

THE ARTICULATION OF AZOREAN INSULARITY IN THE EARLY 1990S AS A STRATEGIC SOURCE OF POWER WITHIN THE EUROPEAN UNION'S AGRICULTURAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

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Summary: This article analyses the deployment of Azorean identity and insularity in the early 1990s as a source of power within the European Economic Union (EEC) to negotiate highly exceptional measures within the EEC's Common Agricultural Policy program (CAP). First, building on Bourdieu's theoretical concept of *doxa* (1977; 1990) the article shows that the notion of Azorean identity is the result of guided action by an intellectual group that put together a series of 'fragments' which, once combined, appear to constitute an actual ontological condition. These include a narrative of five centuries of isolation, volcanism, economic dependency and emigration; studies on presumed Azorean 'personality traits'; folklore studies; objectified presentations of local literature etc. In this context it reveals a long term pattern whereby these premises have become a general means of doxic orientation (cf. BOURDIEU, 1977; 1990). Supporting this argument the article refers to the existence of previous articulations of Azorean identity for the purpose of justifying the status of political autonomy for the archipelago in 1976. Moreover, a brief overview of some Azorean politicians' understandings of the concept will be shown as further support to the contention that Azorean identity constitutes a general means of orientation. Nevertheless, it be argued that Azorean *doxa* is a general means of orientation that does not predetermine the actions of Azorean politicians, but rather guides them in view of ever changing contingencies and historical dynamics. The final section of the article details the actual processes whereby Azorean identity and insularity were deployed as a source of power within the EEC's agricultural policy sector (CAP). It will be show that in this context Azorean politicians presented the archipelago as an abject periphery, while also arguing however, that in order for the EEC to ever reach its goal to be a full fledged European Union (as eventually it did) it would have to provide the Azores, the periphery's periphery, additional exemptions and financial support. In short, this article will demonstrate that the Azorean politicians of the time, co-opted to their advantage EEC's own hegemonic goal of becoming the European Union. In the process they maximized their strategic advantage by deploying a position of ultra-periphery which was informed by, and imbued in, *doxic* discourses of Azorean identity and insularity.

Neves, K. (2012), A formulação da identidade Açoriana no começo dos anos 90 como recurso estratégico do poder no quadro da política agrícola da União Europeia. *Boletim do Núcleo Cultural da Horta*, 21: 87-110.

Sumário: O presente artigo faz a análise da utilização da identidade Açoriana e da insularidade no começo dos anos 90 como fonte de poder no âmbito da União Económica Europeia (EEC) como meio de negociação de medidas excepcionais no quadro do programa da Política Agrícola Comum da EEC (CAP). Em primeiro lugar, com fundamento no conceito de *doxa* teorizado por Bourdieu (1977; 1990), o artigo mostra que a noção de identidade açoriana resulta de uma acção orientada por um grupo de intelectuais que, reuniu um conjunto de elementos avulsos os quais, uma vez associados, parece revelarem uma efectiva condição ontológica. Incluem o discurso de cinco séculos de isolamento; o vulcanismo, a dependência económica e a emigração, estudos sobre presumíveis traços caracterizadores da personalidade do açoriano; estudos sobre o folclore; apresentações concretas de literatura local, etc. Neste contexto revelam um padrão de longo prazo pelo que essas premissas se tornam, em geral, como meios de orientação *doxica* (cf. BOURDIEU 1977; 1990). Em abono deste argumento o artigo faz referência à existência de anteriores formulações da identidade açoriana com vista a justificar o estatuto de autonomia política para o arquipélago em 1976. Além disso, uma visão de conjunto sobre o entendimento de alguns políticos açorianos sobre o conceito, será apresentado como reforço da opinião de que a identidade açoriana constitui um meio de orientação geral. Não obstante isto, pode-se argumentar que a *doxa* açoriana é um meio de orientação geral que, à partida, não condiciona a acção dos políticos açorianos; antes os orienta face a constantes mutações e à dinâmica da história. A parte final do artigo pormenoriza o processo concreto da utilização da identidade e da insularidade açoriana como forma de exercício de poder no âmbito da política agrícola da EEC (CAP). Mostra-se que neste contexto os políticos açorianos apresentaram o arquipélago como sendo uma periferia muito pobre, embora argumentando ao mesmo tempo que, de modo a que a EEC possa vir a alcançar o seu objectivo de se tornar, em toda a extensão do termo, uma União Europeia (como se terá tornado), teria de proporcionar aos Açores, como periferia das periferias, isenções adicionais e apoio de carácter financeiro. Em suma, este artigo procura demonstrar que os políticos açorianos na época, assumiram em seu favor o próprio objectivo hegemónico da EEC em tornar-se a União Europeia. No processo maximizaram as vantagens estratégicas lançando mão da ultra-periferia inspirada e impregnada do discurso *doxico* da identidade e da insularidade açoriana.

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Palavras-chave: *Doxa*, *doxic*, identidade, insularidade, autonomia, periferia, Política Agrícola Comum, Açores, açoreanos, CEE.

INTRODUCTION

This article analyses the deployment of ‘objectified’ Azorean identity and insularity in the early 1990s as a strategic position of power to negotiate highly exceptional measures within the parameters of the European Union’s (EU)¹ Common Agricultural Policy program (CAP). The scholarly significance of this article is threefold. Firstly, it shows that the deployment of Azorean identity and insularity sprang from widely circulating notions of Portuguese-Azorean identity which became increasingly established as of the late 19th century. Secondly, it reveals that these notions of regional distinctiveness had already been used at earlier historical junctures to justify varying degrees of Azorean self-governance vis-à-vis the Portuguese central government. Thirdly, it contends that the EU’s constitutive logic of successive degrees of integration *itself* became the leverage point through which Azorean politicians articulated

notions of identity and insularity to the advantage of the regional government of the Azores². More specifically, data provided in this article illustrates that in its negotiations with Brussels the Azorean government continuously held the position that the EEC’s goal of becoming a fully integrated European Union was not feasible unless it were to meet the ‘the special needs of a region like the Azores marked by a singular economic history of insularity, an unique socio-cultural identity’. It further shows that this strategy resulted in the creation of POSEIMA, a special package of unique agricultural subsidies and exemptions for the Azores. In the final instance, this article contributes to theorization of the articulation of identity and insularity within one of the most solid hegemonic formations of the 20th century.

Building on Bourdieu’s theoretical concept of *doxa* (1977; 1990) the article shows that the notion of Azorean

¹ Formerly the European Economic Community. The European Union was instituted by The Treaty of Maastricht on the 1st of November 1993 (Treaty of Maastricht 1993), which furthered the degree of integration that had existed between member states of the European Economic Community since 1957 as per the EEC’s founding treaty (Treaty of Rome 1957). Since this

article’s analytical focus essentially covers the years between 1991 and 1994, and given the nature of its main argument, I will maintain a heuristic distinction between the EEC and the EU.

² At the time the Government of the Azores was Presided by Dr João Bosco de Mota Amaral. The Regional Secretary of Agriculture and Fisheries was Dr Adolfo Lima.

identity constitutes a form of reflexive agency whereby local intellectuals put together a series of ‘fragments’ which, once combined, *appeared* to constitute an actual ontological condition. These included a narrative of five centuries of isolation; volcanism, economic dependency and emigration; studies on presumed Azorean ‘personality traits’; folklore studies; and objectified presentations of local literature, amongst others. The article subsequently reveals the emergence of a pattern whereby these premises became a general means of orientation whereby these notions became the basis of a reoccurring articulation of insularity and identity to justify varying degrees of self-governance (in other words, a pattern whereby these orientations have become *doxic* cf. BOURDIEU, 1977; 1990). Supporting this argument, the article provides a brief overview of discourses justifying the political autonomy for the archipelago in 1976. Nevertheless, it will also be argued that although Azorean *doxa* is a general means of orientation, it does not predetermine the actions of Azorean

politicians. Rather, it guides them in view of ever changing contingencies and historical dynamics leaving great latitude for improvisation (BOURDIEU, 1990) and agency (NEVES, 1995).

The final section of the article details the actual processes whereby Azorean identity and insularity were deployed as a source of power within the EU’s agricultural policy sector (CAP). This section will demonstrate that in this context, the government of the Azores repeatedly warned the then EEC that if it were to ever reach its goal to becoming a full fledged European Union (it did in 1993) it would have to provide the Azores, the periphery’s periphery, with additional exemptions and financial support. In short, this article will demonstrate that the Azorean Government of the early 1990s, co-opted the EEC’s hegemonic goal of becoming a full fledged European Union to promote its own interests. In the process, the Azorean Government maximized its strategic advantage by deploying a position of ultra-periphery which was informed by, and imbued in, *doxic* discourses of identity and insularity.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

Culture is hardly seen as a set of traditional customs, a fixed constellation of values, world-view, or ethos, but rather as both the medium and

the outcome of practice (FLOWER, 2012; ORTNER, 1984; Kuper, 1992; 1994). Contemporary anthropologists studying culture are much more

oriented towards what Jolly and Thomas call “a burgeoning interest in the politics of tradition” (1992: 241). In effect, the notion of tradition has for long been under critical scrutiny, and is now understood as the interplay between “unconscious cultural inheritance” and “the self-proclamation of the past in the present” (*ibid.*). Studies of the role played by colonial encounters in the emergence of objectifications of culture have problematized primordialized notions of culture (*ibid.*; see also FOSTER, 1992). Anthropologists have also approached the theoretical and political problematic of using words such as “invention”, “real past/fictitious past” in accounts of tradition (BRUBAKER and COOPER, 2007; JOLLY and THOMAS, 1992: 242; LINNEKIN, 1992; FEINBERG, 1994). Finally, there has been a focus on the relationship between regional and national cultural forms (SHIAPPA, 2008; APPIAH, 2007; JOLLY and THOMAS, 1992: 243; KEESING, 1989; 1991; PHILIBERT, 1986; TRASK, 1991). Foster argues that at a more general level, accounting for cultural construction has prompted two major sets of considerations: first, anthropologists now approach “nations as cultural products, and... nationalism as a cultural process of identity formation” (1991: 235). This implies that anthropologists now look at the role of intellectuals and political

elites in the production/reproduction of dominant cultural forms thus making power a crucial issue in anthropological studies. Second, “ethnographers have begun to confront directly the interconnectedness of cultures” (*ibid.*, 236) and to analyze the processes through which global flows of culture become part and parcel of local structures of meaning (see also FREDRIK BARTH, 1989). In addition to these two issues, a current analytical challenge is how to account for the construction/objectification of cultures without falling into the trap of rendering culture either an inescapable fiction or a primordial ethos (Linnekin 1992; Eriksen 1993).

In this context, Foster (1991) has further stated that an issue frequently evoked in the analysis of the formation of collective identities is the process through which the existence of an identity shared by all becomes an a priori assumption, and its constructed reality becomes ‘forgotten’. Referring to the naturalization of the politics implicit in the creation of a specific order of things, Foster echoes a question many scholars ask when confronted with the constructed character of culture: “by what means ... is national culture rendered as an implicit taken-for-granted, shared national habitus?” (1991: 237). Foster calls for the analysis of the emergence of dominant cultural forms which

serve the interests of specific social groups (or classes). He therefore suggests a focus on the mechanisms of social reproduction, without neglecting institutional frameworks, in order to unveil the process through which statements about political orders of things assume the appearance of being separate from the interests of specific social groups.

According to him, the answer to the above question is to be found in “the site of multiple contests informed by a diversity of historically specific actions and intentions.” (1991: 235); indeed, as Foster reveals in “Making National Cultures in the Global Ecumene” (1991), the role of social agents in the construction of culture (as well as in the objectification of identity) must be explored in specific historical contexts (see also John and Jean Comaroff 1992). Scholars must problematize the study of cultural construction by exploring the processes that lead to the emergence of collective imaginings as pervasive cultural forms. This entails pursuing historical overviews in order to witness the naturalization of dominant meanings and practices which, in turn, become guidelines for future action. Second, anthropologists must take into consideration the apparatuses of power such as, for example, the state, the educational systems, the media, or the family, through which

dominant cultural forms, and inherent orders of things, are simultaneously reproduced and transformed. In the final instance, the goal is to account for intentional objectifications (as well as transformations) of culture or collective identities in specific contexts of relations of power. In doing so, the goal is to detect agency in the interplay between taken-for-granted imaginings and their intentional, as well as strategic, articulation within networks of power relations.

The materials analyzed below reveal the emergence of a taken-for-granted shared identity which is then articulated within the context of the various institutional relations that occur between the Azores and the Portuguese government, and subsequently within the EEC. They also show subtle transformations between different social actors (e.g. historians, novelists, politicians, etc.), and through time. Given these considerations, the data on Azorean identity must be organized in a way that simultaneously highlights the emergence of pervasive forms of collective identity and for the role of agency within that context.

Extrapolating from the theorization of national identities by Anderson (1991), it is important to remember that ‘communities’ are not unproblematic, primordial givens, held together by an immutable culture,

but rather processes in which arbitrariness has been (and is) naturalized. In this sense, communities are simultaneously the outcome of interplay between series of events which take place in many different periods and localities, as well as the outcome of occasional conscious action on the part of known agents or institutions – though their actions often have unexpected and unintended consequences. Communities are thus simultaneously the outcome of shared experience, imagined aspirations, manipulative intentions, political discourse, and contingency.

From this perspective, then, a crucial element in the conceptualization of collective identities is the antiquity of their roots and how different social actors appropriate them (PANI, 2011; HUNTINGTON, 2004; ANDERSON, 1991; HOBBSAWM and HANDLER, 1992; HANDLER, 1988). Indeed, continuity with the past has frequently been invoked by ruling elites in order to justify and legitimize current *status quo* (or order of things as Foucault (1966) would have it). Thus, for example, the Nation is thought to be the natural result of centuries of distinct identity formation, and the state its natural political counterpart. Similarly, discontinuities or even ruptures with the past are frequently detectable at the outset of revolutions, within which newly acclaimed rulers

position themselves in contrast to the overthrown political system. Giddens has contributed to a better understanding of the role played by tradition in social reproduction (1979: 200-222). To be sure, he points that when tradition is invoked, current practices are often presented as the repetition of century old practices even when they are relatively new inventions in order to acquire unquestionable legitimacy. As a collective, theorists provide a synthetic analytical model to explore the construction/objectification of Azorean identity. First, they draw attention to the processes whereby notions of community and/or shared identity emerge to begin with, and how they eventually acquire the appearance of possessing a fixed and concrete ontological status shared by all (in Anderson's terms: how is it that Nations – or a region in this case – emerge as 'an imagined community'). Second, they justify a focus on how constructed notions of identity are subsequently articulated in the contingency of specific historical contexts.

Before proceeding, it is important to note that it is not possible to trace the invention of shared identity to a single specific agent, once the arbitrariness of the production of identity has been naturalized and the existence of a shared identity taken as an assump-

tion. It is, however, possible to take into account the historical contexts in which such developments occurred

and analyze some of the processes involved in the articulation/objectification of collective identity.

AZOREAN INSULARITY AND IDENTITY:
FROM TELURISM TO DOXA TO DOXIC ORIENTATION

I now turn to the analysis of Azorean identity, which is embedded in wider notions of identity from the Portuguese mainland (NEVES, 1995). Vitorino Nemésio, Azorean poet and scholar, is most commonly cited as a central reference, having captured the ‘essence’ of Azorean identity in 1933, “... the concept of Azorean identity in order to express the specific way that insularity makes the Azores a territory with unique physical and human characteristics, put together by Nature...” (PEREIRA DA ROSA and SALVATO TRIGO, 1990: 13; REIS LEITE, 1990: 12-13). Indeed, insularity occupies a central position in Nemésio’s writings. Many of his poems describe life in the Azores as deeply marked by the sea’s presence; it is a sea that brings anguish to Azoreans by turning them into prisoners on the islands, but one that is also a source of hope (a link with other places), as well as of reflection. It is important to point out, however, that Nemésio’s insularity is not only physical (islands surrounded by water), it also represents the “...conditioning factor of the islands’ existence [as

inhabited by Azoreans]” (Nemésio cited in FERRAZ DA ROSA, 1984). Nemésio’s insularity has, therefore, been understood as essentially ontological (TEOTÓNIO DE ALMEIDA, 1990: 89-105; CORREIA, 1989).

In fact, Nemésio’s work has been put in the context of a philosophical quest, one of a highly educated scholar who was well acquainted with the work of modern philosophers. Consequently, it is not surprising to see Nemésio’s own work interpreted within the framework of Heidegger (FERRAZ DA ROSA, 1984), Bachelard, and Jung (CECHIN, 1983). Nemésio himself develops Heideggerian philosophical reflection in *O Verbo e a Morte* (The Verb and Death) and, more particularly, in the poem *Casa do Ser* (The Being’s House). The significance of this link between Nemésio, Heidegger, and Bachelard is that subsequent authors may then see literature on insularity as referring to more than a physical reality. By linking Nemésio with Jung, it is also possible to talk of an Azorean collective unconscious shared by all Azoreans, one revealed only through

Nemésio (CECHIN, 1983). For many, Nemesian poems are not merely the manifestation of an artist's creativity: they reflect the Azorean soul.

It may be further argued that Azorean identity is conceived today, perhaps below the level of awareness, in terms of a psycho-ontological status. Pereira da Rosa and Salvato Trigo, for example, suggest that:

[i]nsularity may be considered in, at least, two different dimensions: a geographical one, and a psychological one. In this work, we will use the concept of insularity when referring to the geographical dimension, and the concept of Azorean identity when referring to the psychological dimension [of insularity] (1990: 14).

Silva Ribeiro, in turn, begins his essay *Contribution for an Essay on Azorean Identity* with the following essentialist question:

... what is there in the nature of the Azorean people that may be justly attributed to the effects of the environment; what are the transformations that the environment inflicted on the soul of the Portuguese that in the mid fifteenth century populated the archipelago? (1989: 25).

To answer this question, the author uses the notion of telurism, introduced by Nemésio. Indeed, this reveals Nemésio's belief in assumptions widely circulated in continental Europe (at the time very prominent in Germany under Hegel's influence)

regarding geography's impact upon the character of a people: derived from the Latin word *telluseris*, telurism was also frequently invoked in Romantic 19th century literature in order to explain the particularizing effects that nature has on a people's state of philosophical advancement. In the specific case of the Azores, telurism refers to the sea's presence, the islands' volcanic activity, and sub-tropical storms (PEREIRA DA ROSA and SALVATO TRIGO, 1990; SILVA RIBEIRO, 1989), factors which are said to have accompanied Azoreans throughout five centuries and left an imprint on the Azorean soul. In the final instance, telurism, is perceived as the cause for the development of an Azorean ontological dimension.

Azorean identity goes so far as including a religious dimension which is constructed through several steps. First, the Azores are seen as composed of several semi-metaphorical spaces which coincide with distinct levels of sanctity ranging from a burning sulfurous hell (fumes that are constantly released from semi-active volcanoes) to heaven or paradise (the islands' beautiful lagoons). A Nemesian text reads:

[i]n such frame, lukewarm, and with constant shifting gray tonalities, under seldom clear skies where, nonetheless, sudden bursts of blue gain whitish tones with dreamlike qualities, it is easy to con-

ceive the Dantesquian image of *Furnas*, but that of a Dante who rested from hell in Paradise's picture; that of *Sete Cidades* (1989: 21).

A second step towards the construction of the religious dimension of Azorean identity involves the development of a particular form of religion, *Devoção ao Espírito Santo*, or the Devotion to the Holy Ghost, a mix of Roman Catholicism and animism. Nemésio (1989), Pereira da Rosa and Salvato Trigo (*ibid.*) and Silva Ribeiro (1989) suggest that the development of this particular form of religion in the Azores arises from telurism. The *Devoção* began as an attempt to overcome natural events, as suggested in many accounts of religious processions during particularly violent volcanic eruptions (see for example MARCELINO LIMA, 1940: 627-641). Hence, implicit in the *Devoção* is a view of nature as God's manifestation. Pereira da Rosa and Salvato Trigo suggest: "...this notion of God's natural dimension, which is to say, the notion of His manifestation in the concrete, palpable... gives Azoreans peculiar characteristics..." (1990: 15).

As discussed above, Nemésio's poems have been taken as either the expression of an ontological dimension or as the speaking-out of the Azorean collective unconscious. As such, the revealing of Azorean identity is the

domain of poets and scholars: the poet is the mediator, the only one who has means to reach the Azorean soul. Access to the sources of Azorean identity is, therefore, limited to very few people and almost verges on the domain of what anthropologists would refer to as the "sacred". Consequently, the arbitrariness involved in deciding which aspects to privilege when determining Azorean identity is rendered invisible: Azorean identity is, thereby, naturalized and its existence perceived at the level of common sense. In this context, Yanagisako and Delaney's synthesizing work on the naturalizing effects of origin narratives is a worth a mention. They write:

[t]he meaning of the sacred can only be revealed by those with cultural authority to interpret it. If the sacred is open to divergent readings by people who bring with them ideas associated with human social life, the claim that it is "God-given" is undermined (1995: 13).

Expanding on this, it may be suggested that Azorean identity, constructed as a sacred domain, becomes a truth that "...supposedly transcends human agency" (1995: 13). Such a truth is "...only *discovered* by humans" (*ibid.*). Moreover,

[t]he claim that [identity] is separate from culture naturalizes a hierarchy of knowledge, much as does the claim that religion

is separate from culture. It entails a prohibition against reading across the boundaries of the sacred whose truths are said to exist apart from human subjectivity or agency (*ibid.*).

In the final instance, the above described portrait of Azorean identity conceived by poets is taken by many as ontological truth, and its existence, from then on, is taken for granted. In such instances it becomes an *a priori* assumption that Azorean identity is ready to be invoked, objectified, and to be used in the context of articulations of power that occur between the Azores and external forces.

One of the most important contexts of directly invoking Azorean identity as a mode of strategic positioning was the endorsement by Portugal's central government of the sociocultural and geographic specificity of Azoreans, which led them to granting political autonomy to the archipelago. The process leading to autonomy, however, unfolded throughout a long period of time and frequently required Azoreans to make concessions of their own. It was a process of continuous adjustment between Azorean aspirations of autonomy and the centralism of Portuguese government. Most importantly, it was a process within which Azoreans found themselves thinking about who they were and what was their position in the world (ALAMO OLIVEIRA, 1987; ENES, 1987; LOURENÇO, 1987).

The administrative system through which the archipelago was ruled from a distance explains, at least in part, the rise of an autonomist movement in the Azores. Azorean islands, "colonized", through the donatory system, were ruled and administered for nearly five hundred years from the mainland through representatives at the island level. During this same time period, there were many attempts to find a better form of governance for the islands. For example, as described in Marcelino Lima (1940: 49-98), Faial-island was successively governed by donatarian captains; *capitães-mor*, picked from among the nobles and who were frequently despots (70); *juizes de fora*, who were mayors nominated from among the most knowledgeable citizens and, according to Marcelino Lima, often governed as tyrants (1940: 83); and, also *corregedores*. This list of systems of rule through which Faial was administered is also mentioned in Carreiro da Costa's work in which he refers to the whole archipelago (1978: 115-125). Both authors remark that frequently, even the local level administrators were more interested in increasing their own wealth than in improving the local people's life.

Moreover, throughout these nearly five centuries of Azorean history, the administration of the archipelago coexisted with – and was in fact tied

to – a system in many ways similar to European feudalism. This reality lasted in the Azores until the end of the 19th century and, allied with the poverty in which the majority of Azorean people found themselves, propelled the first movements towards autonomy. However, the concept of autonomy, at least as it refers to the Azorean political project, is hard to define and pin-point: not only because there are still today different positions on Azorean autonomy, but also because the concept has changed considerably throughout the last century. In order to clarify the different meanings of Azorean autonomy, a brief historical overview of the concept is required.

Notwithstanding the difficulty, if not impossibility, of determining the precise origins of Azorean autonomy, there is a set of events which are contemporary to the early proposals for a new status for the administration of the islands (1892-1895). These events ranged from occurrences in the world system (the independence of the United States and its impact in Europe), to occurrences in each of the Azorean islands. However, space only permits to mention some events which are directly linked to the emergence of the Azorean autonomist movement.

The first movement in favor of Azorean autonomy emerged at a time

when the political atmosphere on the mainland was deeply marked by liberalism and anti-monarchic movements. In this context, among other events, one must take into consideration what Hermano Saraiva describes as “the echo from the [1870 decade’s socialist indoctrination” of the Portuguese people (1993: 470); there were also protests against the king in 1890, propelled by the literate population which had increasingly more access to news, after 1865, when newspapers began to be able to support themselves by publishing advertisements (480); another important event was the proclamation of the Republic of Brazil, in 1889 (470-71); also, at the end of the century, there were several rebellions in the Portuguese colonies in Africa; finally, the anti-monarchic movements culminated with the end of the Portuguese monarchy and the proclamation of the Portuguese Republic in 1910 (HERMANO SARAIVA, 1993: 489-503).

In the meantime, the events and ideas described above reached the Azores. Indeed, some Azoreans studied at the Portuguese University at Coimbra, where they became knowledgeable about contemporary European currents of thought; the Azorean Manuel José de Arriaga, the first president of Portugal’s Republic proclaimed with the fall of the Portuguese monarchy

(MARCELINO LIMA, 1940: 367-368), is a good example of this. Another example is Aristides Moreira da Mota who wrote one of the earliest and still influential proposals regarding the attribution of an autonomous status for the Azores. He too was, as will be shown below, deeply influenced by the pro-liberal movements that were present in Portugal in the late 19th century (CARLOS CORDEIRO, 1989; MOREIRA DA MOTA, 1882). In addition, the majority of the Azorean population was subjected to poverty in the late eighteen-hundreds which, in spite of the administrative changes that had been introduced by Mouzinho da Silveira (MARCELINO LIMA, 1940: 23; CARREIRO DA COSTA, 1978: 126), was further exacerbated by the administrative system through which the islands were ruled. Consequently, it was at the juncture of a need to improve the living conditions in the islands, news of rebellions and even independence in some of the Portuguese colonies, and liberal dispositions that were imported from the mainland to the archipelago, that “a movement extraordinarily interesting, which is called Autonomy, appeared in S. Miguel, initiated in 1882 by Aristides Moreira da Mota, intensified in the following years until, in the second day of March 1895 a decree granting Autonomy to the archipelago was promulgated.”

(CARREIRO DA COSTA, 1978: 126). Since the notion of Azorean autonomy first began to emerge in the 19th century, during the Courts’ meetings of 1820, there have been three different ways of conceptualizing it (REIS LEITE, 1987; 1990). Because the third position discussed below has had the determining influence on the current dominant views of Azorean autonomy, it deserves closer attention and so the other two positions will only be mentioned. The first position, which dominated throughout most of the last three quarters of the 19th century, and which was approved by the Courts in 1822, contended that political power in the Azores should be fragmented; consequently, it was proposed that the archipelago be divided into three districts, each of which would be governed from the district’s capital (REIS LEITE, 1990; CARREIRO DA COSTA, 1978). The administration of the Azores thus followed a model that was effective for the Portuguese mainland, which, Reis Leite argues, was a decision that neglected the specificity of the Azores (1990: 24). Another position, one that continues to have some adherents today, was in favor of the creation of an independent Azorean state and appealed to “Azorean pride and liberty” in order to attain its goals (REIS LEITE, 1990: 23). The third position contended that the Azores should be kept under one

singular decentralized form of government and that it should have political autonomy (*ibid.*).

The third position mentioned above, which is very close to the current view of Azorean autonomy, was later crystallized into a proposal presented by Moreira da Mota in 1882. In his proposal, Azorean specificity was directly invoked as an argument for political autonomy. Moreira da Mota's document, however, was original in adding for the first time a social and cultural dimension to the description of the archipelago's geographic specificity. In this sense, Moreira da Mota saw Azorean specificity as having derived not only from what was later to be called *telurism* (the impact that geographical elements had on the Portuguese who settled in the islands), but also, and very importantly, as deriving from the extensive contact that Azoreans had throughout five centuries with many other peoples and cultures, either because of living in mid Atlantic ports, or because of emigration movements. Moreira da Mota argues that this contact with the outside left Azoreans with "traditions expressed in moral and material aspects of life, [and] distinct individual and collective consciousness [emphasis added]" which are "slightly different from those of the Portuguese mainland's population" (MOREIRA DA MOTA, 1892: 15).

Despite this commentary on Azorean identity, the 1882 proposal constructs the argument in favor of Azorean autonomy as a matter of rationalizing the administration of the islands; hence, Moreira da Mota argues that while in the mainland, due essentially to the availability of efficient means of transportation and communication, a central organization of administrative affairs is justifiable, this is impaired by distance in the Azorean case (*ibid.*, 16). Using this argument, Moreira da Mota contends that the Azores should manage their own administrative affairs, including finance (treasury). In a critical passage of the preface to his constitutional proposal, he further suggests that only under such conditions will Azoreans:

"once more find motivation to love the [Portuguese] motherland, to whom they dedicate their holy love, and for whom they have made enormous sacrifices during the most critical of our [Portuguese] history, guarding, at the cost of their property and their blood, national independence (1882: *ibid.*)".

Moreira da Mota presented his claims in favor of Azorean autonomy as being needed for the greater good of the Portuguese Nation; this perspective must be taken as a manifestation of Moreira da Mota's markedly liberal orientation, in the context of which the issue of administrative rationality was seen as inextricably

linked to issues of citizenship. Hence, in addition to arguing that political autonomy would serve the purpose of allowing for the *in loco* administration of the islands, which for him meant better administration, Moreira da Mota presented his proposal as having strong potential for counteracting Azorean aspirations of pro-independence (or even pro-annexation by the United States), aspirations that Moreira da Mota thought existed because of the extreme poverty to which many Azoreans were subjected (CORDEIRO, 1989).

It is important to stress that reiteration of unity in diversity remained one of the central guidelines for the model of political autonomy that was implemented in the Azores in 1974-76. Moreover, the reiteration of unity in diversity was used by the regional government of the Azores as a way of strategically positioning itself within the context of power relations with the outside world, and the EEC in particular, during the period analyzed by this article (1991-1993). Reflection upon the conditions under which Azorean autonomy was first restrained but later allowed to exist was critical to the formulation of the Azorean government's strategies in this context.

In summary, Azorean intellectual and political elites came to understand (or at least imagine and discursively present) Azoreans as sharing a distinctive - yet still Portuguese - collective consciousness. In other words, Azorean notions of identity and insularity became parcel of Azorean *doxa*. These precepts, in turn, became deeply embedded in how different Azorean leaders at different points in time negotiated relations of power between the Azores at the higher levels of governmental power within which the archipelago governance was nested: this *doxic* orientation which is a play of habitual action, improvisation, and contingency, threads a complex relation between difference/abjection (having a separate identity market by insularity) and belonging (e.g. autonomy rather than independence).

Azorean identity is *doxic* since it provides Azoreans with a general means of orientation which guides Azoreans in their creative, but not random, use in the contingency of relations of power with external forces. The next and final section of this article reveals how the flexibility of this *doxic* orientation allowed it to be used in the context of the EEC's agricultural policy to great strategic advantage.

DAVID AND GOLIATH

As many were abruptly reminded with the financial crisis triggered in 2008, the European Union was not a final product of integration³. Neither had the Treaty of Rome created the European Economic Community as a final product (CAUPERS, 1988). Rather, the EEC was to be constructed through several stages by a process of progressive economic integration. Political integration was expected to be the “natural” result of that process. The EEC would, thereby, be transformed from an economic association of states into a federation. This metamorphosis is clarified below in an overview of the discourse that constructs the EU as the “natural” result of progressive economic integration (CAUPERS, 1988; MOTA CAMPOS, 1989; MOTA CAMPOS, 1990; PITA E CUNHA, 1993; SÉRGIO RIBEIRO, 1994). Implied in the EEC’s goal of obtaining economic integration was the assumption that each country, or region, should specialize according to its competitive economic advantages. It was also expected that through time, each region would develop economically such that eventually they would all reach similar states

of economic development thus leading to the economic ‘uniformization’ of the entire EEC. Only under such conditions would “true” economic progress occur and only then would the conditions be set for the European Union to come into existence⁴.

It was expected that as trade were to intensify between countries or regions, higher degrees of interdependency and cooperation would be achieved thus leading naturally to political integration. According to this perspective, obstacles or “artificial” limitations to exchange among countries would be dismantled. Hence the EEC started with the establishment of a Free Trade Zone among member countries, such that commodities could move across borders free from import duties, the latter existing only in exchanges with non-member countries. This meant, however, that the country with the lowest border taxes would attract more commerce and be in an artificially advantageous position. As a result, a Customs Union became necessary – a mechanism for ensuring that the same import duties were charged by

³ In effect, at the time of its creation it was not yet a monetary union, nor had it been when the Euro was launched in 2002.

⁴ In theory only then would it make sense to begin to think of a monetary union, and only after that would it make sense to think of introducing a common currency.

all members – (Mota Campos, 1989: 459): the establishment of a Customs Union meant that a product entering the EEC through France, for example, would cost the same as if it had entered the EEC through the UK. However, different economic policies in each country remained an obstacle to full economic integration. If a country subsidized its auto industry, making cars cheaper, auto industries in other countries would be at disadvantage. To avoid this problem, a Common Market was required, so that sector-based common rules, such as the Common Agricultural Policy, guaranteed that the same measures applied to a given product in all countries (MOTA CAMPOS, 1989: 460). Thus, the Common Market became a free market wherein the interplay of supply and demand was the guiding force.

Given that the Common Market implied that eventually a macro economic policy would have to be established, it was expected that a Economic Union would have to be implemented sooner or later (as indeed ended happening in 1993). Macro-economic theoretical logic dictated that this should entail a monetary union, and that eventually member countries were required to have the same monetary policy so that differences in exchange rates did not put additional stresses on each mem-

ber country's economy. Hence, the idea of Economic Union was at the time implicitly entangled in the apparatus of a Monetary Union (NEVES, 1995)⁵. Finally, this dynamic created the “need” for a supra-national government which coordinated the Economic/Monetary Union's affairs (MOTA CAMPOS, 1989: 524-551). In other words, a federation-like entity was expected to emerge naturally from the EEC.

The creation of several EEC structural funds to increase economic cohesion was a clear indication that the Single Market was far from being realized. In the current context, regions within the EEC were divided into categories on the basis of their economic status – the EEC's so-called developed core being the gravitational center. Each category corresponds to an economic objective. These included the development and adjustment of less-developed areas; the recovery of regions severely affected by industrial decline; and the development of rural areas. Both the existence of exceptions within the Common Market – regions receiving special support through cohesion funds – and the notion of a ‘Europe of regions’, created a setting within which the

⁵ Ironically this basic rule was totally dismissed when the Euro was created and launched.

articulations of sociocultural and economic difference were able to occur. This implied that the State was no longer *the* privileged political entity within the EEC. Moreover, in order to be exempted from Common Policy rules or to receive additional funding, European regions had to show, not only that they lagged behind EEC's developed core, but that they are part of the EU's periphery – or even better, the abject-periphery (Butler 1993; Punal 1987). In the case of the Azores, this called for the articulation of the very identity-insularity *doxic* orientations that had Azoreans used in articulations of power with national levels of governance in the struggle for regional autonomy. I now turn to these issues.

As discussed earlier in this article, when Portugal entered the European Union in 1986, it was decided that European law should become fully applicable in the Azores. The Azorean government's strategy was twofold; first, to obtain, in the short term, all the subsidies already available by Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and thus stimulate the regional economy as quickly as possible. Second, to develop a more careful medium for long term planning of Azorean agriculture within the European Union, aiming at additional subsidies.

In their dealings with the EU in the context of agricultural policy, the

Azorean government evoked the factors that led to the development of Azorean identity without ever using the word identity (e.g. isolation, telurism, insularity, cultural specificity). A more general notion of Azorean uniqueness was used in the articulations of difference within the European Union, than a pre-defined concept of Azorean identity. This is possible since, as explained early in this article, Azorean *doxa* extends to contain a flexible stock of knowledge, from which Azoreans draw different fragments which, in turn, are susceptible to being combined *ex improvisu* into numerous forms in the setting of diverse power relations. In so doing, the Azorean government was able to obtain a legal package with measures for agriculture, which is an exception to the EU's Common Agricultural Policy – the POSEIMA.

POSEIMA was a legal package that dealt with the Azores as an ultra-peripheral zone (JOCE L 171/91 and JOCE L 173/92). Its most important goal was to diminish the disadvantages that Azorean economic agents had to face given the islands' characteristics. It institutionalized a set of subsidies for many activities including raising endemic species of cattle, the development of traditional crops, such as passion fruit, beetroot and tobacco, investment in organic crops, and activities support-

ing the maintenance of traditional craft work. POSEIMA also exempted Azoreans from paying border taxes when importing cereals from outside the European Union where, until then, these cereals had been much cheaper. All the POSEIMA measures were complementary to Common Agricultural Policy rules. POSEIMA also served to suspend certain Common Agricultural Policy rules which, in principle, should be effective in all EU regions.

POSEIMA was constituted by two documents: the Council's Decision 91/315/EEC and the Council's Ruling 1600/92. Both documents resulted from long and arduous negotiations between the Azorean Government's Agricultural Department (AAD) and the EU's ruling organs. More precisely, the documents were negotiated by the Azorean Agricultural Department with the Commission (the EU's bureaucratic organ) and approved by the Council (the EU's political organ). The most critical phase was that involving the Commission (in this case composed of agricultural policy experts from the EU's member countries). Since it was the Commission that elaborated all proposals for laws concerning the European Union, it was the Commission that ensured that the EU's "Constitutional" law – including goals – were respected. By the time POSEIMA reached the

Council, all terms and conditions resulting from negotiation were written, and needed only an act of approval by the then 12 Ministers for Agriculture of the member-countries sitting at the meeting.

At the initial stages of negotiation with the EU, the Azorean Agricultural Department asked for a fund that would subsidize commodity transportation in and out of the Azores, so that Azorean products might be more competitive within the Common Market. This request contradicted the Treaty of Rome, by which terms the subsidizing of transportation was considered a violation to the EU's most basic principles and was deemed incompatible with the goal of achieving a Common Market: it was considered *dumping* (MOTA CAMPOS, 1989). The AAD's request was therefore denied and a suggestion was made that the Azores find an alternative suggestion.

The opportunity came when the French *Departements d'Outre Mer* (DOM) negotiated and obtained a legal package with special measures for agriculture, the POSEIDOM. This program set a precedent for the granting of additional subsidies to ultra-peripheral areas. All that the Azores had to do now was prove that they, too, were ultra-peripheral; the Azores had to show the Commission that although they were already receiv-

ing subsidies in the form of cohesion funds, the archipelago had particular characteristics similar to areas also receiving additional funding. That is, the Azores had to prove themselves similar to the French ULTRE-DOM. It is on account of exactly such an articulation of difference that the Azores were able to negotiate POSEIMA with the Commission. POSEIMA's final version was written jointly by the Azorean Agricultural Department and the EU's Commission, although the Commission had the power either to approve or reject the suggestions made by the Azorean Government. In POSEIMA, the Azores were constructed as an ultra-peripheral area with peculiar economic and social problems. The next few lines give a sense of the Azorean "condition" as evoked in POSEIMA (JOCE 171/91).

Considering that... the EU's institutions should pay particular attention to the archipelago's development policy which is intended to diminish the region's disadvantages inherent in its geographical situation – too far from European main-

land... Considering that the islands suffer from severe structural constraints, made worse by difficulties (insularity, distance, small territory, hard climate) the permanence and cumulative effects of which heavily determine the islands' social and economic development... Considering the dependency of the islands on the exterior sources for supply... Considering that... the additional costs of commodities in the islands are paid by regional funds which limits possibilities of actions promoting economic and social development...

In this sample, it is not hard to recognize the themes, discussed above, that already existed at the local level in the Azores under the label of identity. In POSEIMA, however, the themes present in both the historical and the ontological Azorean self-knowledge are transformed into the single theme of uniqueness, although the general framework for formulating their singularity remains the same. To be sure, such changes in Azorean local discourses were analyzed in light of the EU's own construction as a political union, which was shown to create a space in which articulation of differences (uniqueness) could occur.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The existence of economic cohesion funds, together with the principle of regional *subsidiarity* introduced by the Maastricht Treaty in 1993 to help achieve economic equalization

within the EEC, created conditions suitable for the further objectification and articulation of differences within the EU. Most of all, the articulation of difference was made possible by

the way that the EEC and later the European Union constructed itself in terms of the dynamics described in this article. Indeed, following a trend established in the Treaty of Rome, and with the goal of expanding to include new members, the EU has evolved in the direction of a structure of differences. That is, in order to prevail as a Union of States, the European Union needed to accommodate a wide range of diversity which made the European Union much more flexible than is often realized.

The Azorean government leaders of the early 1990s were well informed of this reality, and indeed, took strategic advantage of it. In effect, knowledge of the flexibility that the European Union required in order to sustain its own existence was a critical source of power for the Azorean government as it sought to obtain exemptions from EU's Common Agricultural Policy to mitigate the many problems that the Azorean agricultural sector then faced. These exemptions became materialized in a special policy program for the Azorean agricultural sector called POSEIMA.

In this context Azoreans reiterated already existing self-knowledge which was only *adapted* into the notion of EU uniqueness. In fact, in POSEIMA, insularity, distance, small territory and hard climate were

again invoked as the determinants shaping the islands' social and economic worlds. Ultimately, it was the specificity of the Azorean condition (socio-cultural, economic, insularity, distance, small territory and hard climate) that allowed for the existence of a legal package constituting an exception to common policy legislation. It is thus possible to conclude that peripheries play a much more active historical role than is acknowledged in the theorization of power relations between hegemonic formations such as the EU and its most peripheral regions such as for example the Azores. In fact, in the case just presented, unveils a dialectic relationship between two political units of not only completely different sizes but also radically different power endowments, the Azores and the European Union – David and Goliath. Nonetheless, articulations between the two had important consequences for both: by presenting themselves as an abject periphery, the Azores were able to obtain highly exceptional measures from the European Union, while the European Union constructed itself through such minor administrative steps into a structure of *subsidiary* differences which enhanced its chances of surviving as a supra state and even of expanding into new territories.

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