad became integrated into those festivities because Ximena begs the king for justice, complaining that the Cid has killed her best doves.¹⁵ The dove, which is represented on top of the silver crowns worn by selected participants (usually three, at least in my village of Altares, Terceira) during the festivities in question, constitutes a symbol of the Holy Ghost.

In Trás-os-Montes, where ballad-singing is intimately related to agriculture, there were two melodies for several poems: one when they were sung in groups while harvesting, and another for more intimate occasions. As some informants told us, a ballad can also be adapted to any melody but, according to our recordings, this must not happen very frequently. The melody used while harvesting was rather slow. The goal was to pass the time, relieving the tedium of the work. The alternate melodies are much more lively in comparison.

Ballads sung during threshing were usually short. The fact that men and women would divide into two groups, alternating the verses and the act of threshing, may help to explain the survival of the medieval parallelistic structure of some ballads and songs (see

Costa Fontes 1982b). After one group sang a particular verse or strophe, the other group would repeat it in an alternate rhyme. The ballads used to while away the hours during the harvest were frequently lengthier, and some were reserved for a particular time of day, often in accordance with their opening verses. *A Fonte Clara* was sung in the morning because it began:

Manhãzinha do S. João,
pela manhã d'alvorada,
Jesus Cristo se passeia
ao redor da fonte clara.

On the morning of St. John's Day,
in the morning at dawn,
Jesus Christ was walking
around the clear fountain.

(TM no. 895)

Mothers also probably sent their daughters to the fountain for water in the morning, for that is when *A Fonte da Salgueirinha* was sung:

Minha mãe mandou-me à fonte,
à fonte do salgueirinho;
mandou-me lavar a cântara
com a flor do romeirinho.

My mother sent me to the fountain,
to the fountain of the willow;
she told me to wash the jar
with flower of rosemary.

(TM no. 1215)

During the morning some people also sang *Indo Eu por Aí Abaixo*, at times on their way to work:

Indo-m'eu por aí abaixo
em busca dos meus amores,
encontrei um laranjal
carregadinho de flores

I was going down the road
looking for my beloved,
and found an orange grove
loaded with flowers.

(TM no. 1251)

Alta Vai a Lua, *Alta* was reserved for noon:

Alta vai a lua, alta,
mais que o sol ao meio-dia;
mais alta vai a Senhora
quando p'ra Belem partia.

The moon is high, even higher
than the sun at midday;
the Blessed Mother was even higher
when she left for Bethlehem.

(TM no. 945)

Around two o'clock people would sing *A Branca e a Morena*:

Indo-m'eu a passear
pela tarde, às duas horas,
encontrei numa janela
duas donzelas formosas.

I was taking a walk
at two in the afternoon,
and found in a window
two pretty maidens.

(TM no. 1165)

When it was time for the mid-afternoon snack, the workers paradoxically would sing *Veneno de Moriana*, a ballad whose heroine poisons her faithless lover with a glass of wine:

—Apeia-te, ó cavaleiro,

“Dismount, oh knight,

darei-t'eu de merendar.
—D. Augénia, ó D. Augénia,
que é que tens para me dare?

I will give you something to eat.”
“Dona Augénia, Dona Augénia,
what do you have to offer me?”

(*TM* no. 481)

At dusk everyone would return home singing *Agora Baixou o Sol*:

Agora baixou o sole
lá p'ra trás daquela serra;
capinha leva vermelha,
que lha deu a Madanela.

The sun had just set
behind that mountain range,
wearing a little red cape
offered by Madanela.

(*TM* no. 1287)

Many other poems were interspersed throughout the day. Naturally, ballads were also sung during other agricultural tasks such as picking olives, as well as on most of the occasions reported by the Azoreans: when women embroidered or were busy with their housework, when people gathered to work together in the evening, and so on. Ballads such as *A Loba Parda* (*TM* no. 1030) and *As Três Comadres* (*TM* no. 1107) were integrated into the repertory of the “pauliteiros,” the famous folk dancers from Miranda do Douro who perform with sticks (see Mourinho 1984:448-518). This folk group was duplicated by the Portuguese in Toronto.

Although we were especially interested in ballads, we recorded a good number of poems of other genres with fairly specific functions in Trás-os-Montes. Some rhymed prayers were said when going to bed and upon arising, while entering church, when the priest came from the sacristy, during communion, and at the end of the mass. There were prayers for the sake of the souls in purgatory, beggars' songs such as *Á Porta das Almas Santas* (*TM* no. 1419), spells with various purposes, from those thought to help in finding lost items, to those that supposedly cured infirmities such as toothaches, and those employed to undo the effects of the evil eye and to confuse one's enemies. *Pela Rua da Amargura* (*TM* no. 1416) and *As Doze Palavras* (*TM* no. 1232; Aarne, Thompson 2010) were used during the vigils held for someone who was about to die. According to one informant, it was important to avoid errors with the latter: “If one makes a mistake, the soul will not go to a good place.” Some Azoreans also seemed to believe this. A few poems were reserved for cyclical festivities such as Christmas and Twelfth Night. *Vinde e Adoremos* (*TM* no. 1402) was sung from house to house in Gimonde (Bragança) during Christmas, but the custom has been reportedly abandoned.

Quando os Santos Reis Souberam (TM no. 1550) was reserved for Twelfth Night. When the workers arrived home at dusk, they sang *Esta Rua é Comprida* (TM no. 1601) in chorus. In Rio de Onor, a local poet would even compose verses to celebrate weddings (cf. TM no. 1666). Those poems were declaimed before the newlyweds and their guests at the door of the church after they were married.

Although I know that ancient historical ballads such as *Morte do Príncipe D. Alonso* are completely devoid of any historical value among the people, being remembered because of the universal human situations portrayed, I am not in a position to discuss what single ballad themes may represent to individual informants. Once again, our main objective was to collect as many ballads as possible, for the ancient and noble tradition that has preserved them across the centuries will soon disappear. In North America Portuguese balladry will die with those who brought it from their homeland. Young people seldom care for ballads in an environment in which the language of their ancestors must be relegated to a secondary position. It is true that many have to use Portuguese to communicate with their parents and grandparents, who frequently know little or no English. However, young people prefer to use English among themselves, even while in the presence of their elders, and there are some who emphatically refuse to speak any Portuguese.

The situation is not much better in Portugal itself. Many prospective informants told us that they had not cared to learn the old songs, preferring the modern ones that were more popular during their youth. One of the reasons why the oral tradition of Trás-os-Montes is the richest in the country is the fact that ballads were associated with agriculture, being sung by groups of people especially while harvesting and threshing, but these customs have almost disappeared today. Machines have been substituted for the sickle, the mallet, and the paved areas previously used for threshing and drying cereals. The groups of laborers who used to go from village to village in the North, at times crossing the Spanish border in order to follow the harvest, are practically extinct today. Those laborers used to learn and transmit new ballads while working in the fields. The other ballad-singing occasions are becoming rarer and rarer due to the influence of radio, television, the spreading of literacy, the increasing urbanization of the countryside, and other pressures of modern life.

To sum up, progress will cause the ballads that have survived, thanks to the aged, to be almost forgotten when those people die.

Fortunately, a great effort is being currently undertaken in Portugal to preserve as many ballads as possible. The “Grupo de Estudos Dr. José Leite de Vasconcellos,” directed by Pere Ferré, has already given us a splendid collection from the archipelago of Madeira (1982), and there are several more in preparation: District of Vila Real (Trás-os-Montes, over 1,000 variants), Madeira (416 versions harvested by Pere Ferré and Vanda Anastácio in 1983), Beira Alta and Beira Baixa (more than 300 versions recorded during carnival in 1985). José Joaquim Dias Marques has formed a monumental collection of about 1,100 ballads in the “concelhos” of Bragança and Vinhais, of which he has already given us a stimulating preview (1984-85). Recently he visited the Alentejo with Ana Maria Martins, recording about 100 poems. Working with Maria Angélica Reis da Silva, Dias Marques has also been able to find several ballads in the “concelho” of Loures, near Lisbon. José António Falcão and Maria de Lurdes Gonçalves das Dores have been exploring the Alentejo and the Algarve. Maria Aliete Farinho das Dores Galhoz’s fundamentally important *Romanceiro Popular Português*, which draws from several sources—theses, other poems gathered by Leite de Vasconcellos, as well as ballads collected in various parts of the country by the editor herself and by others—is now in press. I would like to express my gratitude to these good friends for keeping me abreast of their crucially important investigations and hope that all the results will be made available as soon as possible.

Kent State University

Notes

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Trás-os-Montes (TM). My observations must be read in conjunction with Joanne B. Purcell's indispensable "Ballad Collecting Procedures in the Hispanic World" (1979). A short version of this paper was read at the Tenth International Congress on Patristic, Medieval, and Renaissance Studies, Villanova University, September 1985.

²C. Michaëlis de Vasconcelos (1934) was able to document over eighty *romances* that were cited or partially quoted in works written by about fifty Portuguese medieval and Renaissance writers.

³In 1970 I also found out, thanks to Professor Askins, that Joanne B. Purcell had already investigated this tradition in 1967 and 1968 (Purcell 1968; 1969). I met her in 1973 when I transferred to the University of California, Los Angeles. What she had done in California and the splendid collection she had put together during eighteen months of fieldwork (1969-70) in the Azores, Madeira, Minho, Beira Alta, Beira Baixa, Alto Alentejo, and Trás-os-Montes (see Purcell 1970; 1972) constituted an important stimulus to me. (*Her Romanceiro Português das Ilhas Atlânticas*, which was transcribed by Isabel Rodríguez García, is now in press.) Joanne's work had originally been inspired by Professors Samuel G. Armistead and Joseph H. Silverman, with whom she had studied in Los Angeles. In 1975 Joanne introduced me to them and to Diego Catalán. Their distinguished example and constant encouragement strengthened my resolve to go on collecting as many Portuguese ballads as I could. Unfortunately, Joanne is no longer with us. For an evaluation of her monumental contribution, see Armistead and Costa Fontes (1984).

⁴For a preliminary report, see Costa Fontes (1984a).

⁵When we returned in 1984, many had begun moving to other areas within the city as well as to surrounding communities such as Mississauga.

⁶On São Jorge the word "oravia" or "aravia" is preferred throughout most of the island, but in the village of Beira, where it means "joke" or "rubbish," there are people who simply refer to them as "histórias." The term "oravia" also appears on the island of Flores, but the word "trova" is much more common there. Throughout the Azores, ballads are also known as "décimas" and "casos," designations which are also used to identify the modern narrative poems transmitted by the so-called "literatura de cordel" (chapbooks). Although the ancient and standard word "romance" appears in some of the old ballads (cf. Costa Fontes 1983a:98, 102), it is no longer used with that meaning on the islands. With informants from Madeira and continental Portugal, we merely asked for old songs that told stories.

⁷Please note that, since this ballad and the ones that follow were transcribed from recordings as faithfully as I could, grammatical errors and inconsistencies on the part of the informants were not corrected.

⁸Although Rio de Onor is half Portuguese and half Spanish, it really constitutes a single village, for the inhabitants choose to ignore the border. Since there is a great deal of intermarriage, there are Portuguese who inherit property in Spain and vice versa. When we were trying to conduct interviews in the small country store ("yenta") on the Spanish side, eighty-one-year-old Caetana Fernández López, upon discovering that we were Portuguese, insisted on speaking to us in our own language, for she had learned it from her mother. Someone said that at one time a Portuguese officer tried to separate the two halves of the village by blocking the main road with a chain along the border, but the inhabitants simply pretended that there was another road

next to it. There is an important monograph about this village (Dias 1981).

⁹Term used to designate settlers from the former colonies who saw themselves forced to return to Portugal after their hasty, poorly planned independence.

¹⁰Portuguese provinces are divided into districts which are subdivided into “concelhos.” The closest English translation is “county.”

¹¹I interviewed 15 informants from that province in New England, and Pere Ferré and his team were able to collect over 300 ballads in Beira Alta and Beira Baixa in 1985 (personal communication from Pere Ferré of May 8, 1985).

¹²She recited *Gerineldo* (TM no. 636) and a variant of *O Velho Viúvo + A Fonte Clara* (TM no. 1070), but, although she tried very hard, she was unable to remember her version of the rare *Perseguição de Bucar pelo Cid*. Fortunately, she recorded it for Dias Marques (4:533-34) two years later (1982). This, together with the splendid results obtained by Pere Ferré and his team in the two Beiras, shows how important persistence is to successful fieldwork.

¹³I have already studied a selection of these prayers in “Crypto-Jewish Prayers from Rebordelo,” a paper read at the 39th annual meeting of the Rocky Mountain Language Association, Provo, Utah, October, 1985. The final version of this paper, entitled “Four Portuguese Crypto-Jewish Prayers and their ‘Inquisitorial’ Counterparts,” will be submitted to the *Mediterranean Language Review*. The other seven prayers we recorded will be presented in a separate article.

¹⁴Although Braga presents this ballad as if he had two different variants, the second of which is reported to be from two islands (!), they practically repeat each other word for word (Braga 1906-09:2:249 [Pico]; Braga 1911-13:2:56-57 [Flores and Corvo]). According to Pere Ferré (personal communication), who has investigated Braga’s sources in detail, he merely published the same version twice.

¹⁵The hero is not specifically named in the Azorean rendition, but his name appears in the ancient and in the Sephardic traditions (see Armistead 1978:1:82).