

REGRESSA URGENTE (RETURN URGENT)

a documentary by João Sardinha and António João Saraiva

CEMRI - Universidade Aberta production

The documentary **Regressa Urgente (Return Urgent)** grows out of the project 'REPOR – *The Return of the Portuguese Second Generation to Portugal: Identity, Belonging and Transnational Lives*' headed up by João Sardinha, PhD, associate researcher at the *Centro de Estudos das Migrações e Relações Interculturais* (Centre for the Study of Migrations and Intercultural Relations) (<http://www.univ-ab.pt/cemri/detailmenu.php?menu=29&id=53>), Universidade Aberta (Open University) in Lisbon, Portugal.



The following sections will provide a glimpse into the project, the documentary and the two mentors behind the film.

The project 'REPOR – *The Return of the Portuguese Second Generation to Portugal: Identity, Belonging and Transnational Lives*' – an overview

Within migrant and transnational studies, the descendants of migrants often have complex and ambiguous views of home, identity and where exactly they belong. Such complexity and ambiguity is further stressed upon returning to the ancestral homeland. Returning migrant descendants may be confronted with a dramatically changing social-cultural landscape, where their previously conceived ethno-cultural ideals, or those they may have inherited from their parents, through mass media or during previous short-term visits to the ancestral homeland, may be non-existent or distorted from their own perceptions. Consequently, questions of ethno-cultural definitions arise, driven by the multiple relations and negotiations that emerge in the context of migrancy, return and maintained transnational linkages. We are here in the midst of a mobility form that extends to new kinds of social spaces and cultural fields that often questions previously stable notions and fixed entities that existed in the pre-return. The return itself often ends up challenging, translating, (re)defining, narrating and (re)constructing new meanings of 'who these individuals are' in connection to 'where they are'.

The core nature of the project '*The Return of the Portuguese Second Generation to Portugal: Identity, Belonging and Transnational Lives*' focuses on these very issues, this within the setting of 'return' of Portuguese descendants to their ancestral home – Portugal – originating from three source countries: Canada, France and Germany. We choose these countries given that, at different stages since the 1950s, they have been rich destination countries for Portuguese emigrants and from where

counter-diasporic return has been a phenomenon in recent decades, a large portion of that return made up of the offspring of the first generation.

Through an examination of return experiences, the project possesses three lines of inquiry:

- 1) To scrutinise the often multiple and changing identities migrant descendants are confronted with upon returning to the ancestral homeland. Given that the positioning of such (return) migrants is often one of 'cultural transients' setting themselves in transnational spaces (e.g. home, host and local) defined by such repertoires as the inherited and transmitted ethnic culture (nostalgic and often folkloric), society born into and society found upon return to the ancestral homeland, the research sets out to analyse the intercultural identification bricolages constructed from the cultural elements returnees negotiate with and within, from both the sending and receiving countries.
- 2) To study strategies of integration, aiming to analyse how these individuals go about inserting themselves socially, culturally, professionally and spiritually, into the 'new' society. Also key to this integration analysis is that of perception and how these migrants perceive the 'warmth of the welcome' (or lack thereof) on the part of the host society and how this may lead to them adapting alternative strategies and abandoning original objectives and idealisations.
- 3) Using transnationalism as a central theoretical base of analysis, and assuming that return does not constitute the end of a migration cycle but instead is part and parcel of a circular system of social, cultural and economic relationships and exchanges between countries, cultures and societies, we set out to observe the role of transnational practices and orientations in an attempt to decipher what sort of capital is to be gained from maintaining such practices and orientations and to what extent and degree this locates the migrant in and in-between the countries in question, taking into consideration transnational capital as a resource to be weighed when needed (e.g. in times of economic downturn).

The documentary *Regressa Urgente* (Return Urgent)

Length: 52 minutes

Language: Portuguese (with English subtitles)

Screen Ratio: 16:9 / colour / stereo

Edited by: Neel Naik - Ra Atelier

As an output from the aforementioned project, *Regressa Urgente* tells the story of Marta Raposo, a second-generation Portuguese-Canadian migrant from Montreal, Canada who in 2005 decided to move to Portugal, carrying with her the goal of 'making it' in the Portuguese world of Fado music.

Having initiated her musical career at the age of 16, becoming the lead vocalist of a Portuguese popular music group in the city of Montreal, Marta quickly discovered that her true musical love lied not in Portuguese popular music, but instead, in the 'Portuguese national song' – Fado. In consequence, at the age 18, she stepped on stage at the Portuguese Club of Montreal to perform Fado for the first time, an experience that would go on to make her a leading voice in this Portuguese style of music primarily in the province of Quebec. Having conquered the admiration and recognition of the Portuguese community in her home province, Marta decided it was time to take the next step – to become a '*fadista*' (Fado singer) in Portugal.

The documentary catches up with Marta five years after her arrival in Portugal. After numerous adventures in the Portuguese Fado world, including the launch of her first album in 2009, we follow her steps, observe her relationships and capture her last performances; we collect her thought, her doubts and regrets, and explore her sense of belonging. Marta has once again decided to return, this time back to Montreal. In scrutinising her last days in Portugal, we reveal that not even the strongest desires are enough to sustain this 'fadista' in the 'land of Fado'.

Short synopsis:

In 2005 Marta Raposo left Montreal, Canada in search of a dream – to affirm herself as a Fado singer in Portugal. The camera catches up with her after five years of living in Portugal, at a time when she again prepares to return to Canada; a pivotal period that ends up triggering divided feelings of belonging, carrying with them doubts and regrets. The desire of wanting to succeed in the 'land of Fado' is to be left suspended.



Showings to date:

- Music, Portugal and Local Context Seminar Series – Seminar 8, ISCTE/IUL, Lisbon, Portugal (March 26, 2014).
- Official selection: International Festival Days of Ethnographic Film, Ljubljana, Slovenia (March 12-15, 2013).
- International Conference Arts and Sciences in Dialogue, Universidade do Algarve, Faro, Portugal (January, 17-18, 2013).
- Intercultural Communication Masters Seminar Class, Migrations, Ethnicity and Transnationalism Programme, Department of Anthropology, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal (December 18, 2012).
- Official selection: EXTREMA’doc 2012 - Festival Internacional de Cine Documental, Cáceres, Spain (November 19-30, 2012).
* *Transfrontera* (Portugal/Extremadura) Award Finalist.
- Kwantlen Anthropology Seminar – Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Vancouver, Canada (November 29, 2012).
- Global Monday Seminar Series – University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George, Canada (November 26, 2012).



- Class screening – Geography 128: Introduction to Human Geography, University of British Columbia – Okanagan, Kelowna, Canada (November 22, 2012).
- Official selection: AVANCA 2012 – International Festival of Cinema, Television, Video & Multimedia, Avanca, Portugal (July 25-29, 2012).
- Documentary Film Showing Fado and Canada, Quiosque do Melhor Bolo do Chocolate do Mundo (outdoor showing), Lisbon, Portugal (July 10, 2012).
- Workshop *Migrações no Feminino* (Female Migration), FCSH – Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal (June 6, 2012).
- *Regressa Urgente* (Return Urgent) Official Launch, Museu do Fado (Fado Museum), Lisbon, Portugal (December 9, 2011).
- *Sextas à tarde* (Friday Afternoon's) Seminar Series – special edition (Science and Technology Week – Live Science), Universidade Aberta - Porto Campus, Porto, Portugal (November 23, 2011).
- International Symposium: Identity, Civic Engagement, Multiculturalism and Transnationalism: Portuguese-Canadian Immigrant Descendants in Canada, York University, Toronto, Canada (October 11-12, 2011).



A shorter version of *Regressa Urgente* entitled **Marta Raposo – Narrativas de Regresso (Marta Raposo – Narratives of Return)** (14'32 min) can be viewed and downloaded here: <http://vimeo.com/34578869>.

Showings to date of this documentary include:

- Workshop: Immigrant Incorporation in the Arts – Immigrant Incorporation through the Arts, 10th Annual IMISCOE Conference, Malmo, Sweden (August 26-27, 2013).
- Seminar: Portugal as a Platform of Mobilities (University of British Columbia Summer School in Portugal), Lisbon, Portugal (May 20, 2013).
- Portuguese Canadians on Screen, Proud to be Portuguese Canadian Conference & Cultural Festival 2012, Toronto, Canada (March 25, 2012).

- International Gathering of Portuguese Women in the Diaspora. Maia, Portugal (November 24-26, 2011).
- Workshop: Return Migration and Deportation: Processes and Challenges. 16th International Metropolis Conference, Ponta Delgada, Azores, Portugal (September 11-17, 2011).
- Workshop: Luso-descendants and Transnational Lives: Some Lines of Research, University of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal (June 15, 2011).

Biographies of the researchers/directors

João Sardinha, PhD., is an associate researcher at the Open University's Centre for the Study of Migrations and Intercultural Relations (CEMRI) in Lisbon, Portugal (since 2009). He earned his PhD in Migration Studies from the University of Sussex in the United Kingdom (2007); MA in Geography and Regional Planning from the New University of Lisbon, Portugal (2002); and his undergraduate degree in Geography from the University of Northern British Columbia in Canada (1996). He also carried out post-doctoral studies at the University of Coimbra in Portugal (2008-2009).

João currently heads up research projects on the return to Portugal of Portuguese emigrant descendants; on the identity strategies, sense of belonging and transnational negotiations of Portuguese emigrant descendants in Canada; and most recently commenced a project on lifestyle (expatriate) migrants in the regions of Central Portugal (*Médio Tejo and Pinhal Interior Norte*). He is also an invited contributor to the project DIASBOLA: Football (Soccer) and Migration and has carried out extensive research on immigrant associative phenomena in Portugal based on his PhD work. His most recent publications include:

- (forthcoming) (with António João Saraiva) "My country, my pain; my child, my love': Elderly Azorean immigrants in California narrate homeland return (im)mobility", *Ethnography*.
- (forthcoming) "'Portugal dos Xutos': Portuguese music in the lives of "returned" descendants of Portuguese emigrants from Canada" in Sardinha, J. and Campos, R. (eds.) *Transglobal Sounds: Music, Identity and Migrant Descendants*. Berg.
- (forthcoming) "Idyllic seekers and liminal beings: the case of lifestyle migrants in rural Central Portugal" in K. Torkington, J. Sardinha and I. David (eds.) *Practising the Good Life: Lifestyle Migrations in Practice*. Cambridge Scholar.
- (forthcoming, 2014) "'Even if the only thing for me to do were to milk cows": Portuguese-Canadian descendant returnees narrate constructions of return desires", *Diaspora – Journal of Transnational Studies*.
- (forthcoming, 2014) "Securing networks or networks of security? Portuguese emigrant descendant returnees negotiate transnational positionings", *InterDISCIPLINARY Journal of Portuguese Diaspora Studies (Special Issue: Portuguese Descendants in the Diaspora and in the Return Setting)*, edited by J. Sardinha, E. da Silva and S. Silva).
- (2013) "Settlement and Socialisation Strategies of Lifestyle Migrants in Central Portugal", in M. Janoschka and H. Haas (eds.) *Contested Spatialities of Lifestyle Migration*. London: Routledge, 174-189.
- (2012) "Immigrant Associations as Political and Institutional Partners in Portugal" in Halm, D. and Sezgin, Z. (eds.), *Migration and Organized Civil Society - Rethinking National Policy*. Oxford: Routledge, 195-211.

- (2012) "Negociações Identitárias dos Luso-descendentes no Canadá através do Futebol Português e do Hóquei no Gelo Canadiano" ("The Identity Negotiations of Portuguese Emigrant Descendants in Canada through Portuguese Soccer and Canadian Ice Hockey"), *Revista Etnográfica*, vol. 16, n. 1, 143-162.
- (2011) "Portuguese-Canadian and Portuguese-French second-generation migrant women narrate 'return' to Portugal", *Revista Ex aequo*, n. 24, 29-44.
- (2011) "'Returned' Second-Generation Portuguese-Canadians and Portuguese-French: Return Motivations and Sense of Belonging", *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, vol. 20, n. 2, 231-254.
- (2011) "Neither Here nor There: Identity Constructions, Conceptions of 'Home' and the Transnational Lives of Second Generation Luso-Canadians and Luso-French in Portugal", in Fagundes, F. C., Blair, I. M., Alves, T. and Cid, T. (eds.), *Storytelling the Portuguese Diaspora: Piecing Things Together*. New York: Peter Lang, 153-174.
- (2011) "Portuguese-Canadian emigrant descendants in multicultural Canada: Ambiguous identity in a sure-footed nation or cultural awareness in an uncertain country?", *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, vol. 12, n. 4, 371-389.
- (2011) "Highlighting the Contrasts, Downplaying the Divergences: Insertion and Visibility Tactics of Brazilians in Portugal", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 34, n. 6, 986-1005.
- (2010) "'Things Haven't Been the Same for 500 Years...' Reflections on the Integration and Identity Constructions of Angolans in Portugal", *Migracijske i Etnike Teme*, vol. 26, n. 2, 143-167.
- (2010) "Identity, Integration and Associations. Cape Verdeans in the Metropolitan Area of Lisbon" in Bastos J., Dahinden J., Góis P. and Westin C. (eds.), *Identity Processes and Dynamics in Europe*. IMISCOE - Amsterdam University Press, 168-187.
- (2010) "Immigrantenverbände und Möglichkeiten der Teilhabe in Portugal: Intervention zu welchem Preis? ("Immigrant associations and participation opportunities in Portugal: Intervention at what cost?") in Pries, L. and Sezgin, Z. (eds.) *Jenseits von 'Identität oder Integration' Grenzenüberspannende Migranten Organisationen* (Beyond 'Identity or Integration' Cross-Border Migrant Organizations) Wiesbaden: VS Verlag Fur Sozialwissenschaften, 251-284.
- (2010) "Quadros Identitários e Estratégias de Integração: Posicionamentos das Associações Angolanas, Brasileiras e Leste Europeias em Portugal" ("Identity Frameworks and Integration Strategies: Positionings of Angolan, Brazilian and Eastern European Associations in Portugal"), in *Migrações*, n. 6, 59-80.
- (2009) *Immigrant Associations, Integration and Identity: Angolan, Brazilian and Eastern European Communities in Portugal*. Amsterdam: IMISCOE -Amsterdam University Press (335 pp.).

António João Saraiva recently earned his PHD in Visual Anthropology at the Center for the Study of Migration and Intercultural Relations (CEMRI), Open University in Lisbon, Portugal (2013) where he is also a research member. He earned his MA in Film and Media Studies from Lusófona University of Lisbon, Portugal (2007) and his undergraduate degree in Geography from the University of Coimbra in Coimbra, Portugal (1989). He has been producing and directing educational, ethnographic and environmental documentary films since 1992 and has also worked on a variety of documentary projects for Portuguese Television. His current research work deals with Azorean immigrants in California and return.

Noteworthy audiovisual / visual anthropological production works by António João Saraiva include:

- 2013: documentary *A Minha Terra é uma Ilha* (My Home is an Island). CEMRI-UAb.
- 2011: documentary *Regressa Urgente* (Return Urgent). CEMRI-UAb, (co-director with João Sardinha).
- 2010: documentary *Orlando Ribeiro: Itinerancias de um Geógrafo* (Orlando Ribeiro: Itineraries of a Geographer). RTP Television, (co-director with Manuel Carvalho Gomes).
- 2009: documentary *Gente de Fajãs* (People of the Fajãs - Land between the cliffs and the sea). Grand Prize Winner – Best Documentary Film, 2009 Anthropological Film Festival, Lisbon, Portugal.
- 2007: hypermedia/video *Caparicanos Interactivos* (Caparicanos Interactive), based on the life memories and cultural heritage of a fishermen's community in the town of Costa de Caparica, Portugal.
- 1999: fiction film *Um Certo Amarelo* (A certain yellow). Awarded 1st Prize at the 1999 Videocor Video Festival.
- 1997: documentary *Ventos de Largo* (Off shore Winds). Awarded the Gold Prize at the 1997 CineEco International Environmental Film and Video Festival, the first prize award in the Ecology Category at the 1998 VideoViana Festival, and was the Portuguese selection for the 2001 ECOmove – Environmental Film Festival of FESTIVALS.
- 1995: documentary *Sabugueiro, Verão, 1050m* (Elderberry, Summer, 1050m). Awarded the Serra da Estrela Special Prize at the 1995 CineEco International Environmental Film and Video Festival, and the Open University Best Film Award at the 1996 Open University Video Festival.

He has screened these and various other works at various national and international festivals. Some of his work can be viewed here: <http://vimeo.com/user4750138/videos>

He is also co-author of the following publication:

- (forthcoming) (with João Sardinha) "My country, my pain; my child, my love': Elderly Azorean immigrants in California narrate homeland return (im)mobility", *Ethnography*.



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