

A note from the author

I was asked permission to have this paper included in this website. I hesitated for good reasons. This is a paper written in the late 1970's almost as a guideline for workshops I gave to teachers in New England and California dealing with Azorean immigrant students in bilingual programs. It aimed at addressing some common questions from those who were trying to understand the cultural background of the students.

Even though I tried not to generalize, some generalizations were unavoidable. In any event, much has changed in the Azores since the 1974 revolution that took shook up Portugal. The islands have opened up to the world, and people who return there, after decades in Canada or the United States, often can hardly believe how much life conditions have improved, how modernized the infrastructures are. This is not to say that the culture has changed radically, but simply to underline the fact that this paper now can only serve as background for part of the story - to help understanding, in rough strokes, how the Azores came to be what they were in the 1970's.

In the last decades, the history of the Azores has been studied in depth and there are many publications in the fields of sociology, anthropology, economics as well as other social sciences with a wealth of information on the many facets of Azorean history, life and culture. Unfortunately very few of them are available in English and that is why I bowed to the persistent request of letting an outdated piece such as this be included here.

#