

Jose Fangueiro - Oral History

Date: October 27, 2012

Location: Clube dos Pescadores (Fishermen's Club), New Bedford

Interviewer: Gloria de Sá

Interviewee: José Fangueiro

GLORIA: My name is Gloria de Sá, as I said. Today is Saturday, October 27, and we are here at the United Fishermen Club to interview Mr.... Would you mind saying your name so it may be recorded?

JOSÉ: José Fangueiro.

GLORIA: Mr. Fangueiro, could you please tell me your date and place of birth?

JOSE: October 21, 1945.

GLORIA: So, you had a birthday recently?

JOSE: Yes, I did.

GLORIA: And where were you born?

JOSE: I was born in Matosinhos, Portugal; Matosinhos.

GLORIA: And now you live...

JOSE: In the United States. I live in New Bedford. At 61 61 Seaview Terrace, in New Bedford.

GLORIA: How long have you lived there?

JOSE: How long have I...?

GLORIA: Lived in that house?

JOSE: I've lived in this house for 10 years, 12 years.

GLORIA: Twelve years... And is it yours or do you rent?

JOSE: It's mine, the house is mine.

GLORIA: And, currently, what is your occupation?

JOSE: I don't do anything; I'm unemployed. As you say in English, I'm retired. Retiree.

GLORIA: Retiree. And you have been retired for six years?

JOSE: Retired for six years, for sure.

GLORIA: How many years of schooling do you have?

JOSE: Fourth grade.

GLORIA: Are you an American citizen?

JOSE: I am an American citizen.

GLORIA: Do you speak English?

JOSE: Not very well. Very little.

GLORIA: So, you speak Portuguese at home?

JOSE: At home we all speak Portuguese.

GLORIA: Could you tell me..., speak about your household? Who lives with you? Who...

JOSE: It's me and my wife, but I have two daughters. One lives in Boston and the other lives here in New Bedford; her husband is also a fisherman.

GLORIA: Could you tell me your wife's name?

JOSE: Marcolina Fanguero, that is, Marcolina Pereira. Her married name is Fanguero.

GLORIA: And your wife is still working or is she retired?

JOSE: No, my wife does not work; she is retired.

GLORIA: And when she worked what did she do?

JOSE: She worked in a fish processing plant, but a large part of her life she was taking care of my daughters.

GLORIA: So, you told me that you have two daughters. One lives near Boston...

JOSE: One lives near Boston and the other lives here in New Bedford.

GLORIA: What's the name of the one who lives near Boston?

JOSE: Alice Maria, Alice Maria Pereira Fanguero.

GLORIA: And she works there or...?

JOSE: She works, she works there. To be honest, I don't even know what her job is, but I know she has a pretty good job.

GLORIA: She studied?

JOSE: She studied. She has, how do you say it? She has high school.

GLORIA: High school or did she go to college?

JOSE: College.

GLORIA: Do you know what she studied?

JOSE: *Business administration.*

GLORIA: Ok. She is married?

JOSE: She is single.

GLORIA: Single. And how about the one who lives here? You told me...

JOSE: The one who lives here also studied, also has higher education.

GLORIA: College?

JOSE: College and also a degree in business *association*. Business.

GLORIA: And what is her name?

JOSE: Bridget Fangueiro.

GLORIA: She was born here?

JOSE: That one was born here.

GLORIA: You told me she is married and her husband is a fisherman...

JOSE: Her husband is a fisherman.

GLORIA: What is her husband's name?

JOSE: Her husband's name is Manuel Magalhães. He works for Carlos Rafael. He is the skipper of a boat named Hera, Hera.

GLORIA: And she has a little girl?

JOSE: And she has a little girl... I have a granddaughter, a princess.

GLORIA: And now I would like you to tell about your life..., your childhood.

JOSE: My childhood's life began with going to sea at age 14 in Portugal. I was on on the sardine fisheries in Portugal, which is different from the fisheries here in New Bedord. I don't

know a lot about sardine fishing in New Bedford... It existed, but it was different from there. Different way of fishing from what was done there.

GLORIA: How was it there?

JOSE: There it was with Danish seines.

INTERVIEW INTERRUPTED

JOSE: We worked with Danish seines.

GLORIA: We were talking about your childhood. You told me that you went to sea at age 14 to work on the sardine fisheries and that way of fishing was different...

JOSE: From the one here. There we worked with Danish seines and here, according to what I heard because I have no knowledge of that type of fishing here, but I used to hear that they caught sardine with trawls. Trawls, which are different from seines.

GLORIA: What is a Danish seine?

JOSE: The Danish seine is a net that is dropped and the boat goes on a loop until it meets the beginning again. It drops a little boat with three men inside and it goes on a large loop until it gets to the little boat with the three men inside. That's what is called a Danish seine. It was with that kind of net that we caught horse mackerel, blue horse mackerel, sardine, anchovy, and other types of fish.

GLORIA: How many days did you stay at sea? Did you come home every day?

JOSE: In Portugal we would go out in the afternoon and come back the next day in the morning. We would come back the next day in the morning. When I started, we worked Monday to Monday; there were no Saturdays or Sundays off. We would go to sea every day; every single day. And... But we would go and come back every day. And then there was the closure season, the sardine spawning season. This would happen in January. In January the fishery would close to reopen in April. This means that the harvest would start after April. Later on, already in the 1970s, they gave us Saturdays off. But on Sundays we would go to sea at 10:00 PM. We would come back on Saturday morning and would not go back until Sunday night. This was when I was on the sardine fishery. From there I went into the military.

GLORIA: Is that right? So you did it from age 14 to 20, more or less?

JOSE: From age 14 to 19; at age 19 I went into the military. When I left the military I did not want to go back to the sardine fishery; I went into the long haul shipping, but the foreign long haul, not the Portuguese.

GLORIA: Could you tell me what is the "long haul"?

JOSE: The "long haul" are the big ships that transport merchandise. When I say big ships, I'm referring to steamboats or steamers.

GLORIA: Freighters?

JOSE: Freighters. Perfect. I worked on those for two years and then I came to America in 1974.

GLORIA: You said it was a foreign ship, which port did it go out of?

JOSE: I worked on foreign ships. The ones I worked for were all Danish; all from Denmark.

GLORIA: How did you get that job?

JOSE: I got that job through a friend of mine who was working on that ship. They needed a crew member and I had to go. I had to go because I did not have another option; you made a little bit more money [on foreign ships]. I embarked in France because they would not let me go on in Portugal. I went to the consulate in Bordeaux with a passport – the passport that I had – and there they gave me a permit, which was for a Portuguese mariner authorized to work on foreign vessels. In Portugal, that category did not exist, back then. I did that kind of work until I came to America in 1974.

GLORIA: So, you had to go to Bordeaux to the Portuguese consulate?

JOSE: I had to go to the Portuguese Consulate in Bordeaux to apply for a permit to work on foreign ships.

GLORIA: And after did you come back to Portugal or did you embark?

JOSE: And after I embarked there, in France, on that ship.

GLORIA: Which port?

JOSE: The port of Bordeaux.

GLORIA: At the port of Bordeaux itself.

JOSE: Bordeaux.

GLORIA: I would like to go back. You told me that you went fishing for the first time when you were 14. Do you remember your first trip?

JOSE: My first trip... We go in with our eyes closed... But I was born on the waterfront. I was born 50 meters from the sardine beach.¹ My mother was involved in the fisheries; she was a fish buyer. My father was a fisherman. I lived 50 meters from the sardine beach. I was in contact with the fishery and the sea everyday. With the sea...

GLORIA: Back then, what was life like in Matosinhos?

¹ The beach where the fishing boats unload.

JOSE: Life in Matosinhos was very difficult. Life in Matosinhos... They used to say that Matosinhos was Portugal's America. Because... The reason they said that it was Portugal's America was because people from all over Portugal would come to Matosinhos.

GLORIA: To work on the fisheries?

JOSE: To work on the fisheries and to work on stevedoring services because Matosinhos is Leixões.² The port of Matosinhos is the port of Leixões; it's the same thing. For that reason, people from all over Portugal would come to Matosinhos, including *Transmontanos*³ and *Serranos*.⁴ Most businesses in Matosinhos, the stores and the coffee shops, were owned by *Transmontanos* and *Serranos*.

In Matosinhos, back then, when I was growing up, there wasn't... In a ten by ten room (ten feet by ten feet) would live a couple and three or four children. The separation between the couple and the children was a curtain, hung on the wall. And there they would all sleep, in a ten by ten room. They would even rent chicken coops. Chicken coops are small shacks where you raise chickens and people from outside Matosinhos, who needed a roof over their head, would go and ask homeowners if they would rent them their chicken coops to live in. And there they lived, from Monday to Saturday, those who worked in the fisheries, because on Saturday they would go back to their villages, and they they could sleep in their own homes.

GLORIA: Was it mostly men or also couples?

JOSE: Mostly men, but also women.

GLORIA: And what kind of work did the women do?

JOSE: The women worked in the canneries – there were a lot of canneries in Matosinhos – sardine canneries. They also worked on the sardine beach, unloading fish. The fish needed to be salted, you see. To salt, sand – to “sand” the fish with salt so that it would stay stiff.

GLORIA: Interesting. They rubbed it with salt?

JOSE: No. The fish was dumped in a basket or hamper or into a box and as it was being dumped the women would layer it with salt – they would “sand” it. It was not salting it; it was just “sanding” it so as to keep it stiff, so that the fish would not go limp. In Matosinhos, that was the job of the fishermen's wives.

GLORIA: You said that your mother was a fish buyer...

JOSE: She was a fish buyer and was also a fish salter; there were the fish buyers and women who carried boxes of fish.

GLORIA: Where to?

² Leixões is one of Portugal's major seaports, located 4 km north of the mouth of the Douro River, in the municipality of Matosinhos, near the city of Porto.

³ People from the province of Trás-os-Montes.

⁴ People from the province of Beira Alta. Literally, people from the mountains.

JOSE: Onto the trucks of the people who would take it to Braga, Guimarães, to Barcelos... Fish from Matosinhos would be taken all over Portugal and it would get out of there "sanded." Therefore, there were women to carry the boxes and to "sand" it; they were called the salters. I have a sister in Portugal who still does what my mother did; the same thing. She has a salt shack in Portugal, in Matosinhos. Her job is to sell salt and salt the salt, I mean, salt the fish.

GLORIA: Interesting. I thought that now, with ice, they no longer used salt that much.

JOSE: Nowadays they use ice more than salt. I don't know why, but I've heard that it is more profitable. But back then there was no ice; they only used salt.

GLORIA: So, you told me that you completed fourth grade. Did you enter school when you were seven?

JOSE: Seven. School age was seven; you could not start school if you were younger than seven.

GLORIA: So, after you left school, for a few years you could not..., you were not old enough to work...

JOSE: They sent me to a school, to the fishery school, for one year; one year and a bit. But to tell you the truth, I was expelled from that school.

GLORIA: Really!? And where was that school, was it in Lisbon?

JOSE: The fishery school was in Matosinhos. The fisheries school trained individuals to work in the local fisheries. The local fisheries... The Matosinhos Fishery School.

GLORIA: And what did they teach you there?

JOSE: We learned knots. We learned about nets – the gillnets; all kinds of nets. Mostly knots. And about the different types of nets. And to know a little bit about...

GLORIA: Repairing nets?

JOSE: And to know a little bit about fisheries. To tie nets... When I went there they didn't really teach you how to repair nets. It was more about tying knots, and teaching us a little bit about the local fisheries.

GLORIA: And that meant...? Life at sea? Types of fish? How to catch...?

JOSE: How to catch, how to catch the nets to catch the fish; bottom set gillnets, floating gillnets; learning about those nets.

GLORIA: I see, I see. Why were you expelled? You said you were expelled from the fisheries school...

JOSE: I was expelled for absenteeism. I enjoyed playing ball more than attending school. And then a gentleman..., the school's headmaster, saw how much interest I had for the fishery school and kicked me out.

GLORIA: So, during your free time you played ball...?

JOSE: During my free time I wandered. I didn't do anything; I wandered.

GLORIA: And where did you wander?

JOSE: On the beach; always on the sardine beach. Always through the sardine beach. Because I lived 50 meters away from the beach – one hundred meters, let's say, from the beach.

GLORIA: The beach was just for fisheries or did bathers go there as well?

JOSE: Fisheries. The beach was just for fisheries because there was also a beach for bathers. But I, being so connected to the fisheries, did not care much about the bathers' beach.

GLORIA: And what attracted you to the fisheries beach, what were you interested in?

JOSE: The attraction of the fisheries beach was that my father was a fisherman, my parents' brothers were all fishermen – in my father's family they were all fishermen; it was in the blood. Fishing was in my blood. I am the only fisherman in my family; I have five brothers and I am the only fisherman.

GLORIA: How many brothers and sisters do you have altogether?

JOSE: I have four brothers and one sister.

GLORIA: When you and your siblings were young what did you do? Your father was fishing for... every day, right?

JOSE: My father would go fishing every day and my mother would be, would be at the beach.

GLORIA: Also everyday?

JOSE: All day. From morning to night.

GLORIA: Who took care of the home? Who did...?

JOSE: Until my sister was older... It was my sister who took care of the home and us – my brothers. And when my mother came home we would all get together.

GLORIA: Your mother was the one who cooked dinner or was it your sister?

JOSE: My mother cooked dinner and lunch.

GLORIA: Oh, she came home to cook lunch?

JOSE: Before my sister was an adult; before my sister was of age. After my sister became an adult it was my sister who cooked.

GLORIA: And the brothers, what did they do? What was their role?

JOSE: My brothers were raised the way I was. None of them is a fisherman. I have two brothers who became carpenters. One went... He works on things related to fishing, related to fishing as well. And, as I said, my sister is also connected to fishing.

GLORIA: Very well. I asked if you remembered your first fishing trip...

JOSE: It's very dim. It's difficult to remember the first trip because you go amongst 40 men. The sardine boat I went on, it was me and 40, 41 or 42 other men. I even went on a boat where there were 40-45 men onboard. On bed that was a six feet wide, there would be three men sleeping.

GLORIA: So, you were able to sleep... You were not... You were not awake all night...

JOSE: On the way. While travelling we slept. If we steamed five hours, we would sleep five hours. There would be watches... There would be "quarters".

GLORIA: Shifts, right?

JOSE: There were shifts; six men each shift. Six men each shift. And it was... And it was... Per day. Every day, those three men. They were split into... They were required to do those watches every six hours per day.

GLORIA: Six hours. And where did you go fish?

JOSE: We would go fish in Spain, but would come back to Leixões. When we went to Spain we would come back to Leixões. In general, we would fish along the Portuguese coast, down to Lisbon. All the way South until Lisbon. I never went beyond Lisbon. The farthest I went was to Lisbon, never went South of Lisbon. We would go to Aveiro, Figueira, Peniche. And north to Póvoa de Varzim, Viana do Castelo and Laguardia and Vigo in Spain. But when we went to Vigo or Laguardia we could not unload the fish.

GLORIA: You had to unload in Portugal?

JOSE: We were not allowed to unload fish; we could only go there to run away from bad weather. Nothing else.

GLORIA: So... But when you fished, say, off the coast of Póvoa de Varzim, did you unload in Póvoa de Varzim?

JOSE: If we were... If we were... If we were interested in the price being paid there we could go unload in Póvoa de Varzim. Or we could go unload Viana de Castelo, just as we could go to

Aveiro or Figueira, or Peniche; wherever the price was better. But, in general, ninety percent of the time, we landed in Matosinhos – Leixões. Better known as Leixões.

GLORIA: You told me that after having worked as a fisherman you went to... You went into the military. Where did you do your military service? Did you go to the overseas?⁵

JOSE: No. I did all my military service at the military police headquarters in Lisbon. I was there for two years; a little over two years, in Lisbon, at the military police. I was one of the lucky ones who did not have to go overseas, in 1966.

GLORIA: At the time, were you already married or were still single?

JOSE: Single.

GLORIA: When did you get married?

JOSE: In 1974. I got married in April of 1974.

GLORIA: And your wife was also from...?

JOSE: My wife is also from Matosinhos.

GLORIA: And what happened next? Did you come here around that time, was it then that you came here or were you already here?

JOSE: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I got married in 1970, not 1974. In 1970. In April. In April of 1970. That's what it was. Not 74. In 74 I came to the United States.

GLORIA: Tell me how that happened. How was it that you ended up coming here?

JOSE: I came here because my in-laws were here and here you could earn more than in Portugal. Life here was easier than there. Work here was a quarter of what I used to do in Portugal, you made more money... The living was better.

GLORIA: So you came through your in-laws.

JOSE: I came through my in-laws.

GLORIA: So, before you... Your in-laws were already here when you got married?

JOSE: My in-laws were already here when I got married; they were here when I got married. They were here. My wedding took place there. My wife was living there. My wife did not marry me so I could come here. We were living there. We knew each other. We were neighbors. We were neighbors – we went out and got married. Meanwhile my... Before that my in-laws came here.

⁵ In this case, "Overseas" referred to the "Overseas Provinces"—the Portuguese African colonies of Angola, Mozambique, etc., which were fighting a colonial war against Portugal at the time.

GLORIA: And she came as well or...?

JOSE: No. She stayed there, single. Ah! (SHAKES HEAD) She stayed there. No, she stayed there married. My father-in-law was here and my mother-in-law remained there.

GLORIA: And your father-in-law was a fisherman here too?

JOSE: My father-in-law was a fisherman here.

GLORIA: Tell me about your first impressions when you arrived in New Bedford.

JOSE: When I arrived in New Bedford my impressions were the worst there could have been.

GLORIA: How so?

30:00 MINUTE MARK

JOSE: It was a very dark city; the buildings were all dark, very little movement compared to the place I came from... Because the place I came from was a very lively place. As I said, Matosinhos was considered the America of Portugal by those from the outside. A lot of people who are currently living here, people from Figueira, Algarve, Murtosa, they passed through Matosinhos. As a result, Matosinhos was a city..., was a very busy place. When I arrived here and saw the lack of people on the streets, the dark buildings, the closed-in way of life, I was very disappointed. But I got used to it... I'm doing well; I worked for it. I'm doing well. I like living here. I hope to continue living here.

GLORIA: So, your father-in-law came here because he had..., he knew someone or how did he manage to come here?

JOSE: That part I'm not familiar with.

GLORIA: When you arrived did you fishing right away?

JOSE: When I arrived here I waited about one year before I went on my first fishing trip. And that first trip was from Newport, which is a port close to here. I did two trips there. For the first trip, back then, they gave one hundred and fifty dollars. For eight days at sea. For the second they paid me two hundred something, for about the same number of days. And I was happy. Because back then, one hundred, one hundred some dollars, was the average weekly earnings for the people who lived in New Bedford. So I was happy.

GLORIA: And that... Did you do both trips on the same boat?

JOSE: It was in that... The same boat.

GLORIA: What was the name of the boat?

JOSE: It was a boat... Now I cannot tell you the name of the boat, but it was a boat similar to the salt boats that used to operate on the Douro River.

GLORIA: And what did you catch?

JOSE: The conditions onboard were very bad. The boat was in very bad shape... But those were the conditions back then and those who worked there had to put up with it.

GLORIA: The owners were Portuguese or...?

JOSE: The boat belonged to a Portuguese man who had lived here for many years. He spoke very bad Portuguese, but enough to be understood.

GLORIA: What was his name, do you remember?

JOSE: I have no idea now.

GLORIA: And what kinds of fish did you catch?

JOSE: We caught... In English, yellowtail, flounder, cod, haddock and lobster.

GLORIA: How was that first trip, do you remember how it was?

JOSE: It was good. It was good because I had illusions; I had hopes of making a lot of money. And when you have hope even the little you make is not too bad.

Foi boa, foi boa porque eu tinha as ilusões, tinha as ilusões que ia ganhar muito dinheiro. E

GLORIA: How did you find the conditions onboard?

JOSE: A different way of fishing; a different way. Different from what I was used to in Portugal because, as I said, we did seining (Danish seine nets) and here they used trawling. Trawling is when you use a net that is being dragged behind the boat.

GLORIA: Going back to your arrival here: You arrived here on what date?

JOSE: Cheguei aqui, se a memória não me falta, em Agosto de 1974.

GLORIA: And then you went to live... Did someone find you a place to live?

JOSE: I went to live with my in-laws. Then, I lived with my in-laws.

GLORIA: And where did you live?

JOSE: On County Street. I lived on County Street with my in-laws. I lived there a good 25 years, in the same house. I was fortunate that I did not have to move. I only moved the day I bought my own home. And since I am so connected to the sea, I wanted the house in front of – near the sea. That's where I'm living – near the sea.

GLORIA: You feel an affinity for the sea?

JOSE: Always. I was born by the sea; I have that affinity with the sea. I would have liked to have continued fishing. I stopped going to sea because I was disillusioned with fishing, with the new regulations. I sold my boat, which belonged to me and to a gentleman named Zé Pires. The boat was named Luso American I, which means a Portuguese in America. I bought that boat... That boat already existed, but I bought that boat in 1987 in partnership with Zé Pires. I owned that boat until 2006 or 2008. 2006. I can't remember the exact date. Maybe 2006. (BEGINS TO CALCULATE) Six. Twelve. No, before. Before. 2002. 2002. If memory serves me right, it was 2002. I sold the boat because I was disappointed with the new regulations. Not because I was afraid, but because I no longer had the patience to deal with the new fishing regulations. I didn't grow up with fishing regulations. I grew up catching the fish I wanted, when I wanted and how I wanted. Because when I was growing up there were size limits, but no limits on quantity. To a certain extent I agree with quantity limits, but the new regulations were too complicated for me.

GLORIA: Was it difficult to learn...?

JOSE: To learn the new regulations. I was afraid; I was frightened by the new regulations.

GLORIA: You said that you were partners with José Pires. Was that José Pires the one who owned a driving school?

JOSE: The driving school.

GLORIA: I learned how to drive with him. But before that, then, you worked... After you did those two trips in Newport you came to work in New Bedford?

JOSE: I worked in New Bedford. I worked in New Bedford on a boat named *Imigrante*. I worked on a boat called *Tina Maria*. I worked on a boat called *Trident*. And I worked with some of your relatives, with José Cardoso and Fernando Cardoso on the *Southern Crusader*. I have a story about that, do you want me to tell it?

GLORIA: I would love to hear it.

JOSE: They are part of your family and I have a story with them. During the storm that sank the *Irene Ilda*, where four or five persons died, during that storm I was with the Cardosos, with Fernando Cardoso and José Cardoso on the *Southern Crusader*. We were on our way home, and when we got to the Round Shoal Buoy, which is at the beginning of the entry, if you are coming into New Bedford, we started getting very bad weather and José Cardoso, Fernando Cardoso's uncle said "Fernando, don't go through the Round Shoal Buoy because it's too rough." But Fernando Cardoso, stubborn as he was, like his uncle, who was also stubborn, (He was a good fisherman, but was a very stubborn man. That's what the oldtimers say. The oldtimers... I never worked with him except on the *Southern Crusader*). And as we got into the channel we were hit with two huge waves. We were almost lost. But under the direction of Fernando, I mean, Zé Cardoso, we were able to get out of there and we went to take shelter next to hill where there was a current that ran in the opposite direction, or a channel called Pollock Rip. Pollock Rip⁶ is the English name of that channel. And that's where we waited out the

⁶ Pollock Rip is known for its treacherous currents.

storm. The one on watch was Zé Cardoso⁷, the uncle of Fernando Cardoso who was the owner and captain, and we were resting. When we woke up in the morning, we were already out of danger, inside the bay in front of Nantucket. That was our adventure. When we got ashore we received the news that the Irene Ilda had sunk during the storm.

GLORIA: So, he was a good sailor, he knew the sea?...

JOSE: Zé Cardoso was a good sailor. He was a man of much experience.

GLORIA: Besides that encounter with bad weather did you have others? Other experiences with storms?

JOSE: Every day the fisherman is at sea he has bad experiences. Now it's a little bit different, but in the eighties – seventies, eighties and even later, we experienced a lot of bad weather during the winter. Now it's different because with the limitations... Because of the limits on the number of days, during bad weather the boats come home. But in the 70s and 80s there were no fishing limits, no limit on the number of days; we stayed out and put up with all kinds of weather. We stayed away from hurricanes, but from other types of bad weather we did not; we stayed out there. When I talk about bad weather I mean 40- 50- 70-mile winds and 15-, 20-, and 20-plus-foot waves. We stayed because there were to catch limits and no limits on days. At times we would spend four or five days drifting, and have trips of twelve, thirteen days. That's the way it was.

GLORIA: Back then, how many men did a boat take?

JOSE: Six men; we took six men.

GLORIA: And, generally, the trips were of 10 to 12 days?

JOSE: The average was eight to ten days. We would go out for eight to ten days.

GLORIA: And then how long would you stay on shore?

JOSE: We would stay on shore three days. By union regulations we had to stay on shore for three days. On occasion we wouldn't even stay for three days, but there were also times when we would stay on shore for four or five.

GLORIA: Tell me about the union. During those first years you went fishing on union boats? Fale-me da união. Portanto, nesses primeiros anos que o senhor andou à pesca andou em barcos que tinham união.

JOSE: Union boats.

GLORIA: Then in the 1970s, early 1980s there was a strike...

⁷ Joseph Cardoza or Joe Cardoza.

JOSE: Exactly. In the 1970s, seventy something, close to the 1980s there were strikes... Because of the fish prices and the unions wanted to change...

GLORIA: Could you tell me about that? Do you know what factors led to the strike?

45:00 MINUTE MARK

JOSE: What led to the strike was the fact that the fish was not being well paid and the fishermen were being scammed repeatedly. Because, for example, they would bid a certain amount on the fish and when we went to the fish processing plant to unload the catch they would give us another amount – less than what they had bought it for at the auction. And the union would try, but unfortunately it could not do much.

GLORIA: And that was one of the causes of the strike?

JOSE: That was one of the causes of the strike.

GLORIA: But after that strike, if my memory does not fail me, there were a lot of boats that got out of the union...

JOSE: Yes, after that strike there were a lot of boats that left the union because the union did little or nothing for the fishermen. This was another reason why the owners lost interest in the union. Because in the 1970s and 1970s all, or almost all, boats in New Bedford, regardless of whether they caught groundfish or scallops, belonged to the union. There was a lot of disappointment with the union. Although it was a very strong union – the Teamsters – it did next to nothing for the fishermen. Although, to tell the truth, very few people have done anything for the fishermen. Very few people have done anything for the fishermen. In general, all over the world, the fishermen have been like... like buoys thrown into the sea, tossed by everyone. Tossed by the seas, by the winds; that's a fisherman. He does not have... Never had... He has no power. Why is this so? I don't know. Maybe it's because he is just a fisherman and life at sea is a life of waves, of highs and lows, without law or... Very few people have done anything for the fishermen.

GLORIA: In what year did you buy your first boat?

JOSE: I bought my first boat in 1987.

GLORIA: And that was...?

JOSE: The Luso-American I.

GLORIA: At that time was it easy to buy a boat?

JOSE: It was not easy, in 1987 it was not easy. It was not difficult, but you needed to have an opportunity. You needed to be a skipper and have some money of your own for the down payment, to buy the boat... The bank would finance it like it finances a house.

GLORIA: So you would mortgage the boat...?

JOSE: Yes.

GLORIA: At that time what was the average price for a boat?

JOSE: At that time the average price of a boat was four hundred thousand dollars. Upwards of four hundred thousand dollars. The year that I bought mine, because in previous years, not that I have direct knowledge, but I heard that you could buy a boat from the shipyard for three hundred thousand dollars. It's not that I saw this; I heard. I have no proof.

GLORIA: I understand. At that time were there a lot of Portuguese who owned boats?

JOSE: Yes. The coast... The majority of the New Bedford fleet was Portuguese. The majority of the groundfish fleet. Groundfish was mostly Portuguese.

GLORIA: How about now?

JOSE: Now it continues to be Portuguese because there are very few Americans. There is a gentleman who owns the whole (or almost whole) New Bedford fleet.

GLORIA: That's Mr. Carlos Rafael?

JOSE: That's Mr. Carlos Rafael.

GLORIA: How many boats does he own now?

JOSE: I'm not sure, but I heard that's 44 or 45 boats.

GLORIA: Are they all draggers?

JOSE: They are not all draggers. He owns a number of scallopers, but the majority are draggers.

GLORIA: On the scallopers are there a lot of Portuguese, or few?

JOSE: On the scallopers the majority of the people are Americans; American...

GLORIA: Norwegians...?

JOSE: Mexican, Norwegian... There are some Portuguese on the scallop fisheries, but not many.

GLORIA: When you were fishing, the Portuguese you fished with, where... Where were they from? Were they Continental, Azorean...?

JOSE: When I was...

INTERVIEW INTERRUPTED

GLORIA: I was asking you about the origins of the Portuguese fishermen...

JOSE: Mostly Continentals. At the time I was fishing most people were of continental origin. There were some Azoreans, but the majority was Continental – from Murtosa, Figueira, Algarve... From all over Portugal, but most were from Murtosa and Figueira.

GLORIA: What was a typical trip like? Could you tell me what a typical trip was from beginning to end?

JOSE: A trip from beginning to end...?

GLORIA: Yes, beginning with the preparations for the trip.

JOSE: It's taking in the ice, get the food and prepar the boat. That's what we call getting the boat ready.

GLORIA: How many tons of ice?

JOSE: Tons of ice... It was 18 to 22 tons of ice, on average.

GLORIA: Gallons of fuel?

JOSE: Gallons of fuel... It was on average four, five thousand gallons of fuel. Groceries was about one thousand dollars. And then we were on our way.

GLORIA: Who was responsible for the groceries, the cook?

JOSE: The cook was responsible for the groceries; the owner and the engineer were responsible for the fuel.

GLORIA: How about the ice, the water...?

JOSE: It was the skipper's responsibility to go to the ice factory to get the ide. He would discuss it with the crew to know how much to get; anywhere between 18 and 22 tons.

GLORIA: After icing up...?

JOSE: After icing up they would be on their way for a trip of eight, nine, ten, eleven days. In prior years we even had trips of 13 and 14 days, with six men. Nowadays it's four. Four men. But in the past it was six. Six men due to the fact that there was a lot of cod, and you needed men to work on the cod and the fish.

GLORIA: To gut it and clean it?

JOSE: To take care of it – to gut it, to ice it... And there was... Nowadays you catch less cod, but there are also fewer men, because the men are leaving the fisheries. Very few young men go fishing. The older ones are retiring. Today, today you can't get men to fish.

GLORIA: Why?

JOSE: Because the men don't make enough money. They don't make enough money and also because immigration has stopped. Immigration stopped and as a result we don't have men to go fishing.

GLORIA: You are talking about Portuguese immigration?

JOSE: Portuguese immigration.

GLORIA: So, nowadays there are other groups entering the fisheries, other ethnic groups?

JOSE: There are other groups coming in, but they don't go into the groundfish fishery. They try the groundfish, but they don't like it; they leave it to go into scalloping – the scallop boats.

GLORIA: In your view, what is the reason for that?

JOSE: Why they leave the draggers to go into the scallopers? Because they make a lot more money on the scallopers. They earn more, a lot more. In a trip or two, say, they make more than what a fishing boat (Some, not all.) makes in a year. A scalloper makes makes in a trip or two what many draggers cannot make in one year.

GLORIA: During... You were telling me what a typical trip was like and then we got off course. So, you would go... You would ice up and then you would steam to the place where you would fish...

JOSE: Then we would start our adventure.

GLORIA: Yes. How was it?

JOSE: The adventure could be 16 to 20 hours away. Then we would cast the nets into the sea and the party began.

GLORIA: On average how many hauls would you make per day?

JOSE: Per day it depends. Usually we would trawl for three hours. With 30 minutes for maneuvering; that's three and a half hours. Seven hauls. Six to seven hauls per day, at three hours per haul. Nowadays we no longer do that. Today we do five- six-hour hauls.

GLORIA: Because there is less fish?

JOSE: Because there is less fish, which forces us to trawl for a longer period.

GLORIA: And you worked in shifts, right?

JOSE: The captain did... The skippper does...[his watch] from eight, I mean, from midnight to noon and then he rests. In my time, in my time! From noon to six PM, it was the mate. From six to midnight the skipper. Every six hours. And the crew was the same. Now it's different.

GLORIA: How so?

JOSE: Now it's different. Now it's all crew members below (all asleep) and all on deck (all awake). Except for the skipper and the mate who take turns. But there are also boats where they all sleep and are awake at the same time as follows: Every man will do a watch of three hours while the others are asleep.

GLORIA: Maybe because they are fewer they all have to work at the same time?

1:00 HOUR MARK

JOSE: It's fewer men so there needs to be more collaboration among them, nowadays. In my time it was not like this. In my time it was six hours. Six hours the skipper, six hours the mate – six-hour watches.

GLORIA: And how many men on each watch?

JOSE: Three men.

GLORIA: And on the way to the fishing grounds what did they do?

JOSE: On the way we did watches; three-hour watches. One man is at the wheel, on watch, for three hours, then another will go on watch for three hours, and so on.

GLORIA: And the others are not on watch?

JOSE: They are resting so that they will be rested when they get to the fishing grounds.

GLORIA: During... I know that there was not a lot of free time, but when they had free time what did the men do?

JOSE: They did whatever needed to be done on the boat. Fix the nets that needed to be fixed; do things that needed to be done; straighten up the boat. And when there was nothing to do at all, they would on guard, sitting, in the kitchen; that's where they would be on watch. They would sit there, waiting for something to happen, to haul the nets...

GLORIA: And during that time what would they do? Did they play cards, read...?
E durante esse tempo o que é que eles fazem? Jogam cartas, lêem?

JOSE: They play cards, they read books, they watch videos on TV. Those that have TVs because in my time there was no TV and there was little time to watch it if we had it.

GLORIA: And what do they eat? What is a typical meal? Breakfast, for example?

JOSE: These days, from what I hear, they no longer serve breakfast. It's self-service; everyone makes their own. For lunch, a crew member has to make it – the skipper, the mate, or anyone who has the skills. There is no longer a cook because the number of men does not justify there being a cook, although on some boats there is still a man they call the cook. The men themselves do the grocery shopping, so they can save some money because the grocery bill used to be very high.

GLORIA: So, when you had your boat where did you do the grocery shopping?

JOSE: I always did my groceries at a market called The Ship Supply. That's where I did the shopping, but now very few do it there. The draggers, because the scallopers continue to get their groceries from the Ship Supply and other stores like that.

GLORIA: I heard that now they go to other types of stores, like B.J.s...

JOSE: Yes. They themselves go do the shopping – the crew members. The crew members go as a group to BJs and other stores. It doesn't that it has to be BJs; it can be other stores; other places.

GLORIA: The *Ship Supply* was not owned by Portuguese or was it?

JOSE: No. When I was familiar with it, the Ship Supply, if I am not mistaken, was owned by Norwegians or something like that; they were not Portuguese. It was not a Portuguese store.

GLORIA: Who decides where to go fish?

JOSE: Who did you say?

GLORIA: How is it decided? For example, you go out and how do you know where you are going to fish?

JOSE: Usually, the skipper has... has some idea. The skipper has some intuition to go to a particular place. Because the sea is very large... It used to be large, now it is not. Now the sea is smaller.

GLORIA: How so?

JOSE: Now the sea is divided into sections. The sea is divided into many sections and pitty the one who enters a section that is closed. Mistake or no mistake.

GLORIA: There are fines?

JOSE: Fines and heavy ones. Heavy fines. If one enters an area or a section that is closed to fishing the penalties are very serious.

GLORIA: How do you, how do you sail? How do you know how to get to certain areas? Do you have navigational instruments? Do you do it by memory?

JOSE: When it's foggy, it's very difficult to sail without navigational instruments. Nobody can do it. Few, very few would dare. I have no knowledge of people who sail this coast of the United States without navigational instruments. On the Portuguese coast, yes. We sail without instruments. Or, we used to sail without navigational instruments, based on knowledge of landmarks, knowledge of lights. When I talk about landmarks, I mean hills, churches, towers, which are located along the coast. Lately, we use the radar. Here, in the United States we navigate by radar. But it's an adventure...

GLORIA: So, during... How many years did fish here?

JOSE: All my life, since I was 14.

GLORIA: No, only here in New Bedford.

JOSE: Here in New Bedford? Here in New Bedford since 1974 until 19..., 2000...

GLORIA: 2006?

JOSE: 2002, 2006. Around 2006.

GLORIA: Many years, right? Over 30 years. From 74 to...

JOSE: Thirty some odd years.

GLORIA: So, over those years you witnessed many changes in the fishery – in the way people fish, the types of regulations, the types of technology used, the type of fish caught... I don't know... Which of these changes were the most salient for you?

JOSE: Having to do with the quantity of fish, with the catch?

GLORIA: Any. What changes did you witness over the years that you were fishing, the most salient for you?

JOSE: The changes? I don't know what you are referring to.

GLORIA: For example, the way of catching fish: were there changes in technology used, like the type of nets...?

JOSE: Oh yes, yes. The way we catch fish today, if it were years ago, we would catch double. The nets are much bigger. The nets are bigger and have better catch possibilities. The boats are also stronger. Nowadays we catch more fish. We [would] catch more fish if we were allowed to catch it because I believe, I believe that the sea is full of fish. But they don't let us catch it. But, personally, I even agree with it because the more fish you catch the lower the sale price and that is not profitable for the fisherman – to catch a lot of fish to sell it at a lower price. Although they could let us catch a little more.

GLORIA: Is it easier to catch more fish also because you have more equipment to locate the stock?

JOSE: It's easier. It's easier due to the quality of the equipment we currently have. They have good sonars – some boats; it's not all have the privilege of owning that kind equipment because nowadays the boat owners do not make enough money to have that kind of equipment. For those who have it it's easier. But it also depends on the skipper or captain, whatever you want to call them – You say tomato...

GLORIA: Did conditions on board also change?

JOSE: Conditions on board are excellent, in terms of fisheries. They have good facilities, good food.. They have a good bathroom... –Nowadays because in the past it used to be a wooden bucket. The bathroom used to be a wooden bucket!

GLORIA: You couldn't take showers...?

JOSE: You couldn't take showers; there was nothing... It was rags that they took for the engineer to clean the engine. They would soak then in water – fresh or salt water – and that's how they cleaned their bodies; with a rag soaked in fresh or salt water. Often we thought it was fresh water and it was salt water.

GLORIA: How come?

JOSE: There were leaks...

GLORIA: Oh! When it comes to food, do you think that... During the trips... Do you think things have changed or have they stayed more or less...

JOSE: I don't think so. I don't think so because the Portuguese like to eat well and, as such, the Portuguese, or at least the Portuguese fishermen still have, at least, two meals per day.

GLORIA: One of meat and one of fish?

JOSE: One of meat and one of fish. But there are a lot of boats that provide only one meal.

GLORIA: Really?

JOSE: During the day each person has to make his own. There is food in the boat, but during the day, each man has to take care of himself.

GLORIA: And that is due to...

JOSE: Its due to the time available to rest.

GLORIA: And to the fact that there are fewer men?

JOSE: Sometimes the fisherman is tired and does not want to eat. But the food is there; they take food when they go out.

GLORIA: Are the types of fish you catch now different from those you used to catch?

JOSE: They are the same.

GLORIA: But don't you catch certain species now that you didn't use to catch?

JOSE: No; it's the same species.

GLORIA: How about skate, for example...?

JOSE: We used to catch skate; we did not sell skate. Many years back we had to deal with the skate problem – we would catch it and dump it. Nowadays we keep it. It's a good fish. It makes sense to catch and bring it.

GLORIA: A little while ago we talked about changes in fishery rules and regulations, could you tell me how those changes have affected the boat owners? Actually, you spoke a bit about that when you said that you sold your boat because of the regulations...

JOSE: Due to conditions, due to [existing] conditions. Because today a boat is limited to catching X quantity of fish... That quantity is determined based on the particular boat's catch during the ten years that preceded the approval of that law – the law came out today and they went back ten years to look at that boat's catches. That's how they figured out the allotment.

1:15:00 MARK

This does not mean that it's enough; it is not. And the proof that it is not is the fact that boat owners have to buy more catch, or more fish, in order to survive. And it is not within the reach of every boat owner to be able to buy enough fish to survive. They have been forced to buy or quit. I did not want to buy. Since I didn't want to buy, I sold. I quit.

GLORIA: And how has it affected the men, the fishermen, the crew?

JOSE: The new laws affect the fishermen because the crew members have to pay for everything. Com as novas leis que existem, afecta os pescadores porque os pescadores têm que pagar tudo.

GLORIA: So, they have to pay for the purchase of those...

JOSE: They have to pay for the purchase of the fish. The fisherman goes out to catch fish, but he has to pay for the fish that he goes out to catch. This is the [new] system. That's the system. The fisherman is that buoy that is floating at sea, tossed by wind and tides. He comes and goes. He does not have... He does not have and I don't even know if he can ever have... But to have the fisherman have to pay to catch fish!... Years ago he had to pay to go fishing. That was the "days at sea." Do you want to go fishing? You have to buy days a sea. Now he has to buy fish to go catch. In my opinion, this is a thousand percent wrong. I was a boat owner, as I said. I did not agree with this. I was not happy. I quit. I am not a failure in my professional life as a captain and boat owner. I was never a failure. But I quit because I was forced by these conditions. My honesty forced me to quit.

GLORIA: How do you think the new regulations have affected fish? Do you think that they are a good thing, that they are protecting them?

JOSE: I think that they think they are protecting the fish stocks. But I don't know because I've been out of the industry.

GLORIA: What do you think about the effects of the new regulations on the environment in general? Do you think it was positive, negative, indifferent?

JOSE: What has brought the fishery to this situation? Maybe because in prior years there was too much...

GLORIA: So, you think that in prior years...

JOSE: They overfished. There was an excess of catches. That led to their... But this is a world cycle, I think. Based on my experience with fisheries, I think that this is a cycle. In my hometown, there was a lot of fish, then there was less, and now there is more again, in Portugal. So I think that this here is also a cycle. But I also think, and so I am also in agreement with the fishery experts, with the men who make the regulations, because if there were no restrictions the fisherman would catch all the fish in a day. – He would dry up the fish in a day.

GLORIA: Now, to close, I would like you to tell me about life on shore. For example, when you were still fishing, when you arrived, when you were on shore, what did you do? How did you spend your days?

JOSE: When I was fishing, I would come home and go out with my co-workers and their wives. We would go to restaurants... We would eat, drink and have fun; that's how we would spend our time. Two of the three days would be spent like that. The other days were to take care of things on the boat. From eight in the morning to noon – fix things around the boat: the nets... I would go take care of the boat so it would be ready to go out.

GLORIA: So, when you... Who would take care of the household budget? Was it you or your wife?

JOSE: It was my wife. Was and still is.

GLORIA: What was your role? Was it to make money?

JOSE: All my life my role was to make money and give it to her. But always in collaboration. The expenses were incurred by both of us... But the running of the household is done by my wife.

GLORIA: Who does the housework?

JOSE: Who did the housework? My wife did the housework. Then and now.

GLORIA: You said that you would go out with your wife and your friends. Were your friends Portuguese or from other ethnic groups?

JOSE: They were all Portuguese. When I was still fishing my friends were the men I fished with. It was with them that I would go out. With them and often with their wives .

GLORIA: Do you go to church, are you religious?

JOSE: I'm religious; I don't go to church.

GLORIA: Are you Catholic?

JOSE: I am Catholic.

GLORIA: Do you belong to clubs? I know that you are a member of this one, for example...

JOSE: I am a member of this club.

GLORIA: Do you belong to any others?

JOSE: No, just this one.

GLORIA: You told me that you used to like soccer. Do you still like soccer?

JOSE: I like soccer and... I like soccer.

GLORIA: So, your friends are the men you fished with. Are they all Portuguese mainlanders or are some of them also Azorean?

JOSE: Mainlanders and Azoreans.

GLORIA: Do you keep in touch with your place of origin, with Matosinhos? Do you go there, do you still have friends there...?

Continua ligado à sua terra de origem, a Matosinhos? Vai lá, tem amigos?...

JOSE: I go there. I go there when I can. I haven't gone there in two years, but I used to go every year.

GLORIA: You have your sister there, right? That's what you said...

JOSE: I have my sister and my brothers there.

GLORIA: They didn't want to come here?

JOSE: None of them wanted to come here. I have a brother who lives in Luxembourg, the others all live there.

GLORIA: Do you go to Portuguese feasts, like the Madeira Feast, for example?

JOSE: No, I don't. I don't like feasts that much. By temperament, I'm not very... I don't like festivals.

GLORIA: No?!

JOSE: No. I like to go to a party with friends. With friends. I enjoy being with friends, but I don't like crowds.

GLORIA: Now that you are retired how do you spend your?

JOSE: I'm retired. I spend my days at The Fishermen. From home to the docks, from the docks to home, from home to The Fishermen.

GLORIA: What do you go do at the docks?

JOSE: I go to kill *saudades*.⁸ I go to see the boats. I go to see the boats... I go dream the life that I had!...

⁸ *Saudade* is a feeling of nostalgia for the past that can be relieved or *killed* by revisiting the people or places that you miss.