



## PEASANT STEM FAMILIES IN NORTHWESTERN PORTUGAL: LIFE TRANSITIONS AND CHANGING FAMILY DYNAMICS

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**ABSTRACT:** *The article analyzes data on family forms and individual life experiences in two rural communities of the Baixo Minho (northwest Portugal) during the 20th century. It examines how social and economic differentiation shaped norms and practices, giving rise to a variety of family forms rather than a regional family pattern. The stem family is found to be characteristic of wealthy peasant farmers. Drawing on individual life histories in two different generations, the article traces changes in stem family dynamics under the impact of industrialization and modernization over the last thirty years.*

Family life and history emerged in the late seventies as a major challenge to historians, anthropologists and sociologists studying Portugal. Evidence was scarce and scanty. Nevertheless, it had yielded two important clues. The family monographs of both Poinsard (1910) and Descamps (1935) on rural communities, as well as those by their Portuguese followers (Pimenta 1918), pointed to family patterns based on a complex family organization. At the same time, the initial

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mappings of family forms appeared to reveal strong regional diversity: more nuclear in the southern part of the country, more extended in the north.

Linkages between space, time and social dimensions were far from established. Thus Descamps focused on the "unstable family" of the rural proletariat as a predominant feature of family life in the south but did not identify the household type of the rich landholding classes in this region or search for the family patterns of the rural proletariat in the north. As for the question of the family's relationship to social change, it remained wide open.

A new impetus for understanding family forms came in 1981 with the data published by Rowland on two communities in the North of Portugal (Rowland 1981). Using a military list of 1827, he found a comparatively large proportion of complex households.<sup>1</sup> More qualitative analysis, based on notarial records in another Minho community, led to the hypothesis of a stem family system in landholding peasant families (Brandão and Rowland 1980). Finally, using data from the 1960 national census, Rowland presented a clearer picture of household composition and formation in different regions of the country. In a concluding article, Rowland (1984) considers the possibility of a regional comparison between a "north west Iberian stem family system" and a "Mediterranean neolocal household formation system." The distinction is based on the high incidence of complex households in the north, especially in the Minho (roughly corresponding to the districts of Braga, Viana and Oporto), suggesting the presence of a pattern of patrilocal residence after marriage; and a predominant "nuclear" household system in the south. At the same time, Rowland emphasizes the importance of cultural values in shaping family behavior.

Further studies in the 1980s provided detailed data on family forms and demographic patterns, primarily on rural communities in the north of Portugal. Social anthropologists, historians, demographers, and sociologists carried out valuable in-depth studies drawing on a variety of sources (Feijó 1983; Brettell 1986; Pina Cabral 1984, 1986; O'Neill 1984; Nunes 1986; Durães 1987; Amorim 1983; Brandão 1985; Bastos 1988; Bouquet 1984; Iturra 1985; Ferreira de Almeida 1986; Lourenço 1991).

With respect to household composition and formation, evidence from these local studies for the eighteenth, nineteenth and the twentieth centuries lends support to earlier data on the importance of complex households in the north of the country. However, it also emphasizes intra-regional variation in household composition, as well as differences between social and occupational groups.<sup>2</sup> Both Feijó (1983) and Pina Cabral (1986) establish a positive correlation between wealth and household complexity. Nunes (1986) goes a step further and differentiates the households in the parish according to the occupation of household heads. Although no multiple family households could be found for the year 1878 to which the data refers, the incidence of extended family households was only high among farmers, that is, in a social group with stable and permanent bonds to land and agricultural work. Economic determinants—especially labor needs and inheritance strategies—would thus appear to be relevant to an explanation of complex family patterns in northwestern Portugal. Nevertheless, some of the studies suggest that other factors might also be pertinent. Brettell (1986) observes that residence patterns have less

to do with land tenure arrangements and more to do with the availability of housing, migration patterns and culturally-specific attitudes about the appropriateness of women living on their own.

In attempting to understand the social processes which influence family patterns in northwestern Portugal various studies directed their attention to strategies of inheritance and postmarital residence. In 1986, when Feijó and Nunes (1986) presented a summary of the debate on household composition and household reproduction in northwestern Portugal, the evidence seemed difficult to interpret. In the study on the parish of Lanheses in the Minho, Brettell (1986) stressed that women were frequently favored heirs of the third share.<sup>3</sup> However, she believed that the granting of the share in this parish was used primarily as a form of old-age insurance, and not as a mechanism for maintaining a family patrimony intact through a matrilineal or a patrilineal line. In short, heirship strategies in the parish would seem to preclude "the kind of corporate ownership prevalent in parts of northeastern Spain where stem-family households are also associated with some form of impartibility or preferential partibility" (Kertzer and Brettell 1987, p. 97).

Other studies presented a slightly different picture. In his work on present-day world-views and community relations in two villages in the Alto Minho, Pina Cabral (1984) suggests that daughters in the past were sometimes favored heirs; he insists, however, on a cultural norm which defends the equal rights of all the children to inheritance. More important than this data is Pina Cabral's description of the symbolic importance of the "casa" (household) in this region. The "casa" is defined as the elementary social unit composed of the group of people who share a common pool of resources, the unit being ideally self-sufficient as far as food production was concerned. Finally, Brandão (1985), on the basis of nineteenth-century notarial records for a parish in the Alto Minho, showed that landed families, disposing freely of one third of the patrimony, tended to pass it on to a "favored" heir. Non-favored heirs received a share of the parental patrimony which allowed them to emigrate, to marry or to remain single in the natal household.

Feijó and Nunes conclude that *unequal partibility* is what seems to be characteristic of inheritance practices in the region (Feijó and Nunes 1986, p. 256). However, they warn that "the situation described does not correspond to the one that would be expected from the operation of a *stem family* system" (p. 264), since the principle of partibility prevails even when partibility is unequal.

It was more or less at this point in time (1985) and in the debate that we began fieldwork in two parishes of the Baixo Minho. Our initial goal then was to study the relation over the last fifty years between social change in rural society and part-time farming families. The aim was to understand how family patterns and organization had changed in the context of economic, social and cultural transformations. However, while doing exploratory observation in our first parish, we stumbled upon a present-day multiple family farm—full-time peasant farmers, landowners, where the older generation had favored the eldest son (46 years old in 1985) with a third of the patrimony and where the parental generation lived in separate apartments but still owned and tilled one field while maintaining usufruct rights over the patrimony. The surprise effect came from the fact that we were inside a sub-region which, according to the plotting of family patterns and inheritance



in the north of Portugal by Medeiros (1987),<sup>4</sup> belonged to a região (roughly corresponding to the municipalities of Vila Nova de Famalicão, Fafe and Braga) which was supposed to have strict egalitarian inheritance practices and no stem families. Piqued by the finding of multiple family peasant households and by our failure to understand social differentiation, either past or present, in the villages under study, we enlarged the field of research in two different directions: to include the analysis of full-time peasant families; and to try to capture some of the variety of social groupings and family strategies, past and present, in the villages under study. The debate underway at the time, as well as the results of historians working on Minho landed families in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, encouraged this option. For instance, the work of Durães (1987), based on notarial records at the turn of the eighteenth century, was an additional stimulus. It was confirming the existence of preferential partibility practices (not norms) associated with a favored heirship system in landed farming families.

In the present article we shall concentrate on the analysis of the full-time farming family but reference will be made to the effects of social change on class structure in the villages and the region as a whole, as well as to household composition and family patterns in other social groups, namely, those with bonds to agricultural work (sharecroppers, agricultural laborers). Two main questions underlie our analysis. In the first place, can we depict family forms in terms of a regional, stem-family-patterned northwest, and if so, what are the social processes which produce this complex family system? Secondly, how have stem-family patterns evolved over the last decades, in the context of social, economic and demographic transformations?

#### SOURCES AND METHODS

Research was based on three sources. The first one was the confessional roll, a listing of all residents in the parish by age, sex, marital state and relationship to the head of the household. We obtained additional information on residents and households in the past, namely, their professional and occupational status as well as the household's "standard of living" and "size of farm," by interviewing two privileged informants. For one of the parishes, we found several surviving listings (between 1929 and 1947) and analyzed the 1946 listing; in the second parish, we used the only surviving listing, dated 1963. For data on residents and households in the 1980s, two different sources were used. In one village, the local authorities had carried out a local census which included a listing of all residents by date and place of birth, sex, marital state, profession and relationship to the head of the household. In the other village, a listing done by the parish priest was incomplete, so we redid it by drawing on the 1981 electoral census (containing residents over eighteen years of age, by place and date of birth, marital status), and with the help of two privileged informants to confirm the allocation of each elector to his respective household. Additional data on occupational status, standard of living, parents' occupational status and size of farm were obtained in the same way as for the confessional rolls.

The second source were interviews. These were carried out on three different populations: the family members of 22 present-day full-time farming families, elderly full-time or retired farmers (men and women), and adult men and women belonging to other social groupings with bonds to agriculture (sharecroppers, part-time farmers, agricultural laborers). The interviews were structured according to two main themes: individual and family histories, and internal family dynamics.

The third source concerned direct observation of family life in the full-time farming families. A diary was kept for each family during field work. Observation was mainly carried out through participation in agricultural work and during meal times.

From a methodological point of view, the research sought to combine a static approach, based primarily on analysis of household composition and social structure before and after the boom in post-World War II emigration and industrialization which dramatically changed the face of the province over the last quarter century; with a dynamic approach focusing on family processes and changes during the last fifty years. The latter approach made use of oral historical materials obtained through interviews and present-day materials obtained through fieldwork in the 1980s. The blending and back-and-forth movement between various sources, between past and present, acted as a core methodological pivot to follow family and social change.

#### SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND FAMILY PATTERNS IN THE PAST

Lemenhe and Gondifelos lie in the eastern part of the municipality of Vila Nova de Famalicão (Baixo Minho), in the valley of the Este river. Factories began spreading in the countryside in the second half of the nineteenth century but the large textile mills only developed along the Ave valley, drawing upon the populations of the western part of the municipality. During the first half of the twentieth century and until the 1960s, agriculture occupied most of the working population in the communities under study, although the nearness of urban markets and of industrializing communities had also encouraged other activities: small-scale market-orientated industrial activities such as woodwork and stonemasonry, building and pottery-works, linen- and basket-weaving. Communities often specialized in certain cottage industries. Thus Lemenhe had several basket-weaving and carpenter families whilst Gondifelos was famous for its stone-masons and water-mills. Some of these families (mainly millers, carpenters and stonemasons) combined small-scale farming with other activities but the poorer craftsmen and craftswomen (basket-makers, weavers working on a putting-out system, shoe-makers) very often had no land of their own, not even a vegetable plot.

Analysis of the confessional rolls shows a highly differentiated social structure. Sixty-three percent of individual class locations<sup>5</sup> in Lemenhe in 1946 were linked to land and agriculture. However, 3.6 percent were landowners who owned land but did not actually work it, 7.1 percent were wealthy farmers who owned and worked a reasonably sized (over 3 hectares) farm, 25.1 percent were sharecroppers or very small peasant landowners, 4.6 percent were part-time farmers and 22.6 percent were agricultural laborers. In Gondifelos, in 1963,<sup>6</sup> similar differentiations

appear: 69.2 percent of total class positions were linked to land and agriculture; 1.2 percent were landowners who did not work the land, 10.9 percent were wealthy peasant farmers, 15.7 percent were sharecroppers or small peasant farmers, 7.8 percent were part-time farmers and 33.6 percent were agricultural laborers.

Other class locations were mainly linked to independent non-agricultural activities such as crafts, trade or shopkeeping and building. In Lemenhe, in 1946, these independent workers represented 19 percent of total class locations whereas industrial wage-laborers only represented 8.1 percent. Most of these wage-laborers worked in the local building or carpentry industries; only three (1.1 percent of total class positions) worked in large-scale factories in distant parishes, two as carpenters and one in a textile factory.

Life in these rural communities before the Second World War and in the forties is described by all as a world of "misery" and hard labor. Food was poorly varied and not plentiful. Working hours were long and tasks exceedingly heavy. Nevertheless, social and economic conditions were not the same for all households. Distribution of households<sup>7</sup> according to the class location of the head of household and the household's standard of living shows that in 1946 two-thirds of the households are considered to have had a poor (32 percent) or passable (36 percent) standard of living. The poor and very poor were mostly agricultural wage-laboring families but also included artisans (weavers, basket-makers, shoemakers) and non-qualified industrial wage-laborers. Access to a prestigious craft or trade (carpentry, stonemasonry, water-mills) and/or to land seems to have increased the household's resources considerably. Thus the households of most craftsmen, part-time farmers and sharecroppers are considered to have had a passable standard of living (that is, enough food to feed a family all the year round) whereas wealthy peasants, large landowners, the priest and the school teacher, are considered to have had "more than passable" or "rich" households.

Distribution of households according to their kin composition<sup>8</sup> showed that simple family households formed the overwhelming majority, representing slightly over 70 percent of the total (72.1 percent in Lemenhe and 70.9 percent in Gondifelos). The figure for complex households is 16.3 percent in Lemenhe and 13.1 percent in Gondifelos. Complexity arises mostly from extension but multiple households represent 2.9 percent of all households in Lemenhe and 3.6 percent in Gondifelos. The proportion of solitaries is relatively high (7 percent in Lemenhe and 12.8 percent in Gondifelos) but "no family households" only represent 4.6 percent (Lemenhe) and 2.7 percent (Gondifelos) of the total.

Analysis of household composition by class location of the head of household, as well as detailed examination of the types of household within each broad category of the typology, revealed some interesting features of household composition.

(A) In the first place, complexity arises in various social groups but in different proportions. For example, in Gondifelos, complex households represent 47 percent of wealthy farmer households (n=34) but also 7.7 percent of poor farmer households (n=39), 6.8 percent of independent worker households (n=44), 19.5 percent of part-time farmer households (n=41), 11.3 percent of non-qualified industrial wage-laborer households (n=62), and 11.6 percent of agricultural laborer households (n=86). Proportions of solitaries also vary according to social class: the households

of wealthy peasants have an extremely low proportion (3 percent) of solitaries while poor peasant and agricultural laborer households have particularly high percentages of solitaries (20.5 percent and 25.6 percent, respectively).

(B) Secondly, a detailed analysis of the composition of complex or simple family households showed that the contents of complexity, or of nuclearity, could differ considerably from one social class to another. The most flagrant example of this difference existed, in both communities under study, between simple family households amongst wealthy peasants and simple family households amongst agricultural laborers. Both social groups have comparatively low percentages of simple family households (in Gondifelos, 44.1 percent and 57 percent respectively). However, in wealthy farmer households, the simple family category is almost entirely made up of couples with or without children. By contrast, in the agricultural laborer households, 43 percent of the simple family households are single-parent households with children or rather, except for one case, single-mothers (celibate, widowed or with husband absent from the village) with children.

In the same way, complexity does not necessarily overlap with "stem family" characteristics. In wealthy peasant households, multiple families with two couples belonging to different generations predominate; but no case of a celibate mother and her children living with an older couple emerged. By contrast, this latter type of multiple family was quite common among agricultural laborer households.

The interpretation of the continuities and discontinuities in the household composition results led to analysis of individual and family life histories, with a two-fold objective: the understanding of household formation practices and the processes leading to certain types of kin compositions; and the understanding of the norms and family finalities underlying these practices. This qualitative analysis was undertaken in relation to households with some kind of bond to agricultural work.

Through individual and family histories, it was possible to identify certain norms which permeated family life in general in the recent past. The obligation of *mutual aid* between different generations but also between all households in the village was continually stressed. It was accompanied by acceptance of patterns of unequal reciprocity associated with social and status distinctions. Thus parents and children owed each other sustenance and services over the life course but a child's indebtedness to his parents—for having being brought into the world and having received sustenance in childhood—was considered almost irredeemable. In the same way, husband and wife were considered as working partners in the management of household resources but the woman's debt in relation to her husband was greater than her husband's to her. Unequal reciprocity terms also permeated relations between the richer and the poorer households.

Residence, marriage and succession ideals were always considered in the context of these broader principles of collective exchange and survival. Ideally a young couple should live independently, but account should first be taken of their households' and/or their parents' present and future needs. Residence ideals underlined this constantly. For example, all parents approved of children, or at least one child, living in or within "helping" range and co-residence was seen as a desirable condition for implementation of mutual aid principles.



Cultural prescriptions do not appear in family histories as clear-cut principles or models to be followed. On the contrary, they imply a careful and very often complicated combination of different factors which have to be weighed and considered. Furthermore, socio-economic or even demographic conditions of the household can lead to more emphasis being placed on one or another of the valued factors. We can illustrate this by looking at the way three distinct types of families adopted a differential understanding and combination of relevant family values.

(A) In wealthy land-owning peasant families, the main aim of family union was patrimonial solidarity and the institution of the *casa* (the "house"), linked to a stem family system, was the framework in which this was accomplished. Family strategies were based on continuity in time and children (and marriage) were thus central to the household's articulation of patrimony and long-term reproduction. In the farmers' own words, priority was given to "assuring, or securing" (*segurar*) the future of the "house" and family life revolving round the latter. They sought to encourage the permanence of the house, mutual aid and work obligations between the generations, the subordination of individual and conjugal strategies to the corporate whole. One child "must" stay on in the household to ensure continuity. The solution of the "favored heir" (preferably a male heir), whereby the parents effected a pre-mortem transfer granting him the third share (*terço*), was the approved norm.

The emphasis on maintaining the patrimony more or less intact did not preclude other meanings of intergenerational bonds. The heir was obliged to take care of his aging parents "in sickness and in health" and this "assurance" of care was part and parcel of the preferential partibility norm. Nevertheless, family histories showed that the male heirs were chosen first and foremost for their professional qualities and that parents, conscious of this priority, often foresaw that the heir might fail in his caring duties. In that case, they sometimes inserted a clause in the granting of the third share, entitling themselves to a permanent living-in servant. Alternatively, they took advantage of the fact that they still held on to some of the patrimony to bring into the house a poorer relative or a godchild who would then become the recipient of the remaining patrimony.

In the 1930s and 1940s the preferential partibility norm did not rule out partibility in these families. The equal rights of all offspring to inheritance of the patrimony were always stressed. However, the term "equality" usually took on a specific meaning: farmers considered the rights of the "other" children not so much in terms of absolute material equality (a field for each, a piece of linen for each, etc.) but rather in terms of "equality of opportunity and of satisfaction." Each child should be given the opportunity to setting himself or herself up in an equivalent social position, be it through marriage, emigration or alternative professions. In other words, the original rights of all offspring were recognized but conditioned by the familial priorities of maintaining the "house."

(B) If we turn to poorer peasant families, such as sharecroppers, family cohesion and mutual aid were also strongly stressed. On the other hand, the ideal of maintaining a family patrimony intact or transferring the farm through a patrilineal line was practically absent. In this region, sharecropper farms frequently changed hands, making it difficult to foresee the conditions of transmission. In households that farmed the richer farms, sons would sometimes be encouraged to stay on and

marry in the household. However, the majority of sharecroppers farmed small farms and paid very high rents, barely making a living for themselves and their children. In the latter families, children were sometimes sent into service among the rich bourgeois families and adult sons were encouraged to try their fortune elsewhere, by emigrating or finding a farm of their own to work. Individual life histories recall this constant "restart" of family life among the poorer peasants: couples would start off on a small farm, very often change onto a better farm, and try desperately to save up to build a house of their own and buy a plot of land. They often succeeded in doing this rather late in life and then retired alone into a home of their own. Widowed and/or disabled, they were usually taken in by one of their married children or looked after by those who lived nearby or an unmarried daughter.

Family solidarity principles were centered here on mutual aid and the maximization of labor force. If the parents happened to be on a large farm and needed labor force, a child about to marry could be persuaded to live on, work and marry into the household in order to "help" parents temporarily before moving on. Extension and co-residence of couples were approved of in order to respond to labor, service or lodging needs of either generation. In the words of these peasants, living together could be important in order "to *organize* family life." In the same way, any patrimony accumulated during the life course was seen as a means of ensuring mutual aid principles. The norm was that property should be divided equally (absolute equality) among the children so that all of them contributed to looking after their parents. Also, the granting of the third share was approved of primarily as a form of compensation in case one child took on all the caring responsibilities. Daughters were the preferred heirs as regards caring responsibilities and so this "functional succession," as opposed to the above mentioned "patrimonial succession," was nearly always carried out through a matrilineal line.

(C) Agricultural wage-laborer families rarely possessed any property of their own and usually rented a house with or without a small vegetable plot. In these households, labor and geographical mobility were very early on an integral part of the individual life-course. Whereas sharecroppers were able to keep and feed most of their children and then employ their labor force intensively during adolescence, laborer parents sent their children out to work at a very early age. Thus Zulmira, born in 1933, recalls how she and her sisters were all sent away from home to be domestic servants in town or in rich peasant families. Placed in service at the age of seven, she remembers how useless it was to think about going home because it would mean going hungry.

Adult male out-migration, with a view to "trying their luck" somewhere else, was often attempted. In the words of these laborers, when it was hard to "organize life" in the village, you had to "go out and do something about life." Permanent celibacy rates among women were particularly high in this social group and the formation of lone-mother households through the birth of illegitimate children or the prolonged absence of the father were two frequent patterns of domestic life.

Access to marriage and to long-term conjugal bonds being difficult and spasmodic, family life was more diversified in terms of kin composition: often matri-centered, sometimes centered on the couple, other times centered on the co-residence of celibate brothers and sisters, other times on the bonds existing between solitary

women. Celibate mothers sometimes left their children with grandmothers or grandparents to go and earn money in town; very often they set up household with their parents and cared for them in their old age.

In this context, mutual aid relations were not viewed in strictly "familial terms." Close kin—sons and daughters, husbands and fathers—often had to leave in order to make a living. Norms of assistance, in spite of the distance separating close kin, tried to bring back resources to those who remained in the village. For example, unmarried children in town, like those who lived with their parents, were obliged to send part of their salary home. But those who remained often had to fend for themselves, and more or less expected it. Thus mutual aid between neighboring households, between solitaries with no kin relationship, often replaced mutual aid within the family. Exchange relations were also sometimes established between rich and poor households. Thus two spinster agricultural wage-laborers left their small house to a wealthy peasant farmer who lived next door in exchange for food and care in their old age. Single women usually fared better than single men, as services and food circulated within feminine networks.

When these networks failed, local charity, organized on the basis of households, channelled some food to the more destitute households. Rich peasant women recall the weekly organization of bags filled with potatoes or bread which certain "poor" came to fetch on such and such a day. Patrimony, when it happened to exist, was viewed as a kind of old age insurance for those who possessed it: it could be sold or exchanged in return for food and care.

Oral history materials and analysis of confessional rolls thus suggest that a variety of family forms co-existed in the communities under study in the recent past. The stem family, associated with preferential partibility and a corporate household system, predominated socially and culturally amongst the wealthy peasants. "Complex" families were present in other social groups but the patterns and social meanings of complexity were not always the same. In sharecropper households, complexity was actuated by familism based on mutual aid and the maximization of labor energies. This did not always lead to long-term co-habitation of three generations. In agricultural laborer households, complex families integrated other types of kin composition. It was rare to find two co-residing couples and more likely to find lone-parent families living with a couple, with a relative or with another lone-parent family. In other words, the complex household could follow from diverse family dynamics.

#### RECENT EVOLUTION OF THE COMMUNITIES AND PRESENT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PEASANT STEM FAMILY

New constraints on family life emerged during the last three decades. Factories spread nearer or into the communities under study, calling upon men, women and children to fill their ranks. Transport facilities also opened up working opportunities in distant parishes, creating intense day-to-day migrations between the more agricultural parishes and the more industrialized areas. Emigration to north European industrialized countries (mainly France, Germany and, more recently, Switzerland) gave non-qualified wage-laborers, both agricultural and industrial,

easier opportunities to migrate. Above all, these changes enabled a huge transfer of the working population from the agricultural sector to the industrial sector (primarily labor-intensive, low-wage industries). New demands were also placed gradually on farming activities, in attempts to create a more "modernized," market-producing sector. Tractors and state subsidies appeared in the sixties and milk production for the market was highly incentivated in the seventies. The 1960s and 1970s also increased the integration of families in social security, health and educational institutions. Old-age pensions for all professional groups were created after the revolution (25th of April 1974) and a new state-run hospital was built in Vila Nova de Famalicão in the seventies. A private secondary school existed in Famalicão since the nineteen-forties but state-run secondary schools were opened in the sixties. Social and political life also changed substantially with the revolution: the leading citizens (rich landowners, wealthy peasant farmers) who had controlled local institutions during the dictatorship were challenged; and new protagonists—qualified industrial workers with trade-union experience, industrial entrepreneurs, liberal professionals—appeared on the scene.

In this setting, the power and the prestige of the wealthy peasant family declined considerably. Agriculture itself, already despised in the past as a wage-laboring activity, became devalued as a subsistence activity and only valued in the form of profit-earning, mechanized farming. Stable wage-labor in the industrial and service sector, as well as upward mobility through education, began to dominate the aspirations of the poorer families.

Analysis of the data on social structure and household composition in the eighties reflect these transformations. Social differentiation continues to be strongly marked but is patterned along new occupational categories. Thus agricultural wage-laborers have diminished drastically (4.2 percent of total individual class locations in Lemenhe in 1981) but qualified and non-qualified industrial wage-laborers represent 6.6 percent and 24.3 percent of total locations. Other class locations with links to land and agriculture have seen their relative importance reduced. In Lemenhe, for example, wealthy peasant farmers only represent 1.8 percent and poor peasant farmers 7.7 percent of total locations. On the contrary, the proportion (5.9 percent) of part-time farmers has increased slightly, the most common situation being that of small or medium landowners or sharecroppers who also work as industrial wage-laborers outside the farm. Certain artisans such as basket-makers, weavers and shoemakers have disappeared but independent workers and small entrepreneurs (carpenters, builders, masons, seamstresses, hairdressers, tradesmen) represent 13 percent of total locations. Some new socio-occupational categories are cropping up: non-qualified wage-laborers in the service sector (5.9 percent), jobs linked to technical and intermediary professions in the teaching and health sectors (2.6 percent), large industrial entrepreneurs (1.3 percent).<sup>9</sup>

In a context of demographical growth (Lemenhe had 708 residents in 1940, 873 in 1960 and 1175 in 1981; Gondifelos had 1215 residents in 1940, 1486 in 1960 and 1857 in 1981), the relative percentages of simple family households (71.8 percent in Lemenhe in 1981 and 72.6 percent in Gondifelos in 1985) have not changed greatly. The proportion of solitaries (6.7 percent in Lemenhe and 3.5 percent in Gondifelos) and the proportion of no family households (1.3 percent in Lemenhe



and 2.1 percent in Gondifelos) have diminished, while the proportions of complex families have risen slightly (18.9 percent in Lemenhe and 19.8 percent in Gondifelos). Multiple families represent 6.3 percent in Lemenhe and 9.4 percent in Gondifelos.

Complex families exist as in the past in different social classes and still represent a very important proportion of wealthy peasant households (40 percent in Lemenhe and 50 percent in Gondifelos). However, similar past and present proportions do not mean that nothing has altered in the composition of these stem-family households. On the contrary, a closer look at the internal composition of wealthy peasant households shows two important changes. In the first place, multiple wealthy peasant families continue to be extended vertically but not laterally. Brothers and sisters no longer stay on, celibate, in the favored heir's household. Secondly, these households are no longer augmented by living-in servants. Until the 1950s, the majority of wealthy peasant households had servants. In Lemenhe, in 1946, two-thirds of wealthy peasant households are shown with servants and the latter were also registered in practically all bourgeois households, in a few sharecropper households and in some of the better-off petty bourgeois and part-time farmer households. Most households had one or two, usually young, servants but two very wealthy, multiple family, peasant households, had as many as five and seven, both men and women, living-in servants. As a result of these tendencies, as well as a lower fertility rate, the mean household size in wealthy peasant families has declined considerably, from 8.3 in 1946 to 4.0 in 1981.

Linkages between individual and family life dynamics in peasant stem families have also undergone substantial changes. We shall try to capture some of these changes by looking at the characteristic features of individual life histories in two different generations: those born between 1910 and 1925, who became adults in the thirties and forties, and those born between 1940 and 1955, who became adults in the sixties and seventies.

#### LIFE TRANSITIONS AND FAMILY DYNAMICS: THE ELDER GENERATION

Recollections of childhood and daily life in the 1920s and 1930s are dominated by references to work and collective effort. Most interviewees barely mention childhood after the age of five or six years old. Real life began when they were given serious working responsibilities, at an age when education meant participating constantly and neverendingly in multiple agricultural and domestic tasks. Taking the cattle out to graze is always mentioned as one of the important moments of contact in young childhood with responsibility, work and nature. Before that, interviewees recall that adults had very little time for them and usually left them at home with a young maid or the eldest daughter. Thus Maria, born in 1923, recalls being allowed to play around until the age of five, then being called upon to do small domestic tasks and run errands, then participating fully in agricultural tasks. There was no school<sup>10</sup> yet in her village, but Maria went to catechism classes and sewing lessons for a few years. For those living in Lemenhe, however, a primary school already existed. Joaquim, born in 1915, recalls that his father, a rich peasant farmer, took pride in sending his children (eleven in all) to school. They all went except the eldest sister but not all of them did the primary school certificate. In

other words, wealthy families wanted their offspring to read, write and do accounts but school attendance was often irregular: boys went more often and stayed on for more years, elder daughters were often kept at home to help. Strictness, immediate and non-questioning obedience, threats of physical violence (father kept a whip but mother only slapped) and hard work are recalled as being part of a "good education" which parents sought to minister. The elder children who were good agricultural workers and obedient were compensated as they grew up with better food and certain preferential treatment. They would be allowed to accompany their parents to the fair to learn how to do business and they would be given authority over their younger brothers and sisters. Joaquim, for example, remembers with certain misgivings being ordered about by his elder brother when he was already in his thirties but still unmarried. Status differences were thus created early on and this usually contributed to a gradual outline of heirship strategies: farmer sons preferred by parents learned to expect patrimonial succession, the others who came later on or had difficulty in gaining access to preference, would think of migrating or obtaining money to marry or to set up trade. Parents sometimes stimulated differential opportunities by sending one son to be a priest or by buying a shop in order to set up another son. According to interviews, however, they always made it clear that "they wouldn't take the yoke off the children to bend under it themselves." Adult children worked "for the house" for many years without expecting retribution. They describe the "passion" for work as a guiding impulse and also mention the fact that nothing was expected because "later on" the patrimony would be theirs. On the other hand, parents are described as feeling "obliged" towards their children only when the latter approached the age for marriage, in their late twenties or early thirties. At this stage, an elder farmer son would sometimes be given a field of his own to sow and reap. If, however, he intended to marry and his parents had other farmer sons and thought it too soon to grant the third share, an elder farmer son would sometimes be handed some fields and helped to set up a "house" of his own. This was what happened in the Ferreiro household. Manuel, born in 1911, was the youngest of eight children, five girls and three boys. Two sisters married and went to Brasil, two sisters married farmers from nearby parishes, the eldest son was a farmer and described as his father's "right hand." He stayed on the farm until his late twenties, then married a small farmer's only daughter and was also given some land to till by his parents. The second son migrated to Brasil at the age of sixteen, to work on the plantations; he never returned. Meanwhile Manuel became his father's main help and was promised the third share. His father became ill however when Manuel was eighteen. Before dying, he donated the third share to his wife so that she, four years later, could donate Manuel with the third share when he married a very wealthy farmer's daughter with a handsome dowry in money. Manuel lived with his family in the "young people's apartment": a large bedroom with two small adjoining bedrooms upstairs and a kitchen on the ground floor; his mother and an unmarried sister occupied the other side of the upstairs house (a kitchen, two bedrooms, a parlor). Except for his elder brother, all the other siblings agreed to receive money as their legitimate shares.

Transition from dependence in the house to independent (or semi-independent) family life was thus very contingent on the economic, demographic and interactional dynamics of the household. Parents sought to combine the goal of *continuity* with *precaution* as to the person and the right time to establish a favored heir inside the house. If there were many children, the transition was often delayed. If there was only one farmer son and parents were willing and rich enough, marriage and separate apartments and economies inside the house could be organized without much postponement. António, born in 1911, had only one sister. Having given proof of excellent farming and organizational qualities as well as consideration for his parents, the latter agreed to negotiate his marriage and his taking over of the farm when he was twenty-eight. António married a rich peasant neighbor's daughter and his sister married the same neighbor's eldest son. This son was given the third share upon his marriage and his wife (António's sister) brought money and forest-land. António thus kept almost all the patrimony of the house. He and his parents had separate kitchens but often ate together in António's kitchen. The parents maintained usufruct rights over the house and the property. According to António, they did this for precaution's sake and "to maintain the power in their hands."

When, as frequently happened, the house had more than one son working on the land, severe conflict between siblings sometimes broke out. António's brother-in-law had no problem with his younger brother because the latter was promised a good inheritance by an uncle and aunt with no children. On the contrary, in the Martim household, the two younger brothers were not very pleased with the parents' idea to favor the elder brother. One of them, a carpenter living in a nearby parish, tried to negotiate a larger share in money. Another farmer brother (born in 1917), considered by his parents and the neighbors to be less responsible and capable than his brothers, was led by his elder brother and his parents to accept a field and money as his legitimate share. The "arrangement" (*arranjo*), as farmers call it, was carried out but the brother in question moved out and cut off relations with his elder brother's household from then on. Migration was difficult in the late thirties, so he became a small farmer and day laborer. Some brothers in a similar situation would decide to stay on celibate in the favored heir's household but this decision was also contingent on the relationship between siblings.

The values of patrimonial continuity, precaution, parental authority and preference for male heirship led to a general pattern of late marriage, masculine heirship (not necessarily the eldest) and preferential partibility among wealthy farmers. Negotiation between these factors as well as consideration of other constraints (number and sex of children, alternative opportunities, size of patrimony, etc.) could lead to slightly different family dynamics. For example, daughters with no brothers and those who married them often escaped the late marriage pattern. Thus Noémia, born in 1916, had two elder brothers who were drowned. She was nineteen and her husband twenty-four when they married with both parents' approval. Their marriage "joined up" two large farms, permitting both continuity and enlargement. Her parents demanded that the husband move into the bride's house and this decision led to closer living arrangements: Noémia's mother did the cooking and everyone ate at the same table in the parents' kitchen. According to Noémia, this is easier when the two women are mother and daughter

used to sharing a kitchen. Exaggerated precaution or the inferior size of patrimony could also lead to common living arrangements. Parents were sometimes afraid that the farm was not large enough to support two kitchens, in which case they preferred to maintain authority and control not only over the farm but also over domestic arrangements and expenditure.

Married life of wealthy peasant farmers is described by men and women in terms of hard agricultural work and a permanent effort to "defend" the patrimony and subsistence production for the family. Early married life is very often dominated by the necessity to save up money to finish paying off the legitimate shares of other children or by the effort to enlarge or better a farm by buying a few more fields. Women describe their life as being simultaneously "in" and "out" of the house. They were responsible for housework and cooking and had to give orders in the home. But they valued and often preferred working in the fields. Many of them refer that "I never liked being a prisoner in the house. What I really liked was working in the fields." In the latter context, women had some important responsibilities: the labor processes (cutting grass to feed the animals, hoeing the maize or bean fields) carried out preferentially by women agricultural laborers were controlled by the mistresses of the house, even if "outside work" as a whole was under the authority of the master of the house.

Marriage brought children and, for most of the women interviewed, at least seven or eight successive pregnancies. Couples aspired to having quite a few children but not too many. As Manuel (born in 1918) put it, "if you had a lot of children, it was easier to do the work. It was important to have several children. One was nothing, it had to be at least three or four. Because if one of them was to stay, to give continuity, there was always one who did not like farming, another who did, a daughter who got married, another who was too weak to work and so forth. Then there comes a time when you feel tired and you don't want to see things going to ruin, you want continuity." Procreation practices stressed this ideal of having various children but also tried to impose certain limitations. However, the ways and means of limitation seem to have been few and access to information scarce and far apart. Thus most women say that all they attempted to do was to space pregnancies by breast-feeding for a long time. They say that this did not always work, as they began working in the fields shortly after giving birth. They also mention the fact that they did not feel it was right to "avoid children" as the church preached strongly against it. In some cases, men knew how to exercise birth control and did so with or without their wives consent. For example Emília (born in 1910 and married when she was nineteen), having almost died in childbirth with her first baby, was never against it. Her husband had a brother who was a doctor and was "more informed" on those matters. Emília and her husband had three children.

Later life transitions, such as widowhood or the gradual passing on of farming responsibilities, do not seem to have represented drastic modifications in daily life. Family histories suggest that parents took advantage of parental authority and adult children's dependency on family patrimony to organize this transition in ways that did not create a sudden and complete reversal of family roles and statuses. Favored heirs were promised preferential partibility but were made to wait. If parents were over seventy or handicapped by the time of succession, the granting of the third



share might coincide with the partition of all the patrimony, i.e. with a kind of retirement of the parents from activity, even if they maintained usufruct rights. Very often, however, the naming and the "securing" (through the donation of the third share) of the heir did not coincide with the final partition and parents kept quite a strong hold on patrimony and power almost until their death. In the case of Manuel (above mentioned, born in 1911) and his wife Ana, their eldest son was given the third share when he married in 1958 but the final partition of the patrimony was only carried out thirty years later. In the 1960s, the son lived in the separate apartments and worked one part of the farm but his father, mother and two unmarried sisters worked on the rest of the land and also received payments in kind from the favored heir. Finally, in order to prevent the slightest division of the farm in his lifetime, Manuel stipulated in the final partition that the children who inherited land were forbidden to sell it while he was alive. In this manner, he more or less obliged his four other children (one boy, an emigrant in Brasil, and four married girls; three other children died during their first year of life) to rent any land they inherited to the favored heir. At the age of seventy-nine, Manuel and his wife still tilled their own vegetable plot, tended a separate chicken run, and cooked in their own kitchen. Manuel never worked under his son's orders but his wife sometimes helped the younger generation in the fields. With modern milk production introduced by his son, the farm was prosperous. Manuel disapproved however of certain changes: his son and daughter-in-law took holidays in the summer and were more lenient towards their children; Manuel and his wife could only shrug their shoulders in disapproval.

So succession on the farm during the 1950s and the 1960s did not encounter very different cultural and social conditions from those of the previous generation. This is no longer true in the 1970s and the 1980s. As we shall see, those who pass on the reins of the farm in the 1980s encounter new constraints and different societal values. The farming profession is now considered to be "dirty" even when it is profit-earning, local educational and employment opportunities tempt potential successors and the ideology of absolute "equality" makes the donation of the third share difficult to implement as such.

#### LIFE TRANSITIONS AND FAMILY DYNAMICS: THE YOUNGER GENERATION

Memories of early childhood and adolescence for those born in the 1940s and early 1950s is very much dominated by the educational patterns we saw in the previous generation. Strictness, fear of adults, almost no spare time and constant work obligations defined daily life. Thus Alice, born in 1944, remembers that her parents never let her go to bed very early. Her main chore after supper was to spin flax and if she complained of sleepiness, her mother would encourage her to spin a bit more before going to bed.

Schooling was generalized, however, and, in this generation, all the children spent some years at school and the majority did the primary school certificate. In fact, education outside the home became, during this generation's adolescence, an important lever of change. Pressures worked both ways. Some parents tried to create alternative opportunities for sons or daughters by encouraging them to

continue schooling; others deterred their children on the basis that they had plenty of work to do at home but found themselves face to face with adolescents with poor motivations for agricultural work. José, born in 1948, was given the opportunity to travel by train to the high school in Famalicão; he didn't take it and became a full-time farmer. J., born in 1946, wanted to study but his father refused to give him the opportunity; J. became a part-time farmer and married a primary teacher who had nothing to do with farming. In other words, family patterns and life experiences in the 1960s and 1970s are criss-crossed by new expectations and potentially divergent careers and values. Admittedly, professional divergence also existed in the past. But the new opportunities in the present imply making choices earlier on in the life course (i.e. at the end of six years of obligatory schooling) and seem easier to take advantage of through individual effort and attainment rather than through the donation of family capital.

Adolescence in these families in the 1960s and 1970s is thus described in terms of various pulling forces. On the one hand, children's labor force and presence on the farm is needed more than ever because servants and cheap wage laborers have disappeared. Ana, born in 1951, was taught by her father to tend the vines (one of the few strictly masculine tasks in the past) and was sent as a young girl to take her tractor's licence. On the other hand, children also compare their situation, and not always favorably, with the situation of those employed by industry or with a professional career. On medium-sized properties where there is little capital to modernize the farm in order to turn it into a "money-earning" enterprise, children quickly turn to employment. On richer farms, adolescents are attracted by mechanization in the late 1960s and encourage their parents into modern milk production. They still speak in terms of "having worked for the house" because no regular salary is expected but they are now compensated by their parents with the symbols of modern affluence: motorcycles, money to spend, rather than a field to cultivate or a calf to rear.

Linkages to family life on the farm became more varied. Those who "studied" did less agricultural work, those who found a job continued to help in their spare time and the family saw this as an obligation. But they ended up by doing the less qualified, routine jobs. Girls who "studied" helped only occasionally in the fields; instead, they took over domestic work from their mother so that she could spend more time with father in the fields. Most sons who did not expect succession in the house took advantage of renewed migration opportunities or local employment opportunities. Armindo, born in 1945, liked farming and worked for his parents until he was called up for military service. When he returned at the age of 22, he decided to look for work in a factory that had just opened in a neighboring parish. According to Armindo, his prospects at home were not good: an elder brother was his father's right hand, two other brothers had migrated but the parents still had two daughters who were studying, two other farmer sons and a youngest son who was also studying. Armindo became a textile worker and the brother next to him became a driver in the local cooperative; the youngest farmer son became the favored heir. Armindo married a wealthy peasant's daughter who inherited a small house and a field. The couple became part-time farmers. However, when Armindo eventually inherited his legitimate share, he bought another field and then rented



more land. He left his much detested job and became a full-time farmer. With a loan from the state, he enlarged his house and mechanized his farm. In 1985, he had more debts than his brother who stayed on in the house but was running a profit-earning farm. In summary, life experiences of wealthy farmer children in the 1960s and 1970s integrated wider contacts and insertions in society: schooling and daily trips to the local town, hospital care in Famalicão, short term migrations within the country, access to loans and regular farming expertise outside the community.

Transition to economic independence and marriage for those who left the home farm thus became easier to organize in a local context. For those who wished to stay on the home farm, however, the transition was still difficult to implement and there were new constraints. Succession dynamics and values were gradually changing. Parents still had several children to choose from to establish succession on the farm, the norm of the favored heir was preferred and the third share endorsed by law. Nevertheless, local criticism of this practice became strong and the pressures exerted by the other children toward absolute equality seen as legitimate. Parental authority and the wish for continuity no longer seemed to justify this practice in the public eye and some parents were forced to divide the farm more than they had wished. They complain today that children are no longer obedient and feel that farming is no longer what it was. Some present-day successors still received the third share but others, at a late stage in life, had to make do with their legitimate share, loans and the renting of land to be able to enlarge their farm. Thus António, born in 1938, was promised the third share but never received it. To be able to continue milk farming, he asked his brothers and sisters to let him keep the machinery and a share in arable land only; the house (the building) went to a younger brother, an industrial worker, and care for the aging mother was divided between all the children. The younger generation of parents born in the 1940s and 1950s has attempted to integrate new values. In the 1980s, they still defend "continuity" and the norm wherein "one child at least should stay on in the house." Nevertheless, they also envisage a possible discontinuity of family life on the farm and justify continuity on the basis of new values: the successor should be encouraged to stay on if he is motivated to do so and shows a "vocation" for agriculture. In other words, parental authority and the goal of continuity should not override vocation and motivation. This new understanding of the succession process has encountered certain difficulties. In the eighties, children usually finished obligatory schooling at the age of eleven and their "vocation" (to leave or to continue schooling) was thus decided upon very early on. In spite of the norm prescribing a certain respect for the child's will, parents often opted for keeping the elder son on the farm rather than risking non-continuity. In other words, in spite of a new social significance of children, parents still tend to assert the family's needs over the individual's motivations. They feel justified in doing so by the fact that employment in the region is poorly paid and poorly qualified; in other words, the standard of living, albeit "dirty," of "modern" farmers compares favorably with the standard of living of most salary workers.

On the other hand, the number of potential successors has diminished. This makes it easier to keep the patrimony intact but more difficult to apply the vocational norm. For example, David and his wife, born in 1947 and 1952, had

two boys. The eldest liked farming but also liked school and wished to continue. However, the parents decided to keep him on the farm as successor because they believed his brother, a weak child, could never become a farmer. They hope to send the latter on to secondary school in order to give him an alternative professional career. In this context, parents still envisage "favoring" the son who stays on the farm but they hope to carry this out without openly handing over the third share. Farmers intend to "help" or support the farmer son, primarily through gifts in money and machinery, instead of "securing" him with the third share. This process implies a new form of transition on the farm. Farmer sons can become their parents' sharecroppers as young adults but will only acquire property rights when the final partition is decided rather than at marriage. Those who have more than one farmer son sometimes envisage handing the farm over to a society formed by partnership between two brothers so as not to favor only one son.

New succession dynamics are having some effect on marriage patterns. Both the younger and the older generations consider social and professional homogamy to be important in the running of a farm but free choice is also more strongly stressed than in the past. In practice however, especially in cases where parents have more or less forced a son to stay on the farm, parents feel they have no right left to influence this other major life-course decision; as a result, some of the younger successors are marrying non-farm girls, bringing internal differentiation and new interactions into the farm couple.

Couples now desire and have two or a maximum of three children and wish to give them more "privileges" than they themselves had. Children are taught all the tasks on the farm at an early age but are not forced to work neverendingly as their parents did in childhood. Education techniques are also envisaged differently. Parents feel more responsible for young children and try to be more "understanding" and less severe. For example, physical violence is considered necessary to enforce sanctions but not as part and parcel of day-to-day parent-child relationships.

Married life on the farm in the 1970s and 1980s was very much centered on the couple and a joint working, modernization and management effort. Mechanization enabled farms to dispense with numerous permanent agricultural laborers but threw family members closer together as working partners. Once again, modern values such as autonomy and motivation, older values such as hard work and continuity, and present constraints in terms of shortages of labor force, have to be negotiated and reconciled. For example, some couples would like to be more autonomous from the older generation; but they depend ever more closely, for day-to-day problems like child-care in early married life, on the elderly living-in generation. Nevertheless, the impulse for greater individual and conjugal autonomy is strong. In this setting, some families think it reasonable to build a separate house for the successor, near or alongside the other house. Others prefer to adopt the older patterns of contiguous apartments and justify stricter intergenerational dependence on the basis of mutual aid and "making life easier" principles. The various solutions are accepted, so long as they are implemented by mutual consent. In other words, family patterns and solutions are seen to derive more and more from negotiation and agreement rather than responding to a predominant ultimate goal of maintaining the house and the patrimony for group survival.



## CONCLUDING REMARKS

The foregoing study of family life in two communities describes a small fragment of Minho rural society, strongly influenced by patterns of social, economic and demographic changes during the last fifty years. Results show that the stem family system as a regional and one and only pattern was not to be found in the Baixo Minho. The stem family was however the predominant family form amongst *wealthy peasant farmers*, being based on a preference for impartibility and a favored heirship system, long-term co-residence of different generations and subordination of individual and conjugal aspirations to the goal of maintaining a family property intact. Results also show that a variety of family forms coexisted in rural communities and that socioeconomic variables were determinant factors underlying differential family norms and practices. Finally, analysis of the wealthy peasant stem family in time reveals that family dynamics have evolved from a farm family system orientated by self-sufficiency and "favored" succession to a farm family system underlining profit-earning and "supported" succession. Continuity is still valued but takes into account new values and resources: more varied employment opportunities, children's vocational tendencies and motivations, notions of justice stressing norms of absolute equality in a context where wealth and subsistence do not depend primarily on maintaining the family farm intact through the generations.

## NOTES

1. In the parish of Montaria, complex families were sixteen percent of the total; in the parish of Âncora, they were twenty percent.
2. For a summary of the evidence, see Feijó and Nunes 1986.
3. Property during the latter nineteenth century and until the overthrow of the Salazar regime in the 1970s was transmitted according to the Civil Code of 1867. This code called for the equal division of property among all heirs but made a distinction between the *legítima* (two thirds of the assets that had to be divided among heirs in the direct line of ascent or descent) and the third share (*terço*), the remaining third that could be disposed of freely by the legator.
4. The data referring to family patterns was presented by Medeiros in 1982, at the conference on "Les Campagnes portugaises de 1870 à 1930," Paris, Centre Culturel Portugais. See also Moreira da Silva 1976.
5. It was possible to determine the class location of 79 percent of the adult population over eighteen years old. Individual class location was determined on the basis of two indicators: profession and occupational status.
6. It was possible to determine the class location of 69 percent of the adult population over eighteen years old.
7. 86 percent of households in Lemenhe in 1946 were classified according to the class location of the head of household.
8. Classification of households according to kin composition was based on the Hammel-Laslett classification scheme but allowed for a more detailed subdivision of households within each main household type (people living alone, no family households, single family households, extended family households, multiple family households).
9. In Lemenhe, in 1981, 75.8 percent of class locations of the adult population were obtained. Apart from the class locations mentioned in the text, there were also 1.9 percent

of "bourgeois" class locations and 0.6 percent of "semi-independent worker" locations (workers who have a job in the industrial or agricultural sector and also do independent work).

10. Primary schooling became obligatory in 1911 but the number of schools and teachers per thousand children were very low for several decades. In 1920, only 23.5 percent of all Portuguese children between 7 and 11 years were registered in primary school (Mónica 1978, p. 361); in 1930, 29.3 percent and in 1940, 36.7 percent. In 1940, in the municipality of Vila Nova de Famalicão, there were only 10 teachers per thousand children between 7-13 years old (Mónica 1978, p. 365).

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