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ABSTRACT
                Portuguese immigrants in America and Canada have
certain institutions in their traditional socio-culture which are
considered to act as preadaptive mechanisms in the migrant's
settling-in process. This paper discusses one locale which has a
large proportion of recent Portuguese immigrants, and emphasizes how
women, in particular, are important in the formation of new networks,
through the utilization of a well-known Portuguese technique of
"making a cunha." The data are stated to suggest that in the
migration process women are significant in the formation of both
general and optative-set networks. The study is said to raise a
number of questions such as: (1) whether there is bias in the data
which minimizes the female role in network formation; (2) whether
women play more important factorial roles during periods of
instability and/or rapid cultural change; (3) how institutionally
significant the cunha process is cross-culturally; and, (4) how the
cunha process relates to patronage. (Author/AM)

Networks and migration resettlement: Cherchez la Femme.

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The process of migrating, whether from rural to urban within the same political unit, or from national unit to national unit, requires one crucial mechanism in order to make that move seem even minimally successful. One must establish a new network of relationships with those in the strange environment. Without such a network one is isolated from important information concerning job potentials, economic factors, housing, public services, and a myriad of other daily necessities. Because the situation is strange one seeks to minimize the foreignness; indeed, the more foreign the situation the more frightening and difficult it is to establish a slot for oneself, or a comfortable pattern of familiarity. This, fundamentally, is the reason for ethnic enclaves. Whether we speak of British compounds in India, U.S. military posts in Germany, or Puerto Rican barrios in New York City, the phenomenon of defensive clustering against that surrounding macro-system which is so difficult to handle shows certain cross-cultural, cross-class similarities.

Portuguese immigrants in America and Canada have certain institutions in their traditional socioculture which act as preadaptive mechanisms in this 'settling-in' process. This paper will briefly discuss one locale which has a large proportion on recent Portuguese immigrants and will emphasize how women in particular are important in the formation of new networks, through the utilization of a well-known Portuguese technique of 'making a cunha.' 2

For many of the Portuguese immigrants in southern New
England the business of establishing themselves in their
new home can be summed up in the phrase, 'It's not what you
know--it's who you know'; and, one might add, '...who knows
you.' Theoretically, one cannot immigrate without a very
long wait and great difficulty unless one has kin in the
country. In reality, the loopholes in the immigration laws
are easily employed to make it possible for most people to
leave Portugal and emigrate to the United States whenever
they wish. Thus, although one would expect that current law
makes it standard that one is received by primary family upon
arrival in America this is not the case; it is just as strange
for many now as it was in the pre-World War I days. Immigrants
demonstrate that the process of forming new networks begins in
the pre-emigration period. In order to be accepted by the U.S.
Government you must have at least a paper 'sponsor.' Getting
such a sponsor, having a job waiting, knowing that there is
at least a temporary bed--or an apartment all furnished and
waiting--are all tasks which, ideally, should be performed before
you depart for the United States. The complicated business of
immigrating requires that a number of people be drawn into your
network. The less-fortunate are required to spend a great deal
of time and money dealing with the bureaucracy; those who have
the money, but not the contacts, must resort to 'travel agencies'
--firms which have subsidiary 'bureaus' connected with them which
assist in the migration process--at home and abroad--and for
a substantial fee, needless to say!

The Portuguese who arrive in 'Texton'--a city of some 90,000--soon find out it is not only who you know and who knows you but, equally important, what those you know, know and how much of it you can learn.

It's at this point that women are seen to play a very significant role in the formation of new networks. As Bott (1971, passim) has discussed, an individual's General Network consists of a broad range of individuals--kin, intimate friends, casual acquaintances and (even more importantly on occasion) people who are not directly in contact with Ego but are known to him or are friends of his friends and kin. Against this background of the General Network--a field so broad that even if an individual could list everyone in it the result would be scientifically trivial--is a host of mini-networks, what Gutkind (1969:400) and Aronson (1970:261) have called optative-set networks. These are networks designed to meet Ego's individual needs and demands in varying situations. So, for example, if Ego wishes to get a better-paying and/or more prestigious job he will get in touch with a variety of people and that group then constitutes an optative set at that point in time.

For the Portuguese of Texton, women are important as facilitative and articulatory agents in optative-set network formation. A facilitative agent is an individual who actively participates in the creation and maintenance of a relationship between Ego and another individual. Such a nexus would be the basis of an introduction, the medium of information trans-mission, or the means by which initial contacts would be

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strengthened and solidified. An articulatpry agent, on the
other hand, may never be explicitly involved in a dyadic
relationship but will serve as a point of commonality, of
familiarity--as the basis for two individuals to establish
a speaking relationship. It must be emphasized that these
agents are not 'gatekeepers' or 'brokers' but, rather, serve
as social nodes.

As such agents, the chores which the Portuguese women
of Texton perform are, from one perspective, trivial. Yet,
like so many 'trivialities' the cumulative effect is great.
Women are used to perform such necessary tasks as doing much
of.the paper work required by the U.S. Immigration Service
prior to the immigrant's arrival; meeting the immigrant upon
arrival; arranging housing; inviting people over to meet
them and offering refreshments (a task which can involve
a considerable expenditure of time and money!); getting the
loan of furniture; giving 'inside information about the best
places to shop for what; registering the children in school
and/or the family in the parish church; helping to obtain
social security cards, getting the utilities connected, ex-
plaining the public transit system. Once a job is obtained,
a house_is rented, a child is enrolled in s 'ool, it is usually
the female network of Ego which transmits informal information
about the idiosyncracies of the boss, the foreman, the landlord.
One must learn how much work to do; joining a union--and which
one to join--is also something which must be learned. The list
is endless.

Immigration is difficult under the best of circumstances; women are relied upon to provide the information which eases the way, directly and indirectly. Though males deride 'women talk'--gossip, as they often call it--it is this same gossip which tells where jobs are available, what shops to avoid, what norms should be maintained and what new patterns one should learn if one is to avoid the stigma of 'Greenie' (i.e., a new-comer, a foreigner, 'a dumb hick').

Research shows that, at the explicit level of awareness there is far less recognition of the significance of female agents than, in fact, exists. It is so submerged that even Anderson (1974, passim) overlooked it in her analysis of Portuguese immigrants in Toronto. It is not unusual, however, for the following pattern to emerge: Mrs. Pereira tells various women whom she knows that her husband doesn't like his job (or that he thinks he may be laid off); the friends and kin pass this message on to their friends and kin; word ultimately comes back to Mrs. Pereira of a job here or there; she then tells her husband that she hears there are openings at X-factory; 'Maybe you should give Joe Gomes a call--tell him that Pete Alves said he heard there might be an opening at his place.' When Mr. Pereira calls Joe Gomes he does not mention the entire information network, merely the contact of Pete Alves. And he has never met Pete Alves!

This process is not innovative to the immigrant setting. It is, in fact, identical to the process of "making a cunha' (literally, 'a wedge, a plug--cf., American colloquialism 'put in a plug for me with X'). Though the word differs, the con-

cept is ubiquitous throughout the Mediterranean--and perhaps
even more broadly (as witness its pervasiveness in American
society). In those areas where cunha occurs it seems to be
in complementary distribution with the counter instition of
patronage. To have a cunha is to have a contact; one knows
someone. There is no implication as to the degree of intimacy
involved. It simply means that at a particular time, in a
particular place, a particular someone is available who is
suitable for giving Ego a particular type of assistance in
a particular way.

Patronage, on the other hand, is a dyadic relationship
between a superordinate and subordinate; it is essentially a
permanent, long-term relationship of inequality. One has a
patron only after one has carefully laid the groundwork which
will permit the patron to be approached. Once the relationship
is established one seeks to obtain another such relationship at
the peril of alienating and losing the first patron.

In the formation of optative-set networks the institution
of the cunha is maximized. Certainly, as an immigrant, one's
effectiveness at manipulating the new environment is often
based on how well, when the need arises, one can select from
one's bag of friends and kin, one's General Network, the appro-
priate person to use as a contact. For the Portuguese a cunha
serves as a wedge whereby the wall surrounding the in-group
can be broken open. The person who makes the cunha, and Ego,
stand in an egalitarian relationship to each other; the former
is not richer, more highly ranked, or more powerful. He simply
knows someone.

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In Texton, women have a more extensive General Network
than do men: (1) They are more knowledgeable about, and con-
tact more often, those people in the extended kin network.
(2) They are active church goers and see church attendance as
a place to renew social contacts. (3) When employed they
usually work in the garment industry where, in large, open
rooms around huge cutting tables, gossip helps lighten the
day's drudgery. (4) When not employed, the traditional norm
of staying close to home leads them to make extensive use of
the telephone to chat with friends. (5) It is more tradi-
tionally permissible for women to be fearful of the future,
to express the need to be prepared for failure--thus they
can be more open about wanting to know this or that person,
to find out some bit of information, than can a male. Though
females slightly outnumbered males in my own network (85 of
the former and 72 of the latter) the number of case studies
in which an individual made a cunha revealed that, in 41 situ-
ations, 37 of the contacts were women. Even more intriguing,
26 of the individuals reporting the process did not specifically
use the word cunha--and 9 of them, when asked if they would con-
sider their case an example of 'having made a cunha' said they
didn't know the word. Yet those who were familiar with the
phrase acknowledge that those examples selected were, indeed,
representative of 'making a cunha'; more than one justifying
the ignorance of their neighbors by suggesting that, 'Maybe
these people lived too far out in the country and never learned
the word.'

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There is one class of situation which informants never
categorized as making *a cuñha* but which, analytically, accounts
for the presence of what I am calling 'articulatory agents.'
In 18 of the 37 cases informants reported that jobs were ob-
tained through the good offices of another male whom they
knew: 'George Rezendes got me the job when I first got here,'
'My cousin told me to come down and he spoke to the boss about
me.' Further probing usually revealed that George Rezendes
was Ego's father-in-law--a point which was, apparently, unim-
portant in Ego's perception of the event! Or, again, the
'cousin' was a cousin by marriage--i.e.; two males became
cousins when a woman, standing in that relationship to one
male, married. In these cases the woman was crucial in the
establishment of the relationship between two males but her
structural utility was ignored once it had served the initiatory
function for the dyad. Some men even acted very surprised when
I pointed out the relationship to them: 'I guess you're right;
I never thought about that but now that you mention it I think
we did get started talking because of that.'

In sum, my data (see also a very interesting study by
Riegelhaupt 1967:120-4) suggest that, in the migration process
generally, women are significant in the formation of both
General and optative-set networks. The data on this subject
are relatively sparse; women's roles, generally, have been
minimized and the emphasis has been on male activities. We
are all familiar with the classic picture of the male leading
a covered wagon while the woman sits passively holding her child.

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This is, I think, not the result of some male conspiracy--as some of my more militant feminist colleagues would have it-- but simply due to the fact that there have been more male anthropologists--and most groups are hostile to strange men 'hanging around the womenfolk'. If nothing else, the males may question the field worker's own 'masculinity' if he spends too much time with the women. Whatever the reason, however, one has only to look at the basic literature on kinship to realize how male-oriented have been our analyses. Thus, it is difficult to find cross-culturally substantiating data for the argument that females play an extremely active role in the emigration/immigration procedure. They do, in fact, play an important role in the entire network formation process. It is simply that the data have been ignored. Colin Bell, for example, ignores the potential of his own data in studying middle-class families in Swansea. He found that, 'over and over again where there had been aid from the extended family the important structural link between members...was the father-in-law/father-son/son-in-law link'(1968:91). The stylistic implication is that males dominate the linkage system. Yet, presumably, father-in-law is wife's father, and son-in-law is daughter's husband and thus 2 of the 4 linkages are actually through females.

Willmott and Young (1960) were 'surprised' when studying the middle-class of Woodford, to find 'a female core' to the kinship system.

Finally, Bott (1971:135) in discussing the Newbolts, a

British working-class family, comments that:

> In the Newbolt's network of relatives there was
> a nucleus of women consisting of Mrs. Newbolt's ma-
> ternal grandmother and several of the grandmother's
> daughters.....It was these women who organized the large
> gatherings of kin at weddings, funerals, christenings,
> and so on. It was usually these women who persuaded
> male relatives to help one another get jobs, and it was
> the women who did most of the visiting and small acts
> of mutual aid. This nucleus of female kin was so
> close-knit and so well-integrated that it should per-
> haps be considered an organized group rather than a
> network.'

One might infer that Bott is suggesting that we redefine 'kin-
dred' to signify 'a group of males and females with a common
optative focus, extending out from Ego by means of female
relationships, set relationships being selected or ignored
according to the exploitive focus of the bonding males.'

This discussion has demonstrated how, in the attempts by
immigrants to cope with their new environment, females play an
important but hitherto obscured role. As is usually the case
the study has raised a number of questions: Has there been a
bias in our data which minimizes the female role in network
formation? Is the Texton study skewed to reveal the female
emphasis because, in the immigration process, women become,
temporarily, more visible and/or important? Do women play
more important factorial roles during periods of instability
and/or rapid cultural change? How institutionally significant
is the <u>cunha</u> process cross-culturally--and in relation to patronage?

In generating these more significant questions this particular
study has achieved its modest goal of calling attention to a
hitherto neglected area of ethnographic research.

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