

THE COD TRADE IN EARLY-MODERN PORTUGAL:  
DEREGULATION, ENGLISH DOMINATION,  
AND THE DECLINE OF FEMALE COD MERCHANTS

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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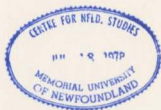
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DARLENE ABREU-FERREIRA





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THE COD TRADE IN EARLY-MODERN PORTUGAL:  
Deregulation, English Domination,  
and the Decline of Female Cod Merchants

by

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A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
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## A B S T R A C T

This study analyzes the extent of Portuguese participation in the early cod fishery off Newfoundland and concludes that Portugal's role in the fishery was intermittent. Evidence shows that the Portuguese were not great cod fishers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The best archival documentation found in Portugal is for the seventeenth century and it shows the English and French supplying the Portuguese with most cod entering Portugal's harbours.

Toward the second half of the seventeenth century the English monopoly of the cod trade in Portugal was entrenched. In order to accommodate the influx of a foreign merchant community, Portuguese authorities had to deregulate the structure of their regional economy. Consequently, a previously-protected native merchant class was displaced by foreigners. In the cod trade, many of these cod merchants who were supplanted by foreign interlopers were women. In certain coastal towns in northern Portugal women were big cod merchants but their number and the volume of cod they merchandised decreased substantially in the second half of the seventeenth century.

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## A B B R E V I A T I O N S

A.D.P.	Arquivo Distrital do Porto
A.H.C.M.V.C.	Arquivo Historico da Camara Municipal de Vila do Conde
A.H.M.P.	Arquivo Historico Municipal do Porto
A.M.V.C.	Arquivo Municipal de Viana do Castelo
A.N.T.T.	Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo
C.M.B.	Camara Municipal de Braga
M.H.A.-M.U.N.	Maritime History Archives - Memorial University of Newfoundland

## P R E F A C E

Researching in Portugal is a challenge even for Portuguese historians, as many admitted to me during my trips to Portuguese archives and libraries in the past four years. The task can be more laborious for foreign visitors who have been accustomed to the generally well-catalogued and accessible sources in Canada. In Portugal, often the difference between success and failure lies on whether or not a particular employee of a given institution is on holidays.

The exceptions to this rule are what made this study possible. The amount of documentation might be slight, but whatever exists in Aveiro, Porto, Vila do Conde, Viana do Castelo, and Póvoa de Varzim was at my disposal. Still, the core of the present study is based on custom records kept by church officials in Porto, and no one has looked at this collection before. Porto historian Francisco Ribeiro da Silva cited the earliest Redízima volumes in his history of Porto in 1580-1640, but only in passing, and the rest has remained untouched. Subsequently, the interpretation of those port entries was done in a vacuum because no other similar documents are known to have survived. Further research and analysis undoubtedly will enhance our understanding of this incredibly rich source of data.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

In Caxinas, a small coastal community between Vila do Conde and Pão de Açúcar in northern Portugal, the villagers believe that men control the seas, but women rule the land.<sup>1</sup> This situation arose from a pragmatic approach to an economic reality which necessitated long absences from half the population and shrewd management from the other half. While men were away at sea, sometimes for several months in the case of the cod fishery, women administered the household, and when men returned women's responsibilities actually increased, for they also dealt with the catch and the cash. It is difficult to determine when such a custom began, but although historical studies on maritime household organizations are few, the accepted view is that Caxinas is not unique among Portugal's coastal communities.<sup>2</sup>

Little is known about the lives of fisher people in Portugal, for the modern or early modern era, but at least one facet of life in the recent past had not been radically

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<sup>1</sup> Alice Geraldès, "A Mulher de Caxinas," in Estudos em Homenagem a Ernesto Veiga de Oliveira (Lisbon: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 1989), 206.

<sup>2</sup> Geraldès, "A Mulher de Caxinas," 203-206. Another study on a small Portuguese town, Lanheses from 1700-1960, found that very pronounced male migration, for socio-economic reasons, created the necessary conditions for women to take over roles ascribed to men in other communities. See C.B. Brettel, Men Who Migrate, Women who Wait - Population and History in a Portuguese Parish (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

modified since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In fishing communities, men fished and women sold the fish. This was true even in bigger centres, such as Lisbon in 1552. A contemporary report outlined a service available at Lisbon's harbour known as the renda da sestaria - that is, a type of basket rental service, where an average of 7 or 8 men, called the lavapexes, or fish washers, waited in the harbour for incoming fishing boats. These fish washers would then offer their services and their baskets to fishers, assist in transporting the fish from the boats, and clean the fish. The clean fish was then handed to the fishers' wives and female servants. In other words, women were responsible for selling fish.<sup>3</sup>

The partnership between fishers and fish sellers might not always have been amicable or equitable, but in northern Portugal at least, records show that merchandising fish was a woman's prerogative, at the retail level especially but often at the wholesale level as well. Questions arise about the extent to which this applied to the high seas fishery in general, and the cod fishery in particular. Women controlling their husbands' individual sardine catches was one thing, but given its location and the need for investment on a larger scale, the cod fishery by its very nature necessitated backing

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<sup>3</sup> João de Brandão, "Majestade e grandezas de Lisboa em 1552," Arquivo Histórico Português, Volume XI (1917), 15.

from financiers with available capital. Few men were in a position to engage in major investments in the early modern period, and likely fewer women still.

Available Portuguese records say nothing about costs associated with the early cod fishery, but the evidence demonstrates that women were at the forefront of the fish trade in Portugal's northern coast up to the mid-seventeenth century, until an influx of new players led to fundamental changes in the game. The best documentation on the Portuguese cod trade exists for Porto, from 1639-1679, and these port records show that by the 1650s only the French offered real competition to the English-dominated cod trade. As the century progressed, the English position was further entrenched, enabling them to control all aspects of the business. Not only were the French systematically removed from Porto's cod scene, but most Portuguese merchants also disappeared from the records, especially women. The present study aims to examine this transformation in conjunction with the evolution of Portugal's connection to Newfoundland's cod fishery in the early modern period. How significant was Portugal's role in the early cod fishery off Newfoundland, and what were the consequences of its demise on the home front?

There is very little evidence of a flourishing Portuguese cod fishery in the early modern period. Though their presence in Newfoundland waters in the sixteenth century was

occasionally noted, their involvement in the fishery was intermittent. A serious appraisal of Portugal's interests at that time reveals that official commitment to the cod fishery was slight at best. Given Portugal's extensive and scattered empire, it is not surprising that some regions and economic sectors were neglected, but the Newfoundland case may have been a missed opportunity for the Portuguese. By the time the cod trade became big business in the seventeenth century, it was in foreign hands. The English in particular played a significant role in providing Portugal with substantial supplies of cod, and the result was a displacement of native fish traders. Not only did English vessels bring in the cod, but English merchants also settled in Portuguese ports, controlling distribution at least at the wholesale level.

The displacement of Portuguese cod merchants by foreign interlopers is interesting enough, but the fact that many of the displaced were female adds another significant dimension. First, what conditions led to the preponderance of female fish merchants in some Portuguese northern coastal communities? Second, was there some inherent gender bias in their subsequent decline? For most historical phenomena, pinpointing causation is no easy task, and the quest to determine the reasons for women's disappearance from the cod trade in seventeenth-century Portugal is equally challenging. Was there a transition between the sixteenth and seventeenth



centuries in Portugal, the effect of which was particularly detrimental to Portuguese women's economic roles? A look at Portuguese society in the early modern era should shed some light on the position of women in it.

. . . . .

Politically and administratively, Portugal was divided into districts, the number of which fluctuated over time. Most districts in early modern Portugal "belonged" to either the king, the queen,<sup>4</sup> the nobility, or a religious order, and seigneurial dues were paid accordingly.<sup>5</sup> The nobility and clergy combined made up approximately 15% of Portugal's population in the early modern era but they owned

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<sup>4</sup> Among the aristocracy, nobility, and religious orders, some women were in a position to enjoy the full privileges of their respective classes. Not only did some female religious orders and a few aristocratic women collect their share of dízimas and other dues from their vast landholdings, but various queens of Portugal had their own ships engaged in overseas trade. See Luís de Matos, "Os Descobrimentos Portugueses - o Começo da Cultura Moderna: Inovação e Mudança," in Reflexões sobre História e Cultura Portuguesa, co-ordinated by Maria Emília Cordeira Ferreira (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos de História e Cultura Portuguesa, 1985), 91.

<sup>5</sup> António de Oliveira, "A população das comarcas de Leiria e de Santarém em 1537," Revista Portuguesa de História, Tomo XV (Coimbra, 1975), 252.

approximately 95% of the country's resources.<sup>6</sup> National concerns were dealt with by the Cortes, an assembly comprised of the most prominent members from each district. The common people were ostensibly represented in this assembly but even their delegates were "honourable" and powerful landowners, and their presence has been seen as an expedient measure by the crown to facilitate raising taxes. The Cortes also functioned as a tribunal, and indeed most of its work was of a judicial nature.<sup>7</sup> Portugal's territory of 89,000 square kilometres was also divided geographically into six provinces, from north to south: Entre-Douro-e-Minho, Trás-os-Montes, Beira, Estremadura, Alentejo, and Algarve. Already in 1527 the coastal towns were densely populated, especially in the north. Between the Douro and Minho rivers the population density was approximately 35 people per square kilometre compared to 8 people per square kilometre in southern

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<sup>6</sup> José Manuel Garcia, História de Portugal: Uma Visão Global, Third Edition (Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1986), 103-105.

<sup>7</sup> Throughout the early modern period the crown seldom called the Cortes to session unless it needed money. From 1502 to 1544, for example, the Cortes was called only three times; the Spanish monarchs made some early conciliatory gestures toward the Portuguese by holding Cortes in 1581 and in 1583, and once again in 1619; from 1641 to 1668 the Cortes was called five times. A.H. de Oliveira Marques, História de Portugal desde os Tempos mais Antigos até ao Governo do Sr. Pinheiro de Azevedo (Lisbon: Palas Editores, 1978 [1972]), 86, 143-144, 266-267, 404.

Portugal.<sup>8</sup> Overall population figures for the early modern period are not very reliable, however, though most historians agree that Portugal's population was not much over one million for most of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>9</sup> Throughout this period Lisbon was by far the country's largest city, with 65,000 people in 1527, 100,000 in 1551, and 165,000 in 1620.<sup>10</sup> Portugal's other major urban centres experienced some growth in the seventeenth century while Lisbon's economy stagnated, but until 1620 the population in Porto, Coimbra, Evora and Elvas ranged from 16,000 to 20,000 at the most.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Garcia, História de Portugal, 101. See also António Burges Coelho, Quadros para uma Viagem a Portugal no Séc. XVI (Lisbon: Editorial Caminho, 1986), 139-144. Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, Os Descobrimentos e a Economia Mundial, Four Volumes, Second Edition (Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1991 [1963-71]), Volume I, 45.

<sup>9</sup> Except for Portugal, whose population remained stable throughout the sixteenth century, western Europe experienced enormous population growth up to 1570, followed by stagnation and even decline in some areas in the seventeenth century. Not surprisingly, however, the number of poor people increased in the seventeenth century, victims of rising food prices, malnutrition, and disease. Geoffrey Parker, Europe in Crisis, 1598-1648 (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1980), 17-23, 29. Oliveira Marques has argued that Portugal's population was near two million by 1640, but other historians refute that unconfirmed figure. See, Oliveira Marques, História de Portugal, 371; John Lynch, The Hispanic World in Crisis and Change, 1598-1700 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 75.

<sup>10</sup> Lisbon was during this time the largest city in the Iberia Peninsula. Spain's largest city during this period was Seville with 120,000 people.

<sup>11</sup> Lisbon's role in overseas trade stagnated in the second half as other coastal towns enjoyed some commercial growth with the Brazil trade, namely Porto, Viana, Vila do Conde,

According to a 1527 census, less than 13% of the Portuguese populace lived in urban centres.<sup>12</sup> No exact figures are known for the seventeenth century, but whether they were living in rural or urban areas, the masses enjoyed little improvement in their standard of living during the early modern period.<sup>13</sup> In Lisbon, for example, commerce excelled in the first half of the sixteenth century but the

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Aveiro, Peniche, Setúbal, Sines, Portimão, Faro, Tavira, Funchal (Madeira), and Terceira. Maria de Fátima Coelho, "A evolução social entre 1481 e 1640," in História de Portugal, Volume 4, edited by José Hermano Saraiva (Lisbon: Publicações Alfa, 1982), 188-190. Coelho provided no references for her numbers, including the indication that Viana had 300 ships involved in the Brazil trade in 1619. Also see Oliveira Marques, História de Portugal, 371-372.

<sup>12</sup> The distinction between urban and rural society was not always very clear in early modern Portugal. In Coimbra, for example, the "country" began inside the city walls where fruit groves, market-gardens and even small farms were kept. Nearby were larger vineyards and groves, and the link between town and country was especially visible in the town council itself: vacations for council members began at harvest time. António de Oliveira, A Vida Económica e Social de Coimbra de 1537 a 1640, Volume I (Coimbra: Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Coimbra, 1971), 321-327. See also Pierre Goubert, "Les Villes d'Europe à l'Epoque Moderne," Revista de História, Volume IV (1981), 125.

<sup>13</sup> In fact historians generally agree that most western Europeans experienced a drop in their standard of living toward the end of the sixteenth century. For example, in Spain at the turn of the seventeenth century the Spanish peasant experienced a "feudal reaction" as aristocrats reclaimed tighter control of their landholdings. In addition to paying from one third to one half of their crops to their lords, peasants were subjected to higher taxes and harsher injustices. Conditions were especially desperate for landless labourers who made up more than half of Spain's rural population. Lynch, The Hispanic World, 4-6.

common people could only afford to eat sardines from the nearby river, and coarse bread.<sup>14</sup> Conditions were not much better in rural regions where more than half of the population was comprised of landless, day labourers.<sup>15</sup> As John Lynch has concluded, each new era in the early modern period ended for the common people much as it had begun: poor living conditions exacerbated by frequent food shortages.<sup>16</sup>

Regional differences were of course very real in the early modern era. As Michel Morineau and Pierre Goubert have found in their studies on the Ancien Régime, regional economic autonomy in western Europe in the early period means that a country must be studied piece by piece.<sup>17</sup> In Portugal, too, much remains to be uncovered about prices and wages before a

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<sup>14</sup> Pauperization increased throughout most of western Europe in the early modern period and malnutrition was widespread. See Robert Jütte, Poverty and Deviance in Early Modern Europe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 72.

<sup>15</sup> Carl A. Hanson, Economy and Society in Baroque Portugal, 1668-1703 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 57.

<sup>16</sup> Lynch, The Hispanic World, 420.

<sup>17</sup> As cited in Aurélio de Oliveira, "Elementos para a História dos Preços na região bracarense (1680-1830)," Sep. da Revista Bracara Augusta, Vol. XXV-XXVI (1971-72), 130, and Aurélio de Oliveira, "Mercados a Norte do Douro: Algumas Considerações sobre a História dos Preços em Portugal e a Importância dos Mercados Regionais (Séculos XVII-XVIII)," Sep. da Revista da Faculdade de Letras - História, II Série, Vol. II (Porto, 1985), (Porto: Faculdade de Letras do Porto, 1985), 11.

general picture can be traced. What is known to date is that, with few exceptions, Portugal's northern provinces and certain parts of the central provinces were generally self-sufficient in cereals. During times of food crisis in the rest of Portugal, northern Portugal was always asked to assist, though there was seldom enough to meet the country's needs.<sup>18</sup> Given the chronic grain shortage in Portugal in the early modern period, it is perhaps fair to suggest that of all the riches that entered Portuguese harbours the most precious was wheat.<sup>19</sup>

Conventional wisdom has it that Portugal was unable to feed itself because the monarchy focused too much attention on its overseas empire and neglected the home economy. Vitorino Magalhães Godinho has contended, however, that Portugal experienced grain shortages long before the advent of overseas exploration and expansion.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, early modern Portugal has been characterized by its arid and sterile environment and depopulation.<sup>21</sup> The depopulation problem was mainly a rural

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<sup>18</sup> Oliveira, "Mercados a Norte do Douro," 25-26, 32.

<sup>19</sup> Oliveira, "Mercados a Norte do Douro," 7.

<sup>20</sup> Historians have also found ample evidence of grain leaving Portugal at the same time that emergency cargoes were unloaded in Portuguese harbours. Oliveira, "Mercados a Norte do Douro," 50. Magalhães Godinho, Os Descobrimentos, Volume III, 217-244. See also Matos, "Os Descobrimentos Portugueses," 84-85.

<sup>21</sup> Matos, "Os Descobrimentos Portugueses," 82-83.

phenomenon as hungry, landless peasants migrated to towns and overseas.<sup>12</sup> Portuguese commentators observed in the mid-seventeenth century that there were three basic reasons for the serious depopulation problem in Portugal: overseas trade which enriched some at great human cost, a low birth rate due to the harsh economic times, and the ownership of most arable land by a small number of people, which prevented the majority of the population from attaining self-sufficiency.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Most of Europe experienced an economic slump in the first half of the seventeenth century, and the number of poor increased not only in Iberia but throughout most of western Europe. Part of the problem was a rise in food prices and the devaluation of money, making the already low wages worth even less. In 1500 Augsburg, for example, a construction worker earned enough to cover a household's expenses and have some money left over, but by the seventeenth century the same wage could only pay for 75% of an average family's living expenses. Jütte, Poverty and Deviance, 29; See also Carla Rahn Phillips, "The growth and composition of trade in the Iberian empires, 1450-1750," in The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long-Distance Trade in the Early Modern World, 1350-1750, edited by James D. Tracy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 87.

<sup>13</sup> José Costa Pereira, "Vectores culturais portugueses de Seiscentos e Setecentos," in História de Portugal, Volume 4, edited by José Hermano Saraiva (Lisbon: Publicações Alfa, 1982), 326-327. See also José Gentil da Silva, "L'autoconsommation au Portugal (XIVe-Xxe siècles)," Annales: Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations, 24e année, No. 2 (mars-avril, 1969), 250-288. Epidemics also played a role in depopulation. In 1575, for example, Toledo experienced an influx of northern migrants, especially from Galicia, who had left their homes because of "hunger and famine" in their region. In 1599-1600 the entire Iberian Peninsula suffered a major plague resulting in serious food shortages. By 1606 reports stated that "all over Spain people had to eat grass." See Linda Martz, Poverty and Welfare in Habsburg Spain: The Example of Toledo (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 95-100.

The problem, therefore, was not so much that Portugal's economy was absorbed by the empire to the detriment of Portugal itself - though that was certainly true - but that the majority of the population could neither enjoy the fruits from overseas trade nor the fruits from Portugal's soil. Both the riches from afar and the resources at home were controlled by a small, privileged class of aristocrats, nobles, and clergy. Only a select few were in a position to invest in and benefit from overseas expansion and long-distance trade, and they jealously protected their entitlements.

Like the rest of western Europe, the Portuguese were socially divided into three estates, the church, nobility, and the common people, but already in 1438 legislators were aware of the stratification within the lower ranks and indeed noted that there were five estates, three among the commoners: fishers and general labourers, professionals or civil servants, and artisans.<sup>24</sup> A middle class began to emerge from the two latter groups but it declined in number and prestige as the crown, nobility, and foreigners monopolized overseas trade.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> The hierarchy was visible among those who had a trade, such as weavers, and those engaged in manual labour. Among the lower tradespeople, a hierarchy was in place as seen in their position during religious ceremonies. See Oliveira, Vida Económica e Social de Coimbra, Volume I, 393-398 (his note 2), and 401-402.

<sup>25</sup> Coelho, "A evolução social," 186-187.



Portuguese historians have long argued that the crown's monopoly in overseas trade up to 1570<sup>26</sup> stifled the growth of a national middle class. In order to finance its overseas operations, the Portuguese monarchy was from the start obliged to seek foreign investors with great sums of available capital, such as the German Welsers and Fuggers, and the Italian Affaitat, Acciaindi, Bardi, and Giralaldi merchant-bankers.<sup>27</sup> Portugal's maritime merchants were in no position to engage in such large-scale commercial endeavours. They were already heavily involved in the North African, Mediterranean, and European trade routes and few could afford to invest further afield. Next to the Portuguese aristocracy, therefore, foreign interests profited most from Portugal's early expansion. The problem was exacerbated by the tendency of the Portuguese aristocracy, including the royal court, to spend the sometimes enormous gains from overseas trade on extravagant and ostentatious homes, adornments, and recreation. Very little was used on productive investments to stimulate the economy and develop local industry. Not only was the local economy underdeveloped, but the Portuguese lagged behind culturally as the arts were neglected in the midst of so much glitter. King D. Peter II (r.1683-1706)

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<sup>26</sup> Pending royal approval, Portuguese merchants were free to participate in the Asian trade starting in 1570.

<sup>27</sup> Garcia, História de Portugal, 108.

apparently had difficulty signing his own name.<sup>28</sup>

There was also little prestige attached to the middle class;<sup>29</sup> once individuals reached a certain socio-economic level, they, too, aspired to noble status.<sup>30</sup> Ennoblement was much pursued in the early modern period and the number of those claiming noble privileges grew 165% from 1550 to 1640 in Portugal as a consequence of new fortunes being made from

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<sup>28</sup> Costa Pereira, "Vectores culturais portugueses," 334-341.

<sup>29</sup> Cultural explanations have often been put forward as a means to rationalize the ostensibly deep-rooted Hispanic obsession with ennoblement. But as C.H. Wilson has suggested, socio-cultural traits should be avoided in explaining historical events, including the Weber-Tawney thesis on the Protestant ethic and its connection with the emergence of modern capitalism. Enough evidence can be found on Calvinist anti-entrepreneurial sentiments, and on capitalist-minded Catholics. Furthermore, deep mistrust and contempt for merchants can be traced in western Europe from Antiquity - and not just in Iberia - and was well embraced by Jean Baptiste Colbert and Adam Smith. C.H. Wilson, "The Historical Study of Economic Growth and Decline in Early Modern History," in The Cambridge Economic History of Europe, Volume V, edited by E.E. Rich and C.H. Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 14-15, 18-19. See also Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, "A Construção de Modelos para as Economias Pré-Estatísticas," Revista de História Económica e Social, No. 16 (July-Dec., 1985), 3-14. Still, some find it difficult to reject the cultural explanation altogether. See António José Saraiva, A Cultura em Portugal: Teoria e História, Volume I (Lisbon: Livraria Bertrand, 1982), 100-104.

<sup>30</sup> Hanson, Economy and Society, 48-55. In Spain, too, foreigners took over the mercantile class abandoned by Spanish merchants who reached "noble" status. Lynch, The Hispanic World, 190-196; Lynch, Spain 1516-1598: From Nation State to World Empire (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 144-149.

overseas trade.<sup>31</sup> Class mobility was possible but not easy to achieve. One way of acquiring noble-like status was through financial gains, but the fortune had to have been acquired through "honourable" means; commercial endeavours were only permitted at the wholesale level.<sup>32</sup>

Portugal's already small middle class was further reduced by the expulsion of New Christians<sup>33</sup> throughout the early modern period, many of whom had their own businesses and were engaged in the manufacturing sector.<sup>34</sup> The Inquisition in

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<sup>31</sup> The literature of the time often ridiculed the ostentatiousness of the many "phoney" nobles. Coelho, "A evolução social," 180-184. Despite the great profits enjoyed by some from overseas expansion, the nobility and ecclesiastical orders continued to receive most of their revenues from their land holdings. The crown, however, increased its receipts rapidly with its monopoly of the Asian trade. In 1518-1519, for example, overseas trade accounted for 68% of the crown's revenues. See Garcia, História de Portugal, 109.

<sup>32</sup> Another way of obtaining some noble privileges was through university study, but only if the parents had already achieved quasi-noble status. Oliveira, Vida Económica e Social de Coimbra, Volume I, 374-376, 429-430. See also Magalhães Godinho, Os Descobrimentos, Volume I, 52.

<sup>33</sup> New Christians were Portuguese citizens who had been converted to Christianity, usually by force; most were of Jewish descent.

<sup>34</sup> Many of the expelled New Christians ended up in northern Europe, especially in the Netherlands, where their business acumen was welcomed and appreciated. Garcia, História de Portugal, 115.

Portugal was officially established in 1548<sup>35</sup> and the persecutions resurfaced when necessary, usually with more severity and tenacity in each subsequent wave. In 1624, for example, the Portuguese Holy Office recommended that those whose Jewish ancestry could be traced to the seventeenth degree should lose all their riches, office, and privileges.<sup>36</sup> The period 1621-1640 was especially critical for New Christians in Portugal as the Holy Office sentenced a total of 5,678 individuals. According to José Veiga Torres it was more than coincidence that during this same period Portugal's bourgeoisie was experiencing a resurgence. The expulsion of New Christians, most of whom were merchants, was a victory for the old established order which felt threatened by the upstarts.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> The oppression of religious minorities had been well entrenched in Portuguese society. In 1537, for instance, the crown decreed that New Christians wear a red, six-point star over their right shoulder in order to facilitate their identification. See Coelho, "A evolução social," 201-202. See also Joaquim Antero Romero Magalhães, "A Sociedade Portuguesa, Séculos XVI-XVIII," in Reflexões sobre História e Cultura Portuguesa, co-ordinated by Maria Emília Cordeira Ferreira (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos de História e Cultura Portuguesa, 1985), 196.

<sup>36</sup> António José Saraiva, Inquisição e Cristãos-Novos (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1985), 129.

<sup>37</sup> The Inquisition of the seventeenth century has been seen as an attempt by the old power brokers, the church and nobility, to force Portuguese society to a traditional order where the privileged owned most of the land, and the majority of the population cultivated the land. Foreigners were those who engaged in capitalist activities and whose new money

In the seventeenth century, New Christians were often synonymous with merchants or homens de negócio - the rising middle class in Portugal. Indeed, those of Jewish ancestry made up more than 75% of Portugal's mercantile class.<sup>38</sup> The Inquisition focused on this group in its trials; more than half of the executed men between 1682 and 1691 were of the middle, merchant class, 30% were artisans, and only 12% were from the lower ranks in society. No noble was executed. A total of 1,329 people were executed in Portugal during that 10-year period, including 670 women, more than half of the total. The records do not indicate their occupation, and António José Saraiva dismissed them from his analysis because, in his opinion, they were concentrated in domestic work.<sup>39</sup>

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threatened the established seigneurial system. Saraiva, Inquisição e Cristãos-Novos, 138-139. José Veiga Torres, "Uma Longa Guerra Social: Os Ritmos da Repressão Inquisitorial em Portugal," Revista de História Económica e Social, No. 1 (Jan.-June, 1978), 59. Another wave of anti-New Christian sentiment in the 1670s and early 1680s led to more expulsions and persecutions. Hanson, Economy and Society, 103.

<sup>38</sup> Hanson, Economy and Society, 79, 84. See also Frédéric Mauro, "Merchant communities, 1350-1750," in The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long-Distance Trade in the Early Modern World, 1350-1750, edited by James D. Tracy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 267-268. Some even blame the interference of the Inquisition for the poor success of the Brazil Company founded on 8 March 1649. Garcia, História de Portugal, 126. Others maintain that the Inquisition was a symptom not the cause of the curtailment of the bourgeoisie in Portugal. See Costa Pereira, "Vectores culturais portugueses," 329.

<sup>39</sup> Saraiva, Inquisição e Cristãos-Novos, 136-137.

It is not clear where he found this evidence, but another study showed that most women were persecuted for witchcraft and indeed made up 81% of the witchcraft cases.<sup>40</sup>

Research on the history of women in Portugal is in its infancy, and much more needs to be known about early modern society in general before definitive conclusions can be drawn about women's place in it. Few women held positions of political power, and their number was small, too, in dominant positions in commerce and industry. The vast majority of women and men worked in agriculture, in subsistence activities, where there was little profit to be made. By looking at early municipal council records for Ponte de Lima, Braga, Porto, Guimarães, Viseu, and Lisbon, Aurélio de Oliveira concluded that there was a disproportionately high number of women in the agricultural sector largely because more men than women migrated to large urban centres and engaged in overseas trade.<sup>41</sup> The vast majority of those who

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<sup>40</sup> Coelho, "A evolução social," 213.

<sup>41</sup> Aurélio de Oliveira, "A Mulher no Tecido Urbano dos Séculos XVII-XVIII," in A Mulher na Sociedade Portuguesa: Visão Histórica e Perspectivas Actuais, Actas do Colóquio, Volume I (Coimbra: Instituto de História Económica e Social/Universidade de Coimbra, 1986), 314. One sixteenth-century Portuguese writer lamented the exodus from country to town, and claimed that "under the smell of cinnamon, Lisbon depopulates the kingdom." Cited in R. Hooykaas, Humanism and the Voyages of Discovery in 16th Century Portuguese Science and Letters (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1979), 33. For an overall look at the number of Portuguese who left Portugal for overseas posts, see Vitorino Magalhães

emigrated were of the lower ranks of society, those who had no economic hopes in the mainland. Many of these men left their families behind, either temporarily or permanently, and in 1545 King D. John III (r.1521-1557) decreed that married men must take their wives with them to India because too many women had been left behind destitute.<sup>42</sup>

In urban centres, too, Portuguese women were marginalized in the social and economic spheres for their roles were usually the most inferior and even "degrading".<sup>43</sup> In the provisioning business, however, women played a prominent role and many enjoyed some privileges because of their monopoly of certain trades.<sup>44</sup> This was especially true of the bread and fish business. Men were millers, but women were bakers and bread sellers; men were fishers, but women were fish vendors, and often women were also responsible for transporting the fish from port to inland markets.<sup>45</sup> Women were also meat

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Godinho, "L'Emigration Portugaise (Xve-Xxe siècles): une constante structurale et les réponses aux changements du monde," Revista de História Económica e Social, No. 1 (Jan.-June, 1978), 5-32.

<sup>42</sup> Matos, "Os Descobrimentos Portugueses," 90.

<sup>43</sup> Oliveira, "Mulher no Tecido Urbano," 310-312. Hanson, Economy and Society, 113, 133.

<sup>44</sup> In Lisbon, for example, women outnumbered men in operating tobacco shops. See Hanson, Economy and Society, 59.

<sup>45</sup> Oliveira, "Mulher no Tecido Urbano," 317-318, and Oliveira, "Mercados a Norte do Douro," 57. Oliveira found that especially in Braga and Guimarães, women were engaged in daily

merchants or marchantes, but men dominated this sector. Women usually sold inferior cuts of meat.<sup>46</sup> Finally, in addition to a great concentration of women in the service sector, as domestics in upper class households, many women worked as weavers. Whether in urban centres or in rural regions, weaving was generally women's work in early modern Portugal.<sup>47</sup>

Like their male counterparts, however, most Portuguese women struggled to meet their basic needs and those of their families. Still, among those noted as poor in the records women greatly outnumbered the men. A census from 1537 of Leiria and Santarém in central Portugal shows that 25% and 21% of the respective households were run by women, primarily widows, and that the vast majority of these were poor. In fact, 73% of those receiving charity in Leiria were women.<sup>48</sup>

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excursions from the coast to the interior carrying loads of fish to consumers in the hinterland.

<sup>46</sup> Women also dealt with other, less prestigious and less profitable food sales, such as milk, eggs, fowl, fruits, and vegetables. Oliveira, "Mulher no Tecido Urbano," 320, 322.

<sup>47</sup> Oliveira, "Mulher no Tecido Urbano," 327. See also Oliveira, Vida Econômica e Social de Coimbra, 393.

<sup>48</sup> Oliveira, "População de Leiria," 240-241. Oliveira cautions against taking information from census lists too literally, however, because there was a real problem with accurate figures. Knowing that most censuses were taken as a means of increasing taxes, the Portuguese were prone to hide from the census taker. António de Oliveira, "A população de Caminha e Valença em 1513," Bracara Augusta, Volume XXX, No. 69/81 (Jan-June 1976), 127.



Studies on Valença and Caminha in northern Portugal have also shown that widows were among the poorest in these two towns, with 42% of widows in Caminha and 63% in Valença receiving charity. This is significantly higher than the number of widowers or single men receiving charity, which was recorded in Caminha at less than 3%.<sup>49</sup>

These figures correspond with similar findings in other regions in the Iberian Peninsula. Already in early modern Spain officials differentiated between the "conjunctural poor" - those who needed assistance during times of crisis - and the "structural poor" who received more permanent support, but unfortunately the records did not always note the distinction.<sup>50</sup> Consequently, poverty levels are difficult to determine, but in mid-sixteenth century the percentage of poor residents in some Castilian towns ranged from 9% to 50% of the population.<sup>51</sup> A census of Toledo in 1561, involving 21 parishes, shows that widows made up 19.33% of the population, and this number was found in other parts of Spain as well. Reasons for the high number of widows in early modern Spain

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<sup>49</sup> In Valença, the clergy and nobility made up 22% of the population, while in Caminha they were 14%; Valença's poor amounted to 16% of the population while Caminha's was 13%. Oliveira, "População de Caminha e Valença," 131, 138.

<sup>50</sup> The municipal council at Coimbra defined the town's very poor in 1590 as those who were good for nothing. António de Oliveira, "A população das comarcas de Leiria," 237.

<sup>51</sup> Martz, Poverty and Welfare, 118.

are that men died earlier, and many men had left to work in Castile's overseas empire.<sup>52</sup> Overall, women appear to have been more likely to receive poor relief in most parts of western Europe in the early modern period. Not surprisingly, women also generally earned significantly lower wages than men.<sup>53</sup>

There were of course class differences between women, and undoubtedly the experience of the noble woman was significantly different from that of the peasant.<sup>54</sup> But all women lived within the confines of a patriarchal society, and record keepers, men for the most part, betrayed society's biases by usually omitting women's economic roles. Women were simply wives, widows, or lowly servants. They were appendages, not individuals. Bartolomé Bennassar's study of two court cases involving family feuds in Andújar, Spain, for example, showed that among the 142 people noted the few women named with their occupations were all servants except for one nun. All other women were the "wife of..." Significantly,

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<sup>52</sup> Martz, Poverty and Welfare, 104-105. See also Coelho, "A evolução social," 194.

<sup>53</sup> Jütte, Poverty and Deviance, 41-43.

<sup>54</sup> Women of the upper classes were generally more secluded in their great mansions, where honour was strongly linked with female fidelity. In some circles, in fact, the ideal was for a woman never to leave her home except at the time of her baptism, marriage, and death. Costa Pereira, "Vectores culturais portugueses," 333.

the same records show that a high percentage of urban males could sign their names, whereas the opposite was true for women, regardless of class. In fact, 19 out of 20 witnesses from religious orders signed their names. The only one who could not was the sole woman from a female religious order.<sup>55</sup>

Some observers have contended that overall, Portuguese women enjoyed relative freedom during the heyday of overseas exploration and expansion because their men were absent for long periods, yet this was not the case. As Gil Vicente noted in his Auto da India, upon the return of her sailor husband from his trip to the Orient, the unfaithful wife was hanged.<sup>56</sup>

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Did Portuguese women experience changes in the structure of their lives during the early modern period? At present this is difficult to determine because little exists for comparative purposes. Portuguese historiography has not

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<sup>55</sup> The court cases took place in 1614 and 1629. Bartolomé Bennassar, "Contribution à l'étude des comportements en Andalousie à l'époque moderne: vivre à Andújar au début du XVIIe siècle," in Les Mentalités dans la Péninsule Ibérique et en Amérique Latine aux XVIe et XVIIe Siècles. Actes du XIIIe Congrès de la Société des Hispanistes Français de l'Enseignement Supérieur (Tours: Université de Tours, 1978), 88-92, 98, 100.

<sup>56</sup> Cited in Matos, "Os Descobrimentos Portugueses," 111.

properly addressed questions of transition in women's lives. José Gentil da Silva's portrayal of Portuguese women's status in the early modern era is too idealistic. His contention that they worked hard whether in agriculture, maritime, or industrial sectors is probably true though nebulous, but his assertion that women's work and wages were devalued toward the end of the sixteenth century is unsubstantiated. The fact that women earned 20 réis in Lisbon in 1611 for roasting a duck, and that a pair of shoes cost 180 réis, tells us nothing meaningful about women's economic position.<sup>57</sup> This criticism is equally applicable to his argument that there was no basic difference between female and male wages in the fifteenth century, but that the advent of a monetary economy with its external pressures was detrimental to women's position in Iberian society, leaving them with only two options, matrimony or prostitution.<sup>58</sup> He failed to adequately explain conditions in the fifteenth century as well as the process of transition in the Iberian Peninsula. Yet Gentil da Silva is one of the few Portuguese historians who has at least

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<sup>57</sup> José Gentil da Silva, "A Mulher e o Trabalho em Portugal," in A Mulher na Sociedade Portuguesa: Visão Histórica e Perspectivas Actuais: Actas do Colóquio, Volume I (Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1986), 268.

<sup>58</sup> José Gentil da Silva, "La Mujer en España en la Epoca Mercantil: De la Igualdad al Aislamiento," in La Mujer en la Historia de España (siglos XVI-XX): Actas de las II Jornadas de Investigación Interdisciplinaria (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1984), 16-19.

attempted to address questions of transition in the lives of Iberian women in the early modern period.

Given the lack of adequate secondary material in Portugal on women's economic contributions, the present study relies heavily on primary sources to explain the position of women in the fish market, with a particular emphasis on port records from seventeenth-century Porto. In order to understand better Portugal's early connection to the Newfoundland cod trade, this analysis encompasses three major points. First, the long-standing assumption of an early Portuguese eminence in Newfoundland's cod fishery is reviewed and seriously revised. Second, the much-neglected field of women's roles in early modern maritime communities is examined and conceptualized in relation to merchandising cod. Third, since Portugal's cod trade was essentially controlled by English agents from at least the mid-seventeenth century, the English share of Porto's cod trade is scrutinized, with a discussion of a possible link between the rise of the English and the subsequent decline of Portuguese female cod merchants.

Of the three key points in this inquiry, the task of investigating Portugal's early cod fishery is the most difficult due to the scarcity of documents for the sixteenth century. Chapter 2 grapples with this misty period as it reviews the evidence for an early Portuguese cod fishery off "Terra Nova". Since the secondary literature has proven

inadequate, emphasis is placed on contemporary sources from that era of "discovery" in order to chronicle the Portugal-Newfoundland connection in a systematic fashion. Many allusions have been made to that connection, often in exaggerated form and poorly documented, with the spotlight on the uncertain undertakings of the Corte Real brothers.<sup>59</sup> Portuguese historians have not adequately studied the subject, though this did not prevent many from making the occasional cursory patriotic comment.<sup>60</sup>

Canadian historiography is equally guilty of

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<sup>59</sup> Gaspar and Miguel Corte Real were Portuguese noblemen from Terceira, Azores, who led expeditions to Newfoundland or Labrador (the exact geographic location is still debated) in 1501 and 1502, respectively; both brothers never returned from their voyages. Historians disagree on the motives of the Corte Real expeditions: some argue that the Portuguese were looking for the north-west passage to India; others suggest that they were looking to establish a colony or settlement in the region, for their vessels had women and men on board; still others maintain that the Portuguese sought to exploit the natural resources in the area, namely the fish and timber. See Henri Harisse, Découverte et Evolution Cartographique de Terre-Neuve et des Pays Circonvoisins (Paris: H. Welter, 1900), 3, 23, and The Discovery of North America (Paris: H. Welter, 1892), 60-68, and 74-76; Eduardo Brazão, La Découverte de Terre-Neuve (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1964), 10-11, and 67-70; Duarte Leite, História dos Descobrimentos (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1958), Volume I, 360.

<sup>60</sup> Armando Cortesão even argued that, "However important documents are to the historian, history is not made with documents only. There are events which, though no documents on them survive, are known to have happened and must be interpreted in the light of circumstantial evidence, and accommodated to the contemporary social, political and cultural picture." See, Armando Cortesão, History of Portuguese Cartography, Volume I (Coimbra: Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, 1969), xxi.

superficiality when dealing with the early Portuguese presence in Newfoundland waters, too often relying on and perpetuating unsubstantiated claims. Keith Matthews concluded that already in 1501 the Portuguese had fishing companies established in Viana, Aveiro, and in Terceira, Azores, to deal with the Newfoundland cod fishery. His source for this information was D.W. Prowse, who had borrowed it from George Patterson, who in turn had quoted an obscure Portuguese historian. None of them based his arguments on actual archival documents.<sup>61</sup> Patterson's interpretation of early maps and nomenclature is a Portuguese chauvinist's dream come true, but it also demonstrates the dangers of skewed analysis.<sup>62</sup>

In the first half of the sixteenth century the Portuguese cod fishery was barely discernible, and it hardly got off the ground in the second half. Reasons for this are complex and

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<sup>61</sup> Keith Matthews, "A History of the West of England-Newfoundland Fishery," Ph.D. Dissertation (University of Oxford, 1968), 38; D.W. Prowse, A History of Newfoundland from the English, Colonial, and Foreign Records (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1896), 15; George Patterson, "The Portuguese on the North-West coast of America, and the first European attempt at Colonization there. A lost chapter in American History," in Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Section II (1890), 145.

<sup>62</sup> Patterson even suggested that not only is the name Anticosti Island of Portuguese origin, but the native name "Naticotec", believed to have been the actual source of Anticosti, "may be a corruption of the European." Patterson, "The Portuguese on the North-East Coast," 157 (his note 2), 158. He also rejected the possibility that the word "Canada" was derived from the native word "Kanata", meaning village, preferring the Portuguese word canada denoting a narrow path.

difficult to pinpoint, and the problem is exacerbated by inadequate sources for the early period, including an almost complete lack of port records for the sixteenth century. The situation is much clearer for the seventeenth century, by which time the Portuguese were at the receiving end of the fishery. To speak of the Portuguese connection with Newfoundland in the early modern period is to speak of a cod trade, not a cod fishery. Although a few hints indicate some participation in the actual fishery, the best documentation exists on cod already in Portugal, and almost exclusively in the second half of the seventeenth century.

Part of the myth concerning Portugal's early cod fishery is the assumption that the Portuguese ate a lot of fish, and that they were especially great consumers of cod. Portuguese studies on consumption patterns for the early modern period are sorely lacking, but the evidence does not support the view that Portugal, being a Catholic and maritime-oriented country, was especially interested in the Newfoundland cod fishery. First, the few references to cod prices in the sixteenth century suggest that cod was usually more expensive than meat. Second, all indications point to a local fish market which only occasionally included cod. Third, there is no evidence to show that cod was appreciated by any particular socio-economic group.

Laurier Turgeon has rightly suggested that caution should



be used when connecting the increase of the fish trade in the early modern era with the influence of the Catholic church and its numerous meatless days. Undoubtedly it played a role, especially after the Council of Trent in the mid-sixteenth century, but as he pointed out, the church never specified that Catholics were to eat fish. Furthermore, the church was usually open to grant exemptions to those who needed to eat meat during Lent or other prohibited days, including the sick, nursing and pregnant women, travellers, and so forth.<sup>63</sup> Significantly, records on expenses incurred during religious festivals and processions in Braga in northern Portugal show that meals for officials involved in those celebrations always included a sizeable portion of meat (the amount varying according to the status of the individual) and a canada of wine, never any fish, cod or otherwise.<sup>64</sup>

The traditional debate over whether or not Portugal had a successful cod fishery in the early modern era has had

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<sup>63</sup> Laurier Turgeon, "Le temps des pêches lointaines: permanences et transformations (vers 1500 - vers 1850)," in Histoire des Pêches Maritimes en France, sous la direction de Michel Mollat (Toulouse: Bibliothèque historique Privat, 1987), 165.

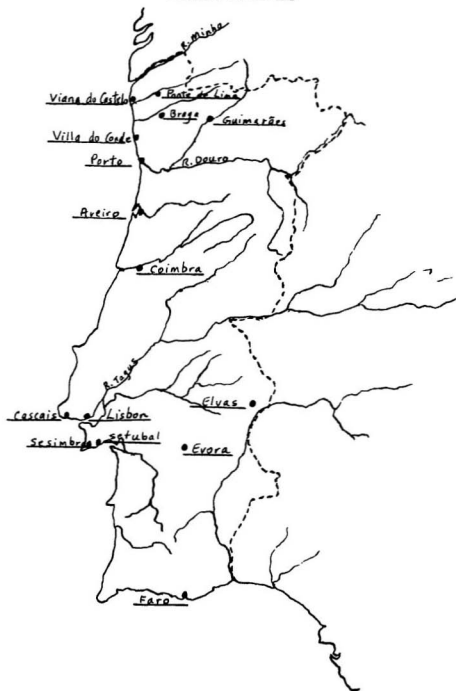
<sup>64</sup> Câmara Municipal de Braga (C.M.B.), "Acordos e Vreações da Câmara de Braga no Episcopado de D. Frei Bartolomeu dos Mártires, 1561," Bracara Augusta: Revista Cultural de regionalismo e História da Câmara Municipal de Braga, Volume XXVII, No. 64 (1973), 598. See also Volume XXX (1976), 727, and Volume XXXI (1977), 458. A canada was an ancient Portuguese liquid measure, equivalent to approximately 1.589 litres.

little to say about the role of Portuguese women in maritime economies. Still, the discussion needs to be considered in order to bring new archival findings to light, and to put the seventeenth-century cod trade, in which women played a visible role, in proper historical context. Documents for the earlier period are fewer in number and less generous in detail about individuals, male or female. Although much of what is known about the sixteenth century is general in nature, Chapter 2 provides the necessary background for the remainder of the discussion on the cod trade.

The present study focuses on the major coastal centres in northern Portugal, including Aveiro, Porto, Vila do Conde, and Viana do Castelo, as well as two neighbouring towns, Ponte de Lima and Braga (see map). The latter two, in the interior but situated along sizeable rivers, provide some insight into questions of accessibility and distribution once cod arrived on the coast. This is not to say that ports further south did not occasionally participate in this trade as well, especially those around the Lisbon area. Furthermore, even if the north coast dominated the Portuguese cod trade, some of this cod may have found its way to communities all over Portugal. For purposes of our research, the north coast proved sufficient.

Although efforts were made to cover the entire north coast, the best documentation on the Portuguese cod trade is

# PORTUGAL



connected to Porto where the district archives holds a large collection of church records, among which is a set of port records for the early modern period. Because the church was entitled to a tithe on incoming merchandise, the Cabido, or chapter, had a vested interest in maintaining a vigilant account of port activities.<sup>65</sup> Consequently, its books are a rich source of information on ship arrivals, cargoes, prices, and merchants involved in the various commercial transactions.

The church's portion was called the redízima because it was 10% of the dízima, or the crown's intake from incoming shipments, which was 10% of the total volume.<sup>66</sup> In other words, the church received one per cent of all cod shipments. Although the Redízima collection covers the years 1573-1827, the most complete books are for 1639-1679. The earlier records are less detailed and fewer in number, while the later ones deteriorate significantly in content from 1680 onwards, due primarily to the absence of entry books and a

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<sup>65</sup> Portuguese historians have found that for the early modern period religious institutions generally kept better records than the laity or civic administrators perhaps because the clergy was overall better educated. See, for example, Oliveira, "Elementos para a história dos preços," 128.

<sup>66</sup> Though the collection will be referred to as Redízima, since that is the name on most of the volumes in question, the amounts noted in the records and in this study deal with the dízima - that is, 10% of all cod entering Porto. Church officials noted the entire amount owed to the crown and usually redízima totals were calculated separately at the end of each book.

concentration on dispatch records only. These problems notwithstanding, the Cabido Redízima series provides the most comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data on Portugal's cod trade. For the most part, cod shipments were clearly specified with three main categories found in the records: vento, pasta, and refugo.

Except for the refugo, which was clearly a refuse or inferior quality of the other two, little is known about what exactly was vento or pasta cod. The vento name suggests that the cod in question was wind dried,<sup>67</sup> or what was known as merchantable cod,<sup>68</sup> while the pasta was probably wet or green cod. The Cabido records furnish no explanation about these categories. Two hints provide some clues, however. First, almost all pasta entering Porto arrived in French ships, while vento was brought in primarily by the English. Since the French are known to have specialized in "la morue verte",<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> The word vento means wind, and an early reference shows that the Portuguese fished for cod in English waters in the fourteenth century which they salted and dried ao vento. José Montalvão Machado, "Alimentos Antigos e Alimentos Novos," Anais - Academia Portuguesa da História, II Série, Volume 29 (Lisbon, 1984), 514.

<sup>68</sup> Daniel Vickers, "'A known and staple commoditie': Codfish Prices in Essex County, Massachusetts, 1640-1775," Essex Institute Historical Collections, Vol. 124, No. 3 (July, 1988), 188.

<sup>69</sup> Charles de la Morandière, Histoire de la Pêche Française de la Morue dans l'Amérique Septentrionale (des origines à 1789), Tome I (Paris: G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1962), 247. Les Sables d'Olonne was especially fond of

it is fair to suppose that pasta was a green cod; the English, with a preference for dry cod,<sup>70</sup> were more connected to Porto's vento trade. Second, vento cod was always more expensive than pasta,<sup>71</sup> suggesting that the preparation process for vento was more complex.

Using these Cabido port records and some municipal accounts, Chapter 3 appraises the volume of cod dealt in Porto in the first half of the seventeenth century, with an emphasis on how the local market was regulated and who was at the centre of cod marketing and distribution. Like many other

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producing this wet or green fishery, and, as discussed in Chapter 4, Olonne was the major French port supplying cod to Porto in the seventeenth century.

<sup>70</sup> Harold Innis maintained that the English problem with adequate supplies of salt led to their specialization in a cod trade that involved "light salting." Harold Innis, The Cod Fisheries: The History of an International Economy, revised edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, r.1954 [1940]), 35-36. Matthews, on the other hand, argued that this was probably less true for the early period, but that whatever pushed the English to concentrate on dry cod, it proved instrumental in winning European markets because dry cod had a much longer shelf life. Matthews, "History of the West of England," 40-42.

<sup>71</sup> One exception was found in April 1641, when both vento and pasta were priced at 2,400 réis per quintal. See, Arquivo Distrital do Porto (A.D.P.), Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1641, Cabido No. 116, f.141. It is possible that the record keeper made an error, or that the vento was of an inferior quality. On 6 March 1649, one vento cargo was valued at 1,600 réis per quintal, but in early June a load of pasta cost 2,020 réis per quintal. See, A.D.P., Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.140, f.142. Either the vento was of an inferior quality, or the pasta price reflects fluctuations at different times of the year.

cities in the early modern era, Porto had wide-ranging jurisdiction over the local economy; city officials were directly involved in price and wage fixing, determining and overseeing standards in weights and measures, granting retail licenses, imposing and collecting sales taxes, and maintaining public health and safety.<sup>72</sup> Given this broad mandate, it is not surprising to find authorities dealing extensively with those engaged in commercial endeavours, especially merchants handling foodstuffs. One of the most pressing concerns for the municipal council was ensuring that the city was amply provisioned, and that enough basic food was affordable to the general populace. Great efforts were taken to secure guarantees from food suppliers, and it is here that a perplexing component of Porto's economy was found: a significant volume of cod was merchandised by women. Were they merchants or retail sellers? Distinctions between merchants and vendors are not well-defined, especially for the early modern period, but there is little doubt that the women in the Cabido records dealt with substantial volumes of cod at the wholesale level.

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<sup>72</sup> Municipal governments had enormous powers in Portugal, especially in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The rise of absolute monarchy in the seventeenth century curtailed some municipal prerogatives. Joaquim Antero Romero Magalhães, "Panorama Social e Económico do Algarve na época de D. Jerónimo Osório," Anais do Município de Faro, No. XI (1981), 56, and Romero Magalhães, "A Sociedade Portuguesa," 194-195.

Much has been written on women's history in the past two decades but a great deal remains uninvestigated, especially in the Iberian peninsula, and particularly in Portugal. Consequently, any discussion of women's work experiences in the early modern period must rely heavily on literature from northern Europe. The most revealing research has been conducted on towns in northern France, Germany, and England, and many studies deal with questions of deterioration in women's status that some historians claim occurred during the period of transition between feudalism and capitalism. There is little agreement on definitions for "feudalism" and "capitalism", let alone on the exact starting point for this "transition", but the debate can be divided into three main camps: those who assert that women enjoyed greater autonomy prior to the advent of capitalism; those who believe that a transition took place but whose conclusions include some serious reservations; and those who reject the before-and-after picture altogether.

As Judith Bennett has pointed out, the chasm between the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period has been comforting to both camps: medievalists enjoyed the protection the separation gave them, and early modern historians cherished the notion of



advancement intrinsically connected with their era.<sup>73</sup> Some challenges have been voiced to the entire question of a discontinuity between these two major historical periods, but no one has successfully formulated an alternative theoretical approach. Significantly, this hesitancy is especially noticeable in women's history for at least five reasons which Bennett succinctly summarized: the model was set by such authorities as Alice Clark and Joan Kelly, it fits the dominant historiographic tradition, it meets our needs for a golden past, it conforms to Marxist historiography, and women's history, still marginally situated in academia, "simply cannot afford to question the master narrative."<sup>74</sup>

Not only is there near complete consensus on this "great divide", but the framework is often articulated with the force of a paradigm because it tells us what we want to hear.<sup>75</sup> The result has been a tendency to make sweeping commentaries based on poorly-researched material. Whether the transition was located in the sixteenth century, earlier or later, the emphasis was to show that it had been great and negative, that

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<sup>73</sup> Judith M. Bennett, "Medieval Women, Modern Women: Across the Great Divide," in Culture and History, 1350-1600: Essays on English Communities, Identities and Writing, edited by David Aers (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), 147.

<sup>74</sup> Bennett, "Medieval Women, Modern Women," 148-149.

<sup>75</sup> Bennett, "Medieval Women, Modern Women," 150.

it represented "woman's descent from paradise."<sup>76</sup> In her study on women's work in England between 1300 and 1700, Bennett argued that although small shifts and changes were discernable during certain economic crises or labour shortages, there was no major transformation in the economic position of most women. In the often romanticized household economy, she found that wives were subordinated to their husbands, women's work was less valued, considered secondary, and less skilled, the household unit was identified by the husband's occupation, and family resources were under his control.<sup>77</sup>

As for waged-work, Bennett detected in England little change between 1300 and 1700. At no time during that four-century period were single women involved in long distance trade, professions, or civil service. Instead, throughout those centuries their occupations continued to be low-skilled, poorly paid, and devalued, and greatly segregated in the service, textile, and clothing sectors.<sup>78</sup> Nor were there major shifts in women's accessibility to guilds, for their entry had always been limited, only attainable through their husbands' membership, and guild restrictions on female

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<sup>76</sup> Susan Cahn, Industry of Devotion, 9, cited in Bennett, "Medieval Women, Modern Women," 151.

<sup>77</sup> Bennett, "Medieval Women, Modern Women," 152-154.

<sup>78</sup> Bennett, "Medieval Women, Modern Women," 157-158.

activities were pronounced during the entire period.<sup>79</sup> Finally, women's wages were approximately one half to two thirds of their male counterparts, whether they were working in the fourteenth century or in the seventeenth.<sup>80</sup> In conclusion, Bennett cautions against the trend to focus on the shifts which were temporary and only affected a small number of women. The evidence does not support the idea of a transition nor of a golden age. Instead, she suggests that recognizing the essence of continuity in women's experience provides a more balanced approach to women's history.<sup>81</sup>

Could historical models associated with women's experience in northern Europe apply to Portugal in the early modern era? At present this is difficult to tell because little exists for comparative purposes. Although this theme of transition has been debated primarily in connection to women in industrial or urban centres, the literature is

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<sup>79</sup> Bennett, "Medieval Women, Modern Women," 159-160. Bennett suggested that England may have been significantly different in this regard than the rest of continental Europe. No all-female guilds were found in England, whereas Paris had a few.

<sup>80</sup> Bennett, "Medieval Women, Modern Women," 161.

<sup>81</sup> Merry Wiesner, however, in her more recent work, contends that fundamental ideological changes took place in the sixteenth century, largely due to the Protestant Reformation and a growing professionalization of work, that progressively devalued women's economic roles. Merry Wiesner, Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), especially her Chapter 3.

reviewed in Chapter 3 in order to put the experience of Portuguese female cod merchants in historical context. What were women's roles in a traditional maritime community in northern Portugal and did these roles change significantly over time? The evidence suggests that along Portugal's northern coast women were involved in the fish trade in a greater capacity than existing historiography might lead one to expect, though this is difficult to confirm because serious gaps remain in the history of women in the early modern period, and the lacuna is especially evident in maritime studies. Traditional histories of the fishery had little to say about women's contributions, and writing on women's history in western Europe has focused on the urban/industrial setting, with a strong emphasis on the role of women in market towns and guild or trade occupations in northern Europe. The model for women's participation in urban economies does not fit well with the maritime sector. As the study on Caxinas illustrates, women enjoy greater autonomy in certain fishing communities, where the fishery is less structured and society in general is more fluid than in urban, industrial centres. Unfortunately, this limited literature is more socio-anthropological than historical, yet it offers the only context available with which one can evaluate conditions in early modern Porto and its vicinity.

In her recent anthropological study of Vila Chã, a small

maritime community north of Porto, Sally Cole discovered that households in maritime communities are women-centred whether the men are absent or at home. She also found that a less gender-stratified work order is common among small, non-industrialized fisheries. Though "fishing, fisher, and skipper" are perceived as masculine roles, women also engage in these activities. Girls apprentice with their fathers, despite attempts by officials at the turn of the century to curb women's participation in the trade. Although some women fish, however, most of them look after the fishnets, unload, sort, and sell the catch, gather and sell seaweed, grow vegetables in their gardens, and manage the household income.<sup>82</sup> In comparing maritime women with agricultural women, Cole concluded that the former are more autonomous because they work outside the home and control the family finances.<sup>83</sup>

Similar observations about Portuguese maritime women in the early modern era are more difficult to locate, but regulations on the retail trade indicate that women were largely responsible for selling fish at the local market. In Porto, for instance, officials reserved an area in town for

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<sup>82</sup> Sally Cole, Women of the Praia: Work and Lives in a Portuguese Coastal Community (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 63-74.

<sup>83</sup> Cole, Women of the Praia, 103-104.

local fishers, and only the fishers, or their wives and daughters, could sell their catch directly to the public. This regulation was confirmed in 1634, with the explicit stipulation that anyone dealing with regateiras would be fined. The regateira, a huckstress or itinerant trader, was only allowed to sell imported fish.<sup>84</sup> The town's primary objective in this case was to reduce the number of intermediaries in order to keep prices down for the consumer, and most of those intermediaries were female. But although municipal records show women predominately in retail trade, the Cabido collection suggests that many women were wholesale fish merchants as well, at least until the 1650s when English merchants took over the wholesale business.

Chapter 4 evaluates the prominent position of English and French ships and shipmasters provisioning Porto with cod and other fish. The few existing port records for the late sixteenth century showed a Flemish presence in Porto, but they were barely visible in the next century, though the first four decades of the seventeenth century remain a mystery,<sup>85</sup> and it

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<sup>84</sup> Arquivo Histórico Municipal do Porto (A.H.M.P.), Livro das Vereações, No. 33 (1597), f.49; No. 47 (1634), f.23v; No. 48 (1638), f.75; as cited in Francisco Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo (1580-1640): Os Homens, as Instituições e o Poder, Two Volumes (Porto: Câmara Municipal do Porto/Arquivo Histórico, 1988), Volume I, 186, 230.

<sup>85</sup> The Cabido port records for 1600-1638 have not survived.

may have been a crucial period of transition for Porto's role in the Newfoundland cod fishery. The actual point of entry by foreign agents into Portuguese markets is difficult to determine, but the records show that by 1639 the French and English positions were well established, with the latter seizing a progressively greater share of the market.

What factors led to Portugal's dependence on England and France for its supply of cod? Were the Portuguese ever in a position to be usurped? Because little is known about the early period, one can hardly speak of a veritable transition from Portuguese self-sufficiency to a foreign takeover. We know that foreigners controlled almost all cod entering Porto after 1639, but had the situation ever been significantly different? Due to lack of evidence for previous decades, it is difficult to determine whether the Portuguese supplied themselves with adequate volumes of cod prior to the 1640s. What the Porto records show with certainty is that by the mid-seventeenth century the English had consolidated their position as the leading cod suppliers in Porto. It should be stressed, however, that nothing was found to suggest that cod consumption was especially appreciated in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In other words, the rise of the Portuguese cod trade parallels the rise of the English cod fishery.

Not only were the English Porto's main cod suppliers,

they also settled in the city to handle cod distribution. Consequently, in the 1650s and 1660s women's participation in the cod trade declined considerably. A look at how the English became such a prestigious commercial class in Portugal's cod trade provides some clues about the apparent displacement of women. Porto sources were not very helpful in this regard, but municipal records in Lisbon offer some hints about the dominant position of English cod merchants, and some possible effects this had on the native community. Lisbon officials left ample evidence of the bitter relationship between Portuguese and English economic interests in the seventeenth century. At the root of most complaints from the capital was a belief that the privileges enjoyed by foreign merchants in Lisbon had seriously jeopardized the local economy. City council was especially critical of English cod merchants who ignored municipal jurisdiction over price fixing, and who also bypassed the local merchant by engaging in direct, retail sales.

After the Portuguese broke from Spanish rule in 1640, King D. John IV (r.1640-1656) quickly sought official recognition abroad, and England obliged. This political coup was not accomplished without a hefty price for the Portuguese nation, the merits of which have been debated ever since. In return for its support of Portugal's independence, England exacted extremely favourable privileges for its merchants



dealing with Portugal. Not only were Portuguese overseas posts opened to English ships, but English merchants trading in Portugal were given almost free rein in their operations.

Historians have viewed the four major commercial treaties signed by Portugal and England in the seventeenth century, 1642, 1654, 1661, and 1703, as the basis for Portugal's slow industrial development in subsequent decades. The treaties led to the Portuguese economic specialization in wine making and exporting to England, and growing dependence on the import of English manufactured goods.<sup>86</sup> Portugal's bargaining position was weakened because of its dependence on England as a political ally. England eventually monopolized Portugal's commerce, a trend that has been traced from 1640 to the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>87</sup>

Although most studies on Anglo-Portuguese economic relations have focused on the wine and textile imports/exports, the commercial treaties between the two countries had an effect on other sectors as well, including the cod trade. Porto's port records especially reveal an increase in English control of the local fish business. Not

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<sup>86</sup> S. Sideri, Trade and Power: Informal Colonialism in Anglo-Portuguese Relations (Rotterdam: Rotterdam University Press, 1970), 4-11.

<sup>87</sup> V.M. Shillington and A.B. Wallis Chapman, The Commercial Relations of England and Portugal (New York: Burt Franklin, r.1970 [1907]), xi-xii.

only did English shipmasters supply most of Porto's cod, but English agents and merchants came to manage the incoming cargoes. Books for the 1640s and 1650s show that while foreigners provisioned Porto with cod, the Portuguese were still involved in marketing it, and a significant number of local traders named were women. From mid century onward, however, a greater number of English merchants were listed in a majority of transactions, making their influence more widespread. In the process, Portuguese women were displaced from their position as mercadoras of cod and fish products in general. It is here that signs of a transition are manifest. Portuguese merchants/traders were not displaced en masse; the displacement applied primarily, if not uniquely, to female fish merchants.

As Chapter 5 illustrates, women's presence in the records decreased steadily as the seventeenth century progressed, first from the cod trade, then from the fish industry altogether. Undoubtedly Porto women were still involved at the retail level, especially in the local fish market, but they were removed from a post previously theirs. Whether or not the English provoked such a radical change in the socio-economic sphere, or whether their presence merely accelerated a trend already in motion, cannot be ascertained at this point. The incomplete records are silent about causes and

motivating forces;<sup>88</sup> the documents reveal even less about conditions prior to the English arrival in Porto's harbour. How were women's traditional roles in a maritime community affected by the converging of English fish merchants in their midst? The English mercantile community enjoyed a relatively comfortable position in seventeenth-century Portugal, but the connection between the growth of their status and the ultimate demise of women's prominent role in Porto's cod trade remains to be seen.

Recent studies on women's history condemn the on-going tendency of economic historians to ignore women's contributions, or treat women's work as exceptional and complementary, the very opposite of what in actuality took place. The lack of documents cannot fully justify this erroneous perception because an essential problem is with the types of questions pursued by researchers. Historians traditionally preferred to highlight class distinctions over those of gender. Even studies on the family have tended to view these units as homogenous with no distinction made among the various components of the family. Whenever a distinction has been made, the tendency was to dichotomize society between the "active" members, (male) shopkeepers, artisans, peasants,

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<sup>88</sup> As one historian has put it, "Nothing in history is harder to establish than motive." C.V. Wedgwood, History and Hope: The Collected Essays of C.V. Wedgwood (London: Collins, 1987), 39.

and the "passive", widows and single women. But there have always been female shopkeepers, artisans, and peasants as well.<sup>89</sup> In seventeenth-century Porto, there were female cod merchants, too.

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<sup>89</sup> Ma. Victoria Lopez-Cordon, "La Historia Inacabada," in Mujeres y hombres en la formación del Pensamiento Occidental: Actas de las VII Jornadas de Investigación Interdisciplinaria, Volume II, edición de Virginia Maquieira d'Angelo (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1989), 104-108.

## Chapter 2: Portugal's Cod Fishery in the Sixteenth Century: Myths, Mists, and Misconceptions

It is difficult to find a history book on Portugal's sixteenth-century overseas exploits that does not mention Newfoundland; it is even more difficult to locate a study in which this Newfoundland connection is accurately and adequately developed. Opinions abound on Portuguese pre-eminence in the early cod fishery, but these affirmations are usually shrouded in nationalistic garb, and most fail to provide a shred of positive evidence for their claims. The reason for this lack of evidence is quite simple: none exists. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, study after study has elevated the Portuguese-Newfoundland connection to mythic proportions.

The secondary literature on the early Portuguese connection to Newfoundland is extremely weak, albeit somewhat colourful. Although hardly any research has been done on the early modern Portuguese cod fishery off Newfoundland,<sup>1</sup> fantastic statements about the importance of Portugal's involvement in the region abound. Samuel Eliot Morison, for example, alleged that Newfoundland was practically a trans-

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<sup>1</sup> A noteworthy exception was found in Viana do Castelo where serious archival work has been done on the city's early cod trade. See Manuel António Fernandes Moreira, "O Porto de Viana do Castelo e as Navegações para o Noroeste Atlântico," in Viana - o Mar e o Porto (Viana do Castelo: Junta Autónoma dos Portos do Norte, 1987).

Atlantic province of Portugal in the first quarter of the sixteenth century. David Quinn, moreover, suggested that "unofficially" Newfoundland was considered "almost part of the Iberian peninsula itself," in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>2</sup> Neither historian provided any evidence for these claims.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Samuel Eliot Morison, Portuguese Voyages to America in the Fifteenth Century (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1940), 72; David B. Quinn, "Newfoundland in the Consciousness of Europe in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries," in Early European Settlement and Exploitation in Atlantic Canada, edited by G.M. Story (St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1982), 17.

<sup>3</sup> Unsubstantiated and exaggerated claims about Portugal's early connection to Newfoundland have been made by many more historians, on both sides of the Atlantic. This is true of older works as well as more recent studies. See, for example: Franco Maria Ricci et al, eds., Portugal-Brazil: The Age of Atlantic Discoveries (Lisbon: Bertrand Editora/Brazilian Cultural Foundation, 1990), 99; G.V. Scammell, The First Imperial Age: European Overseas Expansion c.1400-1715 (London: Unwyn Hyman, 1989), 277; A.H. de Oliveira Marques, Portugal Quinhentista (Ensaio) (Lisbon: Quetzal Editores, 1987), 175; John A. Dickinson, "Old Routes and New Wares: The Advent of European Goods in the St. Lawrence Valley," in Le Castor Fait Tout: Selected Papers of the Fifth North American Fur Trade Conference, 1985 (Montréal: Lake St. Louis Historical Society of Montréal, 1987), 33; Mário Moutinho, História da Pesca do Bacalhau: por uma antropologia do "fiel amigo" (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1985), 19-23; Fernand Braudel, Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century: The Perspective of the World, Volume III, translated from the French by Siân Reynolds (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 143; Samuel Eliot Morison, The European Discovery of America: The Northern Voyages, A.D. 500-1600 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 225; René Bélanger, Les Basques dans l'Estuaire du Saint-Laurent, 1535-1635 (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université du Québec, 1971), 9; Carl O. Sauer, Northern Mists (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 57; J.H. Parry, The Establishment of the European Hegemony, 1415-1715: Trade and Exploration in the Age of the Renaissance (New York: Harper & Bros, 1961), 76-78;

Some historians go to great lengths to maintain the legend that the Portuguese were major players in the sixteenth-century cod fishery, including a few Canadian scholars. For example, George Patterson even contended that contemporary sources, such as reports from Richard Hakluyt, underestimated the Portuguese presence in Newfoundland waters.<sup>4</sup> D.W. Prowse argued that the lack of evidence should not impede generous conclusions about the Portuguese role in the early cod fishery.<sup>5</sup> Finally, Harold A. Innis claimed that much evidence exists on the early Portuguese cod fishery, but that little of it was ever divulged.<sup>6</sup>

Because of the scanty evidence available for a strong Portuguese presence in Newfoundland waters in the early sixteenth century, historians have traditionally followed one of three paths: omit any reference to sources, cite one

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Jaime Cortesão, Teoria Geral dos Descobrimentos Portugueses (Lisbon: Seara Nova, 1940), 36.

<sup>4</sup> George Patterson, "The Portuguese on the North-East coast of America, and the first European attempt at Colonization there. A lost chapter in American History," Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Section II, Vol. VIII (1890), 146.

<sup>5</sup> D.W. Prowse, History of Newfoundland (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1896), 35, 44-45, and 59.

<sup>6</sup> Harold A. Innis, The Cod Fisheries: The History of an International Economy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, r.1954 [1940]), 13-14; and "The Rise and Fall of the Spanish Fishery in Newfoundland," Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Section II, 3d series, Vol. 25 (1931), 51.

another as sources, or rely on the "policy of secrecy" allegedly practised by Portuguese monarchs. This secrecy theory has been especially popular among those wishing to "prove" that the Portuguese were in North America by the mid-fifteenth century, if not earlier. Portugal kept little information on these explorations, the argument has gone, in order to safeguard its findings from other competing nations. Since the early Portuguese chronicles contain much on Portugal's overseas expansion but nothing on "Terra Nova", it has been argued that they were tampered with in order to protect state secrets.<sup>7</sup> R.A. Skelton, for example, believed that some of the most revealing original documents on fifteenth and sixteenth-century Portugal were destroyed during the Lisbon earthquake of 1755,<sup>8</sup> a possibility that will remain forever safe from scrutiny. As for the element of secrecy, Skelton suggested that since the coasts of Newfoundland provided a rich fishing ground, fishers of any nationality

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<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Eduardo Brazão, La Découverte de Terre-Neuve (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1964), 20; Edgar Prestage, The Portuguese Pioneers (London: Adam & Charles Black, r.1966 [1933]), 168, 171, 211; David B. Quinn, North America from Earliest Discovery to First Settlements (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), 110; Dan O'Sullivan, The Age of Discovery, 1400-1550 (London: Longman Press, 1984), 11-19; David Arnold, The Age of Discovery, 1400-1600 (London: Methuen, 1983), 11-12.

<sup>8</sup> R.A. Skelton, Explorers' Maps: Chapters in the Cartographic Record of Geographical Discovery (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1958), 47.



would want to keep the location secret,<sup>9</sup> and apparently Bristol fishers maintained this policy as well.<sup>10</sup>

Not surprisingly, the "policy of secrecy" has been expounded especially by Portuguese historians, notably Eduardo Brazão, Jaime Cortesão, and Vitorino de Magalhães Godinho. Brazão, who referred to "nos secrets si bien gardés sur la navigation," contended that numerous and contradictory errors on earlier maps and charts were sometimes made purposely by Portuguese officials in order to confuse their rivals.<sup>11</sup> Cortesão claimed that Portugal knew of America by at least 1452, when it began its serious work in the north-western Atlantic. These early expeditions were undertaken clandestinely, he stated, particularly during the time of Infante D. Henrique (1394-1460), who wished to build a monopoly, a view also shared by Magalhães Godinho.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, a number of historians have flatly rejected all

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<sup>9</sup> R.A. Skelton, The European Image and Mapping of America, A.D. 1000-1600, The James Ford Bell Lectures, No.1, (1964), 15.

<sup>10</sup> James A. Williamson, The Cabot Voyages and Bristol Discovery Under Henry VII (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1962), 43.

<sup>11</sup> Brazão, La Découverte de Terre-Neuve, 20, 28.

<sup>12</sup> Cortesão, Teoria Geral dos Descobrimentos, 38-39; Vitorino de Magalhães Godinho, Dúvidas e Problemas à cerca de algumas teses da história da expansão (Lisbon: Edições Gazeta de Filosofia, 1943), 5. All three historians failed to provide concrete proof for their assertions.

claims of secrecy. Morison contended that the "phoney voyages are the alleged secret ones," and that secrecy arguments have been put forth by all Western countries, but especially by Portugal. Malyn Newitt pointed out, perhaps more succinctly than most, that when nothing can be shown to have happened during a particular period, Portuguese historians were fond of stressing the "policy of secrecy" as proof of a "great national plan." She concluded outright that these historians were simply "schizophrenic".<sup>13</sup>

Although the "policy of secrecy" debate adds nothing of value to the question of Portuguese involvement in the North Atlantic region, it is worth noting because it has often been used by historical apologists to explain the lack of concrete material on the Portuguese in sixteenth-century Canada. Yet, a careful examination of the few surviving records throws serious doubts on some of the most blatant assumptions found in the secondary literature about the Portuguese early cod fishery. Notwithstanding the probability that some records

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<sup>13</sup> Morison, Portuguese Voyages, 73-81, and The European Discovery of America, 82; Malyn Newitt, The First Portuguese Empire, (Exeter: University of Exeter, 1986), 13-14. Also see Henri Harris, The Discovery of North America (Paris: H. Welter, 1892), 272, and Duarte Leite, História dos Descobrimentos (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1958), 360. More recent work in Portugal has also questioned the entire theory of secrecy. See Francisco Contento Domingues, "A Política de Sigilo e as Navegações Portuguesas no Atlântico," Boletim do Instituto Histórico da Ilha Terceira, Vol. XLV, Tomo 1 (1987), 189-220.

have been lost, a void is still a void. While historical interpretation should not solely be document-driven, the fact still remains that nothing has been uncovered showing a systematic, large-scale, and long-term Portuguese presence in and around Newfoundland in the early modern period. Admittedly, few historians have made such a bold claim outright, but many have intimated of its possibility, if only more were known, and especially if Spain had left Portugal alone.

Conventional wisdom maintains that Spain's annexation of Portugal, 1580-1640, made the latter vulnerable to Spain's traditional enemies - the French, English, and Dutch - and that this led to an onslaught of attacks on Portugal's overseas stations and oceanic voyages. Iberian historians continue to debate the merits of this assessment, but there is little evidence to connect the ascendancy of Phillip II (r.1556/1580-1598) to Portugal's disappearance from the North Atlantic. Insufficient documentation impedes a proper reconstruction of the Portuguese involvement in Newfoundland's cod fishery prior to and during the annexation period; even less is known about any campaign to assault only Portuguese fishing ships. Though some records show that a few Portuguese cod-carrying vessels were attacked in the early seventeenth century, an equal number of references exist on the English, French, and Dutch attacking one another in and around

Newfoundland waters. There were even cases of English pirates attacking English ships. Sir Walter Raleigh, in his expedition of 1618, "taxed" fishers all along Newfoundland's harbours, and kidnapped 130 men.<sup>14</sup> Clearly piracy and privateering posed a real threat to everyone engaged in overseas trade.

Despite the contradictory evidence, historians have had difficulty resisting the notion that Spain's annexation was a source of Portugal's ills. Gillian Cell concluded that the "unfortunate Portuguese bore the brunt of Drake's fury" during his 1585 naval attack in Newfoundland, and that his raid in fact killed the Portuguese fishery. If that was true, then the Portuguese fishery could not have been very significant already, since Drake apparently raided 20 ships only, some of which were not fishing vessels.<sup>15</sup> Portuguese historians too have long maintained that the English and Dutch war against Phillip II eliminated the Spanish and Portuguese from the Newfoundland fishery.<sup>16</sup> The Spanish Armada of 1588 in particular ruined the Portuguese cod fishery, some argued, because many Portuguese vessels involved in the fishery were

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<sup>14</sup> Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 62.

<sup>15</sup> Gillian Cell, English Enterprise in Newfoundland, 1577-1660 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 47-48.

<sup>16</sup> A.A. Baldaque da Silva, Estado Actual das Pescas em Portugal (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1892), 166 (see his footnote).

pressed into the Armada and were destroyed during the campaign. Indeed, the effect of the Spanish annexation must have been profound for although it ended in 1640, the Portuguese fishery did not recover until the nineteenth century.<sup>17</sup>

Not all historians have promulgated the annexation theory. As early as the late nineteenth century, J.P. Oliveira Martins put the full blame for Portugal's decline on the Portuguese themselves. In his opinion, the Portuguese marine was lost long before the loss of independence. He blamed incompetent administration for the decay in Portugal's navigation, stating that by the time of King D. Sebastian (r.1557-1578), the country's prospects were dim. A navigational law of 3 November 1571 aimed to promote and protect Portuguese shipping. It prohibited the use of foreign bottoms to transport goods to any of Portugal's overseas posts, including the Atlantic islands, offered financial incentives to the shipbuilding industry, and opened overseas trade to Portuguese merchants. But it was too little too late.<sup>18</sup> As Fernand Braudel put it, the union of Spain and

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<sup>17</sup> Moutinho, História da Pesca do Bacalhau, 22.

<sup>18</sup> J.P. Oliveira Martins, Portugal nos Mares, Volume I (Lisbon: Ulmeiro, r.1988 [1881]), 36-39.

Portugal in 1580 was a union of two monumental weaklings.<sup>19</sup>

Whether the "decline" of Portugal's cod fishery was due to piracy, the Spanish Armada, or to internal factors is ultimately irrelevant because there was probably little Portuguese activity in Newfoundland waters. Prior to and during the Spanish annexation, Portugal's involvement in the early Newfoundland cod fishery was sporadic at best. Though incomplete data reinforces this intermittency it is substantially correct. Existing sources suggest that cod was only occasionally available at local markets in northern Portugal. Even Ernesto Canto, a flagrant nationalist, minimized Portugal's role in the early Newfoundland cod fishery.<sup>20</sup> In fact, he contended that only in the third

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<sup>19</sup> Fernand Braudel, La Méditerranée et le Monde Méditerranéen à l'Epoque de Philippe II, 2 Volumes, 9e édition (Paris: Armand Colin, 1990 [1949]), Volume I, 207.

<sup>20</sup> For reasons of efficiency and clarity, all cod references in this study will be associated with "Terra Nova" - that is, present day Newfoundland - even though this was not always stipulated in the records. It is recognized that some of the cod reaching Portugal's ports in the early modern era may have come from other regions, notably from waters near Greenland and especially from Norway. See Moses Bensabat Amzalak, A Pesca do Bacalhau (Lisbon: Museu Comercial, 1923), 8; Braudel, La Méditerranée, Vol. I, 177; O.A. Johnsen, "Les relations commerciales entre la Norvège et l'Espagne dans les temps modernes," Revue Historique, T.CLXV (Paris, 1930), 77-78, as cited in Virginia Rau, Estudos sobre a História do Sal Português (Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1984), 171; and "Adventencias para la yntroducción del Trato y Navegación de la Provincia de Terranova y Norvega en los Puertos de Cantabria," Colección Vargas Ponce III, No. 68, as cited in Innis, "The Rise and Fall of the Spanish Fishery in Newfoundland," 65.

quarter of the sixteenth century did Newfoundland begin to be called "Terra do Bacalhao", following the increase of European activity in the area.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, European interest in Newfoundland was haphazard for the first quarter of the sixteenth century, and a systematic cod fishery did not emerge until the mid-century and even later.

A fair amount of documentation has survived from the early modern period showing Portuguese dealings with large volumes of cod. Admittedly, much less is available for the sixteenth century than for the seventeenth, but enough exists to construct a reasonable hypothesis about Portuguese involvement in the early cod fishery. What all these records fail to do, however, is prove that the Portuguese were first among western Europeans in Newfoundland waters in the early modern period, or that they were at any time truly successful in the cod trade of the sixteenth century. In fact, the

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<sup>21</sup> Ernesto do Canto, ed., Arquivo dos Açores, 14 Volumes (Ponta Delgada: Universidade dos Açores, r.1983, [1882]), Volume 4, 415. A letter written 13 September 1512, however, in which King Ferdinand of Aragon requested a visit with Sebastian Cabot, mentioned the "Isla de los Bacalhaos," or "island of the Codfish". See "Sebastian Cabot Consulted about Newfoundland," cited in H.P. Biggar, ed., Precursors of Jacques Cartier, 1497-1534: A Collection of Documents Relating to the Early History of the Dominion of Canada (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1911), 115-116. Also the Jorge Reinel planisphere c.1519 had "Bacalnaos" on the eastern coast of Newfoundland, and "Dolavrador" on the northern coast. Armando Cortesão and Avelino Teixeira da Mota, eds., Portvgaliae Monumenta Cartographica, 6 Volumes (Lisbon: Comemorações do V Centenário da Morte do Infante D. Henrique, 1960), Volume V, unpaginated.

evidence suggests that cod was not a prominent fixture in Portuguese kitchens in the sixteenth century, and that Portugal's interest in the trade was ill-defined and intermittent. Though "success" is a relative term, the documentation shows no sign of Portuguese control of the cod fishery, even if such a goal was ever pursued. Periodic participation in an economic activity does not amount to domination.

With the exception of Portugal's contribution, the history of the sixteenth-century cod fishery in its international dimension is fairly well understood, but a brief overview of the major participants will be considered in order to place the Portuguese in historical perspective. Overall, better documentation exists for the French, Spanish, and English early involvement in Newfoundland than that which survived for the Portuguese, suggesting further that Portugal's role in the early cod fishery was minimal. For example, a French record from 1510 describes a conflict on board a vessel involved in the trade of "poysson...de la Terre Neusfve,"<sup>22</sup> and an early French reference to the "dixme du

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<sup>22</sup> "Pardon to the Mate of a Newfoundland fishing-vessel," cited in Biggar, Precursors of Jacques Cartier, 116-118. For more references to the French early fishery, see Charles de la Morandière, Histoire de la Pêche Française de la Morue dans l'Amérique Septentrionale (des origines à 1789), Tome I (Paris: G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1962), 38, 77, 161, 164, for example.



poesson," dated 1514, stipulated that the tax applied to all fish from everywhere, including "morues" from "la Terre-Neuffve,"<sup>23</sup> though the French did not have a large scale cod fishery in place until approximately 1540-1560. A total of 104 voyages to Newfoundland were registered in Bordeaux from 1517-1549,<sup>24</sup> but the most significant numbers materialized in the 1540s and 1550s. One of the first French Atlantic port towns to show a real interest in Newfoundland,<sup>25</sup> Bordeaux sent out 20 vessels per year in the 1550s, and 40 in the 1560s, while Rouen accounted for 73 in 1549 and 94 in 1555.<sup>26</sup>

The French fished off the Avalon Peninsula in the sixteenth century, but they also showed an early interest in the Gulf and Bank fishery.<sup>27</sup> The Bank green fishery was preferred by some because two and even three annual voyages

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<sup>23</sup> "Agreement between the monks of the Abbey of Beauport and the inhabitants of the Island of Brehat, wherein mention is made of Newfoundland cod," cited in Biggar, Precursors of Jacques Cartier, 118-123; see also pages 124-127, 132-133, 159, and 177-182.

<sup>24</sup> Jacques Bernard, Navires et Gens de Mer à Bordeaux (vers 1400-vers 1550), 3 Volumes (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1968), Volume II, 807.

<sup>25</sup> De la Morandière, Histoire de la Pêche Française, 250.

<sup>26</sup> Laurier Turgeon, "Le temps des pêches lointaines: permanences et transformations (vers 1500 - vers 1850)," in Histoire des Pêches Maritimes en France, sous la direction de Michel Mollat (Toulouse: Bibliothèque Historique Privat, 1987), 137.

<sup>27</sup> Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 23-26, 46.

could be made, and the Bank fish was considered "larger, thicker, and sweeter" than the Newfoundland cod.<sup>28</sup> French green cod was especially appreciated in the Paris region, a market supplied by the French Channel ports as well as Biscayan vessels, especially those from les Sables d'Olonne.<sup>29</sup> The French Basques, on the other hand, fished off the south and west coast of Newfoundland, as well as along the Gaspé Peninsula and Acadia.<sup>30</sup> They concentrated on the dry fishery due in part to the demands of a different market. Basque catches went to southern France and Spain, and the wet fish spoiled easily in the hot climate.<sup>31</sup>

The Spanish Basques arrived a little later in Newfoundland waters than their French Basque neighbours, probably because the former were profitably engaged in the early sixteenth century with trade in the West Indies. As the

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<sup>28</sup> Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 47.

<sup>29</sup> De la Morandière, Histoire de la Pêche Française, 185; Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 48-49.

<sup>30</sup> The Basque were also involved in trade with the local inhabitants in the sixteenth century. See Laurier Turgeon, "Basque-Amerindian Trade in the Saint Lawrence during the Sixteenth Century: New Documents, New Perspectives," Man in the Northeast, No. 40 (1990), 81-87.

<sup>31</sup> De la Morandière, Histoire de la Pêche Française, 308, 344. Due to the more complex preparation process, the dry fishery employed a greater number of personnel than the wet fishery, but de la Morandière suggested that because the Basque region was relatively poor in agriculture, the sedentary fishery was more feasible since a pool of cheap labour was available from the hinterland.

century progressed, however, the Spanish Basques took up the Newfoundland fishery. In the first half of the sixteenth century, Basque expeditions often combined cod and whale fishing, but specialization became the norm later on, with whalers found in the Strait of Belle Isle, while cod fishers concentrated on the west coast of Newfoundland.<sup>32</sup> Both Selma Barkham and Laurier Turgeon concluded that the Basque fishery was relatively successful until the end of the sixteenth century, when Phillip II's costly armadas severely undermined Basque shipping.<sup>33</sup>

Phillip II's foreign policies have often been blamed for the collapse of the Spanish and Portuguese fishery, as well as the rise of the English presence in Newfoundland, but this argument needs further analysis. Embargoes and the impressment of ships and mariners for royal campaigns had their effect on maritime commerce in Spain, but the correlation between them has not been properly investigated. Reasons for the decline of the Spanish cod fishery were undoubtedly complex and multifaceted; the increase in English

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<sup>32</sup> Selma Barkham, "Documentary Evidence for 16th Century Basque Whaling Ships in the Strait of Belle Isle," in Early European Settlement and Exploitation in Atlantic Canada, Selected Papers, edited by G.M. Story (St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1982), 53-56.

<sup>33</sup> Barkham, "Documentary Evidence," 62; Laurier Turgeon, "Sur la Piste des Basques: La redécouverte de notre XVIIe siècle," Interface (sep-oct, 1991), 14-15.

involvement in Newfoundland was certainly a factor, but hardly the only one.<sup>34</sup> Keith Matthews, for one, has contended that the English cod fishery expanded not because the Spanish were defeated during the 1588 Armada, but due to the Elizabethan law of 1563 which established Wednesdays and Saturdays as fish days, and the exemption from import taxes on fish from Newfoundland. The object was to encourage fish consumption and thus promote the fishery to serve as a training ground for naval mariners. Furthermore, religious wars in France (1562-1598) meant that the French could not always meet their own needs; interestingly, English cod exports were first sent to France, not to the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>35</sup>

The English cod fishery off Newfoundland became significant only toward the end of the sixteenth century.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Gillian Cell, especially, expounded the view that English expansion of the Newfoundland fishery was intricately connected with the demise of the Spanish fishery, though she also noted that sources for English activities in Newfoundland prior to 1610 are scattered in "bits and pieces." See Cell, English Enterprise in Newfoundland, 22, 36.

<sup>35</sup> Keith Matthews, "A History of the West of England-Newfoundland Fishery," Ph.D. Dissertation (University of Oxford, 1968), 45, 57.

<sup>36</sup> Despite the excited tone of Cabot's reports about the abundant fishing grounds he "discovered" in 1497, English participation in the Newfoundland cod fishery was limited in the first half of the sixteenth century, though some evidence survives showing an English presence already in the early 1520s. See, "A projected expedition to Newfoundland," and "Notices of the return of the English fishing fleet from Newfoundland," cited in Biggar, Precursors of Jacques Cartier, 134-143. The English government also passed an Act on 25

According to Charles de la Morandière, the English were at first less interested in the Newfoundland fishery because they were adequately supplied with cod from Iceland,<sup>37</sup> though this could not always have been true, given that foreigners were still supplying the English with fish in 1584.<sup>38</sup> By 1597 the English were selling cod to the Dutch, Irish, French, and Spanish.<sup>39</sup> It was not until the first two decades of the seventeenth century, however, that the English cod fishery off Newfoundland, New England, and the Gulf of Maine truly developed.<sup>40</sup>

Harold Innis concluded that the English cod fishery in Newfoundland was successful due to a concentration of the trade in the West Country, and to the employment of large carrying vessels, or sack ships, to transport cod directly from Newfoundland to European and Mediterranean markets.<sup>41</sup>

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February 1548/9 that the Newfoundland fishery was open to everyone in the kingdom. Leo Francis Stock, ed., Proceedings and Debates of the British Parliaments respecting North America, 1542-1688, Volume I, (Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1924), 2.

<sup>37</sup> De la Morandière, Histoire de la Pêche Française, 221.

<sup>38</sup> Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 31. Unfortunately it is not clear who exactly supplied this fish, and how much of it was cod from Newfoundland.

<sup>39</sup> Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 32.

<sup>40</sup> Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 70-72.

<sup>41</sup> Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 54.

Matthews, too, noted that the English cod fishery grew at the same time that the West Country experienced general commercial growth, though not until the seventeenth century did Newfoundland become the "stay of the West-Countries."<sup>42</sup> Not having large salt deposits in their midst, the English solved this problem in Newfoundland by establishing a sedentary fishery in the Avalon Peninsula, allowing them to trade with foreign vessels for supplies, and to concentrate on producing dry cod, which required less salt.<sup>43</sup>

The Portuguese were among those who provided the English with salt right in Newfoundland,<sup>44</sup> and according to Anthony Parkhurst's report of 1578, the Portuguese numbered 50 sail

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<sup>42</sup> Matthews, "History of West of England," 57-61. Quote from Sir Walter Raleigh's speech to British Parliament on 23 March 1592/3, Stock, Proceedings and Debates, Vol. I, 7. The number of English ships engaged in the Newfoundland fishery for the first three decades of the seventeenth century ranges from 150 to 600 annually, depending on the source. Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 69-70.

<sup>43</sup> Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 36.

<sup>44</sup> Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 35. Innis suggested that by 1578 the English had established some form of "overlordship" in the region, especially in connection to the Portuguese in return for protection from the French, but the nature of this arrangement is not very clear. It also seems strange that the English would be in a position to "protect" the Portuguese when Parkhurst stated that the number of English and Portuguese vessels engaged in the fishery was approximately the same.

that year.<sup>45</sup> Parkhurst also stated that the Spanish had approximately 130 ships in the region, including 20 or 30 whalers, but Selma Barkham's archival research has shown that there could not have been nearly as many Spanish vessels in Newfoundland as Parkhurst claimed.<sup>46</sup> If this was true for the Spanish, could Parkhurst have been wrong about the Portuguese as well? The Portuguese, French, Spanish, and English began fishing for cod off the coasts of Newfoundland at different times in the sixteenth century. Of the four major national groups, the Portuguese are the least understood because their contribution has been more difficult to pinpoint - possibly because theirs was the least significant.

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<sup>45</sup> "A letter written to M. Richard Hakluyt...containing a report of the true state and commodities of Newfoundland, by M. Anthony Parkhurst," cited in H.A. Innis, ed., Select Documents in Canadian Economic History, 1497-1783 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1929), 10.

<sup>46</sup> Barkham, "Documentary Evidence," 58. She concluded that there were probably an average of 10 Spanish Basque whaling ships involved annually. Though she was less specific about the number of cod fishing vessels, Barkham rejects the greatly exaggerated figure of 200 Spanish Basque ships in Newfoundland from 1570-1586. See Selma Huxley Barkham, "Guipuzcoan Shipping in 1571 with Particular Reference to the Decline of the Transatlantic Fishing Industry," in Anglo-American Contributions to Basque Studies: Essays in Honor of Jon Bilbao, edited by William A. Douglass, Richard W. Etulain, and William H. Jacobsen (Desert Research Institute Publications on the Social Sciences, No. 13, 1977), 79 (her note 5).

Portugal's role in the early cod fishery was likely as substantial as it could have been, given its resources in the early modern period. By the time the Newfoundland cod fishery caught the imagination of western Europeans Portugal had already spread itself far and wide. In the early 1500s Portuguese overseas interests expanded, with trade routes established from Lisbon to Brazil, Africa, India, and further East. These large-scale ventures must have made serious demands on maritime communities in Portugal, not only in shipping but in human terms as well. The mammoth fleets required large crews, and a substantial number of personnel never returned to Portugal due to fatalities on the voyage or to settlement overseas.<sup>47</sup> Unfortunately, not enough is understood about the impact of overseas exploration and expansion on the Portuguese economy and society. Portugal's historians have traditionally focused on the legendary glorious voyages of "discovery" and the exaggerated profits of empire reaped by a select few.<sup>48</sup> Some Portuguese historians

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<sup>47</sup> C.R. Boxer, Four Centuries of Portuguese Expansion, 1415-1825: A Succinct Survey (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1961), 21, 89.

<sup>48</sup> For example, profits from Vasco da Gama's four-vessel voyage to India (1497-1499) were more than 600% over the original cost of the expedition, but while the Portuguese crown was enriched, it is doubtful that many Portuguese benefited from the voyage. A third of Da Gama's crew perished en route. Stanley G. Payne, A History of Spain and Portugal (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, r.1976 [1973]), 198. See also J.H. Plumb's "Introduction", in C.R. Boxer, The



have lamented the neglect of Portugal's own writers in the early modern period who, being more interested in describing the "New World", failed to properly document their own.<sup>49</sup> As a result, much more is known about Portuguese Goa, for example, than about sixteenth-century Portugal itself.<sup>50</sup> What was the socio-economic reality for most Portuguese people in the advent of the Newfoundland cod fishery?

Though the writing of social history in Portugal remains insufficient, a smattering of hints suggest that long distance trade meant riches for some, but the standard of living of most Portuguese citizens improved very little. Throughout most of the early modern period Portugal was plagued with inadequate resources to meet its domestic needs. Portugal itself could not provide more than subsistence living for most people due to the largely poor and arid soil in the southern region, and the relatively inaccessible land in the hill and mountain-covered northern provinces. In general, northern Portugal was more populous than the south, and agriculturally

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Portuguese Seaborne Empire, 1415-1825 (London: Hutchinson & Co., r.1977 [1969]).

<sup>49</sup> Manuel Amorim, "A Vila da Póvoa de Varzim no Século XVI," in Colóquio "Santos Graça" de Etnografia Marítima: Actas, III, Povoamento, Administração, Aspectos Sociais (Póvoa de Varzim: Câmara Municipal de Póvoa de Varzim, 1985), 106.

<sup>50</sup> Newitt, Portuguese Empire, 2-9.

more productive,<sup>51</sup> but all over the country the best fertile land was owned by the crown, nobility, and clergy,<sup>52</sup> who left much of it idle for sporting purposes or concentrated on export crops, growing vineyards, olive trees, and orchards. Though the Portuguese colonized the Atlantic islands in the fifteenth century ostensibly to provide metropolitan Portugal with additional cereals, colonists soon used Azorean and Madeiran fields for other purposes, particularly in Madeira where sugar plantations became the norm. Consequently, Portugal experienced numerous grain shortages over the early modern period.<sup>53</sup>

Faced with a chronic dearth of grains from the late fifteenth century forward, the Portuguese were forced to import some basic foodstuffs and other materials from northern Europe. In fact, in the early sixteenth century, Portugal was linked to northern Europe as much as to its overseas empire,

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<sup>51</sup> Oliveira Marques, História de Portugal, 371-372.

<sup>52</sup> The nobility and clergy enjoyed tremendous power in early modern Portugal, including exemption from most taxes, near-monopoly of the most prestigious government posts, royal pensions, liberties over dress, consumption, and transportation, and the right to a more dignified form of punishment in case of criminal activity. At least two thirds of land in Portugal was owned by the crown, nobility, and clergy. Carl A. Hanson, Economy and Society in Baroque Portugal, 1668-1703 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 18.

<sup>53</sup> Hanson, Economy and Society, 4-5; Rau, Estudos sobre a História do Sal, 135, 141; Oliveira Marques, História de Portugal, 371-373.

importing lumber, textiles, shipmasts, and especially cereals, in return for agricultural products such as wine, olive oil, salt, fruit, and woad, as well as merchandise from the Indies.<sup>54</sup> In the first three decades of the sixteenth century the Portuguese were directly involved in this northern trade - that is, Portuguese ships carried Portuguese goods to northern European markets and returned laden with goods. As the century progressed, however, fewer Portuguese vessels were available to participate in European markets because of Portugal's concentration in the Asian and Brazilian trade.<sup>55</sup> In the process, northern Europeans took over the carrying trade between Portugal and the rest of the continent.<sup>56</sup>

Not only was Portugal's preoccupation with long-distance

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<sup>54</sup> Rau, Estudos sobre a História do Sal, 119.

<sup>55</sup> A total of 208 Portuguese vessels anchored at the Dutch port of Arnemuiden in 1528-1529 alone. After 1540, however, their presence in that Dutch port was almost indistinguishable. Rau, Estudos sobre a História do Sal, 124-127, 132. See also F. Salles Lencastre, Estudo sobre as Portugens e as Alfândegas em Portugal (séculos XII a XVI) (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1891), 142. The drop in Portuguese ships in northern Europe was not all that drastic, unless Rau referred to ships from the Lisbon area in particular. Another document lists 102 Portuguese ships in Middelburg and Arnemuiden in 1543/1544, 85 of which were from northern Portugal. See discussion on Vila do Conde below.

<sup>56</sup> In just six days in 1577, more than 250 ships arrived in Setubal and Lisbon to collect salt, 160 of which were Dutch and German. In 1582, a Dutch report from Lisbon noted that more than 100 Dutch vessels were expected to arrive soon in the Portuguese capital. Rau, Estudos sobre a História do Sal, 138-139, 148.

trade detrimental to its domestic economy, the Asian trade proved beneficial only to a small number of investors for a short period of time. Portuguese monopoly of the spice trade was temporary and only fractionally true. At first, they alone among European nations had stations along the Indian Ocean, but the Portuguese soon faced competition from Turkish traders as well as other Europeans who ventured further overseas. Furthermore, almost from the start the Portuguese had to rely on foreign merchants at Antwerp to buy and sell their merchandise. Asian goods were for the most part too expensive for Portuguese consumers; distribution of spices and other luxuries was thus controlled by Flemish and German merchants, who, buying wholesale and selling retail, naturally pocketed a substantial share of the profits.<sup>57</sup>

This is not to say that overseas trade was not a lucrative business for some Portuguese. The spice trade yielded so much financial gain to King D. Manuel I that he was labelled "le roi épicier". His great personal profits however did not result in innovative changes in Portugal's

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<sup>57</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein, The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century (New York: Academic Press, 1974), 336-342; Lyle N. McAllister, Spain & Portugal in the New World, 1492-1700 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 67. Also see Henk Ligthart and Henk Reitsma, "Portugal's semi-peripheral middleman role in its relations with England, 1640-1760," Political Geography Quarterly, Vol. 7, No. 4 (October, 1988): 353-362.

infrastructure. Due to the crown's monopoly of overseas trade the Portuguese did not establish chartered merchant companies in the sixteenth century.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, the monarchy did not spread around its newly-acquired wealth, nor did it stimulate the domestic economy through productive investments.<sup>59</sup> The crown's glory was short-lived as well. King D. Manuel's successor, King D. John III (r.1521-1557), was already the "proprietor of a 'bankrupt wholesale grocery business',"<sup>60</sup> partly due to his own mismanagement but largely because he

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<sup>58</sup> Iberia resisted modifications to its well-established state control of overseas trade because, according to Fernand Braudel, it worked. See Braudel's The Wheels of Commerce: Civilization & Capitalism, 15th-18th Century, Volume 2, translated from the French by Siân Reynolds (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 444. The system of absolute government in early-modern Portugal has been viewed as more absolute than in other western European nations, such as France, Italy, England, Germany, and the Netherlands, where greater sharing of power existed. See Manuel A. Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI," Vila do Conde: Boletim Cultural da Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde, Nova Série, No. 11 (June 1993), 11.

<sup>59</sup> Spanish monarchs, too, have been criticized for excelling in foreign enterprise but failing to deal properly with domestic affairs. See Jaime Vicens Vives, Approaches to the History of Spain, translated and edited by Joan Connolly Ullman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), 93-98.

<sup>60</sup> Payne, Spain and Portugal, 239. Magalhães Godinho noted, however, that Portugal experienced several economic crises in the sixteenth century, including in the years 1533-35, 1544-51, 1576-82, and 1594-1605, more or less coinciding with similar hardships all over Europe. As cited in de Oliveira Marques, História de Portugal, 383.

inherited a fragile and cumbersome empire.<sup>61</sup>

Historians have suggested that in the early modern period Portugal was an "agrarian monarchy" as well as a "maritime monarchy," meaning both that the king owned much of the land in the countryside, and that the crown dominated the maritime economy through its monopoly of trade.<sup>62</sup> Yet even if royal intervention in Portugal's economy led to "monarchical capitalism",<sup>63</sup> there is little evidence that the crown committed itself to anything beyond the large scale operations of its overseas empire. While the monarchy had a well-developed system of collecting royal revenues throughout the country, it did very little to promote the national economy. Towns were empowered to regulate the local market, but without consistent support from above, the Portuguese effectively had to settle for a piecemeal economy.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in Portugal's fishery.

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<sup>61</sup> Frédéric Mauro, Le Portugal et l'Atlantique au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle (1570-1670) (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1960), 7. On the other hand, crown extravagance played its part in depleting the monarch's fleeting resources as manifested by the number of aristocrats maintained in the royal household. D. Manuel's entourage consisted of 894 nobles, whereas D. John III had 2,493 to keep him company. Payne, Spain and Portugal, 197.

<sup>62</sup> Frédéric Mauro, "Political and Economic Structures of Empire, 1580-1750," in Colonial Brazil, edited by Leslie Bethel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, r.1991 [1987]), 39.

<sup>63</sup> Nuñez Diaz, cited in Braudel, The Wheels of Commerce, 444.

Though fishers and mariners were protected through certain royal privileges," and many belonged to a confraria, or confraternity, which enjoyed some advantages,"<sup>54</sup> no evidence was found of the crown's interest in fostering a national fishery;"<sup>55</sup> the monarchy was quick to harvest fish tithes, but it did little to nourish the trade. In fact, the fishery declined over the sixteenth century as more and more fishers and mariners sought their fortunes in the Indian and Brazil

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<sup>54</sup> Fishers in Porto, for example, were exempted from forced military service, unless in cases where the monarch participated in the expedition as well. Arquivo Histórico Municipal do Porto (A.H.M.P.), Livro das Vereações, No. 37 (1606), f.199-f.200v, as cited in Francisco Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo (1580-1640): Os Homens, as Instituições e o Poder, 2 Volumes (Porto: Câmara Municipal do Porto/Arquivo Histórico, 1988), Volume I, 186-187. In 1503 Aveiro fishers were granted the same liberties and privileges enjoyed by fishers elsewhere in the kingdom, though it is not clear what all those privileges and liberties were. See António Gomes da Rocha Madahil, ed., Colectânea de Documentos Históricos, 959-1516, (Aveiro: Edição da Câmara Municipal de Aveiro, 1959) 252-253; the "original" is in Tombo da Confraria de Santa Maria de Sá, fl. 86v, a duplicate of which is in the Arquivo Distrital de Aveiro.

<sup>55</sup> For instance, members of the "Confraria da Casa do Corpo Santo de Setúbal" were granted tax exemptions in the purchases of materials essential for their line of work. See Rau, Estudos sobre a História do Sal, 172.

<sup>56</sup> There is evidence that the crown offered Aveiro financial support in the early sixteenth century to stimulate the local shipbuilding industry, but it is not clear whether the ships were destined for the fishery or for the Indian trade. See, Rocha Madahil, Colectânea, Vol. I, 262; original is in the Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (A.N.T.T.), Corpo Cronológico, Part I, M. II, Doc. 6.

trade.<sup>67</sup> Equally ruinous to the national fishery was the pressing of fishing vessels for overseas trade, a trend that began in the early 1500s but became more reckless toward the end of the sixteenth century.<sup>68</sup> One would think that the crown would have wished to protect its own intake, but perhaps the fishery was not a major source of revenue.

In his work on medieval Portugal, A.H. Oliveira Marques cautioned that, in the Middle Ages at least, the fishery was a minor industry in Portugal in comparison to agriculture. Despite its long coast, Portugal did not provide as much fish as may be believed, primarily because of its rough coastal winds and storms.<sup>69</sup> As a result, from early times the Portuguese were forced to seek fish in other regions. Those in the south fished off the coasts of Africa, while northerners went to French and English waters. In the Treaty of 1353 Edward III of England granted the Portuguese rights to

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<sup>67</sup> Samuel Eliot Morison agreed that after the discovery of Brazil, "who cared for codfish, mast trees, and icebergs?" in The European Discovery of America: The Northern Voyages, A.D. 500-1600 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 210; see also Bruce G. Trigger, Natives and Newcomers: Canada's "Heroic Age" Reconsidered (Kingston/Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985), 120.

<sup>68</sup> Oliveira Martins, Portugal nos Mares, 207-213.

<sup>69</sup> Frédéric Mauro, too, contended that Portugal had a dangerous coast which made maritime endeavours quite difficult: "Des caps battus par les vents, des estuaires de torrents souvent ensablés au XVIIe siècle; il n'y a pas de quoi attirer spécialement les flottes de commerce." See Mauro, Le Portugal et l'Atlantique, 89-90.



fish off the coast of England for the next fifty years. On the other hand, the Portuguese fishery was open to foreigners as well. The Florentines were involved in the large-scale sardine fishery off of Portugal from as early as 1399 and in the whale and tuna fishery in the Algarve in the mid-fifteenth century.<sup>70</sup>

If, as records show, Portugal was exporting hake, tuna, and sardines to northern Europe and to the Mediterranean from the early fifteenth century to the mid-sixteenth century,<sup>71</sup> can it be concluded that the Portuguese themselves were adequately supplied? It is extremely difficult to determine the extent of fish consumption in sixteenth-century Portugal

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<sup>70</sup> It is not clear whether the Florentines in question were naturalized Portuguese citizens or actual Italian merchants involved in the fish trade with the Mediterranean. A.H. Oliveira Marques, Portugal na Crise dos Séculos XIV e XV (Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1987), 109-112. The tuna fishery in the Algarve was especially lucrative in the fifteenth century. Already in 1440 a group of Florentine merchants had established a company and agreed to pay the Portuguese crown 60% for the tuna, and 40% for sardines. Oliveira Martins, Portugal nos Mares, 207-213.

<sup>71</sup> Rau, Estudos sobre a História do Sal, 124-127 (her note 86); Constantino Botelho de Lacerda Lobo, "Memória sobre a Decadência das Pescarias de Portugal," in Memórias Económicas da Academia, edited by José Luís Cardoso (Lisbon: Banco de Portugal, r.1991 [1812]), 256-257, 262. Other studies concluded that in the early sixteenth century, Mediterranean Spain and Italy depended on Atlantic salt fish, which was greatly supplied by Portugal. Kristof Glamann, "European Trade, 1500-1750," translated by Geoffrey French, in The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, edited by Carlo M. Cipolla (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1977), Volume II, 436; Braudel, La Méditerranée, Volume I, 550.

for little data on the general subject has been uncovered. It would be helpful to know whether or not the Portuguese were motivated to participate in the early cod fishery off Newfoundland because of insufficient fish supplies at home, but evidence on Portuguese fish eating habits is lacking, and the picture for the rest of western Europe is not very clear either.

Studies on consumption patterns for the early modern period are generally inconclusive, though there is some consensus that the main ingredients in the diet of early modern Europeans were bread, meat, and wine (or beer), the three accounting for at least two thirds of food costs in an average household.<sup>72</sup> There is also some agreement that great amounts of meat were consumed in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, followed by a general decline, especially in southern Europe.<sup>73</sup> Inventories for the English navy in the

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<sup>72</sup> Bartolomé Bennassar et Joseph Goy, "Histoire de la Consommation: Contribution à l'histoire de la consommation alimentaire du XIVe siècle au XIXe siècle," Annales: Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations, 30e année, No. 2-3 (mars-juin 1975), 419.

<sup>73</sup> The decline in meat consumption has been linked to the general drop in real wages in the early modern era, and to an increase in cereal farming. See Bennassar et Goy, "Histoire de la Consommation," 420; Glamann, "European Trade," 447-448; Anne-Marie Piuze, "Alimentation populaire et sous-alimentation au XVIIe siècle. Le cas de Genève et de sa région," in Pour une histoire de l'alimentation, recueil de travaux présentés par Jean-Jacques Hémardinquer (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1970), 143. Frank Spooner, on the other hand, concluded that already in the sixteenth century cereals dominated the daily

mid-sixteenth century reveal the preponderance of meat in the sailor's/soldier's diet. In fact, meat rations were equal to or greater than those for biscuit, while dry fish played a small role in their diets.<sup>74</sup> Fish consumption was found to be more prevalent aboard vessels from the Mediterranean in the sixteenth century. Though rations of cheese and meat were larger than any other food item, a fair amount of dry cod, salted sardines, tuna, and herring was also consumed.<sup>75</sup> Conclusions on this matter varied according to the type of

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diet, whether this was aboard the Spanish-Portuguese vessel heading for Africa, in hospitals, student colleges, noble residences in northern Italy, or at court in Sweden. See Spooner, "Régimes alimentaires d'autrefois: proportions et calculs en calories," in Pour une histoire de l'alimentation, recueil de travaux présentés par Jean-Jacques Hémardinquer (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1970), 37-39.

<sup>74</sup> C.S.L. Davies, "Les rations alimentaires de l'armée et de la marine anglaise au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle," in Pour une histoire de l'alimentation, recueil de travaux présentés par Jean-Jacques Hémardinquer (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1970), 93-95. No consensus has been reached on fish consumption in early-modern England. On the one hand, Keith Matthews claimed that the English ate as much fish as other western Europeans; Gillian Cell, on the other hand, concluded that the English did not eat a great deal of fish, and suggested that most English cod ended up feeding the armed forces. In 1586, for example, each mariner was entitled to a portion of stockfish three days a week. See, Matthews, "History of West of England," 39; Cell, English Enterprise in Newfoundland, 27-30.

<sup>75</sup> Jean-Jacques Hémardinquer, "Sur les galères de Toscane au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle," in Pour une histoire de l'alimentation, recueil de travaux présentés par Jean-Jacques Hémardinquer (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1970), 85-91. Questions remain about the officially stipulated ration and the actual amount each crew member received, as well as how these numbers correspond to "real" diets among the general population.

record used, the time period, and the region in question, but records in several northern European countries reveal that meat or dry cod played a significant role in the mariner's daily diet, though cereal or biscuit was usually the main food item.<sup>76</sup>

Not surprisingly, much more is known about the eating habits of the upper classes than of the great masses. Most surviving documents are from elite consumers, or from other state or church provisioned groups such as seafarers, college students, and hospital patients. In France, for instance, some of the best existing records come from an aristocratic household in Lyon which reveal that fish and meat were consumed in abundance in 1583-84, including 22 species of fresh water fish, and 36 from the sea.<sup>77</sup> In the mid-sixteenth century, hospitals in Nantes served fish almost

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<sup>76</sup> Michel Morineau, "Marines du Nord (Angleterre, Hollande, Suède et Russie)," in Pour une histoire de l'alimentation, recueil de travaux présentés par Jean-Jacques Hémardinquer (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1970), 101.

<sup>77</sup> Jacqueline Boucher, "L'alimentation en milieu de cour sous les derniers Valois," in Pratiques et Discours Alimentaires à la Renaissance. Actes du colloque de Tours de mars 1979, sous la direction de Jean-Claude Margolin et Robert Sauzet (Paris: G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1982), 162. Some aristocratic household accounts from seventeenth-century France show that almost 70% of the daily consumption was meat and fish products. See Pierre Couperie, "Les marchés de pourvoiérie: viandes et poissons chez les Grands au XVIIe siècle," in Pour une histoire de l'alimentation, recueil de travaux présentés par Jean-Jacques Hémardinquer (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1970), 253.

every other day,<sup>78</sup> while dry cod was among the provisions supplied to ships in the Newfoundland trade in the second half of the seventeenth century.<sup>79</sup>

Less is known about the general population, but some accounts from charitable organizations in seventeenth-century Amsterdam show that orphans ate meat twice a week, salted cod on Wednesdays and dry cod on Saturdays, though historians suspect that institutional diets were more generous than what the average European could afford to eat.<sup>80</sup> A study on sixteenth-century Valladolid showed that bread was the basic food item, though beef also played a crucial role in the local diet. From 1580-1590, beef consumption averaged between 25 and 27 kilos annually per person, though comparative figures for grains are not available. Data on fish consumption in Valladolid are not available, but sales tax revenues for 1557 and 1560 indicate that fish taxes were approximately two

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<sup>78</sup> Laurier Turgeon, "Pour Redécouvrir notre 16e Siècle: Les Pêches à Terre-Neuve d'après les Archives Notariales de Bordeaux," Revue de d'histoire de l'amérique française, Volume 39, No. 4 (printemps, 1986), 546. According to Anne-Marie Piuz, however, little fish was purchased by hospitals in seventeenth-century Geneva. See Piuz, "Alimentation populaire et sous-alimentation," 143.

<sup>79</sup> De la Morandière, Histoire de la Pêche Française, 71.

<sup>80</sup> Travel accounts also stressed the importance of meat in the Dutch diet in the seventeenth century. Morineau, "Marines du Nord," 110-114, 121-123.

thirds of meat revenues.<sup>81</sup>

The Spanish ate more meat than fish, at least in the interior, yet fish eating, too, had its place in the social order. Fresh fish, such as red bream, salmon, and oysters, was eaten by the rich, while the lower classes ate dry fish primarily. Interestingly, the general populace preferred to buy wet dry fish, that is, dry fish that had been soaked in water. Fish vendors steeped the dry fish in deep containers full of water for several days before selling it. The remaining water obviously reeked a foul smell, for authorities prohibited vendors from throwing it out on the street. Among the masses, the most popular wet dry fish was hake and cod.<sup>82</sup>

Without adequate price figures, it is difficult to determine the accuracy of this view that dry fish, including cod, was the poor people's food in Spain, or elsewhere. Charles de la Morandière concluded that cod was food for the poor in England, where the rich disdained it until Elizabeth I instituted meatless days in 1563.<sup>83</sup> Keith Matthews, too, quoted the mayor of Southampton who in 1594 called for a ban

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<sup>81</sup> Bartolomé Bennassar, "L'alimentation d'une capitale espagnole au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle: Valladolid," in Pour une histoire de l'alimentation, recueil de travaux présentés par Jean-Jacques Hémardinquer (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1970), 53-56.

<sup>82</sup> Matilde Santamaría Arnáiz, "La Alimentación," in La vida cotidiana en la España de Velázquez, dirigida por José N. Alcalá-Zamora (Madrid: Ediciones Temas de Hoy, 1989), 317-318.

<sup>83</sup> De la Morandière, Histoire de la Pêche Française, 222.

on exports of cod because it was cheap and therefore eaten by the poor.<sup>84</sup> Certainly cod prices must have varied from one region to another, but the assumption that fish in general, and cod in particular, were consumed primarily by the lower classes needs further investigation. A few records found in Portugal raise serious questions about cod availability and affordability.

Little work has been done on consumption patterns in early-modern Portugal,<sup>85</sup> but municipal records from the sixteenth century for Ponte de Lima and Braga reveal something about their respective fish markets, although details are both contradictory and inconclusive. Both sets of records deal with municipal regulations of food prices; Braga's documents referred to cod in 1561 and 1582, while Ponte de Lima's officials dealt with cod in 1581 and 1583. Though in both cases the records are incomplete, and references to cod are relatively few, the bits of data uncovered suggest that in the sixteenth century fish consumption patterns varied from region to region.

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<sup>84</sup> Matthews, "History of the West of England," 51.

<sup>85</sup> The most comprehensive work to-date was done on fruit and fish consumption at the court of King D. Afonso V (r.1438-1481), whose records for 1474 reveal that meat was almost always preferable to fish, though fresh sole and flounder were also appreciated. Maria José Azevedo Santos, "O Peixe e a Fruta na Alimentação da Corte de D. Afonso V - Breves Notas," Brigantia: Revista de Cultura, Volume III, No. 3 (Jul-Sept. 1983), 309.

Given Ponte de Lima's location along the Lima River, upstream from the mouth at the Atlantic Ocean near Viana, the town was in a prime position to receive ships and passengers heading for Portugal's interior or further into Spain. It was also an easily accessible market for cod landed in Viana, and this might explain the relatively low prices for cod found in Ponte de Lima. Thus, on Wednesday, 7 November 1581, town officials resolved that no one could sell cod, dry or salted, for more than 7 réis/arrátel; the verde lavado ou por lavar at 5 réis/arrátel; and cod from Terra Nova, de vento,<sup>86</sup> for no more than 10 réis/arrátel.<sup>87</sup> Except for the vento variety, cod in Ponte de Lima was a lot less expensive than beef. Later that year beef prices were set at 9 réis/arrátel and this decision was to be in effect until Lent in 1582, when beef would cost 8.5 réis/arrátel.<sup>88</sup> No other specific fish prices were found, but high quality beef was priced at 10

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<sup>86</sup> The distinctions made raise some interesting questions. Where else did cod come from besides "Terra Nova"? What was "verde lavado", or clean green cod? Did vento cod refer to wind-dried cod ("vento" means wind), and did it come specifically from Newfoundland only? It certainly was the most expensive type.

<sup>87</sup> João Gomes d'Abreu Lima and Ovidio de Sousa Vieira, "Ponte de Lima nas Vereações Antigas," Arquivo de Ponte de Lima, Volume II (1981), 20.

<sup>88</sup> D'Abreu Lima, "Ponte de Lima nas Vereações Antigas," II, 16-17.



réis/arrátel in March 1583, effective until Easter of 1584.<sup>89</sup> As in the case of cod, there were likely different prices for beef, according to grade, but no other quotation was found in the Ponte de Lima records. All that is clear is that vento cod from Newfoundland, which was probably dry cod, cost more than beef in the early 1580s.

In Braga, located south of Ponte de Lima on the Cavado River, and further from the coast, the situation was somewhat different. The meat industry appears to have been more substantial than in Ponte de Lima;<sup>90</sup> only three references to cod were found from 1561-1582, though the collection is far from complete.<sup>91</sup> The lack of documentation cannot be relied on too heavily, however, because during the same twenty-year period the Braga council dealt much more with other types of fish and meat products.

Both sets of records from Ponte de Lima and Braga provide

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<sup>89</sup> D'Abreu Lima, "Ponte de Lima nas Vereações Antigas," IV, 12-13.

<sup>90</sup> More than with any other commodity, Braga officials were inundated with problems related to the meat industry, from granting licences to purchase cattle, to regulating butchers, resolving accusations that residents were charged exorbitant prices for meat, and dealing with other infractions. Câmara Municipal de Braga (C.M.B.), "Acordos e Vereações da Câmara de Braga...1561," Bracara Augusta, Volume XXVIII, Nos. 65-66 (1974), 534-536, for example.

<sup>91</sup> For example, the 1569 volume ends in August; the next volume, dated 1571-1572, begins in July. Nothing survived for the period 1574-1580, and the lone volume for 1580-1582 begins in May.

inadequate information about food prices to arrive at any definitive conclusions. Enough was found, however, to cast some doubt on the traditional assumption that fish was the poor folks' staple. Some of the lower fish grades were probably accessible to most Braga residents, but it is highly unlikely that vento cod from Newfoundland was consumed by the poor very often. Braga council never associated cod or any other fish with its poor citizens, though a hint as to what the poor in Braga ate was given on Saturday, 13 October 1565, when a group of women were accused of buying up all the tripe and reselling it outside the city; the report indicated that tripe was the poor people's meat.<sup>92</sup>

The first reference to cod found in Braga's records was dated Saturday, 2 March 1561, when authorities were informed of a glut of cod in Porto, and that, consequently, prices were very low in Porto. Braga received its supply of cod from Porto, yet local merchants were charging much higher prices. As a result, town officials decided that no one was henceforth allowed to sell cod for more than 6 réis/arrátel.<sup>93</sup> Despite

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<sup>92</sup> C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXX, 761.

<sup>93</sup> C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXV-XXVI, 455. The report indicated that Braga got its cod from Porto and other maritime ports.

this "glut", however, cod still cost more than beef,"<sup>94</sup> though no categories for either cod or beef were provided.<sup>95</sup> The only other reference to cod found with a listed price<sup>96</sup> was for March 1582 when the price of baqualhao sequo was set at 10 réis/arrátel.<sup>97</sup> Unfortunately, no beef price was available for 1582 to compare with cod, but as Table 1 indicates, beef prices were fairly stable from 1561-1582, so that beef was probably less expensive than cod throughout the 20-year period. Furthermore, a greater amount of other types of fish

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<sup>94</sup> Prices noted were often found at different times of the year. For example, in 1561 the cod price was set in March while the beef price was located in the July records. C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXVII, 620-621.

<sup>95</sup> The price of cod was competitive with prices for most other fish in Braga's market, except for fresh, gutted fish which cost the most. C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXV-XXVI, 455. On the other hand, on 7 November 1565 town council decided that due to an abundance of fish, prices for "pesqada ffresqa", or fresh hake, and other river fish were set at 6 reis/arrátel. C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXX, 766.

<sup>96</sup> On 8 February 1567, the town council outlined sales tax rates, or the sisá, to be charged with various types of fish sold in Braga. In what appears to be an arbitrary manner, officials announced that a load ["carrega"] of sardines would come to more than 60 réis, but if transported by mule or donkey, the tax would be halved, presumably because the load would be smaller in the latter case. Sisa on pesquado sequo (dry fish) was set at 200 or 100 réis, depending on the bundle; a load of pesquadas frescas (fresh hake?) was worth 80 réis in tax; dry octopus was 200 or 100 réis; and a load of mullets, cod, or small mackerel was 140 or 70 réis, according to the volume. C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXXII, 464.

<sup>97</sup> C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXIV, 433. It is not clear what the difference was between baqualhao sequo, which means dry cod, and vento cod.

was found in Braga's records,"<sup>88</sup> suggesting that cod only occasionally reached its market.

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The scanty references to cod in Portuguese sixteenth-century markets coincides with the overall meagre evidence of Portugal's involvement in the cod fishery. Early Portuguese documents dealing with Newfoundland are conspicuously silent about cod fish, unlike corresponding English records for the same period, for example. Following John Cabot's 1497 voyage, the English crown was informed of land surrounded by water "covered with fish which are caught not merely with nets but with baskets", and "that they will fetch so many fish that this kingdom will have no more need of Iceland, from which country there comes a very great store of fish which are called stock-fish."<sup>89</sup> Though there has been some debate over the actual location Cabot visited during his search for a

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<sup>88</sup> This was apparently the situation in the Azores as well. According to Canto, beef was so plentiful in the Azorean island of São Miguel that in 1517 and 1518 it was priced at 1.5 real/arrátel. Fish, too, was in such abundance that the islanders had not developed a taste for salt fish in the early sixteenth century. Canto, Arquivo dos Açores, Volume 12, 145-146.

<sup>89</sup> "Second Dispatch of Raimondo di Soncino to the Duke of Milan [London, 18 December 1497]," cited in Biggar, Precursors of Jacques Cartier, 19-21.

western passage to Asia, there is little doubt that the fish he and his companions boasted about was the North Atlantic cod, likely sighted in or near Newfoundland waters.

The Portuguese also organized reconnaissance voyages to the region during this period, but their reports emphasized different things. The original reports have not survived, but Albert Cantino, residing in Lisbon when news arrived on the Corte Real expeditions, wrote a letter to a contact in Italy in which he highlighted the Corte Real findings. His description included sightings of land covered with "trees and pines of such measureless height and girth, that they would be too big as a mast for the largest ship that sails the sea."<sup>100</sup> Though Portuguese explorers noted the abundant fish in the area, they appear to have been more interested in what they saw ashore.

Reasons for the dissimilarity between the Cabot and Corte Real reports may never be fully understood. Part of it could be that the two expeditions took different routes; another possibility is that the returning adventurers knew how best to impress their respective monarchs. The English may have had

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<sup>100</sup> "Dispatch of Albert Cantino from Lisbon to the Duke of Ferrara, Hercules D'Este [Lisbon, 17 October 1501]," cited in Biggar, Precursors of Jacques Cartier, 63-65.

a greater need for fish for the populace,<sup>101</sup> whereas the Portuguese, with their eagerness to conquer the East, needed timber to build ships. Indeed, another second hand report by Pietro Pasqualigo, dated 18 October 1501, stated that the Corte Real findings

will be most useful to [the king's] plans in several respects, but chiefly because being very near to his kingdom, he will be able to secure without difficulty and in a short time a very large quantity of timber for making masts and ships' yards, and plenty of men-slaves, fit for every kind of labour, inasmuch as they say that this land is very well populated and full of pines and other excellent woods. And said news has so pleased his majesty that it has made him desirous of sending ships again to said region, and of increasing his fleet to India...<sup>102</sup>

It appears, therefore, that the Portuguese were more impressed with the resources on land than with those in the sea. This would explain Portugal's early interest in establishing a settlement in the area, notably the Fagundes

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<sup>101</sup> Some historians argued that the English demand for fish in the early period was small because their needs were met from their own inshore fishery and from Icelandic waters. See Matthews, "History of the West of England," 35, and Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 13-14. Prowse, however, claimed that "codfish was gold in these old days" for the English nation in the first half of the sixteenth century, because only the very rich had access to fresh meat during the winter months. He contradicted himself, however, when he stated that Elizabethan attempts to create a Protestant Lent were unsuccessful because "the proud stomachs of our ancestors have always resented interference with their beef and beer." Prowse, History of Newfoundland, 18, 56.

<sup>102</sup> "Letter from Pietro Pasqualigo to the Signiory of Venice," cited in Biggar, Precursors of Jacques Cartier, 66-67.

colonization of 1521,<sup>103</sup> and the 1567 venture by Manoel Corte Real, nephew of Gaspar and Miguel Corte Real. Having inherited the Terra Nova captaincy,<sup>104</sup> he received royal approval to send three ships with passengers and supplies to begin a settlement in Newfoundland.<sup>105</sup> For reasons unknown, Portuguese attempts to colonize the area were unsuccessful, but it is significant to note that, unlike England in the seventeenth century, Portugal's interest in Newfoundland in the sixteenth century was not motivated by a desire to control the cod fishery. Even the numerous royal letters confirming the Corte Real family's patent to Newfoundland, dated 1500, 1506, 1522, 1538, 1574, and 1579, never mentioned any fish or cod.<sup>106</sup> A document dated 2 May 1537 dealing specifically with fish tax revenues in the island of Terceira, Azores, did

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<sup>103</sup> "Confirmation of the Letters Patent to Fagundes," cited in Biggar, Precursors of Jacques Cartier, 127-131.

<sup>104</sup> This document suggests that in 1567 the Corte Real family, descendants of Gaspar and Miguel Corte Real, still claimed rights to Terra Nova. What exactly this meant in real terms is not clear.

<sup>105</sup> A.N.T.T., "Carta regia de 4 de Maio de 1567, de que consta mandar Manoel Corte Real uma expedição de 3 navios com colonos da ilha Terceira para povoarem a Terra Nova," Livro 6 dos Privilegios de D. Sebastião, f.237, cited in Canto, Archivo dos Acores, Volume 4, 537. See also the "Tratado das Ilhas Novas e Descobrimento dellas..." cited in Biggar, Precursors of Jacques Cartier, 195-197.

<sup>106</sup> Canto, Archivo dos Acores, Volume 4, 497-502.

not refer to cod either.<sup>107</sup>

This absence of cod in Azorean records is noteworthy, since many historians have claimed that Portuguese vessels returning from the Bank stopped off in the Azores before heading for Portugal. The earliest available port records for Ponta Delgada, São Miguel, show no such connection, and a collection of copied documents, dated 1568-1603, makes only general comments about fish taxation by the local municipality without identifying any fish category.<sup>108</sup> The earliest originals, dated 1603-1638, do not mention cod, or any fish for that matter; most references are to woad, wheat, and sugar.<sup>109</sup> It is possible that ships coming into port for a rest or for provisions would not have their merchandise listed, yet one would expect that some of the cod would stay in the Azores.<sup>110</sup> The Azorean historian Julião Soares de

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<sup>107</sup> "Alvara de merce do disimo do pescado da ilha Terceira a Pedro Annes do Canto, 2 maio de 1537," cited in Canto, Arquivo dos Açores, Volume 12, 410-411.

<sup>108</sup> Alfândega de Ponta Delgada, (A.P.D.) Livro 10 dos Registos (1568-1603), f.43-f.45.

<sup>109</sup> A.P.D., Livro 3 de Registos, 1603-1638. Book No. 2 has not survived, and No. 1 is not a port registry but a collection of regulations dealing with customs and tariffs imposed on merchandise entering the port.

<sup>110</sup> The only other possibility is that Terceira, and not São Miguel, was the port of call for Newfoundland ships in the early modern period, but unfortunately this could not be confirmed. After a visit to the local archives, followed by two years of correspondence, the public library and archives at Angra do Heroísmo has had to concede that its "Terra Nova"



Azevedo found only two possible references to cod passing through the Azores in the seventeenth century, both documents from French archives. First, notarial records from La Rochelle showed four vessels were contracted in 1633 to take dry fish and train oil to Terceira. Second, the French Consul in Faial, Azores, reported on 26 November 1686 that the English had great commercial dealings in the Azores. The account stipulated that an average of 70 to 80 vessels passed through the Azores on their way to Barbados, Jamaica, and the Carolinas, loaded with cod, train oil, herring, and other salted fish, as well as wood products and manufactured goods from England. Unfortunately it is not clear whether the English left any of these goods in the Azores.<sup>111</sup>

Many more concrete references to cod can be found in mainland Portugal, but nothing supports the notion of Portuguese pre-eminence in the early cod fishery. One would think that such a long-standing assumption would be based on some solid foundation, but that is not the case. The reason this view survived for so long is because no one bothered to put the premise to a rigorous test. For instance, the most

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collection has been misplaced.

<sup>111</sup> Julião Soares de Azevedo, "Nota e documentos sobre o comércio de La Rochelle com a Terceira no século XVII," Boletim do Instituto Histórico da Ilha Terceira, Vol. VI (1948), 20. The author concluded that the dry fish was cod but it is not clear whether the French document stipulated that or not.

often-cited document used to prove Portugal's early dominance of the Newfoundland cod fishery is the alvará from King D. Manuel I, dated 14 October 1506. The royal letter refers to fish from "Terra Nova" arriving in a few northern ports located between the Douro and Minho Rivers, and royal rights to revenues from this fishery.<sup>112</sup> The document has been construed to mean that the Portuguese cod fishery at Newfoundland was already well established by 1506, and extremely profitable, given the interest of the crown to regulate its tithes.<sup>113</sup> This interpretation is rather optimistic, and not very true to the spirit of the letter. First, the surviving document in question is a copy, not the original letter of 1506, and it is not known when the copy was made. The importance of this point is that the scrivener titled the document "Trelado de hua Carta del Rey, nosso Senhor, acerca da Dízima dos bacalhaos," or "Copy of a Letter from our Lord the King in regard to the Tithe of Codfish." Thus, the title refers to cod, but it must be stressed that

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<sup>112</sup> A.N.T.T., "Trelado de hua Carta del Rey nosso Senhor acerca da Dízima dos bacalhaos," in Livro dos Registos del Rei noso snor, das cartas & alvaras, mandados & outras cartas que o dito Snor manda a esta Alfândega, Nucleo Antigo, No. 110, f.46. Portuguese text and English translation also found in Biggar, Precursors of Jacques Cartier, 96-98.

<sup>113</sup> The tendency has been to quote one another's interpretation of this document. See, Matthews, "History of the West of England-Newfoundland Fishery," 38; Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 14; Prowse, History of Newfoundland, 15; Patterson, "The Portuguese on the North-East coast," 145.

the letter itself does not. It is possible that the fish in question was cod, but that cannot be ascertained. The reference to "Terra Nova", too, should be viewed with caution, for in the early modern period several "newly-discovered" lands were referred to as "Terra Nova", while Newfoundland itself was christened otherwise.<sup>114</sup>

Another crucial point about this royal letter, however, is that the crown's desire to control the fish tithes in northern Portugal has been interpreted as an indication that the cod fishery must have been well-developed. Yet the document gives no such hint. What appears to have been a concern to the king, and what motivated the order in the letter, is that rights to fish tithes in some northern Portuguese ports were being granted to individuals. The crown's interest, therefore, was to affirm jurisdiction over the collection of fish tithes and its profits. In other words, the issue at that time was not necessarily an increase

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<sup>114</sup> Referring to the Francesco de Souza document of 1570, George Patterson explained that "Terra Nova was at this time used generically for all the newly-discovered lands to the north-west, and not specifically for Newfoundland, though it was the best known." See, Patterson, "The Portuguese on the North-East Coast," 163 (his note 2). The Cantino planisphere of 1502 refers to the region as "Terra del Rey de portugall"; the "Kunstmann III" chart of c.1506 shows "Terra de Cortte Riall"; and the Lopo Homem-Reinal atlas of 1519 mentions "Terra Corte-Regalis". See, Armando Cortesão and Avelino Teixeira da Mota, eds, Portvgaliae Monvmenta Cartographica, Volume V (Lisbon: Comemorações do V Centenário da Morte do Infante D. Henrique, 1960).

of incoming fish loads, cod or otherwise, but an attempt by some port towns along northern Portugal to control the fish tithes in their respective region, something the crown was not about to accept without a fight.

Ironically, the few records showing the Portuguese in Newfoundland waters in the sixteenth century are not of Portuguese origin. One of the earliest is a report dated November 1527, taken by Spanish officials in the West Indies upon apprehending an English ship. The English informed their captors that they had been on a discovery mission, and had explored the region at Newfoundland where they saw approximately 50 fishing vessels, including Spanish, French, and Portuguese.<sup>115</sup> An English account of the 1527 voyage indicated that "eleven saile of Normans, and one Brittain, and two Portugall Barkes" were spotted, "all a-fishing".<sup>116</sup> English court records also offer some testimony of the Portuguese in Newfoundland waters, as some merchants/mariners from Viana and Aveiro testified during various complaints of English privateering attacks on Portuguese ships, between

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<sup>115</sup> "La rrelacion que se ovo de la nao ynglesa quando estovo en la ysla de la Mona que venia de camino para la ysla espanola," cited in Biggar, Precursors of Jacques Cartier, 165-177.

<sup>116</sup> Letter written by John Rut of the "Mary of Guilford", from St. John's harbour on 3 August 1527, cited in Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 12-13.

Portuguese documents, on the other hand, seldom mention anything about an actual Portuguese fishery in Newfoundland. As will be shown below, some scattered records allude to a cod trade in the early sixteenth century, but little evidence exists proving that the Portuguese themselves procured their own cod supplies. Because most early port records did not survive, there is no way of verifying the identity of ships and shipmasters entering Portugal's northern ports. In Aveiro, for instance, the best customs records are available from the mid-eighteenth century only. Fortunately, other types of documents survived that confirm the city's undeniable maritime heritage, most of which were collected and published in 1959.<sup>118</sup> An overview of the major port towns along Portugal's northern coast reveals that cod was sometimes a part of local economies, but only in a few cases was evidence found to suggest that the cod fishery might have been important to the northern region.

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<sup>117</sup> Maritime History Archive - Memorial University of Newfoundland (M.H.A.-M.U.N.), Frances Fernando, "To the Queenes maties most honorable pryvie Councell [1579]," 16-A-1-013; Thomas Pyres, "Examination [1583]," 16-A-1-005; John Heimers, "Examination [1583]," 16-A-1-004; William Durston, "Examination [1591]," 16-A-1-006. See also Cell, English Enterprise in Newfoundland, 47.

<sup>118</sup> Rocha Madahil, Colectânea. Unfortunately, the two volumes consist of documents from 959-1516 (Volume I, 1959), and 1581-1792 (Volume II, 1968), with a huge gap for most of the sixteenth century.

## Aveiro

Aveiro's town charter, granted by D. Manuel I on 4 August 1515, is a fountain of information on the local economy. The town's main natural resource was salt from its own numerous salines, sold in Galicia and elsewhere in Europe; the town charter was concerned with guaranteeing all interested parties their proper due in tax revenues. Unfortunately, the cod entry in Aveiro's town charter is not very revealing. Four lines merely state that cod was subject to the new dízima, the crown's prerogative.<sup>119</sup> Though its very mention in a document dated 1515 could imply that the cod trade was already significant in Aveiro's economy in the early sixteenth century, it should be noted that the document in question did not survive in its original form,<sup>120</sup> and thus it is difficult to know whether this record is a "true" copy.

The next reference to cod in the Aveiro collection is a royal provision of 21 October 1572, transcribed on 26 April 1603, dealing with a royal response to a complaint about taxes on cod and sardines. The actual complaint was not included, but one can guess at its contents, for the king responded by saying that cod, sardines, and any other kind of fish coming into Aveiro were not subject to pay sisã, or sales tax, but

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<sup>119</sup> Rocha Madahil, Colectânea, Volume I, 295.

<sup>120</sup> Rocha Madahil, Colectânea, Volume I, 287.

dízima only as per the town's charter. Furthermore, the letter stated that most fishers dried and processed their cod in Aveiro, but that they would choose to sell it elsewhere if they were forced to pay this unjust sisá.<sup>121</sup> It would be interesting to know whether the complaint was put forward by fishers or merchants, or both. Either way, the document suggests that most cod entering Aveiro in 1572 was salted or dried in Aveiro. This is an indication, therefore, that Portuguese fishers did not set up summer camps in Newfoundland, at least not those from Aveiro.<sup>122</sup>

Another hint pointing to Aveiro's involvement in the Newfoundland cod fishery was found in ship lists compiled in 1552 when the crown prohibited departures from northern Portugal to northern Europe because of the onslaught of enemy attacks.<sup>123</sup> Aveiro's list was one of only two registries

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<sup>121</sup> Rocha Madahil, Colectânea, Volume II, 20-22; "original" found in Livro dos Registos, fl. 10v-11v. This is in direct contrast to the situation in Viana, discussed below, where in the 1570s a sisá tax appears to have been charged on cod.

<sup>122</sup> We know that Aveiro ships fished off Newfoundland in the 1570s, as shown in the Anthony Parkhurst letter of 1578, cited above (note 45).

<sup>123</sup> Portuguese attempts to negotiate a treaty with France in the mid-sixteenth century proved illusive, for the French were not anxious to agree to Portugal's monopoly in overseas trade. As a preventive measure against the threat from French corsairs, therefore, King D. John III (r.1521-1557) issued special directives to Portugal's northern ports in 1552, prohibiting departures to northern Europe. Enforcement of this legislation included the accumulation of a list of all ships

with references to ships involved in the cod fishery in "Terra Nova",<sup>124</sup> the only other mention found in the list for Matosinhos.<sup>125</sup> The lists also show that in the northern half of Portugal in the mid-sixteenth century, Aveiro had the most commercial traffic. In tonnage at least, it was first with 5,060, followed by Vila do Conde, with 4,505, Leça with 3,590, Matosinhos with 2,305, Porto and Maçarelos combined for 1,810, and Azurara with 1,670.<sup>126</sup> Furthermore, although Aveiro had the most ships, 69 out of 215 counted, Aveiro's ships were

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in those northern ports. A.N.T.T., Corpo Chronologico, parte 1, maço 87, doc. 114, 115. As cited in Pedro Azevedo, "A marinha mercante do norte de Portugal em 1552," Arquivo Histórico Portuguez, Vol. II, No. 7 (July 1904), 241-253. Also see, Francisco Ferreira Neves, "A Marinha Mercante de Aveiro no Século XVI," Arquivo do Distrito de Aveiro, Volume V (1939), 213-222.

<sup>124</sup> Unfortunately there is no way of knowing the number of ships on Aveiro's list actually involved in the Newfoundland trade. Officials merely noted that many (*muitas*) local caravels were engaged in Terra Nova cod and in trade with Ireland, England, and along the Galician coast. Azevedo, "A marinha mercante," 253.

<sup>125</sup> Matosinhos is a small coastal town just north of Porto. Azevedo, "A marinha mercante," 248, 253. The preponderance of ships connected to Newfoundland in Aveiro's list could be interpreted as a sign that Aveiro was more dedicated to the cod fishery than any other Portuguese port. Unfortunately officials in the remaining ports provided fewer details about their respective ships, and often failed to note the destination or markets in which their ships were involved.

<sup>126</sup> Azevedo, "A marinha mercante," 242.



smaller than those of other Portuguese ports,<sup>127</sup> and none of Aveiro's had any artillery, suggesting a commitment to fishing and coastal trade.<sup>128</sup>

The prohibition of 1552 could not have lasted long, for northern Portugal's economy was strongly linked with the Biscayan region and northern Europe.<sup>129</sup> Besides, pirate attacks became more of a problem closer to home, as corsairs waited for Portuguese ships along Portugal's coast. To meet this growing danger, the crown ordered in 1557 that all ships leaving Portuguese ports had to be armed, even those destined

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<sup>127</sup> For each major port north of Lisbon a roll of its ships exists, except for Viana, which unfortunately has not been located. Ports in southern Portugal were not likely to have received the same restrictions because they would have had few dealings with northern Europe. Azevedo, "Defesa da navegação de Portugal contra os franceses em 1552," Arquivo Histórico Português, Vol. VI, No. 5 & 6 (May/June 1908), 162.

<sup>128</sup> Azevedo, "A marinha mercante," 243. Azevedo contended that the lack of armament in Aveiro's ships was a sign of a predominately Newfoundland trade, for artillery would have been unnecessary in such operations at that time. Selma Barkham, however, noted that no record was found of a Spanish Basque ship going to Newfoundland without armament. Barkham, "Documentary Evidence," 53-56.

<sup>129</sup> See, for example, Luís Crespo Fabião's study of Aveiro's maritime activity with Middelburg, in the Netherlands, in 1544. Portuguese merchants exported primarily foodstuffs to that region, such as wine, fruit, and olive oil, and imported a great deal of ship building materials from the north. Crespo Fabião, "Alguns dados sobre o contributo de Aveiro para o comércio marítimo de importação entre a Zelândia Holandesa e a Península Ibérica nos meados do século XVI (1543-44), segundo dados extraídos das 'contas públicas' do Porto Zelandês de Middelburgo," Arquivo do Distrito de Aveiro, Vol. XLIII (1976), 24-39.

for the cod fishery.<sup>130</sup> Either the earlier law was disregarded, or the piracy problem resurfaced in 1571, for in that year the crown was forced to reinstate this shipping regulation. The new law also mandated the creation of a royal registry of all ships, and that only after a ship had passed an inspection, during which time the prerequisite armament would be examined, could the ship take leave from a Portuguese port.<sup>131</sup>

It is not known whether this royal registry was ever completed or not. Article 23 stated that ships leaving from Aveiro and Viana, and from any other part of the kingdom, to engage in the cod fishery had to be armed.<sup>132</sup> The document tells us, therefore, that Portuguese ships were involved in the cod fishery at least in 1571.<sup>133</sup> Given that Aveiro and Viana were the only two ports named in this legislation connected to the cod fishery, these two towns were probably more committed to the trade than any other Portuguese port at that time. Anthony Parkhurst's letter of 1578 also indicated that the majority of Portuguese ships in Newfoundland were

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<sup>130</sup> Francisco Correa, Collecccão de Legislação antiga e moderna do Reino de Portugal, Part I (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade, r.1816 [1786, 1570]), 166-167.

<sup>131</sup> Correa, Collecccão da Legislação, 168-169.

<sup>132</sup> Correa, Collecccão de Legislação, 190.

<sup>133</sup> It is not clear whether Article 23 was part of the 1557 regulation, or whether it was a 1571 amendment.

from Aveiro and Viana "and from 2 or 3 ports more."<sup>134</sup> How long did this dominance within Portugal last and when and why did it decline? We know that Aveiro masters brought cod to Porto in 1578 and 1585,<sup>135</sup> but whether this was part of a regular and consistent trend is impossible to guess.

Most studies on Aveiro's sixteenth-century history tell of relative prosperity until approximately 1575 when, during an especially harsh winter, a violent storm caused sand nearly to block the harbour's entrance. From that time forward the direction, width, and depth of the bar entrance varied from year to year. The harbour's unreliability, coupled with naval attacks from the English and Dutch following the Spanish annexation of 1580, some have argued, led to a veritable decline in maritime commerce, and a demographic downturn which continued well into the early nineteenth century when Aveiro got its new harbour bar.<sup>136</sup> Others concluded that Aveiro

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<sup>134</sup> Innis, Select Documents, 10.

<sup>135</sup> Arquivo Distrital do Porto (A.D.P.), Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1578, Cabido No. 108, f.21; Cabido No. 111 (1585), f.7v.

<sup>136</sup> S.R. da Rocha e Cunha, Notícia sobre as indústrias marítimas na área da jurisdição da Capitania do porto de Aveiro (Aveiro: Gráfica Aveirense, 1939), 7-12. Unfortunately, like many of his colleagues, Rocha e Cunha failed to provide sources for most of his claims. See also page 27 for a statistical look at the decrease in foreign ships entering Aveiro in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, though it is not clear where he found the information. See also his O Porto de Aveiro, 2 ed. (Aveiro: Tipografia "A Lusitânia", 1959), and Relance da História Económica de Aveiro: Soluções

rose and fell along with Portugal in the sixteenth century. The town's population of 11,000 around mid-century had fallen to 4,000 by the seventeenth century. Reasons for this are not clear, however, though the role of epidemics and climatic changes is often mentioned.<sup>137</sup>

This theme was especially popular in Aveiro's historiography prior to the 1950s,<sup>138</sup> but exponents of

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para o seu problema marítimo, a partir do século XVII (Aveiro: Imprensa Universal, 1930). The question of Aveiro's "decline" is not supported by observations made by a traveller going through the district in 1594. See António de Sousa Machado, "Um Viajante Quinhentista no Distrito de Aveiro," Arquivo do Distrito de Aveiro, Vol. XXXVII (1971), 110-113.

<sup>137</sup> João Augusto Marques Gomes, O Distrito de Aveiro (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade, 1877), 107-108. By the second half of the seventeenth century the bar was down the coast in a place interestingly enough called the "Quinta do ingles" or the "Englishman's garden." Alvaro Sampaio, "O Porto de Aveiro e sua influência no crescimento económico da região," Aveiro e o seu Distrito, No. 2 (1966), 10. It is not clear whether this reference represents a coastal region dominated by an English mercantile community, although another district in Aveiro was called "Alboy", where English merchants were concentrated. See Marques Gomes, Subsídios para a História de Aveiro (Aveiro: "Campeão das Províncias", 1899), 54.

<sup>138</sup> See, for example, João Vieira Resende, Monografia da Gafanha, 2a ed. (Coimbra: Coimbra Editoria, 1944); Américo Viana de Lemos, "O Moliço da Ria de Aveiro." Separata da Revista da Faculdade de Ciências da Universidade de Coimbra, Vol. III, No. 4 (Coimbra, 1933), 5-7; Adolpho Loureiro, Porto de Aveiro (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1904). Most of these historians based their information on the writings of O.P. António Carvalho da Costa, whose Corographia Portuguesa e Descricção Topographia do famoso Reyno de Portugal, Tomo 2, 2nd ed. (Braga: Typographia de Domingos Gonçalves Gouvea, 1868) has become sacred in some circles. Others took the time to point out a few of its most glaring errors, however. See, José Pinto Loureiro, "A Comarca de Esigueira," Arquivo do Distrito

similar views can be found in more recent literature.<sup>139</sup> Natural disasters, coupled with competition, if not downright aggression, from foreign interests undoubtedly played a part in Aveiro's demise in the cod fishery. Another possibility is that Aveiro's masters/merchants had more attractive markets to deal with in the late sixteenth century, especially the growing trade with Brazil. Lack of evidence, however, remains a real obstacle in properly investigating Aveiro's ultimate disappearance from Newfoundland waters.<sup>140</sup>

### Porto

Even less is known about the state of Porto's cod fishery or cod trade in the early sixteenth century. Braga officials inform us of an abundance of cod in Porto in the spring of

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de Aveiro, Vol. II (1936), 199-206.

<sup>139</sup> For example, Júlio de Sousa Martins, "A popósito dos 550 anos da Feira de Março," Aveiro e seu Distrito, No. 33 (1984), 46-63; João Gonçalves Gaspar, Aveiro: Notas Históricas, (Aveiro: Câmara Municipal, 1983); Faria dos Santos, "A pesca, o turismo lagunar e os desportos náuticos em Aveiro," Aveiro e seu Distrito, Nos. 23-25 (1977-78), 40-47.

<sup>140</sup> In 1685, officials from Aveiro lamented that their town no longer had any ship or caravel owned locally. At one point, the certified report attested, the town had a number of shops operated by cod merchants, when enough ships were engaged in the Newfoundland fishery. The decline in shipping, however, meant that most businesses had to close down. Cited in Rocha Madahil, Colectânea de Documentos Históricos, Vol. II, 283.

1561,<sup>141</sup> but they tell us nothing else about the origin or volumes of cod in question. The earliest surviving port records for Porto are from the local church's collection of Redízima books, but the Cabido set has only eight volumes for the second half of the sixteenth century, five of which contain a total of nine cod entries. Dated from 1574-1591, these early port records are not always very clear in their content. Though the entries in question mentioned transactions involving cod, and sometimes references to "Terra Nova", the volume of fish is unclear, and the unit price is unspecified. From the dízima amounts, however, one can determine that a few cargoes were of a fair size; in 1574, for example, the crown received 55,000 réis from one shipment of cod.<sup>142</sup> Given that this amount represented a 10% tax, we know, therefore, that at least half a million reis worth of cod entered Porto that year.<sup>143</sup>

At least five of the nine cod entries indicated Portuguese masters bringing cod to Porto, including two from Aveiro, and one from Villa Nova; in one case the cod shipment came from Lisbon. The five cod entries connected to

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<sup>141</sup> C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXV-XXVI, 455.

<sup>142</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1574, Cabido No. 107, f.35.

<sup>143</sup> The records only noted the monetary totals with no indication of actual unit prices or volumes involved.

Portuguese masters and merchants were found between 1574 and 1585, but the four entries for 1591 no longer suggest a Portuguese control of the trade; two cargoes were brought in by Flemish shipmasters, one by the French, and the other was unclear.<sup>144</sup>

A few cod cargoes were found in Porto's health inspection records for the late sixteenth century, but none of these shipments was connected to the Portuguese either. In 1597, two cargoes arrived in Biscayan ships, one German, and another from Stockholm; a 1598 shipment came from Newfoundland, but the origin of its master/vessel is unclear; and on 25 September 1599 a French ship brought cod to Porto, also from Newfoundland.<sup>145</sup> Were the Portuguese absent from Newfoundland waters already in the 1590s? In his study on Porto during the Spanish annexation, Francisco Ribeiro da Silva contended that from the 1590s to the 1620s Flemish merchants dominated Porto's cod market.<sup>146</sup> Town council records for the late sixteenth century show a Cornelis

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<sup>144</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1574, Cabido No. 107, f.35; Cabido No. 108 (1578), f.15, f.21; Cabido No. 109 (1579), f.20; Cabido No. 111 (1585), f.7v; Cabido No. 113 (1591), f.34, f.36v, f.37.

<sup>145</sup> J.A. Pinto Ferreira, Visitas de Saúde às Embarcações entradas na Barra do Douro nos Séculos XVI e XVII, (Porto: Câmara Municipal do Porto, 1977), 94-107.

<sup>146</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Vol. II, 753. He based his argument on the few sources cited here.

Guilherme connected with the cod trade, but although this indicates a Flemish presence in Porto, it hardly attests to a Flemish dominance of the cod trade.<sup>147</sup> Equally interesting is the absence of the English. In the seventeenth century, Porto's cod trade was first dominated by the French, then by the English, but the few scattered records for the sixteenth century show a more varied group of cod masters/traders in Porto.

Unlike Aveiro, Porto's population is believed to have increased from 12,177 in 1527 to approximately 20,000 in 1599, followed by a demographic decline in the early seventeenth century.<sup>148</sup> Ribeiro da Silva stressed that the decline was not unique to Porto or to Portugal in the beginning of seventeenth century. In the case of Porto, however, he refuted the argument that plague and famine were major causes for depopulation. Instead, Ribeiro da Silva found evidence that Porto's demographic decline was primarily a result of a notable exodus: some sought better opportunities in Brazil,

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<sup>147</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, No. 32 (1594), f.256v; No. 33 (1597), f.146; No. 34 (1598), f.12. Of these three references to cod, the latter one, for 1598, is perhaps the most useful, for it actually states a unit price for cod: 18 reis/arrátel for vento, or 576 reis/arroba.

<sup>148</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Vol. I, 96-98. In 1622 Porto's population was registered at 14,581. It enjoyed a slight increase over the next two decades, with 16,000 in 1639, but declined again in the second half of the seventeenth century, with a total of 15,919 people in 1688.



others were forced to leave due to persecution by the Inquisition, and many merchants left the city due to continual pirate attacks on the nearby coast.<sup>149</sup>

Like Aveiro, Porto was also plagued with a sedimentation problem in its harbour bar. Porto's economy was always intrinsically linked with the Atlantic and Douro River, for the local granitic soil was unable to provide the region with enough sustenance.<sup>150</sup> Unfortunately, Porto's harbour bar had long been a source of problems for navigation on which the city was dependent. In 1551, for example, complaints were made about the frequent dangers faced by merchant ships entering or leaving Porto, though conditions became more perilous at the turn of the century.<sup>151</sup>

How much this affected the fishery is difficult to determine. Municipal records show that Porto received fish from other Portuguese regions, including tuna from the Algarve, as well as sardines from Galicia. Prices were not

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<sup>149</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Vol. I, 96-99. The piracy problem was put forward by the town council in 1607 as it argued against a further tax hike from the crown.

<sup>150</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 49, 65, 379. The problem was compounded by the fact that Porto's municipal council had some jurisdiction over an extensive area of seven boroughs with a total of 29 districts, though in some cases these districts came to the rescue when food shortages occurred in the walled city.

<sup>151</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Vol. I, 109-122.

always provided, but as Table 2 illustrates, in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, beef cost approximately the same as pasta or wet cod in Porto but was always significantly less expensive than vento cod.<sup>152</sup> Unfortunately Porto's town council records did not note many details about volumes, but Ribeiro da Silva found that tithe collections actually increased during the first four decades of the seventeenth century.<sup>153</sup>

The story of Porto's rise in population and economic growth during the sixteenth century is difficult to explain. The 1527 census indicates that Porto and Aveiro had approximately the same number of residents, yet the 1552 ship list shows Porto with only 21 vessels registered, placing Porto's tonnage a distant fifth, behind Aveiro, Vila do Conde, Leça, and Matosinhos.<sup>154</sup> Furthermore, few of the Portuguese ships Parkhurst noted in 1578 in Newfoundland waters could have been from Porto, given that local port records only show

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<sup>152</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Vol. II, 740-757.

<sup>153</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Vol. I, 150-155, 330-332. He concluded that Porto native merchants concentrated on wine exports, especially to Brazil, in the first half of the seventeenth century but it is not clear if this was the case already in the sixteenth century.

<sup>154</sup> Azevedo, "A Marinha Mercante," 243.

two cod entries in Porto that year.<sup>155</sup> Yet Braga town officials tell us that Porto had an abundance of cod in 1561.<sup>156</sup> Did Porto's ships participate in the Newfoundland fishery, or was the city supplied by Aveiro or Viana, or even by foreign vessels? Porto's role in the cod fishery/trade in the sixteenth century remains shrouded in mystery, and only in the seventeenth century did the town clearly surpass all other northern ports in cod imports.<sup>157</sup>

### Vila do Conde

The port with the second highest ship tonnage in the mid-sixteenth century, according to the 1552 ship list, boasted the earliest Portuguese port record on cod specifically from Terra Nova. On 2 October 1527 two merchants paid taxes on 12,500 cod da terra nova from which the dízima was 1,250 fish, and from the 20 almudes de graixa they paid two almudes to port officials in Vila do Conde.<sup>158</sup> Unfortunately, there is

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<sup>155</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima... 1578, Cabido No. 108, f.15 and f.21.

<sup>156</sup> C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXV-XXVI, 455.

<sup>157</sup> See Chapter 4.

<sup>158</sup> A.N.T.T., Casa da Coroa, Livro da Dízima da Alfândega de Vila do Conde de 1527, f.121. As cited in Fernandes Moreira, "O Porto de Viana do Castelo e as Navegações para o Noroeste Atlântico," 81. An almude was equivalent to approximately 32 litres, and graixa was oil, possibly cod or whale.

no way of knowing who actually brought the said cod to port. Nor do we know much more about the cod trade in Vila do Conde for the rest of the century. The only other reference to the trade found is dated 15 February 1585, when a barrelmaker named Pedro Roiz was charged 200 réis for having bought cod from an unauthorized source.<sup>159</sup>

The cod trade was probably more significant in Vila do Conde than the scanty evidence suggests. Given Vila do Conde's location between Aveiro and Viana do Castelo, it is reasonable to suspect that some cod entered Vila do Conde, even if the majority of its own ships did not participate directly in Newfoundland voyages. Indeed, 17 of its 41 ships in the 1552 list were of 150 tons or over, and 22 had artillery, an indication that Vila do Conde did much more business with northern Europe.<sup>160</sup> Aveiro, whose connection

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<sup>159</sup> In other words, already at that time there were problems with consumers attempting to bypass the dízima imposed on cod, which of course would be added to the overall prices charged to the public. Arquivo Histórico da Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde (A.H.C.M.V.C.), Receita e Despesa, 1585, No. 833, f.2v.

<sup>160</sup> From 1513 to 1530, at least 13 vessels from Vila do Conde were attacked by French corsairs, some off the coasts of Madeira, the Canaries, Azores, and Ireland, while others were closer to home, near Viana, Buarcos, or the Galician coast. "Livro dos Roubos q os Franceses e Vasalos del Rey de França Fezeram aos Moradores desta Vila de Guimarães e seu Termo," A.N.T.T., Corpo Cronológico, Part 1, M.50, Doc. No. 31, as cited in Alfredo Pimenta, ed., Boletim Cultural da Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde, Nova Série, No. 2 (July 1988), 51-53.

to Newfoundland was clearly indicated, only had one ship of 160 tons and two of 150; the rest were all smaller, and none of its 69 vessels had armament.<sup>161</sup>

The Portuguese historian Luís Crespo Fabião has looked at records from the Dutch ports of Midelburg and Arnemuiden to analyze the presence of ships from Vila do Conde in northern Europe. The documents found, dated 27 June 1543 to 26 July 1544, indicated that out of the total of 102 Portuguese ships visiting those two ports during that period, more than half, 54, came from Vila do Conde, while Viana do Castelo contributed 17, and 14 were from Porto.<sup>162</sup> Northern Portugal exported primarily salt, wine, fruit, olive oil, sugar, cork, drugs and spices, while the Portuguese received primarily naval construction materials from the Dutch.<sup>163</sup> The records did not show the Portuguese exporting fish to the Netherlands, cod or otherwise.

According to a recent study on Vila do Conde in the sixteenth century, the town enjoyed favourable geographical features, including fertile land in the surrounding area and

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<sup>161</sup> Azevedo, "A Marinha Mercante," 243.

<sup>162</sup> Luís Crespo Fabião, "Alguns dados sobre o contributo de Vila do Conde para o comércio marítimo de importação entre Midelburgo-Arnemuiden (Zelândia) e a Península Ibérica nos meados do século XVI (1543-44)," Boletim Cultural da Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde, No. 6 (1968), 37.

<sup>163</sup> Crespo Fabião, "Alguns dados sobre o contributo de Vila do Conde," 37-43.

a well-maintained harbour.<sup>164</sup> One of Vila do Conde's thriving industries in the first half of the sixteenth century was shipbuilding, and many of the vessels engaged in the Carreira da Índia originated from there.<sup>165</sup> Yet, Vila do Conde's economy was largely based on agriculture and the fishery. Unlike some other neighbouring communities such as Porto, Vila do Conde was not only self-sufficient but also in a position to export local produce. Its principal agricultural products were wheat, barley, rye, wine, beans, peas, and a variety of other fruits and vegetables. From the sea and the Ave River flowing through the town, Vila do Conde was well furnished with fish products, but especially sardines, hake, tuna, lobster, and oysters.<sup>166</sup> But this golden picture of Vila do Conde was not always appreciated by town officials. Municipal records reveal several serious food shortages, especially grain, including in 1502, 1538, and in 1546. In September of that year the town decided to compensate the owners of a cargo of wheat which had been taken by force by the local populace. Officials recognized that the

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<sup>164</sup> Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI," 6-9.

<sup>165</sup> Jorge de Faria, "Marinheiros e Marianes de Vila do Conde," Boletim Cultural da Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde, Nova Série, No. 3 (March 1989), 37.

<sup>166</sup> Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI," No. 11 (June 1993), 13-14.

wheat was taken from the anchored ships by hungry people.<sup>167</sup>

In addition to the dearth of cereals, Vila do Conde occasionally needed to import fish as well, especially sardines from Galicia and other regions.<sup>168</sup> Vila do Conde also prohibited exports of fish products in 1552 and in 1553, with fines of 6,000 réis for infractions. Always the concern was that those involved in taking fish outside the town were not furnishing the local populace adequately.<sup>169</sup> The only local product that was exported with impunity and with regularity was hoops for barrels, which left Vila do Conde for various regions in Portugal, as well as Madeira and the Azores.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI," No. 13 (June 1994), 10-11, 17-19. Sometimes Vila do Conde was in a position to export cereals, such as from 1509-1513, though the volumes involved were strictly limited, and the cereals in question were not to go outside the country. Similar export allowances were made in the 1540s and 1550s, but in 1556 officials permitted a merchant to export chestnuts and wheat to the Algarve only after the merchant furnished Vila do Conde with wheat. On 30 April 1557 council prohibited the export of any wheat, rye, or barley, while in 1667 another merchant was allowed to export a certain amount of wheat, but only by providing the town with half the quantity in the agreement. By the end of the sixteenth century Vila do Conde was importing all its wheat supplies from France.

<sup>168</sup> Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI," No. 13 (June 1994), 12.

<sup>169</sup> Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI," No. 13 (June 1994), 20.

<sup>170</sup> Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI," No. 13 (June 1994), 14-17.

Like the other communities analyzed so far, Vila do Conde's records for the sixteenth century are extremely limited. This situation will certainly skew our understanding of its connection to Newfoundland, such as it was, but nothing survived to suggest that Vila do Conde's role in the cod trade was significant in the early modern period. Incomplete as the municipal records are from 1502-1599, they show much more concern with other types of coastal fish, especially hake, as well as meat products, olive oil, and cereals.<sup>171</sup> Vila do Conde's greatest contribution to the cod business was probably in shipbuilding and barrelmaking.

#### Viana do Castelo

All the evidence suggests that Aveiro, Vila do Conde, and Viana do Castelo dominated commercial traffic in northern Portugal, at least until the mid-sixteenth century, but only Viana possesses solid and consistent documentation of its early connection with Newfoundland. The largest port south of the Spanish Galician border, Viana is unique among northern Portuguese port towns because material survived confirming its role in the cod fishery, and these documents are easily accessible, for they were recently examined and published. Pe. Manuel António Fernandes Moreira has written extensively

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<sup>171</sup> Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI," No. 12 (December 1993), 5-6, 10,



on Viana's history, and his work is refreshing from the outset because he does not waste time arguing about Portugal's early dominance of the Newfoundland cod fishery, for which there is little evidence. In his estimation, the highseas fishery was essentially an alternative fishery - that is, it was practised especially when the customary long-distance commerce with northern Europe was interrupted. Consequently, the cod fishery was developed in the second half of the sixteenth century, when religious wars in northern Europe and the advent of corsair attacks in the north seas led to food shortages in Portugal's northern coast.<sup>172</sup>

A volume that is partly a navigation registry and a record of local commercial taxes survived from 1566-1567 and it shows a substantial amount of cod arriving in Viana.<sup>173</sup> In 1566 at least 74,580 fish were brought to town, and another 88,432 in 1567 (see Table 3). Furthermore, the cargoes included an additional 121 almudes and 80 canadas of cod liver oil in 1566, and 56 almudes and 488.5 canadas in 1567.<sup>174</sup> In

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<sup>172</sup> Fernandes Moreira, "O Porto de Viana do Castelo," 81.

<sup>173</sup> Arquivo Municipal de Viana do Castelo (A.M.V.C.), Livro das Navegações e Comércio de Viana (1566-1567), No. 953-B, f.19v-f.254. The collection includes records on five cod shipments entering Viana from Terra Nova during those two years, and the volume was thoroughly examined and analyzed by the Viana historian, Manuel António Fernandes Moreira. The following discussion is based largely on his findings.

<sup>174</sup> Both ancient measuring units, an almude is approximately 32 litres, while a canada is about 1.5 litres.

total, 45 fishers were involved in the Viana cod fishery during those two years, with two voyages in 1566 and three in 1567.<sup>175</sup> The records show that one master made two voyages to Newfoundland, once in each year, and from the names available, all indications point to a Portuguese cod fishery in the mid-sixteenth century. This raises some interesting questions, for some cargoes included green and dry cod.<sup>176</sup> Was the cod salted on board ship and dried upon arrival in Portugal, or did Viana fishers set up camp along Newfoundland's shores?<sup>177</sup> There is no way of knowing at this point. What is known is that a fairly large portion of the cod in question was exported to Spain, especially Bilbao and San Sebastian. In fact, close to one third of the cod registered in Viana was destined to the Spanish Biscayan region, or 51,435 fish of the grand total of 163,012 fish.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Fernandes Moreira, "O Porto de Viana do Castelo," 84. The term graixa designates a type of oil, or train oil, which could have been extracted from cod, walrus, or whale.

<sup>176</sup> See, for example, A.M.V.C., Livro das Navegacoes, f.36, f.88, f.108v, f.112v, and f.113.

<sup>177</sup> There is some indication that more local vessels were involved in the cod fishery off Newfoundland in 1565. One document stipulates the certification made by some pilots and masters whose ships had just arrived from Terra Nova, in 1565, in which they agree to comply with the established regulations about the sisá do pescado (fish sales tax) and appropriate enumeration of their mariners. See A.M.V.C., Cartas Régias, No. 887, Pasta 7, Doc. 3.

<sup>178</sup> Fernandes Moreira, "O Porto de Viana do Castelo," 84-85.

If Viana merchants were allowed to export cod to Galicia, the town must have been well provisioned at that time. Viana probably supplied cod to other nearby Portuguese communities as well, for in the sixteenth century Viana's economy had strong links with Ponte de Lima via the Lima River, the maritime route to Caminha, and overland with Barcelos (see map).<sup>179</sup> There is reason to believe that the years 1566/67 were atypical, however, for in 1569 the municipal government claimed that fishers in Viana were few and poor. Indeed, Fernandes Moreira concluded that despite the few references to Viana's involvement in the Newfoundland cod fishery in 1566-67, the local economy was predominately in the hands of traders and merchants. These dealt extensively with imports from Andalusia and Seville, especially wine and olive oil, leather from Ireland and the Antilles, fish from Galicia, wheat from France and Atlantic islands, sugar from Madeira and Brazil, and fruit from the Algarve. The city was bustling with commercial activity involving local merchants as well as many from France, England, and Flanders.<sup>180</sup>

Despite this outward opulence, however, the city was

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<sup>179</sup> Manuel António Fernandes Moreira, "A Presença de Galegos em Viana da Foz do Lima no Século XVI," in Colóquio "Santos Graça" de Etnografia Marítima: Actas, III, Povoamento. Administração. Aspectos sociais (Póvoa de Varzim: Câmara Municipal de Póvoa de Varzim, 1985), 70.

<sup>180</sup> Fernandes Moreira, "A Presença de Galegos," 72-73.

often plagued with food shortages, especially in bread, wine, and fish.<sup>181</sup> An insufficient supply of fish was a constant problem in Viana, almost throughout the entire sixteenth century. Municipal records reveal numerous occasions when officials had to prohibit the export of local fish, and restrict the localities for fish sales in order to better regulate transactions and to prevent hoarding. Reasons for the shortage of fish in a well-developed maritime community are not clear, but the problem was likely rooted in Portugal's concentration on overseas activities.<sup>182</sup> Already in the mid-sixteenth century Viana's local fishery was dominated by

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<sup>181</sup> Fernandes Moreira, "A Presença de Galegos," 76.

<sup>182</sup> Fernandes Moreira, "A Presença de Galegos," 85. José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva also pointed out that in 1580 Viana had 80 coastal and high seas fishing boats, whereas in 1619 it had none involved in the fishery because everyone was too busy trading in Brazilian goods. Unfortunately he provided no sources for his claims. See his "Memória sobre a pesca das Baleias, e Extracção do seu Azeite; com algumas Reflexões a Respeito das nossas Pescarias," in Memórias Econômicas da Academia Real das Ciências de Lisboa, para o Adiantamento de Agricultura, das Artes, e da Indústria em Portugal, e suas Conquistas (1789-1815), edited by José Luís Cardoso (Lisboa: Banco de Portugal, r.1991), 281 (his note 14). One reference was found from 1616 in which a Portuguese writer commented that Viana do Castelo previously had "people who were contented with earning just their daily bread by fishing along the coasts - but today none is left, as all fishermen gladly abandoned the poverty of their nets and the security of their shores, for the hopes and dangers of the high sea." Cited in R. Hooykaas, Humanism and the Voyages of Discovery in 16th Century Portuguese Science and Letters (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1979), 40.

Galician fishers.<sup>183</sup> Thus, the region produced few fishers but many mariners, a trend that was equally true in nearby Póvoa de Varzim. Death certificates from 1547-1564 referred to thirteen sailors and one sea captain, all of whom had been involved in overseas trade.<sup>184</sup> Only two fishers were found in Póvoa de Varzim and one regateiro or fish hawkler.<sup>185</sup>

Based on the evidence from the 1566/67 Newfoundland voyages, Fernandes Moreira argues that the socio-economic composition of those involved in the cod fishery included small groups of relatively affluent fishers who set up "companies". These companheiros and their servants staked out a certain territory in the ocean once they reached their destination, and then distributed the earnings amongst themselves. The head or owner of each company - known as the senhorio - did not usually participate in the fishing voyage, but financed the companhia and waited in Viana for the returns. The more experienced fishers, designated marinheiros, assisted the master in the running of the ship, and were generally paid 1,000 fish, plus two almudes of oil; members of the other class, sons of the senhorios or poorer

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<sup>183</sup> Fernandes Moreira, "A Presença de Galegos," 77-78. A 1566 document shows the preponderance of Galician sardines in the Viana market (see his table on pages 91-93).

<sup>184</sup> Amorim, "A Vila da Póvoa de Varzim," 122.

<sup>185</sup> Amorim, "A Vila da Póvoa de Varzim," 149-151.

fishers, were known as the grumete, or sea-boys, and earned approximately half of the above wage. Fernandes Moreira also found that masters of these fishing vessels were not engaged in the cod fishery only. Three of the five had been previously involved in the Brazil trade, in northern Europe, and in the Algarve and Biscayan route.<sup>186</sup>

In addition to the 1566-67 navigation records, more evidence exists concerning Viana's cod trade in the sixteenth century, including some references to cod taxes in that same volume. The registry begins with a list of merchandise and their respective tax rates. Thus, a milheiro de bacalhao was worth 400 réis to the town, while the rate on graxa was 30 réis/almude.<sup>187</sup> A list of some individual taxpayers also reveals a few more details about the local cod trade, and suggests that outsiders occasionally provisioned Viana. On 8 July 1566 a merchant from Aveiro brought in two barrels of cod liver oil, graxa de bacalhao, and had to pay 630 réis, while someone's servant was charged 300 réis for a barrel of graxa

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<sup>186</sup> Fernandes Moreira, "O Porto de Viana do Castelo," 85-86.

<sup>187</sup> Though the type of graxa was not stipulated, one can assume that it referred to cod liver oil. A.M.V.C., Livro das Navegações, f.2v. It appears that taxes in Viana were 20% divided equally between the merchant and the consumer. For example, the merchant and the consumer had to pay 200 réis each on a milheiro, or 1,000 cod.

on the same day.<sup>188</sup>

Other sisá books, or sales tax registries, reveal further information on the early modern cod trade in Viana. A total of 15 volumes survived, covering the period 1571-1659. Large gaps exist in these documents, and the entries of taxed items are often not very precise. In fact, merchandise was usually not separated or named, but merely lumped together as mercandorias under the individual's name. For purposes of this study only four volumes from the late sixteenth century are of any use, 1571, 1573, 1581, and 1583, which contain the taxpayer's name, merchandise, and amount of sisá collected. The volume and value, or unit price of each particular item was never stated. What these records can tell us is that cod and cod liver oil were coming into Viana regularly during those four years at least (see Table 4).

It should be noted, however, that sometimes the taxpayer listed was charged one amount for several items. For example, in 1571 Alfomso de Barros had to pay 6,660 réis in taxes for cotton, iron, and cod.<sup>189</sup> There is no way of knowing how much of his total was actually cod tax. Given that the tax rate for that period is not known either, it is difficult to determine the volume of cod entering Viana at that time.

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<sup>188</sup> A.M.V.C., Livro das Navegações, f.19v.

<sup>189</sup> A.M.V.C., Livro das Sisás, 1571, No. 518, f.153.

Still, the table gives a rough estimate of the taxes Viana collected from the cod trade, for among 144 cod entries found only 26 consisted of other merchandise as well, or 18%. The most common entry involving cod also included cod liver oil, which accounted for 47% of the cod entries. Though records for only four years exist, it appears that much more cod and cod liver oil arrived in Viana during the 1570s than the 1580s.

Newfoundland was infrequently mentioned as a place of origin for the listed cod during these four years. In fact, only three cod entries stipulated that the cod in question was from "terra nova."<sup>190</sup> Another difficulty with this type of record is that it is impossible to determine whether all taxpayers named in the tax list connected with the cod trade were merchants, or if some of them were market vendors or retailers. Occasionally the taxpayer was referred to as pescador,<sup>191</sup> or fisher, but almost all entries provided no job title. Often the family connection was indicated - that is, the taxpayer was the son, grandson, son-in-law, or

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<sup>190</sup> A.M.V.C., Livro das Sisas, 1571, No. 518, f.158v, f.165; Livro das Sisas, 1573, No. 521, f.169v; in one case the cod came from Aveiro, Livro das Sisas, 1581, No. 522, f.149v.

<sup>191</sup> A.M.V.C., Livro das Sisas, 1571, No. 518, f.172; Livro das Sisas, 1581, No. 522, f.155.



brother-in-law of someone else, usually a man.<sup>192</sup> It is not clear whether the patriarch in question was a cod merchant and the relatives were working for him or with him. In two cases the men paying the tax did so for cod brought into Viana from Terra Nova by their respective sons, who remained anonymous.<sup>193</sup> Other taxpayers were noted as the servant/employee of a specified man. In one case, the employee was connected to a mariner, while another worked for a labrador, or tenant farmer.<sup>194</sup>

Finally, these records, inconclusive as they are, show little sign of a foreign presence in Viana's cod trade. James Yres paid 400 réis in tax for cod and oil in 1573,<sup>195</sup> but he was one of the few non-Portuguese names found in the tax list. This could mean that the cod trade was still in Portuguese hands in Viana at that time.<sup>196</sup> As limited as the

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<sup>192</sup> A.M.V.C., Livro das Sisas, 1573, No. 521, f.165v, f.167v, f.169v; Livro das Sisas, 1581, No. 522, f.151, f.165v, f.168v; Livro das Sisas, 1583, No. 524, f.127v, f.128. Women's contributions will be discussed in Chapter 3.

<sup>193</sup> A.M.V.C., Livro das Sisas, 1571, No. 518, f.165; Livro das Sisas, 1573, No. 521, f.169v.

<sup>194</sup> A.M.V.C., Livro das Sisas, 1571, No. 518, f.182; Livro das Sisas, 1573, No. 521, f.165v, f.167v, f.171; Livro das Sisas, 1583, No. 524, f.128.

<sup>195</sup> A.M.V.C., Livro das Sisas, 1573, No. 521, f.167.

<sup>196</sup> On the other hand, the records in question clearly deal with retail sales tax. If those named were retailers only, then those involved in the wholesale trade remain unknown.

information in these four volumes appears to be, it is a lot more revealing than the data in the remaining 15 tax volumes. From the end of the sixteenth century onwards, the tendency was to list tax owing, taxpayers' names and sometimes job titles, but very seldom the actual merchandise being taxed. Though several remarks were made on fishers and fish, cod was not mentioned again.

Though the earliest references to cod in Viana were found in the aforementioned 1566-1567 volume, Fernandes Moreira believes that a much earlier document offers testimony to the cod fishery/trade in Viana. The document in question, dated 12 December 1499, was a grant made by D. Manuel I to a Viana noble concerning rights to the fish dízima collected in Viana's port. This privilege was reaffirmed by subsequent monarchs to the noble's descendants, including in 1524, 1561, and 1594. Fernandes Moreira concedes that the document referred to the dízima velha e nova do pescado only, or the old and new fish tax, and never specified the fish as cod. He is optimistic about the meaning of this 1499 document, however, because it was the basis of many subsequent judicial debates. Not surprisingly, the crown insisted that the said donation did not include taxes collected from cod shipments. The conflict was especially heated in the late sixteenth century, when, in 1595, custom officials at Viana refused to pass over the cod tax to the respective noble family. The

marquis in question appealed this decision and received a favourable ruling in 1602. The court declared that the crown was not entitled to this cod tax because it was part of the dízima do pescado granted to the marquis' ancestors, and that back in 1530 the marquis was already recipient of the tax on cod.<sup>197</sup>

It is interesting to note that already in 1530 this question had come up, but since this is only inferred from a document dated 1602 one has to use some caution in interpreting its possibilities. It is not clear how judges in 1602 determined that in 1530 the marquis had his rights to the tax on cod confirmed. Admittedly, it is not difficult to envision that cod from Newfoundland entered Viana in 1530, since cod reached Vila do Conde, 39 kilometres to the south, in 1527.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> A.M.V.C., Livro de Registos de 1596 a 1602, No. 896, f.232v-238.

<sup>198</sup> On the other hand, customs records for the port at Caminha just north of Viana, also dated 1527, are full of references to textiles arriving in ships from London and other European ports, but nothing was found on cod. See, Elisa Castro and Mário Cunha, "O Livro da Sisa da Alfândega de Caminha do Ano de 1527," Caminiana, Vol. VIII, No. 13 (December 1986), 149-215, and Vol. X, No. 16 (December 1988), 180-210.

A few records describe some Portuguese activities in Newfoundland waters, and undetermined volumes of cod in various Portuguese communities at different times throughout the sixteenth century. What this tells us with any certainty is that the Portuguese had some connection with Newfoundland's main resource, as fishers and as consumers, but the degree of Portugal's involvement in procuring regular supplies of cod is questionable. At the local level, the Portuguese managed the incoming cod, at least until the 1590s. All references to cod taxpayers suggest that the latter were Portuguese. But were these individuals merchants or fish vendors? If they were regateiras and regateiros, who were the mercadores? The existing documents have little to say on this matter, and the most likely reason for the silence is that there were very few cod merchants in Portugal at that time. Although some records indicate that cod was at times abundantly available in certain parts of Portugal, no evidence exists to suggest that cod was a significant item in Portuguese markets. It may often have been part of the fish trade, but it is unlikely that cod emerged as a trade of its own in sixteenth-century Portugal. The international cod trade did not come of age until the seventeenth century, by which time Portugal was out of the cod fishery.

Claims that the Portuguese had a well-established cod fishery at any time in the early modern era are difficult to

substantiate. Not only did records for the northern Portuguese coast and two inland towns fail to produce such results, the assertion cannot be supported by national-based collections. The Cadernos dos Assentamentos,<sup>199</sup> kept during the reign of D. Manuel I, should have contained much on the cod trade if that monarch was concerned about the dízima do bacalhao, as many have argued. These cadernos were used throughout the kingdom by each royal agent responsible for collecting and accounting for the monarchy's revenues and expenses in each respective domain. Thus, each year a caderno was submitted to the royal court outlining the revenues from taxes on various merchandise collected in different regions, administrative costs, and other royal expenses. Given that each individual source of income was registered in its own book, a large number of these documents must have been accumulated during Manuel's 26-year reign. Unfortunately, only 62 are known to have survived, and none of these mentions cod. There were cadernos on lumber, fish, meat, wine, cloth, fruit, wheat, and other general tolls.<sup>200</sup> All references to fish taxes were

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<sup>199</sup> A.N.T.T., Corpo Cronológico, Parte I, II, III, and Fragmentos, as cited in Anselmo Braamcamp Freire, ed., "Outro capítulo das finanças manuelinas: Os Cadernos dos Assentamentos," Arquivo Histórico Português, Vol. VI (1908): 233-240, 443-444; Vol. VII (1909): 220-226, 291-292, 376, 478-480; Vol. VIII (1910): 70-75; Vol. X (1916): 60-208.

<sup>200</sup> Braamcamp Freire, "Cadernos dos Assentamentos," Vol. VI (1908), 239; Vol. VII (1909), 292; Vol. VIII (1910), 71; Vol. X (1916), 73 and 107.

connected to Lisbon,<sup>201</sup> yet even the country's largest city and port offers little proof of a significant Newfoundland trade in the sixteenth century.<sup>202</sup>

In 1565 Lisbon city officials pledged 100,000 cruzados to the crown to help the monarch pay his debts. Records from this transaction offer an interesting glimpse into Lisbon's mid-sixteenth-century economy, for they include a tax roll and the respective trade of each taxpayer. Officials emphasized that no one was exempt from this tax, regardless of status, but whether this means that the list was truly complete is difficult to tell.<sup>203</sup> As is often the case with such a document, the absence of certain trades from the list is as significant as the inclusion of others. It is noteworthy, for example, that no reference to bacolheiro, or cod fisher, was found in the 1565 census. Other types of fishers made the list, including pescador de sardinha and pescador do alto, or

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<sup>201</sup> It is not clear, however, whether this is because many books from other regions did not survive, or if in the early sixteenth century the fish trade was more substantial in Lisbon than elsewhere.

<sup>202</sup> Admittedly, the absence of references to cod revenues in the Lisbon pescado books may have something to do with the fact that the dízima do bacalhao in Lisbon belonged to the Duke of Braganza, and not to the crown.

<sup>203</sup> Câmara Municipal de Lisboa (C.M.L.), Livro do Lançamento e Serviço que a cidade de Lisboa fez a El Rei Nosso Senhor no Ano de 1565: Documentos para a história da cidade de Lisboa, Volume I (Lisbon: Câmara Municipal de Lisboa, r.1947/48), Introduction.

sardine fisher and high seas fisher, respectively.<sup>204</sup> It is possible that cod fishers were part of the latter group, along with tuna fishers, for example, but the records did not specify this.

The name/trade list also shows a number of ship pilots. Though most of them were simply piloto, some had titles denoting their areas of specialization, including Piloto da Carreira da India, Piloto da Carreira da Mina, Piloto da Guiné, Piloto de São Tomé, and Piloto do Brasil.<sup>205</sup> Nowhere was a Piloto da Terra Nova listed, though it is possible that the latter was included in the generic listing of piloto. Be that as it may, the absence of such designations is telling. No cod trade impressive enough to generate particular occupational titles existed in sixteenth-century Lisbon. In fact, all indications point to the lack of Portuguese commitment to the Newfoundland cod fishery, and to their subsequent dependence on cod imports in the seventeenth century.

Enormous voids in the original sources hinder any attempts at definitive conclusions, but the hypothesis that Portugal possessed a Newfoundland fishery or even a special interest in imported cod during the sixteenth century is not

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<sup>204</sup> C.M.L., Livro do Lançamento, Volume IV, 394-395.

<sup>205</sup> C.M.L., Livro do Lançamento, Volume IV, 395 (Index).

sustained by the evidence. The loss of documentation related to Portugal's sixteenth-century maritime endeavours is real, extensive, and regrettable, and any discussion on the early Portuguese-Newfoundland connection must take this into account. Existing documents provide enough hints to suggest that Portuguese access to cod from Newfoundland increased in the second half of the sixteenth century, but their active participation was generally sporadic. In other words, nothing survived to indicate that the Portuguese had a bona fide, established, and regulated cod fishery in the sixteenth century. The crown's monopoly of trade did nothing to promote the fishery. In fact, studies on Viana do Castelo, Póvoa de Varzim, and Porto have concluded that the national concentration on overseas trade harmed local fishing industries. For the ever-elusive pot of gold, the Portuguese neglected their agriculture and fishery; by the seventeenth century they had little choice but to feed themselves with wheat from northern Europe, and English cod.



Table 1:

Food Prices in Réis per Arrátel: Braga, 1561-1582

<u>Date</u>	<u>Cod<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>Other Fish<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>Beef</u>	<u>Tripe<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>Lamb</u>
1561	6	5-10			
1565		6			
1566		5-20	7-7.5		10
1567			7.5		
1568		5-12	7.5		
1569		5-12			
1572				4	9
1574		5-10	7-8	4.5	
1580			8		
1581		10-12			
1582	10				
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SOURCE: Câmara Municipal de Braga, "Acordos e Vreações da Câmara de Braga no Episcopado de D. Frei Bartolomeu dos Mártires, 1561," Bracara Augusta: Revista Cultural de Regionalismo e História da Câmara Municipal de Braga, Volumes XXV-XXVI, Nos. 59-62 (1971-1972): 418-470; Volume XXVII, No. 64 (1973): 587-622; Volume XXVIII, Nos. 65-66 (1974): 533-542; Volume XXIX, Nos. 67-68 (1975): 377-426; Volume XXX (Tomo II), No. 70 (1976): 681-792; Volume XXXI, Nos. 71-72 (1977): 435-481; Volume XXXII, Nos. 73-74 (1978): 415-474; Volume XXXIII, Nos. 75-76 (1979): 483-563; Volume XXXIV (Tomo II), No. 78 (1980): 937-992; Volume XXXV, Nos. 79-80 (1981): 543-592; Volume XXXVI, Nos. 81-82 (1982): 545-601; Volume XXXVII, Nos. 83-84 (1983): 525-574; Volume XXXVIII, Nos. 85-86 (1984): 397-448; Volume XL, Nos. 89-90 (1986/87): 697-736; Volume XLI, Nos. 91-92 (1988/89): 543-570; Volume XLIII, Nos. 94-95 (1991-92): 467-504; Volume XXIV, Nos. 57-58 (1970): 284-438.

## NOTES:

1. Prices represent the range of prices set in that particular year. In the case of fish products, a variety of species was sometimes listed, with various prices applicable.

2. Few references to sardines were found, but in March 1569 high quality sardines were priced at 3 sardines for 1 real. See C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXXVI, 567. On January 1572, sardines were once again priced at 3 for 1 real. See C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXXVII, 560.

3. The same price applied to tripe, hagus, and liver, which on 2 april 1572 was set at 22 ceities/arrátel. See C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXXVIII, 394, 421, and 400 for the price of goat meat, which was 28 ceities/arrátel. These prices, explained officials, were necessary due to the harsh winter the region had just experienced, when many animals died. By July 1572 council was forced to raise the price of tripe to 4 reais/arrátel, given the current high price of meat.

Table 2:

Cod and Beef Prices in Réis per Arrátel: Porto, 1587-1624

<u>Date</u>	<u>Vento</u>	<u>Pasta</u>	<u>Beef</u>
1593	12	10	10/11
1594	15	-	11
1597	20	-	-
1598	18	-	-
1606	14	-	-
1613	-	-	11
1622	-	-	11
1623	14	10	--
1624	18	11	12

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SOURCE: Arquivo Histórico Municipal do Porto, Livro das Vereações, No. 31 (1593), f.274v; No. 32 (1594), f.256v; No. 33 (1597), f.146; No. 34 (1598), f.12; No. 37 (1606), f.20v; No. 39 (1610-1612), f.236v-f.237; No. 45 (1623), f.332v-f.333; No. 46 (1625), f.121-f.121v. Cited in Francisco Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo (1580-1640): Os Homens, as Instituições e o Poder, Volume II (Porto: Câmara Municipal do Porto/Arquivo Histórico, 1988), 757.

Table 3:  
Cod Imports in Viana do Castelo, 1566-1567<sup>1</sup>

<u>Ship Master</u>	<u>Total Cod</u>	<u>Graixa</u>
Martins Alvares Sanamede	29,480	45.5
Manuel Pita o Moço	45,100	91.5
Mauel Dias	30,160	19.0
Martins Alvares Sanamede	32,498	51.5
Domingos Fernandes Gostem	25,774	81.0
Grand Total:	163,012	288.5

SOURCE: Arquivo Municipal de Viana do Castelo, Livro das Navegações de 1566 e 1567, No. 953-B, f.32, f.36, f.36v, f.88, f.91, f.99, f.101, f.108v, f.109, f.112, f.112v, f.113, f.125, f.126, f.129, f.134, f.136, f.139, f.140, f.140v, f.141, f.150v, f.156v, f.159, f.160v, f.161v, f.162, f.172, f.173, f.191, f.198, f.205, f.210, f.217, f.218, f.233, f.234-f.238, f.242, f.245-f.254, f.257. Cited in Manuel António Fernandes Moreira, "O Porto de Viana do Castelo e as Navegações para o Noroeste Atlântico," in Viana - O Mar e o Porto (Viana do Castelo: Junta Autónoma dos Portos do Norte, 1987), 86-89.

NOTES:

1. The cod total represents the number of actual cod, while graixa, or cod liver oil, was measured in almudes, which equals to approximately 32 litres each.

Table 4:  
Cod Shipments in Viana do Castelo, 1571-1583<sup>1</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Entries</u>	<u>Cod Tax Collected</u> (Réis)
1571	39	24,800
1573	63	45,490
1581	25	12,430
1583	17	2,490

SOURCE: Arquivo Municipal de Viana do Castelo, Livro das Sisas, 1571, No. 518, f.153, f.155, f.158-f.159, f.162, f.165, f.168, f.169v-f.170, f.171v-f.172, f.175v-f.176, f.177v, f.182-f.182v, f.184; No. 521 (1573), f.151, f.152v-f.154v, f.156-f.157, f.158, f.159, f.160v-f.162, f.163v, f.165f.167v, f.169-f.169v, f.170v-f.171v; No. 522 (1581), f.149-f.150, f.f.151-f.151v, f.152v, f.155, f.156, f.161, f.162-f.163, f.164v-f.165v, f.168v-f.169, f.174; No. 524 (1583), f.127-f.128v.

NOTES:

1. The "Number of Entries" column represents the number of cod shipments found in the records for each given year. The actual volume of cod was not stipulated in the Livro das Sisas.

### Chapter 3: Women in the Cod Trade: The Regulated Market in Seventeenth-Century Porto

On 30 April 1648, Maria Rois had uninvited guests visit her home when a number of Porto officials from the town's customhouse presented her with some unwelcome news: they had a petition from a local merchant requesting that the bidding for a dízima sale,<sup>1</sup> previously granted to her, be reopened. Her immediate response was not recorded, possibly because it was unrecordable. No personal testimonies survived from the ensuing legal battle, but enough can be extracted from existing documents to show us that the conflict involved three merchants, two female and one male.<sup>2</sup>

The dízima in question concerned a shipment of 943 quintals of vento cod, brought into Porto by the English master of the "Esperança", William Grim, on or about 29 April 1648. Maria Rois had won the rights to the dízima by offering 2,000 réis per quintal.<sup>3</sup> An appeal was registered after the fact, however, by Manoel Rois Hisidro who offered 2,200 réis per quintal for the same cod. Upstanding citizens that they

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<sup>1</sup> The dízima was the royal portion of incoming cargo, or a 10% tax on all imports.

<sup>2</sup> Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (A.N.T.T.), Alfândega do Porto, Nucleo Antigo, No. 110, f.285-f.289. I am indebted to Amelia Maria Polonia da Silva for bringing this document to my attention.

<sup>3</sup> A Portuguese quintal is approximately 128 pounds, or 128 arrátels, for an arrátel is about 16 ounces, or one pound.

were, town officials vacillated on whether or not to cancel their contract with Maria Rois and accept the more generous offer. On 10 May 1648 they reached a decision, undoubtedly motivated by their sense of civic duty, and an increase in Manoel's bid to 2,310 réis per quintal.

Little is known about Maria Rois' private life, but it is clear that she was no quitter. She took her case to the Cortes in Lisbon, and on 17 August 1648 must have sighed in relief. Though the transaction between town officials and Manoel Rois Hisidro had been formalized, to the point that port records showed Angela Lopes, his associate, paying 226,285 réis for the dízima, that amount was subsequently crossed out, with a marginal note indicating that Maria Rois had had the final word, paying 188,598 réis instead.<sup>4</sup>

On the surface, the debate involved a simple question over the appropriateness and legality of reopening bids for a contract already sealed - a question that was resolved with the unequivocal negative response from the Cortes in Lisbon. In the process, however, the testimony reveals something about the manner in which cod was marketed. The crown was entitled to 10% of the incoming cargo, or, in this case, just over 94 quintals. This dízima tax was converted to revenue through a

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<sup>4</sup> Arquivo Distrital do Porto (A.D.P.), Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1648, Cabido No. 124, f.144v. Note that the spelling of a person's name often differs from one document to another, and sometimes on the same page.

system of public auctions. Merchants bid on the price for the incoming cod, and the highest bidder was awarded the rights to market the dízima amount in cod.<sup>5</sup> The court records say nothing about the rest of the cod, but it is reasonable to assume that prices quoted for the dízima amount resembled those applied to the rest of the shipment.

The court records also reveal something about the gender question in the cod trade. It tells us that the industry was not controlled solely by men. In fact, the documents describe the dealings of two female merchants, Maria Rois and Angela Lopes, two major figures in the Porto cod business in the mid-seventeenth century. The latter's role in undercutting Maria Rois' bid shows that the cod business was occasionally intense and even ruthless. There was probably not a lot of goodwill between these two rivals, nor between Maria Rois and Manuel Rois Hisidro, despite their similar names. Whether they were related or not is unknown; the records merely stated that he was her Inimigo - her enemy.<sup>6</sup>

When cod shipments of hundreds of quintals arrived in Portuguese ports, who handled distribution and how was the process regulated? Not a great deal is known about Portugal's

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<sup>5</sup> A.N.T.T., Alfândega do Porto, f.286-f.286v.

<sup>6</sup> There was also mention of "hua mulher sua Inimigua", or "a woman her enemy", likely in reference to Angela Lopes. A.N.T.T., Alfândega do Porto, f.287-f.287v.



cod fishery in the sixteenth century, but substantial data exist in Porto about its cod trade in the seventeenth century. The Portuguese had practically no cod fishery in the seventeenth century, and the cod trade, though much more important, was almost entirely in foreign hands. Portuguese participation was relegated to the receiving end - that is, they imported cod, primarily from French and English sources.<sup>7</sup> Portuguese merchants were engaged in cod distribution, at least until the 1650s, and many of these merchants were women.

There is some question on whether or not the individuals noted in cod transactions were merchants or dealers. Though job titles were not always provided, those noted with an occupation were identified either as mercador/a or as regateira/o. The latter were fish vendors, usually working out of the local market, or hawking fish on the street. In other words, they were involved in retail sales, and there were a great deal more regateiras than regateiros.<sup>8</sup> Women

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<sup>7</sup> In fact, as the century progressed the Portuguese were less involved in importing and more in buying cod imported by others. This will be analyzed further in Chapters 4 and 5.

<sup>8</sup> The term is similar to what Alice Clark referred to as "regrateresses", female pedlars and hawkers, dealing primarily in foodstuffs, most of whom, she claimed, earned but a bare subsistence. Alice Clark, Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1919), 197, 206-209. Clark contended that these lowly occupations were reserved for poor women, but Portuguese records also referred to men in such a line of work, the regatões or regateiros, and it is not clear whether these women and men were necessarily among the poorest.

dominated the retail sector, but what of wholesale? Significantly, Maria Rois was referred to in her court case as a vendeira de bacalhao and as a mercadora de bacalhao.<sup>9</sup> In other words, she not only sold cod, she was also a cod trader. Was Rois a wholesale trader, a merchant?

The difference between merchants and traders is not always easily discerned, especially for the early modern period. Francisco Ribeiro da Silva discovered that among those with a direct role in Porto's economy, some were merchants, while others were vendors, and still others were mere regatões and regateiras. Among the merchant class, he distinguished between those with a warehouse and those with a shop. This distinction went beyond questions of wholesale and retail transactions, international contacts, type of merchandise, or volume. In early modern Porto, wholesale merchants also enjoyed a higher social status, to the extent that in 1578 they objected to having been grouped with other merchants in the city's collection of dues for a religious procession. The former argued that they were quasi-nobles given their international commercial stature, and that they should be exempt from such nonsense, though Ribeiro da Silva suspects that their real grievances stemmed from the fact that most of them were New Christians and wished to avoid

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<sup>9</sup> A.N.T.T., Alfândega do Porto, f.285v, f.287.

participating in a Catholic ceremony.<sup>10</sup>

It is not known whether any of these New Christian merchants dealt in cod, or whether Maria Rois had a warehouse, shop, or neither. Nor is it clear whether any other cod mercador/a enjoyed such status. In his study on the merchant class in seventeenth-century Lisbon, Frédéric Mauro concluded that there were medium merchants, great merchants, and merchant-bankers. The medium merchant specialized in one commodity, traded wholesale and retail, and was engaged in imports and exports. The main difference between the medium and great merchant was that the latter usually dealt with larger volumes and a greater variety of merchandise. The merchant-banker, on the other hand, traded in a wide range of products but was more involved in money lending, especially to the state.<sup>11</sup>

Convenient as these categories might be, Mauro agreed that the classifications were both relative and fragile. Indeed, Fernand Braudel commented that the basic difference between a pedlar and a merchant was wealth, though he differentiated between "traders of the middling sort", those

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<sup>10</sup> Francisco Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo (1580-1649): Os Homens, as Insituições e o Poder, Two Volumes (Porto: Câmara Municipal do Porto, 1988), Vol. I, 113.

<sup>11</sup> Frédéric Mauro, "Marchands et Marchands-Banquiers Portugais au XVIIème siècle," Revista de História Portuguesa, T.IX (1960), 77-78.

who dealt primarily with the home market, and the wholesale merchant with varied interests in the export and import business.<sup>12</sup> Existing definitions of "merchant" for the early modern period have serious limitations, especially in connection to Portugal's mercantile community about which less is known.<sup>13</sup> Nothing is achieved, however, by hiding in semantics. Because the record keeper called them mercadores, because they dealt with great volumes of cod at the wholesale level, because many cod shipments arrived specifically for them, because their commodity was imported, part of the international market, and sometimes re-exported to Brazil, because some of them traded in other merchandise, and because a more satisfactory term has not been found, the mercador/a de

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<sup>12</sup> Fernand Braudel, Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century: The Wheels of Commerce, Vol. II, translated by Siân Reynolds (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 76, 381.

<sup>13</sup> Classification systems are popular tools, however. For example, Portuguese ethnohistorians have grouped fishers in three distinct categories: aristocratic, bourgeois, and plebeian. Though the documentation for the early period is scanty, they argued that those with their own boat and equipment held the highest status among the fishing community, with their families always well dressed in keeping with their socio-economic position; sardine fishers were considered in the middle rank, while line fishers were the lowest class. António dos Santos Graça, O Poveiro: Usos, Costumes, Tradições, Lendas, third edition (Lisbon: Publicações Dom Quixote, r.1992 [1932]), 64-65. Also see Eugénio de Andrea da Cunha e Freitas, "O pescador poveiro. Nobres e plebeus nos séculos XVII e XVIII," in Colóquio "Santos Graça" de Etnografia Marítima. Actas, III. Povoamento. Administração. Aspectos sociais (Póvoa de Varzim: Câmara Municipal da Póvoa de Varzim, 1985), 249-251.

bacalhao will here be termed a cod merchant.

In an attempt to analyze how the Portuguese regulated the cod trade, and the role of women in it, the present chapter focuses on Porto up to 1650. The emphasis on Porto is due to the fact that the best documentation exists for that port town; only a smattering of evidence exists for other Portuguese centres, and consequently the rest of Portugal must be treated less thoroughly. The first half of the seventeenth century deserves special attention because significant changes took place just prior to 1650 which altered the country's political and economic course. In 1640 Portugal began the war of independence with Spain, and Portugal's subsequent main trading partner, England, also underwent a Civil War in 1642-1649. Despite its internal problems, however, England was among the first European nations to recognize the ascendancy of the Portuguese king, D. John IV (r.1640-1656), for which the English received some very generous trading privileges with Portugal. The results of this new trading partnership began to show in the cod trade in the second half of the seventeenth century.<sup>14</sup>

One of the main differences between Porto's cod trade before and after mid-century is the role of women in it. A total of 76 port entries displayed a woman's name with cod

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<sup>14</sup> This theme is treated separately in Chapter 4.

transactions; 47 of those were found in the 1640s, 20 in the 1650s, 7 in the 1660s, and 2 in the 1670s. The apparent decline in women's participation was not unique to the cod business but was also observed in Porto's general fish trade in the second half of the seventeenth century, and this deserves attention on its own.<sup>15</sup> First, we will analyze the literature on women's history in early-modern Europe in order to put the experience of Portuguese cod merchants in historical perspective. Second, the relatively prominent position of women in Porto's cod trade up to 1650 is outlined in some detail. Third, because women's economic roles were often connected to the local market, an examination of how that market was regulated will further our understanding of women's place in seventeenth-century Portugal. Municipal governments had authority over distribution as well as distributors of commodities. The present study will thus deal with merchants first, and merchandizing second.

In northern coastal Portugal women's participation in the fish trade was noticeably important in the early modern period. Whether they ever ruled the land, as was found in Caxinas, is not exactly clear. If ordinances from King D. Manuel's reign are any indication, the official status of Portuguese women in the early modern period was as enigmatic

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<sup>15</sup> Analysis provided in Chapter 5.

as at any other time in their history. In the conjugal arena, for example, husbands could not sell immovable property without the wives' consent, and widowed women were declared heads of their respective families.<sup>16</sup> Officials were concerned with widows squandering their inheritance, however, to the detriment of both widows and the future inheritance of their children. Consequently, the crown had the power to take a widow's possessions and put them under guardianship. Interestingly, officials were warned to be more prudent in cases involving widows of the nobility, out of honour and respect for the deceased and the surviving families.<sup>17</sup> No qualms existed about widowers squandering their inheritance and that of their children, however.<sup>18</sup>

Legally, therefore, widowed women enjoyed some inheritance rights, but whether this gave them real economic power is difficult to tell. Socially, the imbalance between

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<sup>16</sup> Ordenaçoens do Senhor Rey D. Manuel, Livro IIII (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade, 1797), 18-26. In other words, women were not heads of their families when their husbands were alive, but at least no other male kin took over the deceased husband's role.

<sup>17</sup> Ordenaçoens do Senhor Rey D. Manuel, Livro IIII, 32-33. Another law apparently exclusive for women dealt with widows marrying at the age of 50 or over. If they had children or other descendants, the brides-to-be could not prejudice that which the former would inherit, 191-195.

<sup>18</sup> The law stated that all children inherited equally. Ordenaçoens do Senhor Rey D. Manuel, Livro IIII, 183-188, 200-221.

women and men was quite visible, and this inequity was promulgated in law. The most blatant example of social disparity was connected to the issue of adultery. A husband catching his wife committing adultery, or having proof of such an act, could legally kill her and the lover, and even seek assistance from others for the execution.<sup>19</sup> Women, on the other hand, had no such recourse in dealing with their adulterous husbands. In fact, the husband's rights continued after his death. Even when a man could not prove his wife's adultery the accusation remained valid beyond his lifetime. If his widow married the suspected lover, she and her new husband faced the death penalty.<sup>20</sup> Female adultery was so abhorrent that a law was passed during the reign of Phillip II prohibiting women guilty of adultery from selling fish at the royal court.<sup>21</sup>

It is difficult to determine the effect that some of

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<sup>19</sup> Ordenacoens do Senhor Rey D. Manuel, Livro V, 59-61. If the injured husband was a plebeian and the lover was a nobleman, however, the crown reserved the right to intervene. For some examples on how the law applied to different classes, see 54-59, 66-69, 71-72. See also, Ellen G. Friedman, "El Estatus Jurídico de la Mujer Castellana Durante el Antiguo Régimen," in Ordenamiento Jurídico y Realidad Social de las Mujeres, Siglos XVI a XX: Actas de las IV Jornadas de Investigación Interdisciplinaria (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1986), 49.

<sup>20</sup> Ordenacoens do Senhor Rey D. Manuel, Livro V, 62-64.

<sup>21</sup> Ordenações Filipinas, Livros IV e V, edição 'fac-simile' de 1870. (Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, r.1985), Título XXVII, 1178.



these legal codes had on women's everyday lives. How socially acceptable were these practices? Did these implied restrictions translate to circumscribed lives for most or many women?<sup>22</sup> The Portuguese historian José Gentil da Silva has asserted that the Portuguese in the sixteenth century were not misogynist, or at least that the French were misogynist long before the Portuguese. In his opinion, foreigners misinterpreted Portuguese customs and devalued the people in general, and women in particular.<sup>23</sup> In his quest to absolve the Portuguese, Gentil da Silva explained that if some Portuguese records show hints of anti-female attitudes, it was due to foreign influence. Contrary to popular belief, said he, women in the Iberian Peninsula enjoyed greater equality with their male counterparts than women elsewhere in Europe, so much so that foreigners were scandalized. This was especially true of the sexual freedom among Iberian women and

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<sup>22</sup> One particular law suggests that some women, at least, found ways to circumvent a few conventions. In the early sixteenth century, women dressing like men, or vice versa, were whipped in public, if they were from the lower class. Members of the higher classes faced banishment for two years, but either one had to pay a fine of 2,000 réis for the accuser. Ordenações do Senhor Rey D. Manuel, Livro V, 90.

<sup>23</sup> José Gentil da Silva, "A Mulher e o Trabalho em Portugal," in A Mulher na Sociedade Portuguesa: Visão Histórica e Perspectivas Actuais. Actas do Colóquio (1985), Volume I (Coimbra: Instituto de História Económica e Social/Universidade de Coimbra, 1986), 265-267.

men which was observed and condemned by outsiders.<sup>24</sup> Though offering an interesting contrast to the traditional historical emphasis on the Iberian obsession with honour and female chastity, Gentil da Silva's conclusions are unconvincing because he offered little concrete evidence.<sup>25</sup>

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The history of Portuguese women is still deficient; most studies are guilty of either idealizing or generalizing. One work on women in the Baroque period could only suggest that in Portugal little honour was attributed to work, and that this was especially true with women. The less a woman had to do, Aurélio de Oliveira concluded, the more revered she was by society.<sup>26</sup> If that were true, then society revered very few

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<sup>24</sup> José Gentil da Silva, "La Mujer en España en la Epoca Mercantil: de la Igualdad al Aislamiento," in La Mujer en la Historia de España (Siglos XVI-XX): Actas de las II Jornadas de Investigación Interdisciplinaria (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1984), 15.

<sup>25</sup> His main contemporary source is Frère Claude de Bronseval's Peregrinatio Hispanica: Voyage de Dom Edme de Saulieu, Abbé de Clairvaux, en Espagne et au Portugal (1531-1533) (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, r.1970). Given that this was a travel journal written during a religious pilgrimage, one can hardly expect Bronseval's observations to be a fair representation of foreigners' views on Hispanic women.

<sup>26</sup> Admittedly, he was likely referring to the status attached to labourless riches. Aurélio de Oliveira, "A Mulher no Tecido Urbano dos Séculos XVII-XVIII," in A Mulher na

women, for another study on seventeenth-century Coimbra shows many women in retail commerce, providing the town with basic necessities, especially bread, oil, fish, fruit, and wine. Using municipal documents pertaining to retail licences, dated 1660-1672, Guilhermina Mota found several references to women dealing with fish, fresh and dry, though the records did not mention cod. Mota also noticed a clear sex division of labour in the books; men sold meat whereas women sold tripe and other inferior animal parts, the meat of the poor. Wine too, at the wholesale level, was a man's prerogative.<sup>27</sup>

Women's concentration in retail sales was also true of early modern Spain. Antonio Domínguez Ortiz conceded that he was dealing with a territory relatively unexamined in his country, and as such his conclusions were hesitant, but his review of a few municipal and notarial records in Cordoba revealed a dominant presence of women in the local trade, or "el pequeno comercio." Though he cited examples of notable female merchants in early modern Spain, they were widows and few in number. There were certainly many more regatonas than

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Sociedade Portuguesa: Visão Histórica e Perspectivas Actuais. Actas do Colóquio (1985), Volume I (Coimbra: Instituto de História Económica e Social/Universidade de Coimbra, 1986), 312.

<sup>27</sup> Guilhermina Mota, "O Trabalho Feminino e o Comércio em Coimbra (Sécs. XVII e XVIII)," in A Mulher na Sociedade Portuguesa: Visão Histórica e Perspectivas Actuais. Actas do Colóquio (1985), Volume I (Coimbra: Instituto de História Económica e Social/Universidade de Coimbra, 1986), 353-354.

mercadoras.<sup>28</sup> Yet another study on late fifteenth-century Barcelona claimed that a woman was totally subjected to her husband, her work auxiliary to his. She was only free to follow her own trade with her husband's consent. Most women found working outside the family unit were engaged in textiles and clothing industries, or servants in private homes, many of whom had been hired at eleven or twelve years of age.<sup>29</sup> Research on Valencia in the early modern period also suggested that work generally open for women was domestic service, and even that was fraught with dangerous implications according to certain authorities concerned with safeguarding female modesty and chastity.<sup>30</sup>

Though findings have not been conclusive, it is generally accepted that women played a significant role in retail trade in most urban centres in early-modern Europe. In her study on Renaissance Germany, for instance, Merry Wiesner has shown

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<sup>28</sup> Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, "La Mujer en el Tránsito de la Edad Media a la Moderna," in Las mujeres en las ciudades medievales: Actas de las III Jornadas de Investigación Interdisciplinaria (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1984), 172-176. Regatonas were female itinerant traders, while mercadoras were female merchants.

<sup>29</sup> Pierre Bonnassie, La Organización del Trabajo en Barcelona a Fines del Siglo XV (Barcelona: Consejo Superior Inv., 1975), 103-108.

<sup>30</sup> Vicente Graullera, "Mujer, Amor y Moralidad en la Valencia de los Siglos XVI y XVII," in Amours Légitimes, Amours Illégitimes en Espagne (XVIe-XVIIe Siècles), Colloque International, Sorbonne, 1984, sous la direction d'Augustin Redondo (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1985), 110-111.

that women were largely responsible for retail distribution of "life's necessities", including food, clothing, and household furnishings, the very items that took up most of the average family's budget.<sup>31</sup> The general pattern was for a woman to sell the goods produced by her husband and family, and to keep the books, when necessary. In the fish trade, for example, men fished in the local lake or river, and women cleaned and sold the catch, though women also bought and sold fish from others, especially salted fish from the North Sea.<sup>32</sup>

To date, most empirical work on the history of women in early modern Europe has focused on the urban centre, and overwhelmingly on the role of women in crafts and guilds, with some emphasis on questions of transition in women's status. Among those who had a rosy vision of conditions prior to the transition between feudalism and capitalism was Alice Clark, whose study on women's work in seventeenth-century England depicted an idealized world of women working in partnership with their husbands in industry, and even more frequently on their own in the Middle Ages. Women's expertise was needed in

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<sup>31</sup> Merry E. Wiesner, Working Women in Renaissance Germany (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1986), 111.

<sup>32</sup> Wiesner, Working Women, 119, 189, 197. Régine Pernoud's study of medieval France has also shown that a great number of women were engaged in providing foodstuffs to the local markets, including bread, meats, cheeses, and of course fish. Régine Pernoud, La femme au temps des cathédrales (Paris: Editions Stock, 1982), 206, 211-212.

the running of the family business, said Clark, and menial domestic chores were performed not by the wife but by unmarried servants, male or female.<sup>33</sup> Clark's goal was not to reveal any inherent sexism in the guild formation and organization of the early modern era, but to show how the formation of capitalist companies destroyed the traditional family industry, removing women's economic roles.<sup>34</sup>

Although Clark's study was written more than 75 years ago, her work is still pertinent because of her innovative analysis of women's economic contribution in the early modern period. Clark pointed out that not only was there little separation between the public and private world in seventeenth-century England, but also women's domestic responsibilities did not merely amount to childbearing and rearing, housework and food preparation. Women were also responsible for "brewing, dairy-work, the care of poultry and pigs, the production of vegetables and fruit, spinning flax

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<sup>33</sup> Alice Clark, Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1919), 151, 157, 196, for example.

<sup>34</sup> Clark, Working Life of Women, 165, 302. Clark insisted that it was the advent of capitalistic organization of industry, with its emphasis on the individual worker labouring away from home, that ultimately proved disadvantageous for women. Her reasons for this are not very clear, however, for she merely suggested that women could not compete in the new order because they lacked the specialized training, leading women to concentrate on unskilled trades. How capitalism prevented women from obtaining the necessary skills is not discussed.

and wool," in addition to their "regular" jobs.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, women's economic contribution was so vital that in seventeenth-century England a husband did not support his wife; wife and husband were dependent on each other and children were in turn dependent on both parents.<sup>36</sup>

Despite her occasional idealistic assumption, Clark's study is considered a classic because her findings were essentially solid. Subsequent research on English women's economic position in the early modern era confirmed that labour markets and domestic productivity cannot be analyzed separately. Looking at a small town in the Lancashire region, Carole Shammas noted that, in the late seventeenth century, probably fewer than 10% of women were not actively involved in the work force. She also found that most women were "Jills-of-all-trades", combining an array of domestic activities and other jobs to sustain their families.<sup>37</sup> Despite their visible presence in the labour force, however, women earned up to 50% less than men in similar work. Not surprisingly, women

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<sup>35</sup> Clark, Working Life of Women, 5.

<sup>36</sup> Clark, Working Life of Women, 12, 291.

<sup>37</sup> Carole Shammas, "The World Women Knew: Women Workers in the North of England During the Late Seventeenth Century," in The World of William Penn, edited by Richard S. Dunn and Mary Maples Dunn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), 104-105.

made up 76% of the classified "poor" in England in 1688.<sup>38</sup>

Questions of change in women's status over time have often led to discussions on possible restrictions placed on women in guild membership. Focusing on the struggles of the five remaining all-female guilds in Paris in the early eighteenth century, Cynthia Truant projected an image of a socio-economic group under threat by rival male guilds that had eroded women's stronghold since the Middle Ages, when there had been closer to fifteenth all-female guilds in Paris.<sup>39</sup> In Truant's opinion, these guildswomen enjoyed more legal, economic, and social privileges than most women and men of their class, and guildswomen had a strong work identity.<sup>40</sup>

The image of a golden age for Paris women workers in the Middle Ages was somewhat tarnished by Shulamith Shahar's analysis of the Livre des Métiers, written in the thirteenth

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<sup>38</sup> Peter H. Lindert, "English Occupations, 1670-1811," cited in Shammass, "The World Women Knew," 112.

<sup>39</sup> Cynthia M. Truant, "The Guildswomen of Paris: Gender, Power, and Sociability in the Old Regime," Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History, Volume 15 (1988), 131.

<sup>40</sup> Truant also contended that even in all-male trades, the sheer survival of most workshops depended on work by women and men alike. Truant, "Guildswomen of Paris," 131, 134-136. In fact, according to Merry Wiesner, the wife was the most important person in the shop. See Merry Wiesner, "Women's Work in the Changing City Economy, 1500-1650," in Connecting Spheres: Women in the Western World, 1500 to the Present, edited by Marilyn J. Boxer and Jean H. Quataert (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 66.



century by Etienne Boileau. Among the 100 occupations listed, only six were connected to female-only guilds, though women were associated with 80 of the remaining occupations.<sup>41</sup> The few female merchants involved in overseas trade were widows continuing their deceased husbands' work. In fact, an independent female merchant was rare, whether in long distance or retail trade; most women worked in conjunction with their husbands.<sup>42</sup>

Although bans and restrictions were imposed on women's work, they were never meant to curtail the amount of work women could do, only the amount of benefits. In other words, women like men were expected to work to support themselves and their families; objections were raised only when female occupations competed with rival male interests, or if the work in question had some status and prestige.<sup>43</sup> Shahr concluded that when economic activities had been less institutionalized, women had greater opportunities, and she named medicine as an example.<sup>44</sup> In rural society, she argued, women experienced almost no sex-segregation in their work - a rather optimistic

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<sup>41</sup> Shulamith Shahr, The Fourth Estate: A history of women in the Middle Ages, translated by Chaya Galai (London: Methuen, 1983), 191.

<sup>42</sup> Shahr, The Fourth Estate, 193-194.

<sup>43</sup> Shahr, The Fourth Estate, 200.

<sup>44</sup> Shahr, The Fourth Estate, 203.

view, given that Shahar noted female wages in agriculture were approximately half of male wages.<sup>45</sup>

Another study on northern European towns showed that already in the Middle Ages women were generally excluded from high-status work. Defining high status employment as that occupation which granted the individual maximum control of the means of production, distribution, and consumption, Martha C. Howell concluded that women enjoyed high labour status in the medieval period but only within the household production unit. By the early modern period, most people provided goods and services under the auspices of an outside distributor, or worked for wages.<sup>46</sup> Though Howell conceded that examples can be found of women merchants and retailers dealing with high quality and large volumes of goods in some medieval cities, she argued that women's high status positions were seldom secure, and eventually eroded. With a focus on Leiden and Cologne, Howell found that a woman's labour status was connected to her family's role in production; once the family

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<sup>45</sup> Shahar, The Fourth Estate, 210, 242, 249. Merry Wiesner found an ordinance of 1550 in Germany indicating that female agriculture workers were to receive not only less money than their male counterparts, but also a lot less food. Merry Wiesner, Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 88.

<sup>46</sup> Martha C. Howell, "Women, the Family Economy, and the Structures of Market Production in Cities of Northern Europe during the Late Middle Ages," in Women and Work in Preindustrial Europe, edited by Barbara A. Hanawalt (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 199.

trade evolved into a craft, women were displaced. Women were still found in some high status trades but only if these had not organized.<sup>47</sup>

Despite the lack of concrete evidence of a "golden age" for Hispanic women, some recent studies in Spain have also embraced the transition theme. Pilar Sanchez Vicente concluded in her study on Santiago de Compostela (Galicia) that women were economically equal to men in the Middle Ages but that this situation changed drastically from the sixteenth century forward. Reviewing municipal ordinances, Sanchez Vicente found numerous references to female-dominated occupations, including pescaderas, or fisherwomen, though no analysis was provided of what this meant for women at that time. A closer examination of these findings reveals that the references in question deal primarily with the retail sector, and that women were found in town centres and local markets selling goods. For reasons that are unclear, however, even this limited sphere had deteriorated by mid-sixteenth century with the exclusion of women from the major confraternities.<sup>48</sup>

According to Montserrat Carbonell Esteller, two specific

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<sup>47</sup> Howell, "Women, the Family Economy," 203-204.

<sup>48</sup> Pilar Sanchez Vicente, "El Trabajo de las Mujeres en el Medievo Hispanico: Fueros Municipales de Santiago y su Tierra," in El Trabajo de las Mujeres en la Edad Media Hispana, edición de Angela Muñoz Fernández y Cristina Segura Graíño (Madrid: Asociación Cultural AL-MUDAYNA, 1988), 188-189.

ideological movements took root in the seventeenth century which contributed to the devaluation of women. First, writings emerged stressing the virtues of work and the wickedness of idleness, an ideology that recognized the power of work to maintain control of the populace. The idle and vagabonds were depicted as sinful and considered a threat to the status quo - they came and went as they pleased, and independent women were especially suspect because no one controlled them.<sup>49</sup> Second, toward the end of the seventeenth century a hierarchy in the work force was manifest as the professions rose in status to the detriment of general and manual labour. In the process, women's work was devalued not only because most women were involved in the more menial trades, but also because the domestic unity of work and hearth was broken. Non-waged occupations, what women did at home, ceased to be considered work. Women's work came to be thought of as complementary as women became their husbands' helpers. Men were the real workers because they were more likely than women to receive a salary.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Montserrat Carbonell Esteller, "Hecho y Representación sobre la Desvalorización del Trabajo de las Mujeres (siglos XVI-XVIII)," in Mujeres y hombres en la formación del Pensamiento Occidental: Actas de las VII Jornadas de Investigación Interdisciplinaria, edited by Virginia Maquieira d'Angelo (Madrid: Ediciones de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1989), 165-166.

<sup>50</sup> Carbonell Esteller, "Hecho y Representación," 168-169.

As Carbonell Esteller stated, the devaluation of women's work is a fact, but how this came about is more difficult to explain. We know that women were excluded from many trades and guilds, and even restricted from opening up shops in their homes,<sup>51</sup> but it is not clear whether these restrictions applied to women only, or also to men of less influence and power. In her study on the legal rights of Castilian women in the early modern era, Ellen Friedman found that the law became more rigorous against women in the seventeenth century.<sup>52</sup> Schemes to encourage more marriages and stimulate population growth betrayed an inherent preoccupation with male authority. For example, in 1623 Phillip IV granted many privileges to men getting married, including the exemption from any state obligation (such as army duty) for the first four years of marriage, and an exemption from royal taxes for the first two years of marriage. The legislation also encouraged procreation by granting more privileges to those who had six

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<sup>51</sup> Montserrat Carbonell i Esteller, "El treball de les dones a la Catalunya moderna," in Mes enlla del silenci: Les dones a la historia de Catalunya, a cura de Mary Nash (Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya, 1988), 115-117.

<sup>52</sup> For example, only young women married without their parents' consent could be disinherited. The crown was petitioned in 1538, 1542, 1551, 1555, 1558, and 1559 to make the same law applicable to young men as well, but it was not until 1563 that the legislation was changed. The tone of the arguments for this turnaround is revealing, for the concern was that sons of well-to-do families were being tricked by persons of low quality. Friedman, "El Estatus Jurídico," 42-43.

sons, while nothing was gained by having girls, no matter what number.<sup>53</sup> Not surprisingly, the father was rewarded, not the mother. In Friedman's estimation, the status of women in Spain during the Antiguo Régimen was comparable to that of other married women throughout Europe - that is, woman was considered inferior and therefore subordinated to the husband.<sup>54</sup>

Part of the problem with some conclusions on the place of women in early economies can be traced to the type of documentation historians examine. David Herlihy, for instance, noted that out of an approximate 7,000 households headed by women in Florentine Tuscany in 1427-1430, only 270 recorded an occupation. It is difficult to believe that less than half of a percent of female heads of households worked to maintain their families. Contrary to Herlihy's conclusions, it is also unlikely that Mediterranean culture was particularly successful in keeping women "modest, passive, deferential, and retiring in all their social contacts - hardly the qualities needed for success in the marketplace."<sup>55</sup> Women's economic invisibility in medieval

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<sup>53</sup> Friedman, "Estatus Jurídico de la Mujer," 46.

<sup>54</sup> Friedman, "Estatus Jurídico de la Mujer," 52-53.

<sup>55</sup> David Herlihy, Opera Muliebria: Women and Work in Medieval Europe (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 167.

surveys might not be proof of their insignificant role in the labour force, but an example of officials failing to recognize women as workers, usually noting them only as wives, widows, or daughters of male citizens. To be fair, Herlihy acknowledged this possibility, but he still maintained that in Italy at least, "the small participation of women in the labor force parallels their virtual exclusion from the urban guilds."<sup>56</sup> Though restrictions in guild membership imposed on women were real enough, this did not result in a reduced number of employed women. It merely meant that well-remunerated professions and trades were exclusively male, while women were relegated to low-paying, arduous, and mundane work.

Merry Wiesner, too, found that women's participation in the more respected trades declined, even as wives, widows, or daughters, during the early modern period due to growing professionalization and formalization of previously more open

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<sup>56</sup> Herlihy, Opera Muliebria, 173, 176-177, 180. Herlihy's contention that the number of employed women fell in comparison to men in the late Middle Ages, and that "women were economically less active, or at least less visible," has no basis. Women were less visible than men in the records, not in the economy. In her investigation of sixteenth-century Lyon, Natalie Zemon Davis found few female members of local crafts and guilds, but this does not mean that most women did not work but that few women were identified with highly-visible trades. Natalie Zemon Davis, "Women in the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyon," in Women and Work in Preindustrial Europe, edited by Barbara A. Hanawalt (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 167.

occupations. In their attempt to maintain control, city authorities also became more concerned with public order and morality, and part of their attack was aimed at unmarried women who were deemed "masterless". Those in power believed marriage to be more and more the natural state for women, and thus women's work was deemed both temporary and unimportant.<sup>57</sup>

Wiesner was nonetheless cautious about questions on the decline of women's economic roles. Although in some German towns occupations open to women in the early modern period were increasingly limited and devalued, this did not result in the removal of women from the work force. "In fact, what emerges most clearly from the records is not the dismal exclusion of women from economic life but their continued involvement in it despite all barriers and restrictions."<sup>58</sup> The most stringent regulations applied to crafts and trades where women were primarily found as wives or daughters of practitioners. When journeymen organized to prohibit entry to unskilled and unlicensed male workers and women, many of the latter obtained exemptions from city officials to continue their trade on the grounds that they had to support themselves

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<sup>57</sup> Wiesner, Working Women, 190-192.

<sup>58</sup> Wiesner, Working Women, 194.



and their families.<sup>59</sup> Their work allowed them to eke out a basic living and was not seen as an economic threat to any interest group.

In addition to not having the skills and training for the best paid jobs, women workers also differed from their male counterparts by their lack of work identity. If most records fail to list women's jobs it may be because not many women saw themselves as holders of any particular economic occupation. Most employed women had low-paying, menial work, and their waged employment pattern was often interrupted due to family obligations. As a result, many women worked at a variety of jobs during their lifetime, often on a part-time basis, and possibly saw their work as drudgery, not as a vocation. To some extent this must have been true of male workers as well. Men's work was less intermittent, but the majority of them were not skilled craftsmen. It was the latter who most often had their occupation identified in the early documents. Wiesner found that women involved in more skilled and regulated work, such as midwifery and innkeeping, tended to

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<sup>59</sup> While women were usually granted membership to guilds only as widows or daughters of men associated with those guilds, men were also required to be married before they could be licensed craftsmasters. In other words, early modern society was highly structured and stratified, and generally restrictive of individual rights. Within their own class, some working women may have enjoyed relatively equitable positions. Wiesner, Working Women, 152-153.

have a stronger sense of work identity, much as craftsmen did.<sup>60</sup> Consequently, as the latter passed down their craft to their sons, women too handed down their craft to their daughters.<sup>61</sup> Among the general population, however, only a small minority of women had officially recognizable crafts, an even smaller number than men.

Were there signs of a systematic deterioration of women's economic opportunities at that time? Natalie Zemon Davis found some examples of master silk makers in Lyon calling for limits on male apprentices and the removal of female "apprentisses" altogether in the 1580s.<sup>62</sup> Merry Wiesner found many instances of male-dominated guilds placing serious restrictions on female workers. Once a free art became a craft, it was closed to women, whether the skill involved knitting, weaving, tailoring, hatmaking, or dyeing. But although guilds were especially vociferous in the seventeenth century, Wiesner located evidence of anti-female regulations as early as the fourteenth century.<sup>63</sup> The abundance of

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<sup>60</sup> For further analysis on women's lack of work identity in the early modern era, see Davis, "Women in the Crafts," 183, and Maryanne Kowaleski, "Women's Work in a Market Town: Exeter in the Late Fourteenth Century," in Women and Work in Preindustrial Europe, edited by Barbara A. Hanawalt (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 155-157.

<sup>61</sup> Wiesner, Working Women, 195.

<sup>62</sup> Davis, "Women in the Crafts," 185-186.

<sup>63</sup> Wiesner, Working Women, 174-182.

examples of anti-women regulations for the early modern period, compared to relatively fewer recorded incidents for the Middle Ages, is perhaps a reflection of more documentation for the latter period, not necessarily an indication of rising misogynistic trends.

Neither Wiesner nor Davis could account for the anti-female worker phenomenon in any comprehensive manner. Both suggested that male guilds became more apprehensive, paranoid, and prohibitive in response to hard economic times, but this cannot have been the major factor. There is little proof that men were more tolerant and mindful of women's economic independence during economic booms.<sup>64</sup> Wiesner pointed out that some of the earliest anti-female work regulations were directed at single women specifically, and the reasons for concern among the male populace in German towns are quite revealing. By the mid-sixteenth century some master weavers in Augsburg, for example, complained publicly that they could not find enough maids to spin for them. It appears that women realized that they could earn much more spinning on their own, and they undoubtedly enjoyed the freedom provided by working

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<sup>64</sup> It is interesting to note, in fact, that in Colonial New England women who succeeded in the "works of Men" - that is, women who ran profitable businesses on their own - were especially susceptible to accusations of witchcraft. See, Carol F. Karlsen, The Devil in the Shape of a Woman: Witchcraft in Colonial New England (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1987), 145-147, 160-161.

independently. Enraged weavers petitioned city authorities, and council responded with a number of measurers to curb the impertinence of female workers, including prohibiting single women from having their own households.<sup>65</sup>

Mary Prior was perhaps more accurate in pointing out that our conceptualizations of work have undergone a dramatic transformation; elements of choice and enjoyment in association with work were utterly foreign in the past to a great many people. This at least was a common thread in the lives of women and men in pre-industrial Europe. Chances are that only a minority of men had significantly more pleasant jobs than the average woman; what separated the sexes was ultimately not a question of high versus low status occupations, though this was real enough. What impinged more on women's daily lives was the fact that men's work was clearly defined, whereas women's obligations never ended. By looking at the economic roles of widows and unmarried daughters in early-modern Oxford, Prior observed that women's lives were by necessity more elastic.<sup>66</sup> If women's work in pre-industrial societies can be defined, the definition must

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<sup>65</sup> Wiesner, Working Women, 176-177.

<sup>66</sup> As she rightly suggested, this phenomenon was not unique to the early modern period. See Mary Prior, "Women and the urban economy: Oxford, 1500-1800," in Women in English Society, 1500-1800, edited by Mary Prior (London: Methuen, 1985), 95.

begin with the accommodating nature of women's lives. Widows managed large-scale businesses, but they were seldom fully accepted as equals in the male-dominated trading community, they were usually excluded from the privileges associated with full membership in a prestigious guild, and their efforts did not translate into a firm and respectable work identity. Upon her death, the records would merely indicate that the businesswoman was a widow.<sup>67</sup>

While some contend that women workers were significantly curtailed in the late Middle Ages, others argue that women's economic and social subordination was further entrenched in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries with the advent of modern capitalism.<sup>68</sup> This conclusion is especially embraced by Marxist-feminist historians who insist that a major shift took place in women's economic roles and social status with the separation of work and home which took place during the transition period between feudalism and industrial capitalism. But, as Maxine Berg has pointed out, questions of transition are extremely difficult to unravel chiefly because

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<sup>67</sup> Prior, "Women and the urban economy," 96.

<sup>68</sup> Still others argue that women lost political and economic power already in the early modern period, but that while this transition was gradual, women's loss of spiritual status was more abrupt with the Reformation. See Grethe Jacobsen, "Nordic Women and the Reformation," in Women in Reformation and Counter-Reformation Europe (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 62.

historians cannot agree on fundamental premises, such as when feudalism ended and industrialization began.<sup>69</sup> Not only did different regions experience this "transition" in varying degrees and at different times, but little is known about what it really meant to women. Undoubtedly there were serious implications resulting from the separation of workplace and household, but they cannot be fully understood until more is known about female workers in the early modern period. Berg found that already in fourteenth-century Shrewsbury, and later in Salisbury, women's labour was segregated to the more menial occupations. As she concluded, indications point to "a long-standing restricted and subordinate position for women workers, pre-dating any transition to industrial capitalism."<sup>70</sup>

Much has been written on the urban centre, but what of the maritime community? There is reason to believe that although socio-economic conditions in maritime communities in western Europe must also have evolved over time, the situation has always been significantly different in some coastal villages from industrial, urban centres. Although research on the role of women in economies with significant fish trades is

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<sup>69</sup> Maxine Berg, "Women's work, mechanisation and the early phases of industrialisation in England," in The Historical Meanings of Work, edited by Patrick Joyce (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 65.

<sup>70</sup> Berg, "Women's work and mechanisation," 74.

sorely lacking, some groundwork has been done on women's status in small fishing communities. A few studies on the status of Basque women have shown a real contradiction between nationally imposed standards and customary law. In general, Basque women dominated the home sphere while men controlled the public sphere. This pattern was especially entrenched in Bermeo, a fishing town on the Biscayan coast, just north of Bilbao.<sup>71</sup> As a result of long absences by the men at sea, women there led relatively independent lives, and it was customary for men to give their earnings to their respective wives or mothers. As administrators of the family income, Bermeo women enjoyed a position even less constrained than women in the nearby interior.<sup>72</sup>

Peculiarities associated with women's status were found in the Basque region with no known parallel anywhere else in western Europe. The Basque country has a longstanding tradition of strict primogeniture in inheritance rights, regardless of whether the first born is female or male. The emphasis has always been to maintain the family home, or etxe-ondo, intact and pass it on from generation to generation.

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<sup>71</sup> Charlotte Crawford, "The Position of Women in a Basque Fishing Community," in Anglo-American Contributions to Basque Studies: Essays in Honour of Jon Bilbao, edited by William A. Douglass, Richard W. Etulain, and William H. Jacobsen, Jr. Desert Research Institute Publications on the Social Sciences, No. 13 (1977), 145.

<sup>72</sup> Crawford, "The Position of Women," 152.

The real inheritor is not the individual but her or his lineage.<sup>73</sup> In this way privilege is bestowed according to seniority not sex, and a first born daughter would have her future husband move into her family home, and both he and their children assumed her surname.<sup>74</sup> In her capacity as inheritor, the woman was also recognized as the religious and political representative of her family unit, holding key posts in local religious and government functions. In fact, in the Spanish Basque region, women were involved in all levels of government work, including the General Assemblies.<sup>75</sup> Women who were not inheritors, and therefore not heads of households, could vote on behalf of their husbands; in certain regions even younger sons who married younger daughters (with neither party inheriting) moved into their wives' homes and adopted their surnames.

A review of traditional Basque law has led one historian

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<sup>73</sup> Rolyn M. Frank and Shelley Lowenberg, "The Role of the Basque Woman as Etxeko-Andrea, the Mistress of the House," in Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History, edited by Joyce Duncan Falk (Santa Barbara: Western Society for French History, 1977), 15.

<sup>74</sup> Rosalyn M. Frank, Monique Laxalt, and Nancy Vosburg, "Inheritance, Marriage, and Dowry Rights in the Navarrese and French Basque Law Codes," in Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History, edited by Joyce Duncan Falk (Santa Barbara: University of California, 1977), 24.

<sup>75</sup> Frank, "Inheritance, Marriage, and Dowry Rights," 26-27.



to conclude that "in total contradiction to the laws of feudal Europe, women were granted total equality with men." The reasons for this anomaly in the context of western European history have not been fully discovered, although some researchers have concluded that this system of etxe-ondo was essential in the Basque region because the primary economic sectors were fishing and transhumance, both necessitating long absences from menfolk and requiring women to make important decisions on their own. It is worth noting, however, that the Basque feudal nobility adopted the more recognizable form of male primogeniture practised in the rest of Europe, whereas the lower classes continued with the traditional ways.<sup>76</sup>

The system of primogeniture without distinction of sex was also practised in the French Basque region, at least until the Revolution. One of the many grievances that the French monarch received in 1789 was a call for the abolition of male primogeniture and the adoption of equal inheritance rights for all children. Women from the Basque region protested vociferously against any outside meddling in the etxe-ondo tradition, denouncing the legitimacy of a National Assembly which did not allow for equal representation of half of the population. Their cries went unheeded, however, and on 7 March 1793 the "droit d'ainesse sans distinction de sexe" was

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<sup>76</sup> Frank, "Inheritance, Marriage, and Dowry Rights," 22, 28.

legally abolished, though many Basque families undoubtedly ignored the law for many years.<sup>77</sup>

Sally Cole's study on Vila Chã in northern Portugal also showed that in that small fishing community women did not identify themselves in sexual terms, or in relation to their men, but as hard workers.<sup>78</sup> Daughters were preferred to sons because they stayed and took care of their parents, inherited the house, boat, and fishing gear. Indeed, parental property was more identified with the mother than with the father. Men were more prone to emigrate, and daughters-in-law were not always co-operative.<sup>79</sup>

Were similar customs already in place in the seventeenth century, and in other parts of Portugal, particularly Porto? The records uncovered say little about people's attitudes. The Cabido Redízima collection, especially, does not concern itself with social commentary; the ledger-like account books record the names of those involved in transactions in the fish trade, not the reasons behind the individual's contribution.

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<sup>77</sup> Susan Skoglund Ayres, "Women's Rights and the 'Doleances du Sexe de St Jean de Luz et Cibour au Roi'," in Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French Society, edited by Joyce Duncan Falk (Santa Barbara: University of California, 1977), 35, 37.

<sup>78</sup> Sally Cole, Women of the Praia: Work and Lives in a Portuguese Coastal Community (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 40.

<sup>79</sup> Cole, Women of the Praia, 56-58.

Still, a survey of merchant names noted by church officials indicates that women were often participants in substantial cod dealings. In his analysis of big merchants with international connections, Ribeiro da Silva concluded that women in Porto were part of the fringe market, selling foodstuffs in the public square or through the city streets.<sup>89</sup> In seventeenth-century Porto women may not have been great merchants, according to Mauro's definition, but they were definitely involved in much more than the fringe market.

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Porto's church port records, the Cabido Redízima series, demonstrate the existence of prominent female cod merchants. The records deal with specific incoming cargoes of cod and subsequent wholesale transactions between masters, merchants, and town/church officials. Often the records show the name of a merchant responsible for the incoming shipment. The crown's portion, or the 10% dízima amount, was auctioned to the highest bidder, sometimes going to the first-mentioned

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<sup>89</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Vol. I, 112, 126-130, 156-161. He found no women among the noted merchants in the Cabido port records between 1584-1639 (of which only five survived) dealing with imports, but 25 women were involved in wine exports from 1620-1640, five among the most prominent.

merchant or merchants,<sup>81</sup> other times going to the master who brought in the cargo. Most often, however, the dízima auction was granted to a third merchant, and in the 1640s this third party was often a woman.<sup>82</sup>

Two women in particular stood out in Porto's cod trade in the 1640s - Angela Lopes and Maria Rois.<sup>83</sup> Each of these two competitors handled more dízima cod than any other merchant for almost the entire decade. Though the Cabido port records for the seventeenth century begin in 1639, no female cod merchant was noted until 1642, when Angela Lopes handled the dízima for six separate cargoes, totalling 433 quintals of pasta cod, with an approximate value of 525,522 réis.<sup>84</sup> Her

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<sup>81</sup> One strange entry was found for April 1648, when a shipment of 3,076 quintals of vento cod arrived for ten merchants, whereas the custom had been to name only one or two merchants per cargo. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1648, Cabido No. 124, f.143-f.144.

<sup>82</sup> Unfortunately, Redízima records are silent about the remaining 90% of each cod shipment. It is not clear whether the same people who were awarded the dízima portion at the auction also dealt with some or all of the other volume.

<sup>83</sup> The name "Rois" was a common abbreviated form of Rodrigues in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Portugal. As a result, the records in question invariably show entries for Maria Rois, Roiz, or Ruis, and Maria Rodrigues, sometimes adding what appears to have been her nickname, "a Cabrita", or the she-goat. It is my belief that despite the variations in the name and its spelling, the records refer to the same woman. She was most often cited as Maria Rois, however. I am grateful to Francisco Ribeiro da Silva for explaining the Rois and Rodrigues connection.

<sup>84</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1642, Cabido No. 117, f.143, f.143v, f.144v.

closest rival was Mario Teixeira, whose dízima share was 213 quintals of cod.<sup>85</sup>

Women numbered fewer than men among the cod merchants in Porto at that time, and they handled less dízima cod than their male counterparts overall. In fact, only three female cod merchants were found in the records from 1639-1649, compared to dozens of men.<sup>86</sup> What is striking about this relatively small number of women in the business, however, is that Lopes and Rois each had a greater share of the dízima than any other merchant from 1639-1649. A total of 115,988 quintals of cod arrived in Porto during that decade, and 38% of its dízima was handled by Lopes and Rois alone (see Table 5 and Table 6). In addition to their significant role in the cod trade, Lopes and Rois especially dealt with large volumes of sardines as well.<sup>87</sup>

From 1642-1679 Maria Rois was referred to in the cod records 41 times, while Angela Lopes appeared on 15 occasions,

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<sup>85</sup> The type of cod was not specified, but given the amount of dízima owed, 213,200 réis, it was probably pasta. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1642, Cabido No. 117, f.144.

<sup>86</sup> In addition to Angela Lopes and Maria Rois, a third female cod merchant showed up in the books for 1649 and 1650, Maria Carvalha. She handled 280 quintals of cod in 1649, primarily pasta worth 533,907 réis, and 116 quintals of vento in 1650 worth 243,100 réis. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1649, Cabido No. 126, f.140, f.143, f.143v; Cabido No. 128, f.140v.

<sup>87</sup> The sardine trade was in fact dominated by female fish merchants, as will be discussed below.

primarily between 1642-1648.<sup>88</sup> During those six years Lopes was very active in the cod trade in Porto, having been awarded 1,693 quintals of cod dízima during that period, worth approximately 3,489,870 réis. Her share of the cod dízima market was especially strong in 1646 and 1647; in 1646 she handled 393 quintals of vento and pasta dízima cod worth 1,245,734 réis; in 1647 Lopes merchandized 430 quintals of dízima vento and pasta cod valued at 806,029 réis.<sup>89</sup>

Maria Rois handled a little less dízima cod than Angela Lopes in the 1640s, but she dealt with a greater number of cargoes, and her total dízima volume from 1643-1649 amounted to 1,423 quintals of cod with the approximate value of 2,849,579 réis.<sup>90</sup> Unlike Lopes, moreover, Rois continued to

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<sup>88</sup> As mentioned earlier, Angela Lopes was at one point awarded the dízima of 94 quintals of vento cod in April 1648, but later lost it to Maria Rois following the Cortes decision in favour of the latter. This was Lopes' last appearance in the port records as a cod merchant. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1648, Cabido No. 124, f.144v.

<sup>89</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1642, Cabido No. 117, f.143-f.144v; Cabido No. 118 (1643), f.145v-f.147v; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.140; Cabido No. 120 (1645), f.154v; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.151-f.151v; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.144v-f.152v.

<sup>90</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1643, Cabido No. 118, f.147v; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.148, f.152; Cabido No. 120 (1645), f.147v, f.154v; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.146v-f.150v; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.145-f.152; Cabido No. 124 (1648), f.141-f.151; Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.142-f.147.

merchandize cod until 1670.<sup>91</sup> Although the present study concentrates on the first half of the seventeenth century, it is worth taking a quick look at the second half in order to better highlight the obviously important contribution made by Maria Rois in Porto's cod trade.

In 1658 a cargo of 680 quintals of vento cod arrived in Porto for Maria Rois. This was the only entry found where an entire shipment of cod, and not just the dízima, was destined for a female merchant. The shipment in question came in the caravel "Nossa Senhora do Socorro", whose master, Bento dos Santos, was from Cascais, but who arrived in Porto from Lisbon. No dízima was charged on this cargo of cod because the master had papers showing that he had already paid the tax in Lisbon. Since there was no dízima to record, the entry in question provides no unit price for the cod, but if the rate of 2,680 réis per quintal is considered - the rate applied to a similar cargo at that time - the value of Maria Rois' cod shipment was approximately 1,822,400 réis.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Maria Rois handled a small dízima amount that year, 24 quintals of vento cod, worth 87,412 réis. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1670, Cabido No. 154, f.92v.

<sup>92</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1658, Cabido No. 142, f.140. In monetary terms, at least, Maria Rois dealt with larger cod dízima cargoes in the second half of the seventeenth century, including 291 quintals of vento and pasta cod in 1653, valued at 826,868 réis, and in 1663 when she merchandised 290 quintals of vento cod for approximately 1,039,000 réis. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1653, Cabido No. 132, f.148v-f.149; Cabido No. 146

This entry raises a few interesting questions about merchandizing cod in Porto. First, having even just one cargo arriving for Maria Rois adds to the argument that she was indeed a merchant in her own right, and not just a street vendor, or regateira. Second, Porto received some of its supplies of cod from other Portuguese ports, including Lisbon. This coastal transportation was controlled by the Portuguese themselves, and perhaps it was specifically in these cases that Portuguese local merchants, including women, had a bigger role to play. Unfortunately, there is no way of knowing who brought the cod to Lisbon in the first place; port records for the Lisbon area dated prior to the eighteenth century are almost non-existent.

Maria Rois had yet another fish shipment arrive specifically for her, but this time the cargo was sardines. In 1679, 500 milheiros of sardines from Azurara (near Lisbon) were registered in Porto for Maria Rois, and the dízima of 50 milheiros was auctioned to another female fish merchant, Maria da Silva.<sup>93</sup> Sardines were another common fish found in the Cabido records, with the occasional mention of mackerel, hake, herring, and octopus. Generally female fish merchants handled

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(1663), f.146.

<sup>93</sup> The sardines were priced at 600 réis/milheiro and a milheiro was a unit of one thousand. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1679, Cabido No. 163, f.108.



the sardine dízima in the first half of the seventeenth century, with most cargoes arriving in Porto from Sesimbra, Setúbal, and Cascais - ports near Lisbon. Angela Lopes and Maria Rois dominated the trade in the 1640s, with the latter even managing some sardine cargoes from England.<sup>94</sup> Most shipments of sardines or any other fish carried by English ships were handled by English merchants,<sup>95</sup> who preferred to manage their trade regardless of the type of fish in question, from the high seas to the Porto market.

Maria Rois certainly had an exceptional career in the fish trade, not only in the volume of fish she distributed, but also in the number of years she remained active, a career spanning 40 years, from 1639-1679.<sup>96</sup> Given her rather common name, and the various ways in which it was spelt in the records, it is possible that we are dealing with more than one person, but that is unlikely. The consistency with which she appropriated a substantial share of the fish trade strongly

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<sup>94</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1648, Cabido No. 124, f.141, for example.

<sup>95</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1649, Cabido No. 126, f.140, for example.

<sup>96</sup> The first reference to Maria Rois in connection to the cod trade was found in 1643, but her name showed up in 1639 dealing with sardines, and she was still at the sardine trade in 1679. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1639, Cabido No. 114, f.141v; Cabido No. 163 (1679), f.108. It is even possible that she was involved in the fish trade before 1639 and/or after 1679, but missing records prevents any further speculation.

suggests that Maria Rois was a very influential fish merchant in seventeenth-century Porto.<sup>97</sup>

Both Maria Rois and Angela Lopes obtained fairly large cod dízima contracts,<sup>98</sup> often in the range of 100-200 quintals, but occasionally they also dealt with extremely small dízima volumes, and sometimes none at all. For example, in 1644 Angela Lopes handled the dízima of one quintal of pasta cod only, worth 1,200 réis.<sup>99</sup> Maria Rois received nine cod dízima loads in 1648, but five of them ranged from 1 to 3.5 quintals each, though she actually managed a total of 244 quintals of vento and pasta dízima cod over the entire year,

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<sup>97</sup> The records show that in June 1650 Maria Rois a Palheta dealt with 92 quintals of pasta cod, valued at 133,435 réis. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1650, Cabido No. 128, f.143-f.143v. There is some question about the latter's identity, however, for the name appears to be a combination of Maria Rois a Cabrita and Maria Luis a Palheta, both of whom were heavily involved in the sardine trade that year. Given that Maria Luis a Palheta was mentioned nowhere else in connection to the cod trade, whereas Maria Rois a Cabrita was a cod merchant of long standing, the cod dízima in question probably went to the latter. The same discrepancy was found earlier involving a sardine dízima of 25 milheiros which the record keeper noted was awarded to Maria Rois "a palheta". A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1645, Cabido No. 120, f.146.

<sup>98</sup> Rois and Lopes stood out in the records for the volume of dízima cod they handled in the 1640s, but there were other prominent female cod merchants in Porto, including Catherina Fernandez who in 1657 merchandized 416 quintals, most of it vento cod, worth approximately 1,140,952 réis. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1657, Cabido No. 140, f.147-f.148.

<sup>99</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1644, Cabido No. 119, f.140. Angela Lopes was absent from the sardine trade as well, while Maria Rois dominated it once again.

worth 593,544 réis.<sup>100</sup> The erratic pattern of their dizima trade suggests that they must have had other sources of business, and almost certainly a share of the non-dizima dealings.<sup>101</sup>

Angela Lopes and Maria Rois, as well as most other female cod merchants, dealt with an almost equal amount of pasta and vento dizima, and this says something about their cod suppliers. A great deal more vento than pasta cod entered Porto in the seventeenth century: 360,119 quintals of vento, or 76% of the grand total, compared to 107,018 quintals of pasta, or 23% of all cod registered in the Cabido collection for the seventeenth century.<sup>102</sup> The 1640s was an unusual decade, however, because a relatively large volume of pasta cod entered Porto. From 1639-1649, 46,796 quintals of pasta arrived in Porto's harbour, compared to 67,334 quintals of vento. Not only did pasta cod amount to 40% of all cod registered in Porto that decade, but the pasta volume of the

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<sup>100</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1648, Cabido No. 124, f.141-f.151. See also Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.142-f.147.

<sup>101</sup> Though they were also involved in the dizima sales of other types of fish, some years these cargoes too amounted to very small totals, and other years these women did not show up in the Cabido records at all.

<sup>102</sup> The third category, refugo, or refuge cod, amounted to 5,744 quintals only, or 1% of all cod in Porto. Sometimes the cod type or volume was not specified, however. See discussion in Chapter 4.

1640s was actually 44% of all pasta shipments found in the records.<sup>103</sup>

Since women cod merchants had an especially strong showing in the Cabido port records in the 1640s, and since they dealt with a disproportionately high volume of dízima pasta cod, there is strong evidence to suggest that their commercial interests were connected with a specialized market. Indeed, out of the 55 cod entries involving women for which the origin of ship or shipmaster was provided, 64% were connected with the French and 33% with the English. The French are known to have concentrated on the wet or green fishery - the Portuguese pasta - and since the French had an exceptionally successful cod trade in Porto in the 1640s, more pasta cod was found during that decade than at any other time.

It is not known when exactly the French and English first entered Porto's cod market, but in the 1640s their share of the trade was almost the same. In fact, in 1647, the French carried 10,499 quintals of cod to Porto, compared to 5,287 quintals from the English. This was atypical for the rest of the century; after the mid-1650s the English transported more cod to Porto than everyone else combined in almost every year recorded in the Redízima series.<sup>104</sup> The 1640s were

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<sup>103</sup> See Chapter 4, Table 16.

<sup>104</sup> See Chapter 4.

especially successful for French cod shipments into Porto likely because the English economy and fishery were in disarray during the Civil War (1642-1649). Harold Innis contended that after a disappointing fishery in the 1620s, the English fishery off Newfoundland flourished in the 1630s, with the number of ships from each major West Country port increasing from 2 or 3 in the previous decade, to 60 or 80. An estimate for 1637 counted 500 English ships in the Newfoundland fishery. New outbreaks of piracy and the English Civil War disrupted the cod fishery soon after, however, and only 200 ships were reportedly engaged in the English cod fishery in 1652.<sup>105</sup>

Portugal was also at war with Spain from 1640-1668, and fought with the Dutch in Asia and Brazil for at least twenty years in the mid-seventeenth century (1633-1654). Did female cod merchants emerge in Porto only at a time of political disarray? Yet women were active in the sardine trade and retail fish trade as well. The absence of port records for the first four decades of the seventeenth century is unfortunate, for they alone could confirm what at this point can only be surmised. What percentage of the cod trade was handled by women in the 1630s or 1620s? Nothing was found in

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<sup>105</sup> Harold A. Innis, The Cod Fisheries: The History of an International Economy, Revised Edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, r.1954 [1940]), 70.

Porto to support the argument that women were significant fish merchants for most of the first half of the seventeenth century, but if women's role in the cod trade was minor prior to 1639, what was so special about the 1640s? Were Angela Lopes and Maria Rois widowed at that time and consequently took over their deceased husbands' business? Yet neither one was ever labelled a widow.<sup>106</sup>

Unfortunately, the nine incomplete volumes of Cabido Redízima series for the sixteenth century did not connect any woman with the few cod transactions noted, though the information provided was minimal.<sup>107</sup> Porto's municipal records show that on 18 November 1634 the city mandated that anyone, man or woman, selling wine was obliged to obtain a licence and to swear to conform to municipal regulations. This same rule, the document stated, applied to people selling

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<sup>106</sup> Women were often identified in early modern Portuguese documents in relation to their husbands, dead or alive, to the extent that the women's own names were not usually noted, but only referred to as "widow of..." or "daughter of..." The Cabido Redízima series, however, never mentioned the women's marital status, with only two exceptions found: Domingas Fernandez, solteira, or single, dealt with some cod in 1653, and in 1654 Catherina Fernandez, another cod merchant, was denoted as viuva, or widow. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1653, Cabido No. 132, f.144; Cabido No. 134 (1654), f.143v.

<sup>107</sup> Only one woman was found dealing in the sugar trade. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1578, Cabido No. 108, f.21.

cod.<sup>108</sup> Four days later, on 22 November 1634, a group of merchants appeared at city hall and took an oath to conform to regulations, otherwise face a fine of 6,000 réis,<sup>109</sup> and again in 1648 when they agreed to sell cod at 18 réis/arrátel.<sup>110</sup> This latter meeting is especially interesting because among the merchants present was Antónia Roiz, someone who never made the Cabido records. Conversely, the other women in the Redízima entries were not at that meeting either. It may be that Angela Lopes and Maria Rois were otherwise occupied, given that 1648 was the year of their big court battle. Was there a connection between Antónia and Maria Rois? The records do not provide any further details, although it is worth noting that all merchants signed the document, except Antonia Roiz.

The above-noted 1634 municipal decree ordering that cod and wine merchants abide by council rules specifically stated that regulations applied to all merchants, men and women. Given the predilection of the Portuguese language for the masculine gender, a document which explicitly addressed homens

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<sup>108</sup> Arquivo Histórico Municipal do Porto (A.H.M.P.), Livro das Vereações, No. 47 (1634), f.86-f.86v. The document refers to pessoas (people), and specifically mentions "men as well as women", a clear indication that both were engaged in this type of operation.

<sup>109</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, No. 47 (1634), f.89v.

<sup>110</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, No. 48 (1638), f.125v-126.

como mulheres must be seen as a clear indication that women were merchants in their own right. If this is true, how to explain the lone female cod merchant at the 1648 meeting? Admittedly, this is puzzling, but one possible reason for women's absence from those events is that, because most women were illiterate, many of them stayed away from such document-signing functions, and had someone appear on their behalf.<sup>111</sup> Whether or not this was true of cod merchants of Lopes' and Rois' calibre cannot be ascertained.

Other evidence was found showing women outside Porto with a strong connection to Newfoundland's cod trade. In Aveiro, for instance, a ship list from 1552 indicates that a fair number of women had an interest in the cod fishery, if not in cod marketing. Out of the 69 ships listed for Aveiro at that time, 17 had women as owners or co-owners. In three other cases women were mentioned in reference to their family

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<sup>111</sup> This custom was clearly noted in documents from Braga and Ponte de Lima. In one case in 1571, a caseira, tenant or lessee, did not sign her contract, the scrivener explained, because she was a woman ("e nao asynou por ser molher"). Câmara Municipal de Braga (C.M.B.), "Acordos e Vreações da Câmara de Braga no senhorio de D. Frei Bartolomeu dos Mártires, anos 1571-VII, 28 a 24-XII-1572," Bracara Augusta, Volume XXXVII, Nos. 83-84 (1983), 532. A similar phenomenon was found in nearby Ponte de Lima in its early municipal records. For example, on 30 January 1581 three merchants received licences to sell olive oil, among whom was Isabel Cerqueira. They all signed except Isabel Cerqueira, a man having to sign for her. João Gomes d'Abreu Lima, "Ponte de Lima nas Vereações Antigas, 1581," Arquivo de Ponte de Lima, Volume II (1981), 7.



connections, including one ship owned by a man and his wife's son (i.e. his stepson).<sup>112</sup>

Although this record does not prove that women played a major role in overseas commerce, it shows that they were among those with substantial capital. Most of these women were referred to as widows, indicating that they perhaps inherited the ships from their husbands; in one case a woman was referred to as the widowed daughter of Miguel Ribeiro, suggesting perhaps that she inherited the ship from her father. Only two other ships were noted belonging to women outside Aveiro, one in Matosinhos, and another in Vila do Conde.<sup>113</sup> Though in 1552 King D. John III requested a roster of all ships in northern Portugal, Aveiro officials were especially conscientious about collecting data on ships in their region.<sup>114</sup>

Records from Viana do Castelo also showed women involved

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<sup>112</sup> Pedro Azevedo, "A marinha mercante do norte de Portugal em 1552," Arquivo Histórico Português, Volume II, No.7 (July 1904), 251-253. See also Francisco Ferreira Neves, "A Marinha Mercante de Aveiro no Século XVI," Arquivo do Distrito de Aveiro, Volume V (1939), 213-222. Other studies have noted female ship owners. For example, the "Charity" of Southampton was owned in 1639 by four people, including a widow. Keith Matthews, "A History of the West of England-Newfoundland Fishery," Ph.D. Dissertation (Oxford University, 1968), 70.

<sup>113</sup> Azevedo, "A marinha mercante," 245, 248.

<sup>114</sup> Like other romance languages, however, the Portuguese tend to use the masculine form unless females are specifically targeted.

in Newfoundland's cod fishery in a role other than that of a regateira.<sup>115</sup> In 1566-1567 two women were part of local merchant groups who financed fishing expeditions to Newfoundland. Leonor Pires, a widow, received 6,000 fish and nine almude of oil in December, 1566, while Ana Pereira received 2,515 fish in January, 1567. Her servant also earned 800 fish from this same voyage. Leonor Pires was part of another venture in 1567, from which she received 6,200 fish and 6 almude of oil.<sup>116</sup> Though still a minority in the merchant groups noted,<sup>117</sup> these two women dealt with substantial volumes of cod from those two shipments. Given that the volume of cod was given in number of fish, and no unit prices were noted, it is difficult to gauge the value of each merchant's portion. It is known, however, that one merchant sold his 8,000 cod to the Bilbao market for 61,000

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<sup>115</sup> Unfortunately, the ship list for Viana from 1552 has not survived.

<sup>116</sup> Arquivo Municipal de Viana do Castelo (A.M.V.C.), Livro das Navegações e Comércio de Viana, No. 953-B, f.32v, f.113, and f.191. Interestingly, Ana Pereira was not referred to as a widow.

<sup>117</sup> Leonor Pires was one of four merchants involved in the Newfoundland voyage undertaken by Martim Alvares Sanamede, master, in 1566, and one out of five merchants in another expedition the following year. Ana Pereira's venture involved six merchants. Two other voyages to Newfoundland in 1566-1567 did not involve any female merchants. See Manuel António Fernandes Moreira, "O Porto de Viana do Castelo e as Navegações para o Noroeste Atlântico," in Viana - o Mar e o Porto (Viana do Castelo: Junta Autónoma dos Portos do Norte, 1987), 86-88.

réis.<sup>118</sup> An estimate of Leonor Pires' share would come to 45,600 réis for the 1566 voyage, and 47,120 réis for the 1567 load.<sup>119</sup> Only the shipmaster had a slightly higher share than Leonor Pires in the first joint venture, and she had the largest share in 1567.<sup>120</sup>

Viana's municipal tax books of 1571-1583 disclosed other women in the cod trade as well, but, interestingly, women dealt with other merchandise much more frequently. Ana Pereira, for example, appeared again in 1571, this time dealing with mercadorias, or unspecified commodities. In some instances women were named as paying duties on merchandise, including cod, brought into Viana by their sons,<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Fernandes Moreira, "O Porto de Viana do Castelo," 86.

<sup>119</sup> Fernandes Moreira, "O Porto de Viana do Castelo," 87-88.

<sup>120</sup> These were the only two sources found on Viana's early cod fishery, so it is not known to what extent female merchants were involved in the trade before or after 1566-67. The same port records showed a great number of women trading other merchandise, notably in iron. A.M.V.C., Livro das Navegações, f.10v, f.13v, f.28v, f.29, f.31, f.35, f.35v, f.43, f.43v, f.54, and f.62. Though sometimes women were referred to as "the wife of..." (such as, "Maria Allverz molher do pescador", or wife of the fisher, f.31) often they were named without reference to their marital status. For a glimpse at women's participation in Viana's commercial sector 20 years earlier, see A.M.C.V., Livro da Receita e Despesa da vyla de Vyana de 1530, No. 6, f.16, f.20, f.20v, f.26v, and f.27, for example.

<sup>121</sup> In fact, most cod shipments noted in Viana were handled by a variety of family members, most notably a brother-in-law, or a son-in-law. A.M.V.C., Livro das Sisas, 1571, No. 528, f.162, f.176; Livro das Sisas, 1573, No. 521,

suggesting a family-operated business. But the most common affiliation for a woman was still her husband, dead or otherwise, whereas men's marital status was seldom mentioned.<sup>122</sup> Sometimes women were referred to as daughters, including the daughter of Maria Dagoarda.<sup>123</sup> The books sometimes noted women on their own,<sup>124</sup> and a little piece of reverse discrimination was found in Viana's tax registry for 1583, when Antônio Gomez paid taxes on cod and sardines. The scrivener found it necessary to point out that Gomez was married to Sarra da Rocha.<sup>125</sup>

Female merchants were also noted in the 1527 port records for Caminha, a coastal town just north of Viana. Several women were involved in the textile industry, specifically with

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f.156v; Livro das Sisas, 1581, No. 522, f.165. Family connection was also mentioned in reference to other merchandise. See, Livro das Sisas, 1581, No. 522, f.165v, f.168v; Livro das Sisas, 1583, No. 524, f.127v, f.128, for example.

<sup>122</sup> For examples of references to female traders noted by their marital status, see A.M.V.C., Livro das Sisas, 1571, No. 518, f.162; Livro das Sisas, 1573, No. 521, f.154v, 156v, f.165, f.165v, f.169v; Livro das Sisas, 1581, No. 522, f.155, f.162v, f.163, f.169, f.174.

<sup>123</sup> A.M.V.C., Livro das Sisas, 1581, No. 522, f.155; Livro das Sisas, 1583, No. 524, f.128v.

<sup>124</sup> A.M.V.C., Livro das Sisas, 1571, No. 518, f.176; Livro das Sisas, 1573, No. 521, f.169v, f.171v.

<sup>125</sup> A.M.V.C., Livro das Sisas, 1583, No. 524, f.128v.

imports from London and other European centres,<sup>126</sup> including some women from Viana,<sup>127</sup> and even from Porto.<sup>128</sup> Again, many men were noted as son-in-law and brother-in-law, including in connection to a woman. For example, Francysquo Nunez, brother-in-law of Maria Anes, paid the sisa on cloth from Anvers.<sup>129</sup> Finally, it is worth noting that women from Viana's most famous family, the Fagundes, were also involved in the textile trade from northern Europe, with mother and daughter declaring imported shipments at customs in 1504 and 1519, respectively.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Even most fishers and mariners in the records were involved with trade in Galicia, Ireland, London, Anvers, and Madeira. See Elisa Castro and Mário Cunha, "O Livro da Sisa da Alfândega de Caminha do Ano de 1527," Caminhiana, Ano VIII, No. 13 (December, 1986), 159, 160, 167, 173, 181, 193, 195, 202, 204, 206; and No. 16 (1988), 184, 190, 194-201, for example.

<sup>127</sup> Castro, "Livro da Sisa," No. 16 (1988), 168, 186-188, 195, 196-198, 205; No. 13 (1986), 190, 193.

<sup>128</sup> Castro, "Livro da Sisa," No. 13 (1986), 168.

<sup>129</sup> Castro, "Livro da Sisa," No. 13 (1986), 191; see also No. 16 (1988), 198, 199, 205, for similar cases. It is not clear whether these men paid sisa on behalf of their sisters-in-law, or whether the latter were just better known in the business community.

<sup>130</sup> A.N.T.T., Casa da Coroa, Livro da Dízima da Alfândega de Viana de 1504, f.31-f.34. As cited in Fernandes Moreira, "O Porto de Viana do Castelo," 77. The mother remained nameless, for she had someone declare her cargo on her behalf, but the daughter, Maria Fagundes (not Violante Fagundes, says Fernandes Moreira) was named in the port records on her own in 1519. A.N.T.T., Casa da Coroa, Livro das Sisas dos Panos da Alfândega de Caminha de 1519, f.260, f.274. As cited in Fernandes Moreira, "O Porto de Viana do Castelo," 78, 80.

Between Viana and Porto lies Vila do Conde, another significant fishing community with old ties to the cod fishery. In the sixteenth century, the town's strongest contribution was probably in supplying ships for the fishery, but no record was found of cod shipments entering its port. Municipal tax books from the seventeenth-century show some evidence of a cod trade in Vila do Conde, and although the volumes involved were not very large, female fish merchants handled most cargoes (See Table 7).

Vila do Conde's early tax books listed cod shipments under a general heading for each cod merchant. For example, the "Titulo de Anna de Lima" consisted of several pages, and some entries concerned declarations of expected cod shipments, while others dealt with actual loads having arrived and tax payments collected. The expected shipments did not always match the arrivals, therefore figures noted in Table 7 are only rough estimates. Some entries were also difficult to decipher due to the deterioration of the document. The significance about Vila do Conde is not the cod volume handled in that port, but the obvious dominance enjoyed by women in the wholesale cod trade. Though the documents are sparse, what survived is quite revealing. Men appeared only three times in connection to cod, whereas women were named more than 20 times, especially between 1614 and 1616, when Anna de Lima and Isabel Dias "a bretoa" were the two leading cod merchants

in Vila do Conde.<sup>121</sup>

The records suggest that cod entering Vila do Conde did not arrive aboard a ship, directly from Newfoundland or elsewhere, but via the overland route, from Porto and Viana. In fact, the tax books in question dealt specifically with merchandise transported overland. Perhaps Vila do Conde had more cod arriving by sea, but only port records could tell us that, and unfortunately they have not survived. Even municipal documents are more sporadic for the rest of the seventeenth century. Following three entries only in 1624 and 1633, the next cod reference found was dated 9 May 1670, when officials fined Maria Loba 500 réis for having sold rotten cod. This was not the first time she had been in trouble, however, for back on 21 March she had to pay 200 réis for having sold cod without a proper licence, another 300 réis for having overcharged her customers with the said cod, and an

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<sup>121</sup> Arquivo Histórico da Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde (A.H.C.M.V.C.), Sisas dos vinhos...mercadorias que vieram por terra, 1614-1615, No. 1681, f.36, f.66, f.66v, f.68v, f.94, f.95; No. 1682 (1615), f.53, f.54; No. 1683 (1616), f.42-f.43v; No. 1686 (1624), f.29; No. 1689 (1633), f.42. In May 1614 officials noted the cod price at 13 réis/arrátel, 416 réis/arroba, or 1,664 réis/quintal. Women were prominent in other commercial sectors as well, especially in the wine industry. Books for 1615 and 1616, for example, had several entries of female wine merchants, sometimes in conjunction with their husbands, but often operating on their own. See, for example, Sisas dos vinhos... 1615, No. 1682, f.2v, f.18-f.20, f.32-f.34, f.43, f.44; and Sisas dos vinhos... 1616, No. 1683, f.6-f.7v, f.10-f.12v, f.18-f.20, f.22, f.39, and f.41.

additional 500 réis for using improper weight measures.<sup>132</sup> Finally, in 1681 Ana Nunes and Catarina Dias received licences to sell cod at 30 réis/arrátel.<sup>133</sup>

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Given their significant presence in the provisioning business, women were especially affected by town council's control of the local market. Consequently, a review of municipal regulations and some reported infractions tells us a great deal about the role of women in a regional economy. Not only were town governments empowered to regulate commercial transactions, but officials also intervened in questions of public morality, most of which dealt with restricting women's mobility.<sup>134</sup> Certainly all merchants and vendors were equally regulated when they obtained retail

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<sup>132</sup> A.H.C.M.V.C., Livro das Correições, 1670-1671, No. 2499, f.16v-f.17 and f.25v.

<sup>133</sup> A.H.C.M.V.C., Actas, 15 Marco 1681, Livro 17, f.172-172v. It should be noted, however, that while the few cod entries noted are interesting for purposes of the present study, the cod volume was minute in relation to other merchandise in the records, especially wine and sardines. For example, tax books for 1623 and 1626 made no mention of cod, yet the first had 40 pages of sardine entries, while the latter contained more than 50 pages on sardine taxpayers. In other words, citizens of Vila do Conde clearly ate a lot more sardines than Newfoundland cod. Unfortunately it is not known at this time how many of these sardine merchants were women.

<sup>134</sup> This theme is discussed in greater detail below.



licences, and when they adhered to set prices, weights, and measures. But officials were especially concerned with problems of inadequate and inaccessible food supplies, and thus regulations in the food business were more exacting than in other retail businesses. These in turn applied to women in particular because more women than men worked in the food business.<sup>135</sup> In other words, most municipal regulations were not gender specific, but because women outnumbered men in the food sector, at least at the retail level, municipal authorities had greater contact with women.<sup>136</sup> Cod arriving in Porto would only get to Braga if Porto municipal officials authorized it; women in Braga would get to sell it only if Braga's town council authorized them. Control of distribution and distributors was at the heart of the regulated market. We have looked at some merchants; the intricacies of merchandizing remain to be seen.

In theory, each municipal council had extensive powers to deal with the most immediate concerns faced by the local

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<sup>135</sup> Most studies on women's early economic roles in urban settings show that women dominated the food provisioning business. See discussion below.

<sup>136</sup> Nor were municipal regulations necessarily oppressive to merchants or retailers. In some cases the regulated market protected the interests of certain local groups. See discussion in Chapter 5.

populace.<sup>137</sup> In practice, however, the crown was often asked to intervene or assist with a particular local problem, either by disgruntled citizens or by municipal governments. In relation to the local fishery, for instance, the Portuguese monarch passed several laws in the seventeenth century, regulating collection of fish taxes, prohibiting trawl nets, administering the tuna fishery, prohibiting restrictions imposed on fishers in certain rivers by local nobles, and condemning the harassment sometimes suffered by local fishers at the hands of some municipal officials.<sup>138</sup> Unfortunately, the effect these royal mandates had on any particular group

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<sup>137</sup> Though price fixing was the prerogative of the municipal government, occasionally the crown attempted to instill national standards. For example, on 5 March 1587 the crown decreed that all French ships coming into Portugal to load salt for Flanders had to agree to a fixed price beforehand which they would sell for in the Flanders market. Phillip II was moved toward this extreme measure because of complaints that French masters were charging four times as much as they had paid in Lisbon, though it is not clear who launched the complaint. See Virginia Rau, Estudos sobre a História do Sal Português (Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1984), 153.

<sup>138</sup> Ministério da Marinha e Ultramar, Collecções de Leis Sobre a Pesca desde Março de 1552 até Janeiro de 1891 (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1891), 13-20. Significantly, though, nothing was found in this collection regulating the Portuguese cod fishery. The only reference to the cod trade was made in 1758 when the crown stipulated that ships bringing in wheat, cod, and lumber could be boarded prior to unloading of merchandise. See A.A. Baldaque da Silva, Estado Actual das Pescas em Portugal (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1892), 439.

has not been properly examined.<sup>139</sup>

Porto's municipal council not only had political, economic, military, judicial, and administrative jurisdiction over the city; its power permeated in varying degrees over an extensive area of seven boroughs with a total of 29 districts. But although the council's mandate was far-reaching, economic and fiscal concerns took up most of its energies. Approximately half of the meetings held between 1580 and 1640 dealt with price regulations, taxation, and requests from the crown for assistance with overseas operations.<sup>140</sup> For purposes of our study, council's dealings with foodstuffs are especially helpful not only because these references usually include food prices, but also because they sometimes provide an indication of who was involved in provisioning the city. It is here that the regateira and regateiro are most often mentioned or identified, either in conjunction with obtaining retail licences and agreeing to a price rate for their goods, or in connection to some infraction in their dealings with the public.

One way city officials attempted to limit problems

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<sup>139</sup> On 12 December 1565 Braga municipal officials discussed an earlier order from the crown stipulating that nets used to fish in local rivers be in good condition and comply with regulations on size and make. C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXX, 772.

<sup>140</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 49, 65, 379.

between retailer and consumer was by appointing an individual to regulate weights and measures. In 1606 this post paid 8,000 réis per year, and by 1624 the annual salary was up to 20,000 réis.<sup>141</sup> These lucrative jobs were reserved for well-established Porto citizens, and were often inherited posts within certain families. The generous remuneration also illustrates the importance placed on maintenance of standardized measuring procedures. Though all parties seeking retail licences to sell commodities had to swear that they would weigh and measure their goods honestly, infractions of this nature were frequent enough to necessitate municipal intervention. Meat-cutters, for example, had to contend with the repesador<sup>142</sup> who was placed at the entrance of the local slaughterhouse. Each meat trader had to provide the official with approximately 5.5 kilos of meat, from which complainants could get redress.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, 37, f.185-f.185v, and Livro 7 do Cofre dos Bens do Concelho (1625), f.21v; as cited in Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume II, 632-633.

<sup>142</sup> A repesador was literally responsible for "re-weighing" a purchase and making amends, as well as noting all infractions which would be reported to the municipal council.

<sup>143</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume II, 632-633. The majority of infractions and fines levied against Porto vendors in the second half of the fifteenth century were connected to the sale and purchase of meat and fish. See Iria Gonçalves, As Finanças Municipais de Porto na Segunda Metade do Século XV (Porto: Câmara Municipal do Porto, 1987), 48.

While the repesador was hired by the city, numerous other measurers were employed by merchants to process their respective goods. Though these measurers were paid by the private sector, council still reserved the right to regulate them, including determining who could hold such a position, the number of licences granted, length of tenure, and even salary. In 1598, for example, council decreed that cereal merchants had to pay their measurers 1 real per alqueire measured.<sup>144</sup> There was a thankless job, for neither the public nor merchants themselves trusted their measurers. Complaints were so numerous that Porto dismissed all previously-approved measurers in 1584, 1598, and 1634. The most frequent complaint was that measurers cheated consumers through fraudulent measuring procedures. Merchants too were short-changed in this manner, and some measurers even bought out the entire volume of wheat, for example, and then resold it at higher prices, a practice that enraged council since it was always concerned with restricting the role of intermediaries. The work was profitable enough, however, that many tradespeople, including shoemakers and tailors, left their calling in the sixteenth century to take on a measuring licence. The city responded by greatly reducing the number of such licences, and by choosing women for the job in order to

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<sup>144</sup> An alqueire is equivalent to 13.566 litres.

prevent men from leaving their trade. In 1598, however, the reverse was in effect, when only married men were granted the privilege, perhaps due to pressure from men who wished to be measurers. By 1620 both women and men were thus occupied, but in 1634 officials once again called for restricting the job to honourable widows, as well as respectable married women or single women of 40 years of age or over.<sup>145</sup> It is not known what motivated council to target this group.<sup>146</sup>

Always the concern was to diminish the role of the intermediary, the person who was most suspect in cheating the consumer, either by overpricing or by altering the quality of the product. In 1626, for example, council legislated that milk could only be sold by producers or dairy workers. Apparently there had been complaints that enterprising women had been meeting the carts outside city limits, buying all the milk, adding water to it, and then reselling it in the city at

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<sup>145</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, No. 26, f.380; No. 29, f.160, f.269; No. 34, f.107-f.108, f.119-f.119v, f.121v; 44, f.10v, f.96. The call for restricting the post of measurer to women, made in 1634, was noted in Livro das Vereações, No. 47, f.75v; Livro 3 dos Acórdãos ou Posturas, cap. 12; and Biblioteca Publica Municipal do Porto (B.P.M.P.), Manuscrito 1422, "este livro he dos acordaos que se fizerao e reformarao no anno de 1587...", f.2; as cited in Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume II, 636-638.

<sup>146</sup> Respectable middle-age women may have been considered more trustworthy than younger people of either sex, and most middle-age men were probably less likely to leave their trade once they were well established. Officials may also have used this post as a means of assisting older women who were perhaps in greater economic need than men.

a substantial profit.<sup>147</sup> Council's attempts to curb intermediaries in Porto's local economy, as a means to keep prices down for the consumer, went as far as to request that caravel owners and their associates count their own sardines upon arrival in Porto, thus eliminating the need for the contadeiras, or counters, who were generally women.<sup>148</sup>

Questions of weights and measures in the fish trade were also regulated by the municipality, but as Ribeiro da Silva discovered, uniformity was only slowly achieved in the early modern period. Cod, like other types of fish, was sold by lot well into the seventeenth century. Not surprisingly, regateiras preferred the system of approximate visual calculations, with their own eyes doing the calculating. Already in 1593 the sale of dry fish and cod was conducted by weight, but in 1622 regateiras were still fighting this restriction, and won the concession to sell dry fish at least by lot.<sup>149</sup>

Regateiras, like market measurers, were probably not a

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<sup>147</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, No. 41, f.238v, as cited in Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume II, 707.

<sup>148</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, No. 34, 117v-f.118, and No. 42, f.250; as cited in Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume II, 639.

<sup>149</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, Porto e seu Termo, Volume II, 752.

popular group in seventeenth-century Porto;<sup>150</sup> both consumers and officials were suspicious of the regateira's alleged propensity to short-change her customer. The municipal council was also interested in limiting the extent and number of intermediaries in the local market as yet another means of keeping prices down for the general public. Hoarding merchandise, leading to inflationary prices, was sometimes a problem. On 5 November 1623 town officials decided to combat such practices by ordering that for the first nine days after its arrival in Porto cod could only be sold to the general public. During those nine days ship merchants were forbidden to sell cod to other retailers or to merchants for resale. At the end of nine days these restrictions were lifted, but the cod could only be sold at a set price. Officials reserved the right to regulate cargoes destined for outside city limits as well, and infractions were subject to fines of 6,000 réis.<sup>151</sup> As Ribeiro da Silva pointed out, there was undoubtedly resistance to this price fixing, and infractions must have

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<sup>150</sup> Among the meanings associated with the title one finds "shrew, quarrelsome rude woman, wicked tongue," in the Novo Michaelis Dicionário Ilustrado, Português-Inglês, Português-English, Volume II (São Paulo: Comp. Melhoramentos, 1961), 1072. Some Porto records on revenues from fines had a few entries from fishmongers, or das bravas - women who were verbally aggressive. See Gonçalves, As Finanças Municipais de Porto, 47.

<sup>151</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, (1623), No. 45, f.332v-f.333.



been a real concern. In 1634 and again in 1648, the town ordered that no one, regardless of status, could sell cod without first registering it at city hall, and take an oath to conform to regulations, or face a fine of 6,000 réis.<sup>152</sup>

The method used to price cod was similar to that used for other merchandise. If it arrived by sea, wholesale, the merchant had only to declare the merchandise in the town centre, register an intended price, and swear to maintain that fixed price. Retailers, however, were subject to prices determined by town officials.<sup>153</sup> Prices were set with some attention to supply and demand. For example, on 11 January 1606 Porto's municipal council set retail cod prices at 14 réis/arrátel.<sup>154</sup> This rate was significantly lower than what

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<sup>152</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações (1634), No. 47, f.89v; Livro das Vereações, (1638-1639), No. 48, f.125v-f.126.

<sup>153</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume II, 756. For examples of this process, see A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações (1638-1639), No. 48, f.16, f.70v-f.71. Both examples involved English cod merchants. Similar conditions on price registering were in place in Braga in the mid-sixteenth century. C.M.B., "Acordos e Vereações," Volume XXIX, 400-401, and Volume XXX, 779. Officials also fixed prices for hospitality establishments. Thus, in 1577 the municipal council in Vila do Conde decreed that innkeepers could not charge their guests more than 1 real for two sardines. See Manuel A. Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI," Boletim Cultural da Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde, Nova Série, No. 11 (June 1993), 19.

<sup>154</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, (1606), No. 37, f.20v.

had been charged in 1598, when an arrátel of cod cost 18 réis.<sup>155</sup> Officials justified the low cod prices in 1606 by claiming that there was an abundance of cod in the city, though Porto also experienced dearths in cod supplies. On 10 May 1613, for instance, town officials were petitioned to permit a French cod ship to unload in the city, given the shortage of cod at that time.<sup>156</sup> Again on 15 February 1638 a petition was presented to council members objecting to the departure of a number of ships to foreign ports, all carrying loads of cod. The complainants claimed that the cod was needed in the region, especially with Lent approaching.<sup>157</sup>

A comparison between wholesale prices quoted in the Redízima series and retail prices found in Porto's municipal records should offer some insight into the cost of cod for consumers.<sup>158</sup> In 1639, for example, the average price for a quintal of dízima vento was 2,179 réis. The price for an

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<sup>155</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, (1598), No. 34, f.12. It should be noted, however, that the 1598 quoted price was for vento cod, whereas the 1606 entry did not mention the cod category.

<sup>156</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, (1613-1614), No. 40, f.56v.

<sup>157</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações (1638), No. 48, f.19-f.20.

<sup>158</sup> Unfortunately, I was unable to consult Porto's post-1640 municipal records during my visit to the municipal archives, and thus the two series can only be compared for 1639 and 1640 only.

arrátel of vento cod, therefore, according to Cabido Redízima prices for 1639, was approximately 17 réis, not very different from prices set by city council (see Table 8). Pasta prices were also compatible between the two sources; a Cabido quintal of pasta cost an average of 1,320 réis, or 10 réis per arrátel. The following year, in 1640, Cabido average prices for pasta was 1,400 réis per quintal, or 11 réis per arrátel, still within the range of municipal council prices. The vento, however, showed a slightly different picture, for the average Cabido price for a quintal of vento in 1640 was 2,280 réis, or 18 réis per arrátel; yet municipal prices ranged from 22 to 25 réis/arrátel that year.

It stands to reason that Redízima prices should be lower than those quoted in municipal books, for the former dealt with wholesale merchandise, while town officials set prices for the local retail market. The Cabido averages, on the other hand, cannot be seen as an adequate estimate of cod prices over the entire year, for almost each individual cargo was priced differently. In 1640, for example, vento prices ranged from 2,080 to 2,420 réis per quintal, with the highest price quoted in early fall.<sup>159</sup> Still, questions remain about the relation between Redízima prices and the cost of a pound of cod for the average Porto citizen. Regardless of which

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<sup>159</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1640, Cabido No. 115, f.140v, f.142.

source is consulted, however, it is clear that in Porto cod was an expensive commodity, as far beyond the reach of the common folk as had been the case in the sixteenth century. This was especially true of vento cod, whose price fluctuated a great deal more than pasta's. By definition the latter was more accessible to the masses given that beef prices in 1639 were set at 14 réis per arrátel.<sup>160</sup>

Cod shipments entering Porto were not only subject to municipal price fixing; shipmasters also faced a possible health inspection. This inspection took place aboard the ship, usually in a location isolated from the town itself, and was administered by town officials.<sup>161</sup> Most of the information in the records of inspection identify those present and the procedure followed to establish whether or not a ship would be allowed to enter Porto. Health officials were less likely to turn away cod vessels arriving directly from

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<sup>160</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, Porto e seu Termo, Volume II, 756-757. For references to cod prices in Porto's municipal records, see A.H.M.P., Livro das Versações, No. 45 (1623), f.332v-f.333; No. 46 (1625-1628), f.121-f.121v, f.230-f.230v, f.238v (in this latter case, the entry did not stipulate whether the cod in question was vento or if the price quoted was per arrátel - the affirmative was guessed for both); No. 47 (1634), f.86-f.86v, f.89v; No. 48 (1638-1639), f.98v-f.99, f.125v-f.126.

<sup>161</sup> From these health visits remain some records which were transcribed and published in 1977. See J.A. Pinto Ferreira, Visitas de Saúde às Embarcações entradas na Barra do Douro nos séculos XVI e XVII (Porto: Câmara Municipal do Porto, 1977).

Newfoundland. Cod shipments from European ports posed more problems not only because of possible contact with infected people, but also because these cargoes usually carried other goods. Indeed, the general rule was that all ships not solely involved in the fishery or commerce along the Portuguese coast had to undergo a visit from a health inspector, and only after showing the necessary pass, obtained outside city limits, could these ships enter the port and unload.<sup>162</sup>

Officials believed that wool, cotton, and flax were especially problematic, because these textiles were more susceptible to absorb contagion from contaminated air. As a result, an early document shows Porto's health authorities declaring that all ships coming from English and French ports had to be stopped and inspected.<sup>163</sup> Though cod was generally

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<sup>162</sup> Pinto Ferreira, Visitas de Saúde, 33-35.

<sup>163</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro 1o do Registo Geral, 1 Dez. 1597, f.166v-f.167v; as per Pinto Ferreira, Visitas de Saúde, 13-19. As part of the ship inspection, officials recommended that passports and other ship documents on cargo be examined carefully, but this precaution was found to be insufficient. The proper manner to conduct the inspection was to take aside some sailors and passengers and interview them separately to see if they contradicted one another. It was believed that this form of investigation led to more accurate information because they were dealing with more simple and sincere characters. If a variety of answers was obtained, the passports were likely not good and the passengers/crew had to be quarantined. Officials were also aware that corruption existed in this "pass" procedure, and thus they recommended that the city pay those in charge of granting the passes adequately to lessen the likelihood of accepting bribes. This was not an unusual occurrence, apparently, as the records mentioned one Manuel Pires, who in 12 June 1677 was fined

a less dangerous cargo, it was not exempt from rejection by health officials. In 1625, for instance, the city's health inspector ordered António de Abreu, shipmaster, to throw his load of cod into the sea because of the suspect quality of the fish.<sup>164</sup>

On the surface, Porto's economy in the first half of the seventeenth century appears overburdened with regulations, but Porto was not unique in Portugal or in continental Europe.<sup>165</sup> In Spain,<sup>166</sup> too, local judges regulated retail prices of commodities from eggs to candles. In the case of meat and

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6,000 réis for having allowed ships to pass without proper documentation from health officials. See Pinto Ferreira, Visitas de Saúde, 35-36.

<sup>164</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações (1625-1628), No. 46, f.25v.

<sup>165</sup> In the early modern period Portugal was not alone among west European countries to strictly regulate their markets. In England, too, strenuous regulations on the fishery were found, including one that prohibited "regrating and forestalling", or cornering the market, and a six-day leeway between the arrival of fish cargoes and the settlement of prices between masters and merchants, a practice that went as far back as 1358. See D.W. Prowse, History of Newfoundland from the English, Colonial, and Foreign Records, Second Edition (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1896), 32-33 (his note 1).

<sup>166</sup> Though neither country had nationally standardized practices of price fixing and regulating weights and measures in the early modern period, both Portugal and Spain followed similar customs of municipal control over provisions of foodstuffs. See, Bartolomé Bennassar, "L'alimentation d'une capitale espagnole au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle: Valladolid," in Pour une histoire de l'alimentation, recueil de travaux présentés par Jean-Jacques Hémardinquer (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1970), 51.

cured fish, an individual was sometimes contracted to supply the community with enough provisions for a period of one or even four years, at an agreed price. The most common practice, however, was for a town to make arrangements with several dealers, and price ceilings for meat and fish were usually changed three or four times a year.<sup>167</sup> Though Spanish officials attempted to standardize systems on weights and measures in the sixteenth-century, Earl J. Hamilton found regional differences on weight units throughout Spain.<sup>168</sup> In Bilbao an arroba of fish weighed 12.5% more than in Castile, and the pound in Murcia equaled 434 grams, whereas in Santander it was 713 grams.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Earl J. Hamilton, War and Prices in Spain, 1651-1800, (New York: Octagon Books, r.1965 [1934]), 201.

<sup>168</sup> Along with eggs and oranges, for example, sardines were sold in units of two, a dozen, or even a thousand. Most meat and fish, however, was sold by the 16-ounce pound in early-modern Castile. An arroba was 25 pounds, while the Spanish quintal was 100 pounds. In some regions in Spain, such as Medina de Rioseco, Villalon, and Medina del Campo, the most common unit for wholesale fish sales was the carga, which contained "about 10 arrobas", or approximately 2,500 sardines. Fish was also sold in Old Castile-Leon by the tercio, which was the equivalent of 4.5 to 5 arrobas, and the cesto, or basket of various sizes. Earl J. Hamilton, American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain, 1501-1650 (New York: Octagon Books, r.1965 [1934]), 175-177. In France, too, fish was sold by weight, in number (by the 100 or per basket, for example), or by length. Pierre Couperie, "Les marchés de pourvoierie: viandes et poissons chez les Grands au XVIIe siècle," in Pour une histoire de l'alimentation, recueil de travaux présentés par Jean-Jacques Hémardinquer (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1970), Tableaux 1 et 3.

<sup>169</sup> Hamilton, American Treasure, 178 (his note).

Regional differences were undoubtedly in place in Portugal as well, but to date no global study on commodity prices has been attempted. But though specific standards varied from town to town, municipal councils had essentially similar concerns about proper distribution of foodstuffs. Thus, in 1527 officials in Vila do Conde decreed that only fishers, their wives, sons and daughters, and servants could sell their fish by lot.<sup>170</sup> A century later Porto still had problems with this practice; in 1622 selling fish by lot was restricted in Porto for it was believed that the custom allowed regateiras to profit too much.<sup>171</sup>

Similar to Hamilton's findings for Spain, Vila do Conde's municipal council records for 1591 reveal that officials were required to regulate prices of foodstuffs every three months.<sup>172</sup> And similar to the custom in Porto, Vila do

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<sup>170</sup> Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI," No. 12 (December 1993), 10. In 1641, the city of Faro (Algarve) passed a law obliging fishers to sell their catch on land and not on the beach, which they had been doing for several years, forcing consumers to have to remove their shoes before they could purchase their fish. Frédéric Mauro, Le Portugal et l'Atlantique au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle (1570-1670) (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1960), 286-287. The real concern was that members of the local church/religious orders did not want to wet their feet on the beach.

<sup>171</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro 5 de Sentenças, f.476-f.478; as cited in Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 230.

<sup>172</sup> A.H.M.V.C., Livro sessões da Câmara de Vila do Conde (1591), 8S, f.326v-f.327, as cited in Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI," No. 12 (December 1993), 9-10.



Conde's council controlled prices by making foodstuffs available to the regular public before wholesale or retail merchants took over. In 1548 and 1549, for example, officials resolved that all foodstuffs arriving by sea had to be sold aboard ship at retail prices to the public for the first three days, or else merchants faced fines of 2,000 réis.<sup>173</sup> At a time when food shortage was an almost constant threat, municipal governments were especially concerned with ensuring that their citizens were amply provisioned.<sup>174</sup>

Towns not only controlled their respective markets but they also attempted to standardize food prices within a certain region. In Vila do Conde, for example, council decided on 19 August 1527 that all regateiras and other fish vendors had to sell their fish by weight and according to prices set in Porto at that time.<sup>175</sup> On 2 March 1561 authorities in Braga fixed cod prices according to current

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<sup>173</sup> Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI," No. 13 (June 1994), 13.

<sup>174</sup> In order to circumvent possible future shortages, Vila do Conde occasionally allowed merchants to export grain but only in return for a guaranteed amount set aside for local consumption. Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI," No. 13 (June 1994), 10-12, 17-19.

<sup>175</sup> Attempts at price uniformization were common, though the efficacy of the programs is less clear. Another reference was found to fixing prices according to standards in Porto, this time dealing with olive oil in 1577. A.H.C.M.V.C., Livro VI das Sessões da Câmara de 1577, f.384, as cited in Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI," No. 12 (December 1993), 15, (his note 1).

prices in Porto,<sup>176</sup> and on 30 January 1581 Ponte de Lima priced olive oil at the same rate then in effect in Braga. Ponte de Lima also attempted to standardize wages for on 11 January 1583 municipal authorities and local Cortes representatives agreed to a fee rate earned by their colleagues in Braga, Viana, or Valença.<sup>177</sup>

Though price fixing was clearly the mandate of each local council, officials obviously kept abreast of trends around their region, and even colluded with other towns to keep prices competitive. On 26 January 1566, for example, Braga's town council decided to send a letter to Guimarães, Barcelos, and Ponte de Lima, all neighbouring towns, to arrive at an accepted price for beef.<sup>178</sup> Unlike Vila do Conde, however, Braga set prices on foodstuffs on a yearly basis, and Ponte de Lima did likewise.<sup>179</sup> On 9 January 1567, for instance, Braga's council had seven merchants agree to supply the town

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<sup>176</sup> C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXV-XXVI, 455.

<sup>177</sup> Abreu Lima, "Ponte de Lima nas Vereações Antigas," II, 7, and IV, 8-9.

<sup>178</sup> Braga's council also decided on 16 November 1566 that since olive oil was valued in Porto at 18 réis/cartilho, and since it was customary for oil to be priced in Braga at one more real than in Porto, olive oil would be priced at 19 réis/cartilho in Braga. C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXXII, 432. A cartilho or quartilho was approximately 0.397 litres.

<sup>179</sup> In March 1583 a butcher agreed to sell high quality beef until Easter of 1584 for 10 réis/arrátel. Abreu Lima, "Ponte de Lima nas Vereações Antigas," IV, 12-13.

with fresh and dry fish and sardines as per the agreement of the previous year.<sup>180</sup> Like most important decisions made by council, any decrees on food prices were announced by Braga's town crier all over town and vicinity,<sup>181</sup> as was the case in Ponte de Lima.<sup>182</sup>

Though municipal councils dealt primarily with commercial and fiscal regulations that ultimately affected everybody in the community, some official decisions targeted women specifically. On 21 June 1581 Braga council ordered that no woman day labourer working for wages could charge more than 12 réis per day plus meals, or else face fines of 1,000 réis.<sup>183</sup> No such restrictions were found for male labourers.<sup>184</sup> The restrictions on female wages might have been in response to an increased demand for female labourers. The records do not

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<sup>180</sup> The text states that they agreed to the terms set the previous year of 1564, and the writer attempted to correct it but wrote 1564 a second time. Given that this took place in 1567, the agreement in question was probably from 1566. See C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXXII, 453.

<sup>181</sup> C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXX, 761, for example.

<sup>182</sup> Abreu Lima, "Ponte de Lima nas Vereações Antigas," II, 6-9, 20, for example.

<sup>183</sup> C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXIV, 377.

<sup>184</sup> Despite these limitations, however, some women had money to spare, for on 25 October 1581 Maria Anto received 2,000 réis that she had lent to council. The following month Felipa Jacome paid back 10 cruzados she had borrowed from the town. C.M.B., "Acordos e Vreações," Volume XXIV, 400-401.

stipulate motives for the new law but in 1581 the Spanish crown was in the midst of consolidating its annexation of Portugal. Portuguese young men may have been recruited for military service at this point.

A bylaw in Braga also prohibited the renting of a dwelling to an unmarried girl or woman. According to town officials, there was a problem with loose girls and unmarried women who refused to serve others, resulting in licentiousness and abandoned children. In order to maintain order, and because everyone had to work according to God's will, those caught breaking this law faced a fine of 1,000 réis.<sup>185</sup> In the Azores, too, officials showed concern over too many women roaming the streets at night. Consequently, on 3 March 1635 the municipal council at Ponta Delgada, São Miguel imposed a curfew on women and levied fines on those caught outside at night without a valid reason.<sup>186</sup> Another order dated 8 June 1670 stipulated that any single woman living or talking in a scandalous fashion, giving reason for the neighbours to complain, was not allowed to live in the principal streets of the town, and anyone who would bring forth accusations could

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<sup>185</sup> C.M.B., "Livro das Vereações," Volume I, 136-137. See also Volume XXXVII, 530. Unfortunately this unit was not dated, though the editor proposes that most laws were in effect already in the fifteenth and sixteenth century.

<sup>186</sup> Ernesto Canto, ed., "Posturas da Câmara de Ponte Delgada no século XVII," Arquivo dos Açores, Décimo Quarto Volume (14), 139.

have the woman banned from the town altogether.<sup>187</sup>

In Porto, too, occasionally there were restrictions in place against single females working as regateiras. Although the reasons for these restrictions are not all that clear, there was some concern that the profession of regateira exposed women to immoral behaviour. Officials were also concerned with a shortage of female servants because the latter preferred the free life of street hawking.<sup>188</sup> It is interesting to note that this legislation came about in 1647, and only applied to single women, though in 1593 a similar restriction applied to single men as well.<sup>189</sup> It might be

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<sup>187</sup> Canto, "Posturas da Câmara de Ponta Delgada no século XVII," Arquivo dos Açores, Décimo Quarto Volume (14), 176-177.

<sup>188</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações (1647), No. 51, f.132v, as cited in Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 225.

<sup>189</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, No. 31, f.253, as cited in Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 226.

that overseas expansion led to an increase in the number of retail traders, which would have hurt the elite classes that depended on a cheap labour force.

It is difficult to determine the effect of these edicts on women's lives, but given the preponderance of women in the business of trading in foodstuffs, the regulated market as it applied to the provisioning sector was significantly, and perhaps dominantly, a woman's problem. To what extent this was true for wholesale cod merchants, such as Angela Lopes and Maria Rois, is not easy to tell. Lopes and Rois may have been involved in some retail sales of their own, or at least had to deal with regateiras who sold their cod shipments. Certainly municipal authorities had jurisdiction over the wholesale sector as well, although sometimes their arbitrary decisions were nullified by the courts as was seen in the case involving Maria Rois in 1648. The vast majority of women working in the food business was concentrated in retail sales, however, and town councils were especially concerned with regulating those with direct contact with the public. In the service sector at least, the number of women confronting government officials was great indeed.

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Society mandated women to be obedient, chaste, modest,

timid, and reserved. Her demeanour was most orderly, eyes lowered, serene face...in everything representing seriousness, honesty, and moderation. Quiet and reclusive, she stayed within her domestic boundaries that protected her, all doors and windows shut firmly through which danger could penetrate.<sup>190</sup>

In light of this traditional view of Iberian women in the early modern era, how do we account for the likes of Maria Rois and Angela Lopes? They were probably exceptional cases, as women and as fish merchants at that time.<sup>191</sup> Not everyone handled the dízima cod volumes they did, but many women were found engaged in hard work far from their domestic boundaries. Ideal representations, like that above, are seldom based on reality. Undoubtedly deep-seated negative views about women

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<sup>190</sup> Carlos Gómez-Centurión Jiménez, "La Familia, la Mujer y el Niño," in La vida cotidiana en la España de Velázquez, dirigida por José N. Alcalá-Zamora (Madrid: Ediciones Temas de Hoy, 1989), 174.

<sup>191</sup> Even the fact that neither Maria Rois nor Angela Lopes were ever identified or connected to a male relative raises some interesting questions about their independent status. The most common find on women in economic endeavours, no matter how significant these might be, has their familial links well noted. For example, a group of prominent women were discovered with substantial involvement in the long distance textile trade in Segovia in the late fifteenth century. The six women found as members of a merchant company were identified either as widows or as daughters of male members, though they enjoyed all merchant rights and privileges. María Asenjo Gonzalez, "Participación de las Mujeres en las Compañías Comerciales Castellanas a Fines de la Edad Media. Los Mercaderes Segovianos," in El Trabajo de las Mujeres en la Edad Media Hispana, edición de Angela Muñoz Fernández y Cristina Segura Graíño (Madrid: Asociación Cultural AL-MUDAYNA, 1988), 233.

had an effect on curtailing women's experience,<sup>192</sup> but domestic enclosure was never practised by the majority. As recent studies have shown, the strict moral code was enforced on and by social groups for whom a sense of feminine honour was most important: the urban middle and upper classes.<sup>193</sup> The poor could not afford the luxury of keeping up with

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<sup>192</sup> Indeed, one concern crossed all class and social lines, and was generally accepted as ultimate dogma - the absolute necessity of female fidelity. The preoccupation with shutting up women away from dangerous elements began as early as age 12 or younger, for no other reason than to ensure their purity for the marriage market, and, once married, women's behaviour was equally circumscribed. Female adultery was punishable by death, usually at the hands of the offended husband. According to Carlos Gómez-Centurión Jiménez, the collective obsession for conjugal honour was one of the preoccupations that best typify society in Baroque Spain. Gómez-Centurión Jiménez, "La Familia, la Mujer y el Niño," 185-186.

<sup>193</sup> Even women under house arrest escaped the constant vigilance by wearing "el tapado", an enormous cape that covered them from head to foot, with their faces hidden by a veil or the large cape itself. This garment allowed the most perfect anonymity for married or single women desperately seeking a taste of liberty. Not surprisingly, "las tapadas" were a source of much social criticism, but given the number of references and complaints found, it appears that "el tapado" was popular and frequently used throughout the seventeenth century, proving that what moralists professed was one thing, and the manner in which women lived was something altogether different. Gómez-Centurión Jiménez, "La Familia, la Mujer y el Niño," 174-177. Similar fashions existed in Lisbon, though as Fernando Castelo-Branco discovered, it was found exclusively among the elite. See, "Lisboa vista pelos Estrangeiros (até aos fins do século XVII)," in Presença de Portugal no Mundo. Actas do Colóquio (Lisbon: Academia Portuguesa da História, 1982), 372-373.



it.<sup>194</sup> But even women who were not poor were not recluses, as seen in Porto's cod trade. Clearly most women's lives transcended the traditional ideal of domestic enclosure.

Female domestic confinement was impractical for most women, even if desirable by some men. In the early modern period, as in many other historical junctions, the feminine mystique only applied to a very small number of women of higher means whose husbands could afford to keep them within a restricted sphere, a sphere that was both indulgent and confining. Nor was this practised by all women from the upper classes. Maria Rois and Angela Lopes, for example, must have belonged to wealthy families yet they led very public lives indeed. The majority of people, women and men, worked wherever and at whatever they could to sustain themselves and their families, with little regard for proper male and female spheres. In fact, more and more historians insist that the "domestic work" label is meaningless for pre-industrial societies, when the division between production, reproduction, and consumption was poorly defined.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> Angelina Puig Valls y Nuria Tuset Zamora, "La Prostitución en Mallorca (s. XVI): ¿El Estado un Alcahuete?" in Ordenamiento Jurídico y Realidad Social de las Mujeres, Siglos XVI a XX: Actas de las IV Jornadas de Investigación Interdisciplinaria (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1986), 81.

<sup>195</sup> Montserrat Carbonell Esteller, "Hecho y Representación sobre la Desvalorización del Trabajo de las Mujeres (Siglos XVI-XVIII)," in Mujeres y hombres en la formación del

This is not to say that women and men enjoyed equal economic opportunities in the early modern period. In Cordoba, for example, research has shown that women's position in the artisanal trades toward the end of the fifteenth century was secondary; no record listed them as masters, while several references suggest that women were engaged in a complementary role, as their husbands' helpers.<sup>196</sup> On the one hand, all indications point to an overwhelming concentration of women in retail trade, especially dealing with foodstuffs, with few in the artisanal sector, and even fewer in large scale commerce.<sup>197</sup> On the other hand, the authors recognized that part of the reason that few references were found to women is due to the usage of the male plural form, as is the normal case in Spanish when denoting a group, even if it only consists of one male and several females.

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Pensamiento Occidental: Actas de las VII Jornadas de Investigación Interdisciplinaria, Volume II, Edición de Virginia Maquieira d'Angelo (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1989), 159-163.

<sup>196</sup> Ricardo Cordoba de la Llave, "El Papel de la Mujer en la Actividad Artesanal Cordobesa a Fines del Siglo XV," in El trabajo de las mujeres en la Edad Media Hispana, edición de Angela Muñoz Fernández y Cristina Segura Graíño (Madrid: Asociación Cultural AL-MUDAYNA, 1988), 238-239, 253.

<sup>197</sup> José Manuel Escobar Camacho, Manuel Nieto Cumplido, Jesús Padilla Gonzalez, "La Mujer Cordobesa en el Trabajo a Fines del Siglo XV," in Las mujeres en las ciudades medievales: Actas de las III Jornadas de Investigación Interdisciplinaria (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1984), 159-160.

This renders the task of identifying women and the extent of their economic position a little more problematic.<sup>198</sup>

Division of labour along gender lines is longstanding, however most Portuguese women and men were traditionally employed in what was generally regarded as menial occupations. As Maria Helena da Cruz Coelho found in her study of Evora, Lisbon, and Porto in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, towns were run by men, but only a certain, small group of men had that role. She concluded that the social hierarchy in those three communities consisted of nobles and merchants at the top, tradespeople in the middle, and manual or general labourers at the bottom. It was in this last group that most women were found, and men also.<sup>199</sup> Within the trading class, the vast majority of women and men alike were involved in small retail and in minor trades.<sup>200</sup> In this occupation-

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<sup>198</sup> Escobar Camacho, "La Mujer Cardobesa," 155. They also suggested that since most of the documents dealt with legislation in response to conflicts with social, economic, and professional implications for the city, women would be less implicated in these discussions. Women were primarily engaged in "domestic activities," and thus most of them did not pose a social risk or threat because they were controlled within the family structure. It is not clear what was meant by "domestic activities", or how women were controlled exactly, though this line of thinking would be rejected by Carbonell Esteller.

<sup>199</sup> Maria Helena da Cruz Coelho, Homens, Espaços e Poderes (Séculos XI-XVI) (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1990), 38-39.

<sup>200</sup> Cruz Coelho, Espaco, 49-50. For a further discussion on privileged versus the non-privileged, see Concha Torres Sánchez, La Clausura Femenina en la Salamanca del Siglo XVII:

based hierarchy the vast majority of women and men alike were engaged in work which was poorly remunerated and provided no leverage on influence and power. It is therefore impossible to argue that women were powerless on the basis of numbers, since the international merchants at the apex of the power structure were few whatever their sex.

Disparities between the sexes should not be underrated, however, for a man in the most menial of jobs still earned more than his female counterpart. Cruz Coelho found that already in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries women received lower salaries than men for doing similar work, and that this was particularly true in urban areas. Working in tile furnaces, for example, women earned 43% of men's wages, whereas in the agricultural sector women were paid closer to 70 or 75% of men's rates.<sup>201</sup> Much remains to be discovered about women's employment in pre-industrial societies, yet little has been found to support the notion of a "golden age" in the lives of working women.

The contrast between urban and rural settings is worth

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Dominicas y Carmelitas Descalzas (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidade de Salamanca, 1991), 31.

<sup>201</sup> Cruz Coelho, Espaço, 47. Not a lot is known about wages in early modern Portugal, but the Misericórdia in Aveiro paid a male labourer in 1602 a total of 160-180 réis per day, his assistant earned 120 réis per day, and women received 50 réis per day. Arquivo da Santa Casa de Misericórdia de Aveiro (A.S.C.M.A.), Feria de Despesas, (June 1602-June 1603), f.30, f.31, f.33. f.36, f.38v, f.41, f.43, f.45v, f.47v.

noting, for this distinction has not always been properly examined. Studies on women's economic roles have concentrated on more industrialized centres and organized trades or guilds in particular, with the inevitable conclusion that these workplaces were for the most part men's domain.<sup>202</sup> The most obvious flaw with this type of investigation is that once again women's lives were judged against those led by some men, with the assumption that the former would be validated, if only they were more like the latter.<sup>203</sup> Dominant figures

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<sup>202</sup> For example, in her study on women and guilds in eighteenth-century Málaga, Siro Villas Tinoco found that already in 1611 municipal ordinances referred to women only as bakers, fruit sellers, and regateras. Regulations on guilds occasionally mentioned women but only as widows of carpenters, shoemakers, or silk traders. In each case the law granted widows some privileges to use the deceased husband's trade shop with an employee or servant; in the case of a widow of a carpenter, she was entitled to this trade for two years, if she was an honest woman; a widow of a shoemaker could put up shop with employees and servants for as long as she retained her widowhood and chastity - if she remarried with a man of another trade, she no longer could maintain her deceased husband's trade, unless her new husband learned the said trade. Siro Villas Tinoco, "La Mujer y la Organización Gremial Malagueña en el Antiguo Régimen," in Ordenamiento Jurídico y Realidad Social de las Mujeres. Siglos XVI a XX: Actas de las IV Jornadas de Investigación Interdisciplinaria (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1986), 96-97.

<sup>203</sup> Some contemporary literature, though outwardly championing the cause for women's history, still insists on highlighting the exceptional female in an overwhelmingly male activity. See, for example, Giuseppe Maria Viscardi, "Pouvoir Institutionnel et Condition de la Femme en Basilicate aux XVIIe-XVIIIe Siècles: Premier Bilan d'une Recherche," Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine, Tome XXXII (oct-déc, 1985). Other historians have shown that integration of women in history signifies the questioning of traditional periodization based on categories more appropriate to

make interesting reading, but seldom in isolation. The real story lies in exploring who controlled whom, and how, and why.

A more complete story also should account for regional differences, particularly in employment variations between city, farm, and fishing communities. Not a great deal has been done to compare these three sectors in the early modern period, but the latter two were undoubtedly more similar to one another than with the urban centre. Like the farmer, the fisher was at the mercy of environmental factors, and hence had to follow a more flexible work schedule though certainly not less arduous than city work. Because of fishers' extended absences from home, however, their families were often left to fend for themselves for long periods of time. By necessity, a system evolved wherein women managed family income all year round. In other words, society in certain maritime communities had to become more fluid simply to survive. To what extent this was true in bigger centres, such as Porto in the mid-seventeenth century, is not clear.

By the time Maria Rois and Angela Lopes appear in the records, the Portuguese cod fishery, such as it was, was slipping into foreign hands, and so was the cod trade. How

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masculine activities. In other words, it is not enough to substitute or add women's "contribution" to a "men's world". See, Ma. Dolors Ricart i Sampietro, "Present i Futur de la Nova Història de la Dona," Pedralbes: Revista d'Història Moderna, Any VII, No. 8/I (Barcelona, 1988).

exactly Rois and Lopes managed to appropriate such a large share of Porto's cod trade is difficult to know. Given the extent of their cod volumes, it is unlikely that Rois and Lopes came to the business as wives or widows of fishermen. Their respective families probably had some connection to seafaring, in shipping perhaps. Though the most prominent female cod merchants found in Porto's records must have belonged to the elite - the very group for which most records survived - little is known about women like Rois and Lopes because they do not fit the usual category of upper class women in the early modern era. They were not eccentric aristocrats or noblewomen patronizing the arts and sponsoring religious works. Maria Rois and Angela Lopes were successful businesswomen. Little is known about conditions that facilitated their entry into the cod trade, but their subsequent decline coincided with the influx of foreign merchants. The English came to town.

Table 5:  
Cod Dízima Totals in Quintals for Female Merchants in Porto,  
1642-1679<sup>1</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Vento</u>	<u>Pasta</u>	<u>Refugo</u>
1642	5	0	4392	0
1643	4	3176	1903	115
1644	3	626	203	26
1645	3	1500	1178	0
1646	6	3797	2335	125
1647	7	4873	6057	192
1648	4	993	2769	0
1649	7	5446	3607	56
1650	3	1106	1721	0
1653	4	2483	1746	160
1655	1	120	0	0
1656	4	2019	245	0
1657	5	4729	17	0
1658	1	0	0	0
1659	1	59	0	0
1663	2	2978	0	0
1666	1	0	0	90
1668	5	0	2710	0
1669	1	0	0	0
1670	1	241	0	0
1679	1	0	1258	0

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SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1642, Cabido No. 117, f.143-f.144v; Cabido No. 118 (1643), f.145v-f.147v; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.140, f.148, f.152; Cabido No. 120 (1645), f.147v, f.154v; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.146v, f.147v, f.150-f.151v; Cabido No. 122 (1647),



f.144v-f.145, f.147, f.148, f.150v, f.152-f.152v; Cabido No. 124 (1648), f.141, f.144v, f.147, f.150-f.151; Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.140, f.143-f.143v, f.142, f.146-f.147; Cabido No. 128 (1650), f.140v, f.143-f.143v; Cabido No. 132 (1653), f.144-f.144v, f.148v-f.149; Cabido No. 137 (1655), f.100; Cabido No. 138 (1656), f.148-f.149v, f.151; Cabido No. 140 (1657), f.146v-f.148; Cabido No. 142 (1658), f.140; Cabido No. 143 (1659), f.145v; Cabido No. 146 (1663), f.146; Cabido No. 149 (1666), f.106v; Cabido No. 176 (1668), f.102v, f.103v-f.104; Cabido No. 153 (1669), f.100v; Cabido No. 154 (1670), f.92v; Cabido No. 163 (1679), f.106.

#### NOTES:

1. The "No." column represents the number of dízima contracts handled by women in each respective year. The vento, pasta, and refugo columns show the total number of quintals handled by female cod merchants that given year for each cod category. In 1658 no cod dízima contract was handled by a woman but Maria Rois dealt with 680 quintals of vento cod. In 1669 Maria Rois dealt with one quintal of peixe de pao, a type of unidentifiable fish, but given its unit price of 3,500 réis per quintal, it might have been a vento grade.

Table 6:  
Cod Dízima Totals in Quintals by Grade of Fish for Female  
Merchants in Porto, 1642-1649

Year	Merchant	Vento <sup>1</sup>		Pasta		Refugo	
		Vol.	Pct	Vol.	Pct	Vol.	Pct
1642	Lopes	--	--	4392	100	--	0
1643	Lopes	959	33	1903	66	15	1
1643	Rois	2217	96	--	--	100	4
1644	Lopes	--	--	--	--	15	100
1644	Rois	417	67	203	33	--	--
1644	Rois	209	95	--	--	11	5
1645	Lopes	1500	100	--	--	--	--
1645	Rois	--	--	363	100	--	--
1645	Rois	--	--	815	100	--	--
1646	Lopes	3572	91	243	6	125	3
1646	Rois	225	15	1322	85	--	--
1646	Rois	--	--	770	100	--	--
1647	Lopes	1692	61	1080	39	--	--
1647	Rois	--	--	871	100	--	--
1647	Ruis/ Lopes <sup>2</sup>	1090	39	1533	54	192	7
1647	Ruis	--	--	1320	100	--	--
1647	Ruis <sup>1</sup>	2091	95	103	5	--	--
1648	Lopes	943	100	--	--	--	--
1648	Rodrigues	--	--	887	100	--	--
1648	Ruis	50	3	1882	97	--	--
1649	Rois <sup>4</sup>	1968	99	20	1	--	--
1649	Rois <sup>5</sup>	2614	99	32	1	--	--
1649	Carvalha	--	--	3185	100	--	--

1649	Carvalha	864	94	--	--	56	6
1649	Rodrigues	--	--	370	100	--	--

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SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redízima... 1642, Cabido No. 117, f.143-f.144v; Cabido No. 118 (1643), f.145v-f.147v; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.140, f.148, f.152; Cabido No. 120 (1645), f.147v, f.154v; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.146v, f.147v, f.150-f.151v; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.144v-f.145, f.147, f.148, f.150v, f.152-f.152v; Cabido No. 124 (1648), f.141, f.144v, f.147, f.150-f.151; Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.140, f.143-f.143v, f.142, f.146-f.147.

NOTES:

1. The "Vol." column represents the volume of cod, in quintals, handled by each merchant. The "Pct" column shows the percentage in each cod category handled by a merchant for each given year.

2. This dízima contract was shared between Maria Ruis and Angela Lopes. It is my belief that the merchant Maria Rois, Maria Rois a Cabrita, Maria Ruis, Maria Ruis a Cabrita, Maria Rodrigues, and Maria Rodrigues a Cabrita was one and the same person.

3. This dízima contract was shared between Maria Ruis and Rolante Il.

4. This dízima contract was shared between Maria Rois and João Ribeiro.

5. This dízima contract was shared between Maria Rois and Manuel Banha.

Table 7:  
Cod Handled in Quintals by Merchants in Vila do Conde, 1614-1681

<u>Date</u>	<u>Merchant<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>Volume<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>Price</u>
1614	Maria Fernandez	7	
1614	Anna de Lima	45	13
1614	Isabel Dias	51	14
1614	Francisco Fernandez	10	
1615	Isabel Dias	32	
1615	Anna de Lima	40	
1616	Isabel Dias	66	
1616	Anna de Lima	36	
1624	Francisco de Mendonca	60	
1633	Domingos Afonso	8	
1633	Marta Francisca do Cais <sup>3</sup>	-	
1670	Maria Loba	-	
1681	Ana Nunes	-	30
1681	Catarina Dias	-	30

SOURCE: Arquivo Histórico da Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde, Impostos e Sisas, 1614-15, No. 1681, f.36, f.66-f.66v, f.68-f.68v, f.94-f.95; Sisas dos Vinhos e mais mercadorias que vieram por terra, 1615, No. 1682, f.53, f.54; Sisas dos Vinhos e mais mercadorias que vieram por terra, 1616, No. 1683, f.42-f.43v; Sisas mar e terra, ano de 1624, No. 1686, f.29; Sisas mar e terra, ano 1633, No. 1689, f.42; Livro das Correições, 1670-1671, No. 2499, f.16v-f.17v, f.25v; Actas, 15 Março 1681, Livro 17, f.172-f.172v.

NOTES:

1. Only three male cod merchants were located in the municipal records for Vila do Conde in the seventeenth century, Francisco Fernandez (1614), Francisco de Mendonça (1624), and Domingos Afonso (1633).

2. The "volume" column lists the number of quintals of cod handled by each respective merchant in the given year; the "price" column lists the price in réis per arrátel.

3. No volume is provided for Marta Francisca do Cais because she did not deal with quintals, but only 7 arrobas, on 22 October 1633. Maria Loba was charged with infractions in dealing with cod, while Ana Nunes and Catarina Dias received licenses to sell cod.

Table 8:  
Retail Cod Prices in Porto, 1606-1640

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<u>Year</u>	<u>Vento</u> <u>(Réis/Arrátel)</u>	<u>Pasta</u> <u>(Réis/Arrátel)</u>
1606	14	--
1623	14	10
1624	18	11
1625	14-16	10-13
1627	16-25	16-20
1628	16-20	--
1634	10-17	10-12
1635	20	--
1639	18-20	10-12
1640	22-25	12.5

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SOURCE: Arquivo Histórico Municipal do Porto, Livro das Vereações, No. 37 (1606), f.20v; No. 45 (1623), f.332v-f.333; No. 46 (1625), f.25v, f.121-f.121v, f.136, f.230-f.230v, f.238v, f.292-f.295; No. 47 (1634), f.86-f.89v; No. 48 (1638), f.16-f.16v, f.19-f.20, f.70v-f.71, f.98v-f.99, f.125v-f.126. Also see Francisco Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo (1580-1640): Os Homens, as Instituições e o Poder, Volume II (Porto: Câmara Municipal do Porto/Arquivo Histórico, 1988), 757.

#### Chapter 4: Porto's Cod Trade in the Seventeenth Century: An English Oasis

Municipal and port records for northern Portugal reveal that cod was a significant commodity in the seventeenth century, especially in Porto. Town council minutes indicate the extent to which local governments regulated cod sales, including who could sell it, how, and for how much. These documents also show that Portuguese women were often involved in cod transactions, at the wholesale and retail level. What is less clear from municipal records is the total volume of cod handled in a neighbourhood market and how it got there. Fortunately Porto's Redizima port records partly fill this important gap by providing systematic details on cod volumes entered in its harbour, as well as origin of ship, master, and merchant. The Cabido series proves that there was a cod trade in seventeenth-century Porto, but it also confirms that from at least 1639 there was no Portuguese cod fishery.

Some Portuguese were still fishing in Newfoundland waters as late as the 1620s, but these isolated cases were the last vestiges of an intermittent activity which had nearly disintegrated by the early seventeenth century. Documentation is more complete and better detailed for the second half of the seventeenth century, and by that point the picture is crystal clear: the Portuguese were great recipients of cod shipments, but the trade was in foreign hands. From the

Portuguese point of view, Terra Nova - such as it was - transformed during the late 1590s and early 1600s into Newfoundland, an English fishing colony.

Despite the presence of numerous western European players in the early modern cod fishery in Atlantic-Canada, only two nations were serious contenders in the seventeenth century, England and France. Portuguese records bear witness to this development, especially port registries kept by the Cabido da Sé in Porto.<sup>1</sup> The church's Redízima books are particularly fruitful between 1639-1679, and during that period the English presence in Porto's cod trade was overwhelming. The records show few other nations in the trade, and the absence of Portuguese masters and merchants was conspicuous, especially after the 1650s. From that date forward, even the French contribution was seriously minimized as English control of Porto's cod trade became almost absolute.

What factors led to Portugal's dependence on the English for its cod supplies? The starting point for England's dominant position in Porto's cod trade is difficult to trace,<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Cabido, or church Chapter, had a vested interest in maintaining good records on customs transactions because the church received a tithe from all imports.

<sup>2</sup> By the 1630s the English cloth trade with Portugal had diminished somewhat while the Newfoundland cod trade had increased significantly. See V.M. Shillington and A.B. Wallis Chapman, The Commercial Relations of England and Portugal (New York: Burt Franklin, r.1970 [1907]), 171-173.



primarily because port records for 1600-1639 have disappeared. It is surely more than coincidence, however, that the English were especially successful in supplanting the French in Porto after the peace treaty between England and Portugal in 1654. The French undoubtedly profited from the disarray in the English cod fishery during England's Civil War in the 1640s, but the trade privileges England obtained from Portugal in the middle of the century gave English merchants advantages that even Portuguese traders did not enjoy. This was the price Portugal was willing to pay for England's friendship during Portugal's war of independence with Spain.

Portuguese historians have traditionally claimed that Spain's annexation of Portugal (1580-1640) led to economic devastation for the Portuguese, but this viewpoint is distorted. Portugal's interests were targeted by foreigners not just during the annexation period but especially after independence, particularly on the home front. Furthermore, although post-annexation events cannot be isolated entirely from the consequences of Spanish occupation, the Portuguese independence movement was not initiated by an economically oppressed people but by a select few who supported an aristocrat's desire to be King.<sup>3</sup> Vitorino Magalhães Godinho

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<sup>3</sup> Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, for one, concluded that the Restoration of 1640 was essentially a case of dominant groups keeping down the populace, in Os Descobrimentos e a Economia Mundial, Four Volumes, Second Edition (Lisbon: Editorial

even argued that there was little alteration in Portugal during the Spanish annexation.<sup>4</sup> The only visible influence A.H. Oliveira Marques detected was a tendency for the Spanish monarchy to encourage the creation of large-scale commercial companies or societies, such as the "Companhia Portuguesa das Indias Orientais", founded in 1587, and the "Companhia da Navegação e Comércio com a India", founded in 1619 but only officially recognized in 1628. The first hardly got started, and the second folded in 1633, in both cases victims of insufficient funds. Independence in 1640, however, did not provide any benefit to the Portuguese economy. In fact, commercial enterprise declined owing to increased persecutions by the Inquisition, which no longer felt obliged to comply with Spanish procedures.<sup>5</sup> War with Spain and continual attacks in the high seas jeopardized Portugal's long distance trade; the lucrative overland route to Spanish markets was closed; and the Mediterranean was no longer open to Portuguese

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Presença, r.1991 [1963-71]), Volume IV, 219.

<sup>4</sup> Magalhães Godinho, Os Descobrimentos, Volume III, 49.

<sup>5</sup> When sixteen-year-old Philip IV ascended to the Spanish throne in 1621, the running of the government was placed in the hands of Gaspar Felipe de Guzman, the future Duke de Olivares, whose great plans for replenishing an empty treasury included the granting of liberties to New Christians, for the small price of 1,500,000 cruzados. After Independence, the Portuguese Inquisition was rekindled. A.H. Oliveira Marques, História de Portugal desde os tempos mais antigos até ao governo do Sr. Pinheiro de Azevedo (Lisbon: Palas Editores, 1978), 434.

ships either.<sup>6</sup>

The decline in Portugal's economy, often attributed to the Spanish annexation, did not really begin till after 1640.<sup>7</sup>

Admittedly, signs of economic instability emerged in the 1620s<sup>8</sup> as English and Dutch infiltration of the Asian and African market increased. Complaints were vociferous about high taxes, commercial deterioration, enemy attacks, increased pauperization, and inflation.<sup>9</sup> Although most of Europe was suffering from similar ills, enough Portuguese were convinced that their problems stemmed from Spanish rule. Spain was the

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<sup>6</sup> Oliveira Marques, História de Portugal, 376-377.

<sup>7</sup> Historians do not always agree on exact times of economic peaks and crises. Frédéric Mauro, for example, concluded that from 1570-1600 the Portuguese economy was thriving; from 1600-1620 it was in a depression; it was up from 1620-1640, and down from 1640-1670. Frédéric Mauro, Le Portugal et l'Atlantique au XVIIe Siècle (1570-1670) (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1960), 489.

<sup>8</sup> Some Portuguese historians trace this economic decline to 9 April 1621 when the 12-year truce between Spain and the Netherlands ended. Henceforth Portuguese shipping and colonial posts were attacked more frequently, and commercial relations with northern Europe was disrupted. See Virginia Rau, Estudos sobre a História do Sal Português (Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1984), 179.

<sup>9</sup> From 1539 to 1641, gold and silver prices increased 20% and 12% respectively in Portugal; from 1641 to 1668, gold prices rose 175% and silver 114%. The real lost more than half of its value between 1600 and 1671. Frédéric Mauro, "Marchands et Marchands-Banquiers Portugais au XVIIème siècle," Revista Portuguesa de História, Tomo IX (Coimbra, 1960), 76.

perfect scapegoat.<sup>10</sup>

Declaring independence from Spain in December 1640 was relatively easy for the Portuguese, especially since Spanish forces were occupied with another rebellion in Catalonia. Maintaining independence, however, was another thing, for the war with Spain lasted 28 years.<sup>11</sup> Independence also meant greater dependence on other nations for political support and economic ties.<sup>12</sup> The English, already more numerous than any other foreign group in Portugal in 1640, were best able to take full advantage of Portugal's weak bargaining position.<sup>13</sup>

The 1642 Anglo-Portuguese treaty officially permitted

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<sup>10</sup> Oliveira Marques, História de Portugal, 438-439; Victor Morales Lezcano, Relaciones Mercantiles entre Inglaterra y los Archipiélagos del Atlántico Ibérico (1503-1783): su Estructura y su Historia (La Laguna de Tenerife, Canarias: Goya Artes Graficas, 1970), 61.

<sup>11</sup> In addition to fighting with Spain, the Portuguese also declared war on the English in 1650 as Portugal supported the English monarchy during the Civil War. Cromwell forced the Portuguese to ratify the 1654 "peace" treaty by sending a squadron to Lisbon in 1656. The following year the Dutch blocked Lisbon's harbour for three months as the Dutch-Portuguese struggle for overseas posts continued. Only in the 1660s did Portugal achieve relative peace in Europe which was to last until the turn of the eighteenth century. The Portuguese signed peace treaties with England in 1661, France in 1666, Spain in 1668, and the Netherlands in 1669.

<sup>12</sup> Unable to feed itself, Portugal was dependent on Ireland and England for potatoes, the Dutch for cheese, Africa, Italy, England and France for wheat, Italy for olive oil, and the Levant for rice. Piedade B. Santos, Teresa Rodrigues, and Margarida Nogueira, Lisboa Setecentista Vista por Estrangeiros (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1987), 53-54.

<sup>13</sup> Oliveira Marques, História de Portugal, 377-379, 446.

English trade with Portuguese overseas possessions, but the treaty was especially concerned with securing the rights and privileges of the English mercantile community in Portugal, particularly the "factories" in Lisbon which played an integral role in Anglo-Portuguese trade.<sup>14</sup> The treaty allowed for English trading vessels to remain in Portuguese ports up to three months without unloading, giving the English the opportunity to wait for favourable prices or to leave and sell their goods elsewhere.<sup>15</sup>

During the English Civil War the Portuguese supported the Royalists. Prince Rupert even entered Lisbon in 1649 and

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<sup>14</sup> Portuguese ministers acknowledged in 1649 that English ships were essential to Portugal's trade in Brazil because of Portugal's war with the Spanish at home and the Dutch in Brazil. Shillington and Chapman, The Commercial Relations, 178-182, 193. But although the English gained more favourable conditions in Porto after 1640, they already enjoyed a privileged position prior to the Restoration period. For example, already in 1607 British citizens in Portugal had their own judge to oversee any disputes. In 1614 an Englishman was charged with uttering profanities against the Catholic church. Philip III approved of the charge, but he requested that it not be known that he had been informed of the case, even though the incident did not contravene the spirit of the English-Spanish peace agreement. Arquivo Geral de Simancas (A.G.S.), Secretarias Provinciales - Portugal, Livro 1551, f.272 (Carta regia ao Bispo do Porto de 30.12.1614); as cited in Francisco Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo (1580-1649): Os Homens, as Instituições e o Poder, Two Volumes (Porto: Câmara Municipal do Porto/Arquivo Histórico, 1988), Volume I, 336.

<sup>15</sup> Henk Ligthart and Henk Reitsma, "Portugal's semi-peripheral middleman role in its relations with England, 1640-1760," Political Geography Quarterly, Vol. 7, No. 4 (October, 1988), 356.

attempted to settle matters with members of the English community, enemies to the Royalist cause. The community was split between Royalist and Commonwealth supporters, and the English attempted to fight it out in Lisbon as the Portuguese king looked on helplessly. The conflict was resolved with a peace treaty in 1654 at which time Portugal paid dearly for its initial support of the Royalist cause. In addition to paying compensation for the imprisonment of English merchants and seizure of their property in Lisbon, Portugal also had to open the East Indies, Portuguese Africa, and Brazil to English merchants.<sup>16</sup>

The 1654 treaty has been seen as a turning point in Anglo-Portuguese relations, when Portugal became England's virtual "commercial vassal." Portugal's disadvantaged position was further entrenched in 1661 with the marriage of Princess Catherine, sister of King D. Alfonso VI to England's Charles II. With the alliance between the two crowns Portugal hoped to gain more political status, but it was once again forced to make serious concessions. The 1661 treaty confirmed those signed in 1642 and 1654, gave England Bombay and Tangier, and opened Brazil to English settlement.

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<sup>16</sup> With Brazil, the English were allowed to trade freely in everything except fish, wine, olive oil, and the import of brazil wood, which remained the monopoly of the Brazil Company. Shillington and Chapman, The Commercial Relations, 199.

Furthermore, Catherine's dowry was two million crowns, approximately 400,000 gold shillings or £20,000, setting a record for dowries in Europe up to that time.<sup>17</sup>

The "free trade" deal between Portugal and England meant that the Portuguese continued to export agriculture products, especially olive oil, fruit, salt, and wine, as well as sugar, tobacco, and colonial gold, and to import codfish, textiles, and other manufactured goods from England. Little was "free" for Portugal about the agreement, however, for the English soon established favourable import tariffs for its sugar and tobacco from the West Indies, despite Portuguese protest. With the additional influx of French and Dutch products from their own plantations, European prices for sugar and tobacco dropped in the second half of the seventeenth century, forcing Portugal to meet its trade imbalance with bullion.<sup>18</sup>

The Portuguese attempted some protectionist policies of their own by fostering domestic cloth production and encouraging the development of other industries. The Count of Ericeira, who became Portugal's Secretary of State in 1675, was especially instrumental in advocating Portugal's economic

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<sup>17</sup> S. Sideri, Trade and Power: Informal Colonialism in Anglo-Portuguese Relations (Rotterdam: Rotterdam University Press, 1970), 22. The crown doubled the rate of income tax in order to raise funds to cover the dowry price. Mauro, Le Portugal et l'Atlantique, 468.

<sup>18</sup> Shillington and Chapman, The Commercial Relations, 171-175.

independence. Portugal's landed gentry balked at any attempts at reform, however, and the church feared that industrial development would be controlled by heretics and Jews. Despite these obstacles, Ericeira introduced Sumptuary Laws in 1677 which prohibited the wearing of foreign cloth. At the same time, he encouraged immigration of artisans from northern Europe to set up factories using local wool. By the end of the seventeenth century domestic production was successful enough to hurt English imports.<sup>19</sup> Cloth manufacturing in Covilhã and Portalegre, and hat factories in Braga,<sup>20</sup> met nearly all of Portugal's textile needs.<sup>21</sup> It might have worked, if not for Ericeira's death in 1690, and new

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<sup>19</sup> Some observers explained the decline in English commercial traffic in Portugal in the 1670s and 1680s as a result of a general depression experienced by Portugal due to the rise of West Indies sugar and the subsequent fall in sugar prices. See H.E.S. Fisher, "Lisbon, its English merchant community and the Mediterranean in the eighteenth century," in Shipping, Trade and Commerce: Essays in memory of Ralph Davis, edited by P.L. Cottrell and D.H. Aldcroft (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1981), 24.

<sup>20</sup> Braga is in the northwestern province of Minho, while Covilhã is in the Beira province in the interior, and Portalegre is in the Alentejo near the Spanish border (see map).

<sup>21</sup> Shillington and Chapman concluded that the Portuguese revival of its cloth production did not have a great effect on English woollen exports, which increased considerably between 1668 and 1697. This was still not enough, however, for English merchants complained that their profits would have been greater had they not faced competition from the French, Dutch, and the Portuguese themselves. See Shillington and Chapman, The Commercial Relations, 218-219.



discoveries of gold in Brazil in 1693-95.<sup>22</sup> With official attention focused once again on potential bullion wealth, Ericeira's protectionist policies died with him.

By the turn of the century Portugal was open for business and the English responded with the Methuen Treaty of 1703. In return for a market for its wines, Portugal removed all barriers to English manufactures. English exports to Portugal increased 120% from 1697-1710, while Portuguese exports to England rose 40% during the same period.<sup>23</sup> Some historians have explained Portugal's return to English economic dependence as politically, culturally and socially motivated, but the gold rush in Brazil was also instrumental in the subsequent neglect of the Portuguese manufacturing sector. Although resistance from powerful groups was a problem,<sup>24</sup> the promise of quick riches across the sea was even more difficult to ignore. The gold rush in Brazil blinded the Portuguese to

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<sup>22</sup> Sideri, Power and Trade, 24-27.

<sup>23</sup> Sideri, Power and Trade, 44. In 1709-1710, imports in England from Portugal were worth £192,113, whereas its exports to Portugal reached £614,635. Shillington and Chapman, The Commercial Relations, 220-225.

<sup>24</sup> Sideri, for example, suggested that Portugal's landed aristocracy had little interest in promoting manufacturing, for its huge wine estates were deeply connected with the English. Opposition to industrialization was also due to the "mentality and hopes" of the Portuguese, though these factors remain unclear. See Sideri, Power and Trade, 39 (his note 78). For similar views on the Spanish, see Morales Lezcano, Relaciones Mercantiles, 45.

problems at home, just as spices from the Orient had done two centuries earlier when Portugal's domestic economy was subordinated to the Indian fleet.<sup>25</sup>

Because a proper economic history of early modern Portugal has not been written, a more comprehensive picture of its economy in the seventeenth century is difficult to formulate. In general, what set the seventeenth century apart from the sixteenth was not so much questions of prosperity or decline, but shifts in economic specialization. In the first half of the sixteenth century, the Indian trade - especially in pepper - was everything, but by 1577 change had set in. Growing competition from European nations flooded markets and by 1627 a spice load could not cover expenses.<sup>26</sup> The pepper trade was replaced with sugar from Brazil which by the 1620s was a major portion of revenues registered in Lisbon's customhouse. Thus Portugal's overseas-based economy went from African gold in the fifteenth century, to Asian pepper in the sixteenth, to Brazilian sugar in the seventeenth, and back to

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<sup>25</sup> José Gentil da Silva, "L'Appel aux Capitaux Etrangers et le Processus de la Formation du Capital Marchand au Portugal du XVe au XVIIe Siècle," in Les Aspects Internationaux de la Découverte Océanique aux XVe et XVIIe siècles. Actes du Cinquième Colloque International d'Histoire Maritime (Lisbonne, 1960), présentés par Michel Mollat et Paul Adam (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1966), 359.

<sup>26</sup> Mauro, however, contended that the oriental market did not decline until after 1640, and that its relative importance compared to other merchandise dropped, but not its value. Mauro, Le Portugal et l'Atlantique, 490.

gold in the eighteenth century.<sup>27</sup>

Less is known about Portugal's domestic enterprises, though undoubtedly the overseas magnet lured attention away from other important activities. Although the Portuguese salt trade was still strong in the seventeenth century, especially after the Portuguese-Dutch treaty of 1669, the carrying trade was in foreign hands.<sup>28</sup> Portugal's dependency on food from abroad remained constant, and northern European vessels handled most of that traffic as well. From 1641-1649 alone 556 foreign vessels entered Lisbon, 229 of which carried foodstuffs.<sup>29</sup> Nor were the Portuguese dependent on foreign supplies of grains only. Overseas trade led to a shortage of mariners and, consequently, Portugal's national fishery

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<sup>27</sup> Magalhães Godinho, Os Descobrimentos, Vol. I, 49.

<sup>28</sup> Approximately 1,500 ships arrived in Setubal from 1679-1690 to collect salt, of which 1,121 were Dutch, 169 English, 38 Swiss, 35 Norwegian, 28 German, 13 Danish, 10 Spanish, and 6 French. Rau, Estudos sobre a História, 246-247.

<sup>29</sup> A total of 101 ships carried wood, 29 carried minerals, 59 were loaded with manufactures, and 138 were undetermined. Mauro, Le Portugal et l'Atlantique, 492-493. Not every region suffered equally from food shortages. Porto, for example, did not need to import foodstuffs from the outside as often as Lisbon because of the rich agricultural hinterland in Porto's vicinity. Northern Portugal was generally more prodigious than the south, but there were also distinctions between neighbouring provinces. For example, the Minho was more densely populated and inhabitants worked in individual farming units. The less densely-populated region of Tras os Montes still had a more communal system in place, akin to "open fields". Mauro, Le Portugal et l'Atlantique, 90-92; Magalhães Godinho, Os Descobrimentos, Volume IV, 14-17.

declined in the first half of the seventeenth century. The Portuguese became great fish importers.<sup>30</sup>

Clearly this was the case in Porto. Although this town lagged behind its coastal neighbours in the sixteenth century, it emerged as the major seaport north of Lisbon in the seventeenth. Population estimates for this period suggest a trend of stagnation and even decline in Porto, but in fact the city experienced some real commercial growth. From an estimated number of 20,000 inhabitants in 1599, Porto's population was registered at 14,581 in 1622, followed by 16,000 in 1639, and 15,919 in 1688.<sup>31</sup> These population estimates are difficult to verify, however. Ribeiro da Silva concluded, however, from the decrease in retail licences granted by the municipal council, that Porto experienced a demographic decline in the early seventeenth century. Municipal officials also made several references to numerous commercial closures in Porto in the 1630s and to merchants

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<sup>30</sup> Magalhães Godinho, Os Descobrimentos, Volume IV, 219; Mauro, Le Portugal et l'Atlantique, 68, 282-84, 435, 510. From the beginning of the seventeenth century, Portugal experienced fish shortages, largely due to the decline in its own national fishery which has been linked to poor maintenance of ports, new taxation and licence impositions, and overfishing through the use of illegal trawls. Interestingly, in 1618 the crown outlawed fishing with drag nets, except in case of fishing for his household.

<sup>31</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 96-98.

leaving the city, but this information must be seen in the context of the city arguing against new royal taxes.<sup>32</sup> A complaint about a shortage of fishers in Porto in 1624 had some grain of truth, however, for the Senate approved financial assistance to the district in question.<sup>33</sup>

Interestingly, the volume of merchandise and value of dízima collected in Porto almost tripled between 1591 and 1639. According to Ribeiro da Silva, this growth was not connected to modifications in the tax system, but to greater port activity stimulated by an expanding foreign presence in Porto, and an increase in imports, especially cod and sugar. This economic boom was not unique to Porto at that time and, indeed, suggests that the political union between Spain and Portugal was not detrimental to the latter. The annexation led to a temporary change in players, but not necessarily to a cessation in commercial activities.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> In 1604 Porto officials awarded 282 licenses, but in 1621 the number dropped to 129. Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 101.

<sup>33</sup> Arquivo Histórico Municipal do Porto (A.H.M.P.), Livro das Vereações (1623), No. 45, f.42, as cited in Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 102, 188. The reason given for the absence of fishers was that many had been captured by pirates.

<sup>34</sup> For example, Spain's anti-Dutch campaigns in the late sixteenth century led to the replacement of the Flemish mercantile community in Porto by the French. Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 330-332. Porto and other smaller ports grew in population and mercantile activity from 1580-1620. Viana, for example, increased from 962 households

By 1639 a new order was in place: the English dominated imports of textiles and cod; France provided most cereals and paper; from Flanders came naval construction materials, armaments, books, and cereals; from the Biscayan region Porto got most of its metals, while Galicia provided lumber and fish.<sup>35</sup> In 1628 Porto must still have had some ships going to Newfoundland. City council decreed that year that anyone wishing to import cod had to have a licence, but that those going to Newfoundland could do so without one.<sup>36</sup> This may have been one last attempt to encourage local initiative in the cod fishery, but more likely the order referred to vessels going to Newfoundland to buy cod from planters.<sup>37</sup> Council

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in 1527 to 2,500 in 1619; in 1586 Viana had 19 caravels, but by 1619 it had 70. Growth was noted all along the coast due to the Brazilian sugar trade. Some hints suggest that conditions were significantly different in southern Portugal. The plague killed 35,000 people in Lisbon in 1580, and another 20,000 in Evora; there were also plagues in the Algarve in 1646-50. Population estimates for the seventeenth century, however, are seldom reliable. Magalhães Godinho, for example, contended that c.1640 Portugal had approximately two million people, but Mauro claimed that Portugal's population in 1639 was 1,200,000 only. Mauro, Le Portugal et l'Atlantique, 491-492, 502. Magalhães Godinho, Os Descobrimentos, Volume I, 46; Volume IV, 219.

<sup>35</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 118-121.

<sup>36</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, (1625-1628), No. 46, f.292v, f.294v-f.295.

<sup>37</sup> Richard Whitbourne wrote in 1615 that "sundry Porguall ships have also come thither purposely to loade fish from the English and have given them a good price for the same and sailed from thence with it to Brasile where that kinde of fish

records for 1634 noted only licences for selling cod retail, along with fixed prices: 14 réis/arrátel for vento bom & novo; 10 réis/arrátel for vento velho; and 10 réis/arrátel for pasta.<sup>38</sup>

Ribeiro da Silva found at least a dozen Portuguese merchants in the early seventeenth century whose business in Porto was primarily, if not solely, concentrated in the cod trade. In his opinion, the Porto cod community emerged as a coherent mercantile group, who even had their own lawyer arguing on their behalf for better prices.<sup>39</sup> He argued further that the bacalhoeiros had become so prominent that they were among those required to pay a military tribute in 1640.<sup>40</sup> Despite this Portuguese presence in the municipal records Ribeiro da Silva concluded that foreigners dominated

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is in great request and they have made great profit thereby." Cited in Harold A. Innis, The Cod Fisheries: The History of an International Economy, Revised Edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, r.1954 [1940]), 92.

<sup>38</sup> The cod categories were "good and new (fresh?) vento", "old vento" - that is, new and old merchantable or dry cod; and pasta or green/wet cod. A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, (1634), No. 47, f.86-f.86v.

<sup>39</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações (1634), No. 47, f.89-f.89v. On behalf of his clients, the bacalhoeiros, Visente de Pinho submitted a request, dated 22 November 1634, to city officials for a licence to sell vento at 17 réis and pasta at 12 réis, presumably per arrátel.

<sup>40</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, Porto e seu Termo, Volume I, 161; Volume II, 755.

the cod trade in Porto at the wholesale level.<sup>41</sup> He did not study the Cabido collection, however, which shows Portuguese female cod merchants involved in the trade, especially in the 1640s and 1650s.<sup>42</sup>

The Redízima series reveals a progressive decline in Portuguese participation in Porto's cod trade in the seventeenth century. Conversely, the number of foreigners in the business increased significantly, as merchants and as shipmasters. Every record book of port registries from 1639-1682 confirms that the cod carrying trade was largely in foreign and particularly in English hands. Porto's health inspection records, based on official inspections on incoming ships from 1657-1698, reveal a similar picture: the English dominated the cod trade from sea to port. We will analyze both sets of records and compare the two in order to better conceptualize this trade.

Among the first observable items in the Cabido records is the date and type/name of ship entered.<sup>43</sup> These two factors

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<sup>41</sup> In fact, municipal records show a few references only to foreign cod merchants. See A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações (1625-1628), No. 46, f.121v, f.136, for references to French merchants; and No. 48, (1638), f.98v, for the presence of a Flemish merchant. As per Ribeiro da Silva, Porto e seu Termo, Volume II, 755.

<sup>42</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>43</sup> At least 60 entries did not specify the type of vessel carrying the cod, and 177 entries did not include the ship/master's origin. Any statistical analysis must remain



alone provide some insight into Porto's cod trade: the sort of ship used to carry cod was often linked with the provenance of cargo; the date a shipment arrived was usually indicative of cod category. A quick overview of the Redízima records shows that most shipments arrived in the fall, and that the type of ship used more often to transport cod to Porto was the navio (see Table 9 and Table 10). Though this is the Portuguese generic word for ship or vessel, the incidence of other ship types is indicative of the course taken by the master in question. For example, caravels were used primarily by Portuguese masters, almost all from Cascais (near Lisbon), and almost all between 1647-1658. Portuguese masters brought cod to Porto in navios only nine times over the entire period, plus another seven shipments in fragatas. Pataxos, on the other hand, were used especially by the French, who were noted 41 times, compared to 21 for the English. The majority of English masters arrived in Porto in navios, 250 out of 289 recorded entries,<sup>44</sup> indicating that the navio was used

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tentative, but the available figures serve to illustrate some trends in the mode of transportation for Porto's cod. It is no coincidence that certain types of ships were associated with different groups of masters; the route and distance travelled, as well as the cod volume, were key factors in the choice of vessel.

<sup>44</sup> As Frédéric Mauro has pointed out, the navio is the most difficult ship to identify in Portuguese records for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Sometimes it merely referred to a basic ship, while other times navio was a heavy and slow vessel. He did not discuss the fragata, which was

probably as a sack ship.<sup>45</sup>

The type of ship used is a good indication of the distance travelled and the volume of merchandise aboard. For the Portuguese, caravellas and fragatas were usually adequate because Portuguese masters transported cod primarily along Portugal's coast. The English, on the other hand, carried cod across the North Atlantic where larger vessels such as navios were necessary. In cases where cod was brought from English ports, pataxos or sumaguas sometimes was adequate. Most French cargoes arrived from French ports, and thus they used pataxos nearly 50% as often as the navios.

The monthly distribution of cod arrivals is similarly representative of the different players in Porto's cod trade. As shown in Table 10, more cod entries were found for the months of October, November, and December. That was also the time when most English cargoes arrived in Porto. The English furnished Porto's vento cod, while the French dealt primarily

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probably a frigate, or escort-vessel, while the patacho was a two-masted, 100-ton ship, usually of Dutch origin. Navios and caravels were the most common ships on the Atlantic route. Mauro, Le Portugal et l'Atlantique, 37.

<sup>45</sup> One way the English fishery differed from that of other Europeans is that from the early start, English fish was carried to European markets and the Mediterranean in sack ships. The English used small vessels for the actual fishery, a size of 50-80 tons, and had a carrying fleet to transport the load from Newfoundland. See D.W. Prowse, A History of Newfoundland from the English, Colonial, and Foreign Records, Second Edition (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1896), 21-22.

in pasta cod, which they tended to take to Porto in the summer months.

Overall, 76% of the total cod volume entered in Porto from 1639-1682 consisted of vento, 23% was pasta, and refugo and other "ruined" cod amounted to only 1%. In nearly every year for which a Redízima book survived, the volume of vento cod was greater than the pasta and refugo combined (see Table 11). During the period under study, a total of 472,881 quintals of cod were registered in Porto. Table 12 offers a general breakdown of the two main cod categories, and the two major cod suppliers.

Clearly the English dominated the vento trade, while the French dealt more in pasta cod. The English carried a total of 265,681 quintals of cod to Porto between 1639-1682, of which 92% was vento, and 7% was pasta.<sup>46</sup> In fact, out of 275 English cod shipments found, 257 included vento. During the same period the French entered Porto's harbour with 103,108

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<sup>46</sup> All figures have been rounded off to the nearest whole number. Totals do not always add to 100% because they do not account for the refugo cod, which, given its minute quantity, does not warrant too much attention. Only 5,744 quintals of refugo (1.21% of total cod) arrived in Porto, most of it in English ships. English refuse fish was especially aimed for the slave market in Virginia and the West Indies, while "merchantable" cod was sold in European and Mediterranean markets. Daniel Vickers, "'A Known and Staple Commodity': Codfish Prices in Essex County, Massachusetts, 1640-1775," Essex Institute Historical Collections, Vol. 124, No. 3 (July, 1988), 190-193; Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 76-79.

quintals of cod, 63% of which was pasta, and 36% was vento.<sup>47</sup> But although French masters brought in more pasta than the English, the latter controlled a greater share of the entire cod market in Porto.<sup>48</sup>

The English and French dominance of Porto's cod trade was visible throughout most of the entire period under study. As shown in Table 13, only occasionally did English or French annual totals fall below amounts for "other/unknown ports". The "year count" column represents the number of ship entries registered that year.<sup>49</sup> This is followed by the total volume of cod (vento, pasta, and refugo combined) handled in Porto that corresponding year, the total handled by English masters/merchants, and the total attributed to the French.

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<sup>47</sup> Porto's market contradicts Harold Innis' contentions that French small fish from the Petit Nord went to the Mediterranean, large green cod went to Paris, large dry cod went to Spain and Portugal, and medium dry cod was for home markets. Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 127.

<sup>48</sup> Out of 688 cod entries found in the Cabido Redizima collection, nearly 200 did not provide adequate information on the nationality of masters or merchants, or the ship's point of departure, which largely accounts for 25% of the market not included in the above figures. Other minor participants in Porto's cod trade, such as the Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch, will be discussed later.

<sup>49</sup> From 1639-1682, a total of 688 cod entries were found with clearly-stated volumes of cod in quintals. The rest either did not specify the volume, or had it indicated in other forms, such as barrels or bundles. From 1680-1682, however, many entries were incomplete, often missing such pertinent data as unit prices. For this reason, the period 1639-1679 is considered more complete and will be used for more comprehensive analysis below.

The last column, "other/unknown ports", represents all cod brought into Porto by other participants and shipments for which the place of origin for the master/merchant was not indicated. The latter makes up the bulk of this column, especially in 1654 when the discrepancy was greatest.<sup>50</sup> The total cod volume in the "other/unknown port" section amounts to 103,313 quintals, or 22% of the total cod registered in Porto in this period. Entries with unspecified cod origin amounted to 71,637 quintals of cod, or 15% of the grand total. In other words, the Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch are known to have contributed a mere 6% of Porto's cod trade.

Early in the period it appears that Porto's cod trade was shared almost equally by the English and French. From 1639-1653 a total of 134,542 quintals of cod entered Porto, of which 52,397 quintals were English, and 50,932 quintals were French, or 39% and 38% respectively. The picture changed entirely after that, however. The only other time the French offered any real competition was in 1668-1670;<sup>51</sup> the rest of

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<sup>50</sup> For unknown reasons, the Cabido record keeper did not specify the place of origin for the master/merchant in nearly all entries in 1654, resulting in a total of 23,796 quintals of cod from "unknown" origins. Given the trend at the time, however, a sizeable share of that portion was probably brought into Porto by English masters, especially since most of it was vento cod. Arquivo Distrital do Porto (A.D.P.), Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1654, Cabido No. 134, f.140-f.161v.

<sup>51</sup> England joined the Triple Alliance in 1668 against France, and preparations for war probably affected the Newfoundland fishery.

the century belonged to England.

The English established control of a great portion of the herring and cod fishery in the seventeenth century, especially off Norway and Newfoundland. Much of this fish was exported to a number of European ports, especially to Spain, Portugal, and Italy.<sup>52</sup> In the first two decades of the seventeenth century the English developed the cod fishery off Newfoundland, New England, and the Gulf of Maine.<sup>53</sup> But although the English Newfoundland cod fishery was substantial already in the early seventeenth century, only after the 1650s,<sup>54</sup> and indeed in the eighteenth century, was the cod fishery considered a "more valuable source of wealth than all

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<sup>52</sup> Constantino Botelho de Lacerda Lobo, "Memória sobre a Decadência das Pescarias de Portugal," in Memórias Econômicas, IV, edited by José Luis Cardoso (Lisbon: Banco de Portugal, r.1991 [1812]), 245-246.

<sup>53</sup> New England's major market was Bilbao, but Innis claimed that Lisbon and Porto also received "little merchantable" fish from New England, while the "middling fish" went to the Canaries, Madeira, Fayal, and Jamaica; refuse was sent to Barbados and the Leeward Islands. English records hardly ever mention Portugal at this time, but he felt that the exclusion was perhaps due to the Spanish annexation which melted Portugal and Spain together. Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 52, 70-74, 118. Porto documents do not confirm that a lot of cod arrived in northern Portugal from New England.

<sup>54</sup> Keith Matthews claimed that by 1612 ships from Dartmouth were regularly trading Newfoundland cod in Portugal, but he did not elaborate, in "A History of the West of England-Newfoundland Fishery," Doctoral Thesis (Oxford University, 1968), 83.

the mines in the world."<sup>55</sup>

The number of cod shipments arriving in Porto fluctuated from year to year, depending on such factors as weather conditions, fish harvests, and war/piracy problems faced by the two major suppliers. Though neutral carriers and convoyed fleets minimized losses at sea, hostilities between two or more European nations often resulted in attacks on fishing vessels, which directly affected the supply of fish products. War also led to embargoes and impressment of fishing vessels, mariners, and fishers.<sup>56</sup> The decline in the English cod fishery in the 1640s, for example, was probably due to new outbreaks of piracy and the English Civil War; by 1652 fewer than two hundred English ships made the trip to Newfoundland.<sup>57</sup> The Redfzima book for 1652 did not survive,

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<sup>55</sup> G. Chalmers, Opinions on Interesting Questions of Public Law and Commercial Policy (London, 1784), 65, as cited in Matthews, "History of the West of England," 4. One study showed that the Newfoundland fishery produced the following volumes of salted, dry cod: 1677, 24,330; 1697, 155,270; 1698, 272,618; 1699, 372,300; 1700, 312,000; 1701, 216,320; 1702, 81,340...and did not reach the high volumes of the late seventeenth century until the 1730s. R. Forsey and W.H. Lear, "Historical Catches and Catch Rates of Atlantic Cod at Newfoundland during 1677-1833," Canadian Data Report of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences 662, St. John's (July 1987), 4.

<sup>56</sup> Vickers, "'A known and staple commoditie': Codfish Prices in Essex County, Massachusetts, 1640-1775," Essex Institute Historical Collections, Vol. 124, No. 3 (July 1988), 190-191.

<sup>57</sup> The number of English ships engaged in the Newfoundland fishery for the first three decades of the seventeenth century range from 150 to 600 annually, depending on the source.

but in 1650 the English carried only 1,106 quintals of cod to Porto, compared to more than 10,000 quintals the previous year. The French, in the meantime, had little problem bringing 7,019 quintals of cod to Porto in 1650, one of the few times that they surpassed the English by a wide margin (see Table 13).

The English cod trade in Porto declined significantly in the 1660s.<sup>58</sup> In 1666, for example, only one English vessel arrived in Porto with cod, carrying 361 quintals of vento and 275 quintals of pasta.<sup>59</sup> This is not surprising given that only 10 English fishing vessels went to Newfoundland that year.<sup>60</sup> What is surprising is that the French did not replace the English as cod suppliers in Porto at this time. Not only did the French send a mere 190 quintals of cod to Porto in 1666, they did not show up at all in the records in 1660, 1663, and 1664. It is not clear why the French dropped off from Porto so markedly at this time, for they were not at

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Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 69-70.

<sup>58</sup> Anglo-Dutch hostilities undoubtedly played their part in disrupting the cod fishery. English protectionist Navigation Acts, which aimed to promote national shipping and curtail Dutch supremacy in the carrying trade, were largely responsible for the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652-54), Second Anglo-Dutch War (1664-67), and Third Anglo-Dutch War (1672-78).

<sup>59</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1666, Cabido No. 149, f.100-f.100v.

<sup>60</sup> Matthews, "History of the West of England," 19.



war with the Netherlands and England till after 1665. Writing in about 1669, Nicolas Denys estimated that the number of French vessels engaged in the cod trade was between 200 and 250.<sup>61</sup> Keith Matthews asserted that the French experienced a "vigorous revival" of their cod fishery after 1658,<sup>62</sup> but if that was true, then they failed to take advantage of a relatively-open Porto market until the late 1660s.

The rise of the French fishery in the last quarter of the seventeenth century coincided with troubles on the English side; English participation declined from 250 ships and 20,000 fishers in 1640 to fewer than 100 vessels in 1680.<sup>63</sup> In 1678, the French had an estimated 300 vessels in the area, which declined by 1700, mainly due to wars, to 100 on the Banks and 20 on the west coast.<sup>64</sup> English observers compared catches in 1684 and the reports claimed that the French caught 300 quintals per boat whereas the English got 100. Yet this

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<sup>61</sup> Nicolas Denys, The Description and Natural History of the Coasts of North America (Toronto: Champlain Society, r.1908 [1669?]), 142-144, as cited in Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 88-89.

<sup>62</sup> Matthews, "History of the West of England," 189.

<sup>63</sup> Competition from the New England and French fishery, as well as the carrying trade, led to a decline in the Newfoundland cod fishery, but one observer even commented that there was a decrease in demand for fish in the "Romish countries" because of more leniency toward meat-eating during Lent and other fish days. Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 105-107.

<sup>64</sup> Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 127.

apparent competition between the French and English in Newfoundland waters is hardly visible in the Porto records. Porto officials might not have cared about the source of their cod, but English observers were keenly interested in what the French did. One English report stipulated that not only did the French catch more, but they also "victual cheaper, finish earlier, and get the first of the market, so they profit more from the trade than we."<sup>65</sup>

There was haste in arriving first in Newfoundland, in catching and preparing the fish, and in reaching European markets, for prices could vary from day to day, and the perennial early bird really caught the best price.<sup>66</sup> Cargoes arriving alone fetched higher prices than those arriving en masse. Not only was there less merchandise with which to compete, but also it would not be known how successful the fishery was that season. By October and November prices dropped because most ships arrived at that time.<sup>67</sup> This

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<sup>65</sup> Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 122. English observers complained that French fishing grounds off St. Pierre, Trepassey, St. Mary's, Colinet, and Placentia gave the French an advantage because cod "came in" earlier in the year than it did in the English south shore of the Avalon Peninsula. Matthews, "History of the West of England," 190.

<sup>66</sup> Matthews, "History of the West of England," 22.

<sup>67</sup> Charles de la Morandière, Histoire de la Pêche Française de la Morue dans l'Amérique Septentrionale (des origines à 1789), Tome I (Paris: G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1962), 277.

trend was observed in the Redízima records, as will be shown later. What is less apparent from the Cabido collection is the ostensible decline of the English cod fishery in the 1680s. Porto's records are far from complete for the last two decades of the seventeenth century, but the few sources that survived show fluctuations in English cod entries, not consistent deterioration. Porto's share of the English cod trade was probably not very significant and may not reflect broader trends. It is difficult to know where Porto would rank among English cod markets.<sup>68</sup>

Be that as it may, what Porto's records reveal is not an English decline but a change of English ports as the place of origin for masters and/or merchants involved in the cod trade. As Table 14 illustrates, the majority of the 289 entries attributed to the English had the shipmaster associated with an English port. Plymouth, Topsham, and London were the top three residences connected to English cod masters. The three combined for 148,837 quintals of cod registered in Porto during the period under study, making it 56% of the entire English volume, and 31% of all cod entering Porto.

Each major English centre had a part to play in Porto's

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<sup>68</sup> The 16,085 quintals of cod brought into Porto by English ships in 1681 was only approximately 7% of that year's catch, if, according to Keith Matthews, the English averaged around 220,000 quintals annually in the late seventeenth century, in "History of the West of England," 191.

cod trade at different times in the seventeenth century. Plymouth took the lead, with five entries in the 1640s,<sup>69</sup> 16 entries in the 1650s, 14 in the 1660s, and 22 arrivals in the 1670s. Plymouth's role declined in the 1680s, however, with only five recorded appearances. This decline is partly explained by the absence of receipt documents in the Cabido collection after 1682, but, significantly, Topsham masters numbered 22 in Porto in the 1680s, despite the incomplete documentation. Shipmasters from Topsham also entered Porto 24 times the previous decade, suggesting that Topsham dominated the trade in the latter part of the seventeenth century, while Plymouth had its heyday earlier. London's contribution to Porto's cod trade, on the other hand, was spread over the 40-year period with a more gradual increase toward the end of the seventeenth century, with 6 cod shipments in the 1640s, 8 in the 1650s, 11 in the 1660s, 10 in the 1670s, and 14 in the 1680s. Finally, though Whitstable was only ranked fourth among English towns supplying cod to Porto in the seventeenth century, masters from that region made a substantial contribution in the 1650s, with 20 cod shipments recorded. Dartmouth, too, sent 11 cod vessels to Porto at mid-century, and each of these two ports accounted for 10% of the English-

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<sup>69</sup> Of the 42 entries found connected to the English but for which no master origin was provided, 23 were recorded in the 1640s.

Porto cod trade.

This trend compares relatively well with Keith Matthews' research into the role of West Country ports in Newfoundland's cod fishery. His findings showed that Dartmouth and Plymouth were heavily involved in the cod fishery early in the first half of the seventeenth century, each outfitting 80 ships annually in the 1630s, but that both declined toward the end of the seventeenth century. Dartmouth especially had a dominant role in the trade until the War of the Grand Alliance (1689-1697), but it is possible that Dartmouth's connection to northern Portuguese ports was especially strong at mid-century. Significantly, a Dartmouth merchant house opened up in Viana in the 1650s. Some West Country ports lost their monopoly of the cod trade as London, Topsham, and Bideford involvement increased.<sup>70</sup>

The French trade with Porto was also based in certain specific ports (see Table 15). Out of 184 French vessels recorded from 1639-1682, 54 came from Les Sables d'Olonne, 39 from La Rochelle, and 22 from Bayonne. Another 30 entries were attributed to French masters for whom no port of origin was indicated. This unknown source was equal to 16% of France's entire cod volume for Porto, or 19,866 quintals of cod. The three major ports supplied Porto with 72,304

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<sup>70</sup> Matthews, "History of the West of England," 60-62, 73, 265.

quintals of cod, 70% of all cod from France, or 15% of all cod in Porto. Interestingly, though the French specialized in pasta overall, one particular port dealt more in vento. Out of the 18,663 quintals of cod originating from La Rochelle, 16,483 quintals were vento, or 88% of all cod from La Rochelle.<sup>71</sup>

Shipmasters from Les Sables d'Olonne had little to do with vento. A total of 47,279 quintals of their contribution, or 97%, consisted of pasta cod only. Olonne contributed 47% of France's overall cod exports to Porto, but its share of France's pasta exports to Porto was 72%. With an ample supply of salt at its doorstep, Olonne concentrated on and, indeed, dominated France's wet fishery during the entire seventeenth century.<sup>72</sup>

Porto's Redizima records and de la Morandière's findings on the early French cod fishery do not match in one key point: the period when French ports were more dominant. De la Morandière found that La Rochelle was the main French Atlantic port involved in the Newfoundland cod trade in the early modern period, but toward the middle of the seventeenth

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<sup>71</sup> Like their Basque neighbours, since the mid-sixteenth century les Rochelais had been especially interested in the dry fishery. De la Morandière, Histoire de la Pêche Française, 249-250.

<sup>72</sup> De la Morandière, Histoire de la Pêche Française, 296-300.

century it began to decline as les Sables d'Olonne and Nantes rose in importance.<sup>73</sup> The Cabido books show the opposite: Olonne masters were mostly visible in Porto's harbour from 1647-1668, while La Rochelle masters were in Porto primarily from 1669-1676.<sup>74</sup> This may suggest that port histories and national histories follow distinct patterns.

Interestingly, though, like the English, Olonne's masters preferred the navio. Only four of them are known to have travelled to Porto in pataxos, and one in a fragata. With five Olonne entries not specifying the type of ship, the navio showed up 44 times out of 54 Olonne entries. In fact, the Olonne navio brought 42,003 quintals of pasta to Porto, compared to 1,052 quintals by the fragata, and 554 quintals in the pataxo. Olonne's preference for the navio suggests that many of its cod shipments arrived in Porto directly from outside Olonne. Not surprisingly, therefore, cod brought to Porto by Olonne masters was often described as having arrived

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<sup>73</sup> De la Morandière, Histoire de la Pêche Française, 248.

<sup>74</sup> Porto was clearly not a major market for French cod, however. In fact, although Les Sables d'Olonne dominated France's cod trade in Porto, its share was only 10% of all cod registered in Porto. Still, de la Morandière's evidence had some serious gaps. An inventory of 1664 indicated 74 ships involved in the Newfoundland cod fishery from Olonne, while in 1698 Olonne sent 80 ships to Newfoundland, most doing two trips in a year, and some even three. De la Morandière, Histoire de la Pêche Française, 296-300.

from the "banco" or "terra nova".<sup>75</sup> Cod shipments from La Rochelle masters were never specifically connected with Newfoundland. To be fair, these ships were not associated with any specific place at all, but given that masters from La Rochelle entered Porto 20 times in navios, and 16 times in pataxos, shipmasters from La Rochelle probably departed directly from France to Porto more often than those from Les Sables d'Olonne.

Decade by decade, some trends in Porto's cod trade are more obvious (see Table 16). For example, during the first decade under study, 1639-1649, 148 vessels entered Porto with cod, bringing a total of 115,988 quintals, or 25% of the grand total for the 40-year period. The cod composition during that decade consisted of 58% vento, 40% pasta, and 2% refugo. The following decade, 1650-1659, more vessels arrived, bringing more cod. The most significant change, however, was that 73% of the decade's total was vento, whereas pasta dropped to 25% of the market. In the 1660s the shift was even greater. Though only 111 vessels arrived with cod, 78% of their cargo was vento, while only 20% was pasta. The last decade for which relatively complete records exist shows the most

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<sup>75</sup> See, for example, A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1655, Cabido No. 135, f.143v; Cabido No. 140 (1657), f.145; Cabido No. 142 (1658), f.145v; Cabido No. 143 (1659), f.143-f.143v; Cabido No. 176 (1668), f.103-f.104; Cabido No. 153 (1669), f.105v-f.106.



dramatic discrepancy between vento and pasta volumes. A total of 149 vessels arrived between 1670-1679, with 93,806 quintals of cod, of which 92% was vento, and only 8% was pasta. Since vento was primarily controlled by the English, it is fair to say that the French were largely outmarketed as the century progressed.

Finally, monthly statistics for cod entries in Porto serve to further illustrate the propensity of certain cod categories during different times of the year. As Table 17 demonstrates,<sup>76</sup> October was an especially busy month for the vento trade, making up 95% of all cod registered that month, or 126,488 quintals. Approximately 35% of all vento registered in Porto arrived in October alone. Porto residents were also less likely to see pasta in September, November, and December, when more than 80% of the cod arriving in Porto was vento. These four months combined accounted for 242,339 quintals of all vento registered in Porto, or 67% of all vento. Not surprisingly, the English dominated the cod trade at this time of the year, controlling 77% of the vento cod during October, and 72% during all four autumn months.

Pasta, on the other hand, was more abundant in June,

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<sup>76</sup> The present discussion does not take into account the cod amounts found under the "other/unknown" column, for reasons already discussed. Furthermore, it should be noted that some entries were not properly dated, resulting in the corresponding amounts along the "o" month line.

July, and August, when 64-75% of the cargoes arriving in Porto consisted of pasta cod. Pasta shipments during the summer months totalled 64,945 quintals, or 61% of all pasta registered in Porto, of which the French brought 57,778 quintals, or 89% of all pasta. It appears, therefore, that the cod traffic in Porto's harbour was specialized according to the time of the year. French and English masters seldom had contact with one another, given that many of them arrived in Porto at different times of the year. Though sometimes vessels brought both cod categories,<sup>77</sup> the bulk of each cargo was usually of one type or the other.

Porto's cod trade is easier to examine than that of most other Portuguese ports not only because of the Cabido collection but also due to the survival of health inspection records from the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At a time when the spread of infectious diseases was a serious threat to many communities, municipal authorities ordered inspections of incoming ships as a means of ensuring that nothing or no one posing a health risk would enter Porto's harbour. The health inspection books and the Cabido church collection cover almost the same period, and consequently they can complement each other. Matching cod entries in the

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<sup>77</sup> A total of 110,191 quintals of vento and 21,910 quintals of pasta shared vessel space. The combined amount of 132,101 quintals represents 28% of all cod registered in Porto from 1639-1682.

Redízima series with the Visitas leads to a more complete picture of Porto's cod trade. Church officials had a vested interest in recording volumes and market values, while health authorities were primarily concerned with the provenance of incoming vessels; details found in one source can sometimes fill a gap in the other.

On the surface, the two collections appear quite similar; both begin in the 1570s but provide little information for the sixteenth century, and both have significant gaps in their chronology. The Redízima unit has a hiatus from 1591-1639, while the Visitas has nothing from 1600-1657.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, the Cabido series does not have books for 1662, 1665, 1671, and 1672; the same is true for the Visitas, except for 1672. In that year, Porto health inspectors visited 24 vessels carrying cod. Although the cod volume was unfortunately not recorded, the sheer number of vessels is some indication that a sizeable amount of cod entered Porto that year. The Visitas also showed only six cod vessels inspected in 1673, an enormous drop from the previous year. The only existing Cabido volume for 1673 is a Despacho, or dispatch, and without a receipt book no comparison can be made with the Visitas. Health inspection records serve to confirm some of the

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<sup>78</sup> Books for these periods are missing from both collections, suggesting that perhaps the two series were at one point stored together from whence some volumes disappeared.

findings already discussed in connection to the Cabido series; they also enhance our understanding by providing some information about Porto's cod trade for the last two decades of the seventeenth century when church records are less prolific."<sup>9</sup>

Since Newfoundland and fish in general were not considered high risk as sources of contagious diseases, cargoes of cod were less prone to be rejected by health inspectors. Cod shipments that did not arrive in Porto directly from Newfoundland, however, were subjected to more scrutiny, and spoiled cod was rejected regardless of place of origin. On 25 October 1660, for example, a recently-arrived load of cod was deemed rotten, and the master was told to throw it out to sea. On 8 November officials ordered that an announcement be made throughout Porto that no one get rotten cod from ships off the coast, unless they wished to face a fine of 6,000 reis or 20 days in jail, and that a search take

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<sup>9</sup> Not all entries in one document match those found in another; sometimes the Redízima has cod entries not found in the Visitas, and vice versa; not all pertinent information corresponds, such as dates, names, and place of origin, and often health inspectors did not properly identify the cargo. For some examples of these discrepancies, see J.A. Pinto Ferreira, Visitas de Saúde às Embarcações Entradas na Barra do Douro nos Séculos XVI e XVII (Porto: Câmara Municipal do Porto, 1977), 154-155, 162-163, 168-169, 172-189; A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1675, Cabido No. 158, f.100-f.104; Cabido No. 159 (1676), f.109v-f.111v.

place of homes and shops suspected of having said cod.<sup>80</sup> Another cargo of cod was rejected on 16 February 1695, and a shipment of herring and cod was deemed inedible in 1698.<sup>81</sup> Redízima records, too, occasionally referred to a cod cargo classified rotten and thus thrown out to sea, though sometimes only a portion was rejected. On 24 May 1658, for instance, a vessel from London carrying 1,960 quintals of vento had its load diminished by 100 quintals which was found to be rotten.<sup>82</sup>

An especially interesting reference involved a shipment of alleged "unsavoury" fish, suggesting that politics played some role in the business. On 5 July 1698, following a complaint from the public of a bad smell emanating from 49 barrels of herring and one of pasta cod, officials had one barrel of herring opened and had three herring cooked. It was found that the loin of the herring was edible, while the rest of the fish was unfit to be sold to the public. Meanwhile,

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<sup>80</sup> The provenance is not known. Pinto Ferreira, Visitas de Saúde, 43. Apparently officials recognized varying degrees of "rotteness". On 19 June 1653, for example, a cargo of vento cod was priced at 1,300 reis per quintal, whereas in 26 June pasta was priced at 1,540 reis per quintal. The vento had a low value "per ser roim & podre", or awful and rotten, but not too rotten for resale. See, A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1653, Cabido No. 132, f.144.

<sup>81</sup> Pinto Ferreira, Visitas de Saúde, 43, 74.

<sup>82</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1658, Cabido No. 142, f.143v. See also, Cabido No. 138 (1656), f.151, f.151v; Cabido No. 143 (1659), f.141.

the barrel of pasta cod had 37 cod in it, all were deemed unfit and thrown into the river. The English consul petitioned city officials stating that the herring was acceptable in his homeland, and thus wanted permission to have them returned to England. He was allowed to do this, as long as the departure took place in front of town officials. Though the English palate, or lack thereof, is world renowned, there was likely more at stake than a few smelly herring. The English consul complained that there was no ship to return to England, and requested a licence to take leave for another port, outside of Portugal. This was granted and they were to depart within 15 days. If the fish were found in Porto after the deadline, it was to be thrown into the river.<sup>83</sup> It appears that when foreign vessels were inspected, the consulate representing the nation in question usually accompanied health officials aboard ship,<sup>84</sup> and it must have been a serious business indeed. There was probably a lot of pressure put on Portuguese officials to expedite the process, for on 10 March 1684 a municipal order was passed in Porto recommending that the utmost brevity be exercised during

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<sup>83</sup> Pinto Ferreira, Visitas de Saúde, 78-79.

<sup>84</sup> On 12 June 1677 Porto health officials quarantined the passengers of the "Fortune" from London because the ship had contact with the Moors. The English consul was not present at the time but was notified immediately. Pinto Ferreira, Visitas de Saúde, 59-60.

visits to foreign ships.<sup>85</sup>

Out of approximately 2,000 ships visited by Porto health inspectors from 1577-1698, at least 460 ships carried cod. Often cargoes included other merchandise, however, especially those ships not coming directly from Newfoundland. Not surprisingly, the Visitas indicate that most cod entering Porto was controlled by the English. In fact, out of the 460 cod entries, 320 were carried by English vessels. Also in keeping with the Cabido findings, the Visitas show the English bringing more vento than pasta, or pasta and vento together. Though often health inspectors did not stipulate the type of cod, vento was still mentioned more often than pasta.<sup>86</sup> The English, for example, were recorded 126 times with a vento cargo, and only seven with pasta, plus 14 mixed cargoes of vento and pasta. Consequently, the Visitas show the English arriving in Porto particularly in the fall and winter: September, 27 entries; October, 101; November, 57; December, 41; January, 23; February, 12; March, 28. Their presence declined markedly during the spring and summer, with 10 in April, 6 in May, 5 each in June and July, and 15 in August.

None of the above contradicts the Cabido findings, but

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<sup>85</sup> Pinto Ferreira, Visitas de Saúde, 43.

<sup>86</sup> This would not have been important to their mission, whereas Cabido church officials had a vested interest in specifying the category, for the unit price was different for each type of cod.

the Visitas provide some information otherwise unavailable from the Redizima records. The Visitas complement the Redizima by showing the English presence in Porto well into the 1680s and 1690s, whereas the latter collection waned toward the end of the 1670s. In fact, health inspection records are more complete for the last three decades of the seventeenth century, showing 102 English cod shipments in the 1670s, 87 in the 1680s,<sup>87</sup> and 106 in the 1690s, as shown in Table 18.<sup>88</sup> One of the things that we learn from these records is that at least some cod arrived in Porto even when its main supplier was at war. Keith Matthews maintained that no English fishing ship left for the Newfoundland fishery for the first three years of King William's War (1689-1697),<sup>89</sup> but the English entered Porto's harbour carrying cod at least 12 times in 1691, most likely in "sack" ships.

Health officials usually indicated Terra Nova when the cod shipment came directly from Newfoundland to Porto; when the point of departure was somewhere else, or there had been a stopover on the way, this was duly noted. As a result of

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<sup>87</sup> The Visitas collection has numerous gaps for the 1680s, but especially in the 1660s with nothing surviving from 1661-1672.

<sup>88</sup> This table represents shipments with specific mention of cod and associated with the English, whether in connection to the ship/master, or merchant, or both.

<sup>89</sup> Matthews, "History of West of England," 19.



this fairly consistent record keeping, we know that English cod almost always came directly from Newfoundland. Out of 320 English vessels inspected for which a place of origin was located, 260 or 81% came from Newfoundland. The next most common point of departure for English masters carrying cod to Porto was Plymouth, with 26 noted; New England showed up 9 times. Sometimes the official noted the place of residence for the master coming from Newfoundland, and in this case Topsham and London were the two major centres.

The French differed from the English in this respect. Out of 87 French entries located, 78 came to Porto from French ports, with Bayonne, Nantes, Bordeaux, and La Rochelle topping the list.<sup>90</sup> Of course the French presence in Porto was limited in comparison to the English, as Table 19 illustrates. The Visitas paint a picture similar to the one found in the Cabido records; the French were greatly outnumbered by the English in Porto throughout most of the second half of the seventeenth century. The limitation with the Visitas collection is especially visible here, for they showed that

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<sup>90</sup> A possible explanation for this difference between the French and the English lies in the type of cod each respective nation sent to Porto. The English vento or merchantable cod was dried in Newfoundland and thus could be transported directly to Porto. The French pasta or green cod came from the Grand Banks and was probably first taken to French ports where it was properly treated before heading for Porto. La Rochelle specialized in vento or dry cod, however, yet according to health inspection records, 12 French ships brought cod to Porto from La Rochelle.

only in 1680 and 1681 did the French have a relatively prosperous share of Porto's cod trade. Yet the Cabido records tell a different story, showing a steady flow of French vessels in Porto in the 1640s, and an especially strong presence in 1669 and 1670, when French masters entered Porto's harbour 18 and 22 times, respectively (see Table 13). No Visitas records survived for those years, however, which serves to underscore the need for caution when using either of these sources for blanket generalizations.<sup>91</sup>

Finally, a notable distinction between the Visitas and the Cabido series is that the latter provided unit prices for incoming cod shipments. This vital piece of information was not always clearly stipulated in the Cabido records, but usually church officials noted the given price for each category of cod dealt with individually.<sup>92</sup> In Porto, cod was

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<sup>91</sup> Health inspectors made two references only to Olonne cod masters, one in 1681 and another in 1682, but we know from Cabido sources that at least 54 Olonne entries were registered in the seventeenth century, 32 of which took place in the 1640s and 1650s - again, when the Visitas unit is especially scarce. Furthermore, both Harold Innis and Charles de la Morandière claimed that the French cod fishery actually increased in the last two decades of the seventeenth century, with the latter citing 80 vessels from Olonne in 1698. Though Porto was certainly not France's only market, it received more French cod than the Visitas indicate. Pinto Ferreira Visitas de Saúde, 272-273, 282-283; De la Morandière, Histoire de la Pêche Française, 295-296; Innis, The Cod Fisheries, 105, 122.

<sup>92</sup> It must be stressed once again that the Cabido record keeper was merely concerned with the unit price for the dízima amount of cod - that is, the portion set aside for the crown and church, and which was auctioned off to the highest bidder.

sold in reis per quintal at the wholesale level, regardless of category.<sup>93</sup> It is not known whether this system was used in all other Portuguese ports, though standard weights and measures were not in place in most of western Europe. In Marseille, for example, dry cod was sold by weight, usually in quintals, which equalled 100 pounds;<sup>94</sup> in Dieppe and Honfleur, on the other hand, green cod was sold by the fish.<sup>95</sup>

Price fluctuations were of course numerous, especially with vento cod, but they remained fairly steady until the

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It is not clear whether this same unit price was applicable to the remainder of the cod shipment. Unfortunately, because the Cabido entry series is seriously lacking for the 1680s and 1690s, and the Visitas provides no price units for registered cargo, cod prices for the last two decades of the seventeenth century remain unknown.

<sup>93</sup> Only a few exceptions were found where the monetary system applied was the cruzado and cod was referred to in barrels or bundles. See, A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1643, Cabido No. 118, f.143v-f.144; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.149; Cabido No. 124 (1648), f.141; Cabido No. 135 (1655), f.153v.

<sup>94</sup> Earl J. Hamilton, too, concluded that one quintal was equal to 100 pounds, in American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain, 1501-1650 (New York: Octagon Books, r.1965 [1934]), 176-177, but Daniel Vickers had one quintal equal to 112 pounds in his study on the cod fishery in New England, "'A known and staple commoditie'," 118, 194.

<sup>95</sup> De la Morandière, Histoire de la Pêche Française, 196-197.

early 1660s (see Table 20),<sup>96</sup> when an increase in prices occurred. In 1660 the average vento quintal cost 3,027 réis, and the price remained over 3,000 réis per quintal for the next 20 years, with the exception of 1676 and 1677, when prices dropped to 2,625 and 2,487 réis per quintal respectively.<sup>97</sup> Price movements followed the general trend of supply and demand. Thus, the 1660s was a decade of relatively low volumes of cod entering Porto, both from English and French sources (see Table 13), and this is also when some of the highest average cod prices were found. In 1660 the price of vento cod ranged from 2,800 to 3,200 réis per quintal, but in 1661 it began at 4,060 réis per

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<sup>96</sup> Given that it only amounted to 1% of the total cod in Porto during the entire period, refugo cod will not be considered in the following discussion. The records indicate that refugo was more often than not vento gone bad, and its appearance offers some indication of the preponderance of vento to rot. Comparing the refugo numbers to that of vento, however, clearly shows that vento, for the most part, made its destination safe and sound. Refugo showed up in the records 15 times only, for a total of 5,744 quintals, and all between 1639-1666. It is not clear why no refugo was found in the later period. Either preparation techniques or salting methods improved by the 1660s to the extent that very little cod deteriorated, or officials were more vigilant about detecting unsavoury cod.

<sup>97</sup> Between 1660 and 1679 there was a gap of six years for which no Cabido Redizima records exist. Furthermore, large volumes of vento cod came into Porto between 1680 and 1682, with 19,198 quintals, 19,371 quintals, and 11,545 quintals respectively, yet no prices were recorded for these entries.

quintal.<sup>98</sup> Because no port registry survived for 1665 it is difficult to know whether any cod arrived in Porto that year, but probably not, or it could not have been very much; the price of vento skyrocketed in 1666 and 1667, when it was priced at more than 5,000 réis per quintal.<sup>99</sup>

The volume of cod entering Porto in the 1660s was relatively small in comparison to other years, and this must have led to the increase in prices witnessed at that time. Though local factors probably played a minor role in a trade so international, Porto consumers were affected by price swings in incoming cod supplies regardless of the reasons behind the price change. In 1668, for instance, vento prices in Porto ranged from 3,400 to 4,000 réis per quintal,<sup>100</sup> and in 1669 they jumped to 4,500 réis per quintal and 5,300 réis per quintal.<sup>101</sup> The lowest price paid for a quintal of vento was in 1654, at 800 réis; the highest was in 1669, when a

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<sup>98</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1661, Cabido No. 145, f.143v.

<sup>99</sup> Vento prices averaged between 4,550 réis per quintal in May to 5,200 réis per quintal earlier in the year (date not provided), while in 1667 vento prices varied from 5,000 réis per quintal in January, to 4,450 réis per quintal in December. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1666, Cabido No. 149, f.100, f.104v; Cabido No. 150 (1667), f.100-f.105.

<sup>100</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1668, Cabido No. 176, f.100-f.106. In the A.D.P. catalogue for the Cabido series, No. 176 is dated 1688, but it should really be 1668.

<sup>101</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1669, Cabido No. 153, f.103, f.104v.

quintal cost 5,300 réis.<sup>102</sup> The average vento volume was 777 quintals, with the minimum at 11 quintals, and the maximum of 3,721 quintals.

Pasta, the next most common category of cod found in Porto, enjoyed fairly stable prices throughout the period under study. Its cargoes were usually smaller than vento, with the minimum at 4 quintals, a maximum of 2,277 quintals, and an average of 402 quintals. The lowest pasta price noted was 600 réis per quintal, in 1678, and the highest was 2,660 réis per quintal.<sup>103</sup> Given the extent of price variation and fluctuation, annual averages are rather tentative, but it is fair to say that vento was sold, on the average, from 1639-1679,<sup>104</sup> at a price between 2,500-3,500 réis per quintal; the overall average cost for pasta cod was 1,324 réis per quintal.

Except for the obvious cases of high prices at times of shortages in Porto's cod market, fluctuation patterns are not always easy to explain with the Cabido records. In general, prices for pasta were higher in early summer, and prices for vento were highest in early fall. This trend is in keeping

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<sup>102</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1669, Cabido No. 153, f.104v. The 800 reis per quintal must have applied to inferior vento, though the records do not specify.

<sup>103</sup> The race is on to find this damned source...

<sup>104</sup> As noted earlier, more complete records were found for the period 1639-1679, including entries with specific unit prices for a quintal of cod.

with the accepted theory that ships reaching a market first got the best prices for their cargo. But although the overall picture fits this general pattern, specific price changes are often difficult to understand. Part of the problem is that Cabido dating is not very reliable as an indication of when ships actually arrived in Porto. Date comparisons between the Visitas and the Redízima reveals that there was always a wide gap between the two. Undoubtedly the health inspection took place prior to any other business, while the Cabido date represents the date of unloading, or more likely, the day Cabido scribes updated church books.<sup>105</sup>

Questions about Cabido dating notwithstanding, the collection offers enough consistent price trends to allow for some sound analysis. Sampling four years, 1648, 1658, 1668, and 1678 provides a basis for comparison of price variations. As usual, however, it is the data that does not fit the general pattern which generates more interest. In 1648, for

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<sup>105</sup> The most blatant example of date discrepancies was found for late 1674 when Cabido records showed 15 cod entries, involving 10 vessels, all under the date heading of 1 October. The Visitas, however, had three of these ships in September, and the rest were inspected the following month, including five on 29 October. It is not likely that Cabido officials noted the cargo before a vessel passed the health inspection. It is possible that health inspectors wrote their reports sometime after the visit, but the time lapse could not have been very long. The most logical explanation is that church officials did not always bother to note the exact date of a transaction, but merely added entries to a previously dated page.

example, vento prices stabilized in October, while the lone vento shipment in September received a higher price. Pasta, too, enjoyed higher prices in the summer, and then dropped significantly in the fall (see Table 21). What remains a mystery about 1648, however, is that one shipment of 3,075.5 quintals of vento, dated 22 April, was divided into ten separate entries, the dízima of which went to the same merchant, but five loads were priced at 1,850 réis per quintal, while the other five went for 2,400 réis per quintal. No explanation was provided for this price differentiation, though the various prices probably reflected differences of quality within the vento grade.

The general pattern of higher prices for vento in the early fall was not observed for 1658 (see Table 22). In fact, the highest rate for the entire year was noted in the last entry for November. This trend is especially difficult to understand given that Porto received 23,536 quintals of cod that year, of which 21,988 quintals were vento. Clearly there was no shortage of vento cod in 1658. The data on pasta cod is also a bit strange for 1658 because none of it arrived in the summer. In 1668, however, pasta prices were significantly higher in July than in August (see Table 23). Vento prices remained high in November because little vento arrived in Porto in 1668. Of the total 9,915 quintals of cod registered that year, only 3,930 quintals were vento. This is of course



the year when England was at war with France, which would have disrupted the fishery.

Finally, in 1678 not enough pasta cod arrived in Porto to allow for any serious analysis, but vento cod prices followed the general pattern of higher prices in early fall, followed by a drop in prices, with the lowest found in the last entry (see Table 24). The only surprise was one shipment of vento cod priced at 2,020 réis per quintal in October, when other shipments before and after it were priced at 4,000 réis per quintal. Again, the reason for the discrepancy is not known. One possible explanation is that the cod in question, though vento, was inferior somehow, perhaps leftover from the previous season. It is noteworthy that vento arriving in Porto during the winter and spring months was usually priced low. Some of it was probably what Keith Matthews called "winter fish", harvested in the autumn, dried over winter, and less popular when brought to market the following year.<sup>106</sup>

Porto cod prices do not deviate too far from other cod prices in western Europe in the seventeenth century, especially those found by Earl J. Hamilton for Valencia and Seville. Hamilton concluded that in general, prices for commodities, including animal products and fish, rose steadily from 1560-1650 in Spain. Fish prices rose more than other

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<sup>106</sup> Matthews, "History of the West of England," 22.

commodities during 1635-1650, a trend Hamilton blamed on conflicts with France (1635) and Portugal (1640) that may have disrupted the usual flow of fish supplies to some major Spanish ports.<sup>107</sup> Fish prices were abnormally high at mid-century but they dropped below the prices of most other commodities between 1652-1657, though Hamilton failed to explain this phenomenon.<sup>108</sup> From 1658-1668, however, and again in 1679, fish prices rose dramatically, only to fall again between 1680-1683. The price of fish, like that of other imported commodities, was vulnerable to monetary inflation and deflation.<sup>109</sup>

Not much is known about prices in Porto for other commodities in the seventeenth century, rendering a comparison extremely difficult. According to the Cabido records, however, cod prices were not "abnormally high at mid-century", at least not in comparison with other years. As was the case in Spain, cod prices in Porto rose significantly at the end of the 1650s, but unlike Spain, cod prices in Porto never fell back very much after that. Cod prices in 1678 and 1679 rose significantly in Porto, however, just as Hamilton found in Spain. No cod prices were noted in the remaining Cabido

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<sup>107</sup> Hamilton, American Treasure, 230.

<sup>108</sup> Earl J. Hamilton, War and Prices in Spain, 1651-1800 (New York: Russell & Russell, r.1969 [1947]), 175-176.

<sup>109</sup> Hamilton, War and Prices in Spain, 177.

records, unfortunately, so that there is no way of verifying whether they dropped again as it happened in Spain.<sup>110</sup>

Hamilton's conclusions dealt with fish prices in general, and not specifically with cod fish, but Porto's cod prices perhaps stabilized in the 1680s. Matthews suggested that there may have been a decline in demand for cod in the 1680s for in 1684 the price for cod was 10 shillings per quintal, despite the low catches that year. Prices for merchantable cod had been 11-12 shillings per quintal between 1675 to 1681.<sup>111</sup> Given that a large number of English ships entered Porto with cod in the early 1680s, according to health inspection records (see Table 19 ), Porto's prices might have been affected by this general decline. Part of the problem in detecting a "trough pattern" in Porto's cod trade in the seventeenth century is that not enough is known about cod prices in Porto during a crucial time, when cod prices are supposed to have really slipped, in the late seventeenth and

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<sup>110</sup> Referring to New Castile and Andalusia, Hamilton concluded that "as imported commodities, fish and spices were depressed in value by exchange appreciation following the monetary deflation in 1680," but it is less clear whether this was also true in the rest of the Iberian peninsula. See Hamilton, War and Prices in Spain, 177.

<sup>111</sup> Matthews, "History of West of England," 192. Unfortunately the prices quoted are for Newfoundland purchases, not market prices paid in Portuguese ports.

early eighteenth centuries.<sup>112</sup>

Whether cod prices rose or fell, two factors remained constant in Porto's cod trade in the seventeenth century. First, the bulk of Porto's cod trade was managed by the English merchant community. Second, the crown and church received their tithes, and though the annual collections obviously varied according to the amount of cod in the market, the percentage of cod revenues was always significant in comparison to revenue from other fish sources (see Table 25). For the 35 years for which complete revenue figures exist, cod made up more than 50% of the totals in 28 out of 35 years, and for 19 years the cod portion was 80% or more. The percentage of cod revenues was only significantly lower than amounts from other fish sources during the years of low volumes of cod entering Porto, such as in 1666. Unfortunately, incomplete records for the period after 1679 prevent a similar analysis for the rest of the seventeenth century. The last four Redízima books available, 1679-1682, provide little information about the recorded cod shipments. Some cargoes in 1679 were properly noted, but most lack pertinent details, such as unit prices, especially from 1680-1682. All that is

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<sup>112</sup> Vickers, "'A known and staple commoditie'," 188-190. Given that this study deals specifically with cod from New England, there may be some question about its applicability to Porto's cod trade. Very little cod from New England is known to have reached Porto between 1639-1682, or in the latter two decades of the seventeenth century.

clear from these last entries is that substantial volumes of vento cod entered Porto in the early 1680s, most of which was brought in by English masters.<sup>113</sup> From 1683-1713, the Cabido Redfizima collection consists of Despacho books only. Fortunately, however, the dispatch series contains a fish revenue section at the end of each volume (see Table 26). Although it is not known what percentage of these annual revenues was from cod, there is no reason to suspect that the situation altered very much from the previous years.

Because prices quoted in the Cabido Redfizima collection are wholesale, and we do not know what retail prices were at the local market for the second half of the seventeenth century, it is impossible to gauge what profits Porto's English community enjoyed from cod trade. We know that large quantities of cod sometimes arrived in Porto, and that at times prices rose up to 5,300 réis per quintal, but what that meant for the merchant or the local consumer is difficult to determine. What is certain is that the cod trade was under

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<sup>113</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redfizima...1679, Cabido No. 163, f.109-f.110; Cabido No. 164 (1680), f.107v; Cabido No. 169 (1682), f.103v, for example. Ironically, the best information was found concerning a Topsham master whose vessel sank in Porto's bar, from which 397 quintals of vento and 4 quintals of pasta were salvaged. See Cabido No. 168 (1681), f.101v. See also the same volume, f.100, for an entry for vento from Bayonne, brought in by a Portuguese master, Manuel Pires Leitam, from Setubal, in his caravel, for a Portuguese merchant, Luis Dias Pereira. Cabido No. 168 (1681), f.100v. See also Pinto Ferreira, Visitas de Saúde, 254-255.

English control, from Newfoundland to Porto's wholesale market, especially in the second half of the seventeenth century. Not only were the French supplanted, but there was little room for any other contributors.

Both the Visitas and Redízima documents show a presence of other players in Porto's cod trade besides the French and English, but the role of Portuguese shipmasters, for example, was minimal, whether one consults the Redízima or Visitas. In the latter, only 15 references to Portuguese merchants/masters were found, only once was a Portuguese master noted carrying cod directly from Newfoundland to Porto, and even he resided in Plymouth.<sup>114</sup> Most Portuguese masters brought cod to Porto from Galician or French ports. The Visitas also showed the occasional ship from other nations carrying cod to Porto,<sup>115</sup> and though this presence was minor compared to the French and English, the few outsiders serve to highlight some of the

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<sup>114</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vezitas, Anno 1676, f.19v; as per Ferreira Pinto, Visitas de Saúde, 172-173.

<sup>115</sup> One of the strangest entries found in the Visitas connected to the cod trade was on 23 January 1658, at which time health inspectors noted that an English ship, the "Prosperidade", whose master was John Casman, brought pasta and vento cod from the "Vila de Genova". This was likely a ship involved in the Levant trade and the cod was probably originally sent to Genoa but could not be sold there. On 02 February 1673, the "Sao Francisco" brought cod from Terra Nova and Galicia, and it had an English and a Galician master. See, A.H.M.P., Livro das Vezitas, Anno de 1657, f.23, and Livro das Vezitas, Anno 1672, f.30, as per Ferreira Pinto, Visitas de Saúde, 114-115, 144-145.

intricacies in the cod route, as indicated in Table 27.<sup>116</sup>

Keith Matthews reported that in 1660 an Iberian fleet of 50 vessels fished north of Bonavista. Two decades later the Iberians were pushed even further north to St. Anthony's, where their fishery collapsed due to French and English privateers. Both Spain and Portugal, he concluded, did not return to Newfoundland until the nineteenth century.<sup>117</sup> The Iberians in question must have been mainly Spanish, for by the second half of the seventeenth century few Portuguese ventured out to Newfoundland. If they did, they never bothered bringing their catch to Porto. The few references to Portuguese masters bringing cod to Porto got their cargo from other parts of Portugal.

Cascais (just north of Lisbon) seems to have been the home base for most Portuguese vessels/masters involved in the seventeenth-century cod trade. One master from Cascais brought cod from Lisbon on 5 and 10 April 1657,<sup>118</sup> and

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<sup>116</sup> The Redizima series, too, is a testament to the occasional participation of a variety of shipmasters in the business. Though the French and English dominated Porto's cod trade in the seventeenth century, their control was not absolute. Church records revealed the occasional vessel/master from other parts of Europe venturing into Porto with cod shipments. See, for example, A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1653, Cabido No. 132, f.140, and Cabido No. 138 (1656), f.142.

<sup>117</sup> Matthews, "History of the West of England," 187-188.

<sup>118</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1657, Cabido No. 140, f.141.

another four Portuguese ships carried cod to Porto in 1658.<sup>119</sup> None of these cargoes was charged any duties because each master had papers showing prior payment in Lisbon. In one case, the master had papers from officials in Vila do Conde and in Lisbon. The records stated that the shipment came from Lisbon, but the caravel had already been to Vila do Conde as well, which is north of Porto. Whether it went to Vila do Conde to drop off some cod, pick up some more cod, or for other business, is difficult to know. In another case, only half the cargo was subject to duties in Porto because the master had paid duties for the other half in Faro, a port in the Algarve in southern Portugal. It is not clear, again, whether this master took cod from Lisbon (or Newfoundland) to Faro first, or whether he picked up the said cod in Faro.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1658, Cabido No. 142, f.140, f.142v, f.144v.

<sup>120</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1658, Cabido No. 142, f.144v. The origin of a ship/master does not necessarily prove that the nation in question was involved in the Newfoundland fishery. A ship from Stockholm, for example, brought 289.5 quintals of pasta to Porto in January 1658, but the master had picked up his load of cod and sardines in France. On the other hand, in 1664 a master from Rotterdam brought in a load of pasta from the "Banco da Terra Nova." Finally, in 1679 Porto received a cargo of "peixe de amburgo", fish from Hamburg, priced at 1,500 réis per quintal. It was definitely not vento cod, for that was valued at 4,000 réis per quintal at the time, but it was more expensive than the pasta, which was worth 800 réis per quintal in early 1679. See, A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1658, Cabido No. 142, f.140v; Cabido No. 147 (1664), f.102v; Cabido No. 163



Portuguese masters/vessels were absent from the Cabido records for the next fifteen years. Not until 1674 did they make another appearance, though Cascais/Lisbon was no longer their home base; one was from Masarellas, one from Porto, and another from Viana.<sup>121</sup> Unfortunately, the records did not indicate where the Portuguese masters got their cod, though it is doubtful they obtained it in Newfoundland. The master from Porto, for example, carried vento as well as pescados and herring,<sup>122</sup> which suggests that he did not arrive directly from the cod fishery. Furthermore, the master from Viana, António Fernandez Sisto, also brought vento to Porto in 1676 and 1678, and in both cases the cod came from La Rochelle.<sup>123</sup> The same may have been true of the 1674 shipment.

The limited extent of Portuguese involvement in the Newfoundland cod fishery in the seventeenth century is also reflected in the licences granted to pilots and shipmasters. From 1596-1648, a total of 543 names were found to have received such a licence, but only two of them received the

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(1679), f.101.

<sup>121</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1674, Cabido No. 157, f.90, f.91.

<sup>122</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1674, Cabido No. 157, f.91. See also Cabido No. 150 (1667), f.104, for reference to a master from Cascais with a load of sardines from England.

<sup>123</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1676, Cabido No. 159, f.109v; Cabido No. 162 (1678), f.111.

"Ofício de Mestre e Piloto das carreiras de Ilhas, Guiné, S. Tomé, Angola, Brasil, e Terra Nova"; Antonio Alvaes de Ordem, resident of Mondego, on 18 October 1607; and Gomes Rodrigues, resident in Setubal, on 21 May 1624.<sup>124</sup> Clearly, at least some Portuguese masters or pilots still pursued the Newfoundland cod fishery/trade at that time, though they were few indeed. It appears also that masters did not receive licences for one particular area only. In other words, a master associated with trade in Brazil, for example, may also have had some involvement with Newfoundland cod, especially in connection to exporting it to Brazilian markets, as shown in the last few volumes in the Cabido series.

In addition to the receipt books, the Cabido Redízima collection contains several volumes dealing with the dispatch of merchandise, especially for the latter part of the seventeenth century. The Despacho provided less detail than the Redízima, for the former merely noted the merchant's name and merchandise leaving Porto, with confusing information on the volume, and no indication on the value. Still, for purposes of this study, Despacho books offered some insight

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<sup>124</sup> The bulk of the pilot licences was for the Africa-Brazil trade. Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (A.N.T.T.), Livros das Ementas, Livro 8, f.226, and Livro 11, f.194. Mondego was perhaps Figueira da Foz do Mondego, or Buarcos, a coastal town south of Aveiro. Setubal is also a port town, just south of Lisbon. I am grateful to Amelia Maria Polonia da Silva for sharing this reference with me.

into Portuguese cod exports, particularly to Rio de Janeiro, Pernambuco, and Bahia (see Table 28).

The collection of Despacho books has large gaps, and not all existing volumes showed cod shipments for Brazil.<sup>125</sup> It is also difficult to quantify the volume of cod Porto exported to Brazil because of the variation in measuring units. Toward the end of the seventeenth century officials were more prone to indicate the volume in quintals, but in the earlier period cod shipments were noted in coartyrolas, barris, pipas, and a few other obscure units.<sup>126</sup> It is difficult to gauge, for instance, how much cod was in 68 coartyrolas<sup>127</sup> and 4

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<sup>125</sup> There are also Despacho books for 1650, 1656, 1657, 1667, 1668, 1673, 1676, and 1690, but no references to cod were found in them, though the search was cursory due to time constraints. The few existing volumes for the eighteenth century (1713-1798) revealed nothing either.

<sup>126</sup> In 1648, for example, cod shipments for Brazil were noted as follows: 15 cartolas, 1 quarto, 2 coartas, 19 cartollas, 4 coartallos, 1 tinso, 1 canostra, and 4 tonso. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1648, Cabido No. 125, f.61, f.64, f.72v, f.73v, f.74v, f.75v, and f.77. In 1652, three cod cargoes destined for Brazil were shipped as 13 quartos, 7 livros, 8 pipas. Cabido No. 130 (1652), f.40v, f.43, and f.44.

<sup>127</sup> In 1648 some equivalencies were noted, but enough discrepancies exist to necessitate caution. For example, one shipment of 6 coarterolas had 18 quintals of cod, or 3 quintals per coarterola; 10 coarterolas had 40 quintals, or 4 quintals per coarterola; and 3 coarterolas had 12 quintals of cod, or 4 quintals per coarterola. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1648, Cabido No. 125, f.73v, f.76v, f.77v. Yet at the same time, another entry stipulated that 3 cartolas had 8 quintals of cod. What was the difference between a coarterola, cartola, or quartola in the seventeenth century? Today a quartola is a cask, or small pipe, while a cartola is

barris.<sup>128</sup> Sometimes the cod volume was even more problematic to figure out because no specific measuring unit was provided at all, except for alguns coartos de bacalhau, or just bacalhau.<sup>129</sup>

Given the above-noted problems, and the sparsity of the Despacho documents, it is difficult to arrive at any definitive conclusions about cod exports to Brazil. The best that can be said about this branch of Porto's cod trade is that toward the end of the seventeenth century cod exports to Brazilian markets increased steadily, though this cannot be determined with absolute certainty. What is certain is that

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a barrel.

<sup>128</sup> There is some evidence that record keepers differentiated between a barril and a pipa, for one entry stipulated that a merchant shipped cod in 4 quartolas and 2 barris, as well as 2 pipas of olive oil. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1691, Cabido No. 179, f.106. The Portuguese pipa and barril both mean barrel or cask; an English barrel, however, measures approximately 30-40 gallons, while the pipe is the equivalent of two hogsheads, or approximately 105 gallons. In some cases, the volume was provided in the Despacho books for cod shipped in pipas, but unfortunately no such information was given for cargoes in barris, and even the pipas equivalencies varied, from 2-6 quintals per pipa. See Cabido No. 166 (1681), f.42, f.44, f.47, f.64, f.82; Cabido No. 170 (1682), f.170, f.198v; Cabido No. 171 (1683), f.100v, f.105v, f.117v, f.137v, f.145v, f.153v, f.160, f.175; Cabido No. 174 (1687), f.61v, f.78, f.85, f.115, f.195, f.196; Cabido No. 175 (1688), f.174. The latter consisted of two shipments of 20 pipas each, one weighing 90 quintals and the other 75 quintals. Clearly the weight depended on the type of cod (seldom stated) and the amount of cod in each pipa.

<sup>129</sup> Some coartos of cod, or just cod. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1647, Cabido No. 123, f.142.

few foreign names were found in these records, either as shipmasters or as merchants.<sup>130</sup> In the Brazilian cod trade, at least, the Portuguese played a major role.<sup>131</sup> Indeed, the 1642 and 1654 peace treaties between Portugal and England, which opened Portuguese overseas posts to English merchants, specifically reserved fish exports to Brazil to the Portuguese Brazil Company.<sup>132</sup> Many merchants noted in the Despacho

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<sup>130</sup> Samuel Palmer was one of the few English merchants registered with cod shipments for Pernambuco, though he dealt primarily with wine, rosin, grain, and other merchandise. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1696, Cabido No. 184, f.123-f.126v; Cabido No. 185 (1699), f.91v, f.92, f.99, f.100v, f.122, f.134, f.199v, for example. The Despacho books also include a section entitled "Navios pa o Norte", dealing with exports to northern Europe, the majority of which was connected to English masters from London and Bristol. Among the items listed were wine (vinho maduro), olive oil (azeite), vinegar, salt, raisins, and figs. "Navios pera Brazil", on the other hand, were especially loaded with wine, cloth, vinegar, and brandy (aguardente). See, for example, Cabido No. 188 (1702), f.165-f.167v.

<sup>131</sup> Portuguese merchants/masters also dominated the trade registered under "caravelas e mais embarcações da Costa" or coastal cargoes. One of the major items exported from Porto to other parts of Portugal was arcos de pyra, or barrel hoops, indicating that barrel making was a significant trade in the region. See, for example, A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1702, Cabido No. 188, f.165-f.167v. Strangely, though, no cod was found in this section which dealt with traffic along the Portuguese coast. Occasionally cod shipments were noted in a Despacho book in the section entitled "Titulo dos navios do Brazil", in a vessel headed for Aveiro, Lisbon, or the Algarve. It is not clear whether these were mere stopovers on the way to Brazil, or whether the cod in question was actually destined to those Portuguese ports. See Cabido No. 123 (1647), f.142-f.142v.

<sup>132</sup> A few references were found to a Companhia Geral, or General Company, in connection to cod exports to Brazil. See, A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1652, Cabido No.

books shipped an array of merchandise to Brazil along with a load of cod. For example, in 1655, Henrique Fernandez sent 106 cartolas of cod, as well as grain, iron, rosin, wool, and vinegar.<sup>133</sup>

Despite the presence of Portuguese names associated with the few cod exports to Brazil, one crucial factor remains constant throughout the second half of the seventeenth century: existing port records and health inspection certificates bear witness to the overwhelming presence of the English in Porto's cod trade. Their position was so dominant that church officials were obliged to adopt a separate accounting system for English shipments. Beginning with a cod entry on 23 October 1655, notes were added to the margin stating that henceforth half the dízima amount was recorded in the Cabido book, and the other half went in the Livro Novo.<sup>134</sup> No reasons were provided for this change, nor any indication of the whereabouts of this Livro Novo, or new book.

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131, f.47-f.48v; Cabido No. 133 (1653), f.41, f.45, and f.46. A couple of entries were also found on cod and beef del rei shipped to Brazil, but nothing else was provided to clarify these references to the king. See, Cabido No. 123 (1647), f.142, f.143.

<sup>133</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1655, Cabido No. 136, f.41, f.45, and f.47v.

<sup>134</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1655, Cabido No. 135, f.144v. The folio number for the new book where the other half was to be found was usually indicated, but not always.

Later in the same volume, a note indicated that "a metade vaj no livro dos ingreces novo,"<sup>135</sup> half goes in the new English book - and indeed, the new bookkeeping system applied to English fish cargoes only.<sup>136</sup> It is difficult to tell, however, whether this restructuring was due to English intervention, church reorganization, or whether it was mandated by the crown. Nor is it clear why after almost a decade,<sup>137</sup> record keepers dropped this system as abruptly and as mysteriously as it had started.<sup>138</sup>

Not only did the English dominate cod imports in Porto, they also maintained a strong presence in cod distribution in the city, at least wholesale. The English controlled the trade from Newfoundland to the local market, and even appropriated a large share of the fish trade in other species.

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<sup>135</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1655, Cabido No. 135, f.148v, f.153.

<sup>136</sup> In fact on 11 March 1659 an English vessel from Plymouth brought two separate cargoes of pasta cod, one for a Portuguese merchant, and another for an English merchant; only the latter was halved. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1659, Cabido No. 143, f.141.

<sup>137</sup> This splitting was noted in the Cabido books from 1655-1664. No volume for 1655 exists, and from 1666 forward, all cod dízima was treated equally, with everything recorded in the Cabido Redízima book.

<sup>138</sup> The Livro Novo was introduced at a time when the volume of English cod in Porto was at its highest, and ended when English cargoes had dropped dramatically. From 1655-1658, English masters brought into Porto 17,628, 11,112, 11,213, and 18,140 quintals of cod, respectively. By 1666, the volume was down to 636 quintals. See Table 13.

The only serious competition the English faced in Porto's cod trade was from the French. Little evidence exists showing the French stationed in Porto; they apparently brought in their cargo and left. Unfortunately, the records revealed little about possible disputes between the two rival nations.

One hint of Portuguese officials being called to mediate was found in the notarial records for 1703. The legal document referred to a French ship carrying cod from Terra Nova, but which had been captured by the English and brought to Porto. The same volume contains the protest submitted by the French crew in Porto.<sup>139</sup> The outcome of this complaint is not clear, but England could hardly have been too concerned about the incident. The records showed few references to French merchants in Porto, and the absence of Portuguese dealers became increasingly obvious as the century progressed. By the end of the seventeenth century the English mercantile community had found more than a home away from home in Portugal; English merchants enjoyed a status the natives could only envy. Thanks to privileges accorded to the English in the Anglo-Portuguese treaties of 1642, 1654, 1661, and 1703, Portugal became more than an economic colony. It was truly an English oasis.

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<sup>139</sup> A.D.P., Livro q ha deservir de nota...de Manuel Pedro Monteiro nesta side do porto...1703, Po. 2, No. 175, f.124-f.128, and f.140v-f.141v. I am grateful to P. Manuel Leao for sharing this reference with me.



Table 9:  
Types of Cod-Carrying Vessels  
in Porto, 1639-1679

<u>Ship Type</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>Total</u>
barco	1
caravella	21
chalapa	1
charrua	7
fragata	12
nao	13
navio	526
pataxo	78
selha	1
sumaquá	18

Table 10:  
Total Cod Shipments by  
Month in Porto, 1639-  
1679

<u>Month</u>	<u>Total</u>
Jan	36
Feb	34
Mar	42
Apr	45
May	27
Jun	34
Jul	56
Aug	51
Sep	50
Oct	155
Nov	101
Dec	61

SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1639, Cabido No. 114, f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 115 (1640), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 116 (1641), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 117 (1642), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 118 (1643), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 120 (1645), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.140-f.153; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.140-f.154; Cabido No. 124 (1648), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 128 (1650), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 132 (1653), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 134 (1654), f.140-f.161v; Cabido No. 135 (1655), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 137 (1655), f.100-f.101v; Cabido No. 138 (1656), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 140 (1657), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 142 (1658), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 143 (1659), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 144 (1660), f.120-f.123; Cabido No. 145 (1661), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 146 (1663), f.140-f.146; Cabido No. 147 (1664), f.100-f.104; Cabido No. 149 (1666), f.100-f.108v; Cabido No. 150 (1667), f.100-f.105v; Cabido No. 153 (1669), f.100-f.110; Cabido No. 154 (1670), f.90-f.99; Cabido No. 157 (1674), f.90-f.94; Cabido No. 158 (1675), f.100-f.104v; Cabido No. 159 (1676), f.107v-f.112; Cabido No. 161 (1677), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 162 (1678), f.110-f.130; Cabido No. 163 (1679), f.100-f.110.

NOTES:

1.A rough translation of the ship types is only somewhat helpful: barco = boat; caravella = caravel or small sailing vessel; chalapa or chalupa = long-boat, shallop; charrua = large freight vessel; fragata = frigate; nao or nau = large vessel or ship; navio = vessel or ship; pataxo or patacho = two-masted pinnace; the "selha" is unclear; and the sumagua or sumaca = small two-master. See Frédéric Mauro, Le Portugal et l'Atlantique au XVIIe Siècle (1570-1670) (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1960), 35-37.

Table 11:  
 Volumes of Cod in Quintals from Redizima Accounts: Porto,  
 1639-1682<sup>1</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Vento</u>	<u>V-%</u>	<u>Pasta</u>	<u>P-%</u>	<u>Refugo</u>	<u>R-%</u>
1639	14	9847	6758	69	2623	27	466	5
1640	12	7227	5045	70	1881	26	301	4
1641	9	6292	1999	32	4204	67	90	1
1642	22	8750	1561	23	5057	76	28	0
1643	9	8216	4987	61	3114	38	15	1
1644	7	2054	1608	78	420	20	26	1
1645	10	5864	4487	77	1378	23	0	0
1646	11	11191	8293	74	2667	24	231	2
1647	17	20536	10542	51	9714	47	280	1
1648	21	15622	7315	47	8307	53	0	0
1649	16	22493	14740	66	7432	33	322	1
1650	9	8125	1254	15	6871	85	0	0
1653	15	10429	5134	49	4998	48	297	3
1654	31	32614	23105	71	7948	24	1562	5
1655	29	24182	16929	70	5695	24	1558	6
1656	24	12705	11665	92	1025	8	16	0
1657	19	16743	14330	86	2414	14	0	0
1658	26	23536	21988	93	1548	7	0	0
1659	18	16607	11063	67	5544	33	0	0
1660	6	5401	4827	89	574	11	0	0
1661	13	9320	8052	86	1268	14	0	0
1663	8	6997	6587	94	410	6	0	0
1664	7	5899	5254	89	282	5	363	6
1666	6	1323	958	72	275	21	90	7
1667	12	5898	4934	84	964	16	0	0
1668	21	9915	3750	38	6165	62	0	0

1669	38	20865	16710	80	4155	20	0	0
1670	49	29693	26914	91	2779	9	0	0
1674	16	12930	12850	99	80	1	0	0
1675	15	8990	8829	98	161	2	0	0
1676	18	11771	10484	89	1287	11	0	0
1677	19	14843	14673	99	170	1	0	0
1678	14	10830	10382	96	448	4	0	0
1679	18	4750	2004	42	2747	58	0	0
1680	36	19475	19198	99	277	1	0	0
1681	44	20559	19371	94	1189	6	0	0
1682	29	12497	11545	92	953	8	0	0

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SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redízima... 1639, Cabido No. 114, f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 115 (1640), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 116 (1641), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 117 (1642), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 118 (1643), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 120 (1645), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.140-f.153; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.140-f.154; Cabido No. 124 (1648), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 128 (1650), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 132 (1653), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 134 (1654), f.140-f.161v; Cabido No. 135 (1655), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 137 (1655), f.100-f.101v; Cabido No. 138 (1656), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 140 (1657), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 142 (1658), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 143 (1659), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 144 (1660), f.120-f.123; Cabido No. 145 (1661), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 146 (1663), f.140-f.146; Cabido No. 147 (1664), f.100-f.104; Cabido No. 149 (1666), f.100-f.108v; Cabido No. 150 (1667), f.100-f.105v; Cabido No. 153 (1669), f.100-f.110; Cabido No. 154 (1670), f.90-f.99; Cabido No. 157 (1674), f.90-f.94; Cabido No. 158 (1675), f.100-f.104v; Cabido No. 159 (1676), f.107v-f.112; Cabido No. 161 (1677), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 162 (1678), f.110-f.130; Cabido No. 163 (1679), f.100-f.110.

NOTES:

1. The "No." column represents the number of shipments registered for each given year; the "Total" column represents the number of quintals of all identified cod for each given year; the remaining columns represent the number of quintals for each cod category registered for each given year, followed by the percentage for each respective category of cod from the overall total for each given year.

Table 12:  
Volumes of Cod in Quintals by Category and Major Supplier:  
Porto, 1639-1682<sup>1</sup>

		Vento		Pasta		
	Total <sup>2</sup>	Volume	V-%	Volume	P-%	T-%
English	263,723	245,906	68%	17,875	17%	56%
French	103,108	37,358	10%	65,744	61%	22%
Total	467,137	360,119	77%	107,018	23%	100%

SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redizima... 1639, Cabido No. 114, f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 115 (1640), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 116 (1641), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 117 (1642), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 118 (1643), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 120 (1645), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.140-f.153; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.140-f.154; Cabido No. 124 (1648), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 128 (1650), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 132 (1653), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 134 (1654), f.140-f.161v; Cabido No. 135 (1655), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 137 (1655), f.100-f.101v; Cabido No. 138 (1656), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 140 (1657), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 142 (1658), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 143 (1659), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 144 (1660), f.120-f.123; Cabido No. 145 (1661), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 146 (1663), f.140-f.146; Cabido No. 147 (1664), f.100-f.104; Cabido No. 149 (1666), f.100-f.108v; Cabido No. 150 (1667), f.100-f.105v; Cabido No. 153 (1669), f.100-f.110; Cabido No. 154 (1670), f.90-f.99; Cabido No. 157 (1674), f.90-f.94; Cabido No. 158 (1675), f.100-f.104v; Cabido No. 159 (1676), f.107v-f.112; Cabido No. 161 (1677), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 162 (1678), f.110-f.130; Cabido No. 163 (1679), f.100-f.110.

NOTES:

1. The "Total" column and row contain the total number of quintals of vento and pasta cod registered in Porto from 1639-1682. The "English" and "French" rows contain the total quintals of cod brought into Porto by masters from each country, followed by their respective total volumes for each major cod category. The "V-%" and "P-%" columns contain the percentage each major category represents from the grand total

volume of cod. The final column, "T-%" shows the share of Porto's cod market for each major supplier. In other words, the English supplied Porto with 68% of the vento trade, 17% of the pasta trade, and 56% of the entire cod trade. Other, "unknown" ships/masters brought into Porto 100,306 quintals of cod.

2. Refugo cod is not included in these figures. The remaining 22% of cod that entered Porto between 1639-1682, approximately 100,306 quintals of cod, was brought in by "other/unknown" suppliers.

Table 13:  
 Volumes of Cod in Quintals Exported Annually to Porto by  
 English, French, and Other Suppliers, 1639-1682<sup>1</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>England</u>	<u>France</u>	<u>Other</u>
1639	14	9847	4995	0	4852
1640	12	7227	4691	0	2536
1641	9	6292	1469	3501	1322
1642	22	8750	976	4557	1113
1643	9	8216	4546	1492	2178
1644	7	2054	430	635	989
1645	10	5864	1141	855	3868
1646	11	11191	7296	3396	499
1647	17	20536	5287	10499	4750
1648	21	15622	7164	5482	2976
1649	16	22493	10041	9396	3056
1650	9	8125	1106	7019	0
1653	15	10429	3255	4100	3074
1654	31	32614	7025	1077	24512
1655	29	24182	17628	3538	3016
1656	24	12705	11112	0	1593
1657	19	16743	11213	2442	3088
1658	26	23536	18140	243	5153
1659	18	16607	5339	3509	7759
1660	6	5401	5361	0	40
1661	13	9320	3069	1341	4910
1663	8	6997	5892	0	1105
1664	7	5899	5473	0	426
1666	6	1323	636	190	497
1667	12	5898	4325	1450	123
1668	21	9915	3930	5985	0



1669	38	20865	11715	7920	1230
1670	49	29693	15929	10893	2871
1674	16	12930	10735	115	2080
1675	15	8990	8394	245	351
1676	18	11771	6208	1789	3775
1677	19	14843	10875	1251	2718
1678	14	10830	8372	475	1983
1679	18	4750	3029	1706	16
1680	36	19475	13545	3335	2595
1681	44	20559	16085	3902	573
1682	29	12497	9257	1552	1689

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SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redfzima...1639, Cabido No. 114, f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 115 (1640), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 116 (1641), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 117 (1642), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 118 (1643), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 120 (1645), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.140-f.153; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.140-f.154; Cabido No. 124 (1648), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 128 (1650), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 132 (1653), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 134 (1654), f.140-f.161v; Cabido No. 135 (1655), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 137 (1655), f.100-f.101v; Cabido No. 138 (1656), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 140 (1657), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 142 (1658), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 143 (1659), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 144 (1660), f.120-f.123; Cabido No. 145 (1661), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 146 (1663), f.140-f.146; Cabido No. 147 (1664), f.100-f.104; Cabido No. 149 (1666), f.100-f.108v; Cabido No. 150 (1667), f.100-f.105v; Cabido No. 153 (1669), f.100-f.110; Cabido No. 154 (1670), f.90-f.99; Cabido No. 157 (1674), f.90-f.94; Cabido No. 158 (1675), f.100-f.104v; Cabido No. 159 (1676), f.107v-f.112; Cabido No. 161 (1677), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 162 (1678), f.110-f.130; Cabido No. 163 (1679), f.100-f.110.

NOTES:

1. The "No." column contains the number of cod shipments registered in Porto in each given year; the "Total" column contains the number of quintals of cod entered in Porto; the "England" and "France" columns contain the total cod volume (quintals) brought into Porto in each given year by shipmasters from those nations; the "Other" column contains all cod (quintals) registered in Porto in each given year from other sources other than English and French. The vast majority of entries in the "Other" column did not have a place of origin indicated in the records.

Table 14:  
Origins of English Shipmasters in Porto's Cod Trade, 1639-1679<sup>1</sup>

<u>Origin</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Total Cod (Quintals)</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Barnstable	15	12,661	5
Bristol	4	1,476	1
Dartmouth	27	26,118	10
London	50	49,007	18
Plymouth	62	57,599	22
Poole	5	3,226	1
Topsham	53	42,231	16
Whitstable	32	26,692	10
Other	41	46,572	18

SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redizima, 1639, Cabido No. 114, f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 115 (1640), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 116 (1641), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 117 (1642), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 118 (1643), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 120 (1645), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.140-f.153; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.140-f.154; Cabido No. 124 (1648), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 128 (1650), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 132 (1653), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 134 (1654), f.140-f.161v; Cabido No. 135 (1655), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 137 (1655), f.100-f.101v; Cabido No. 138 (1656), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 140 (1657), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 142 (1658), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 143 (1659), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 144 (1660), f.120-f.123; Cabido No. 145 (1661), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 146 (1663), f.140-f.146; Cabido No. 147 (1664), f.100-f.104; Cabido No. 149 (1666), f.100-f.108v; Cabido No. 150 (1667), f.100-f.105v; Cabido No. 153 (1669), f.100-f.110; Cabido No. 154 (1670), f.90-f.99; Cabido No. 157 (1674), f.90-f.94; Cabido No. 158 (1675), f.100-f.104v; Cabido No. 159 (1676), f.107v-f.112; Cabido No. 161 (1677), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 162 (1678), f.110-f.130; Cabido No. 163 (1679), f.100-f.110.

NOTES:

1. The "No." column contains the number of entries recorded from each respective port; "Total Cod" signifies the number of quintals of all cod brought into Porto by a shipmaster from each given English port; "Percent" represents the share of the English cod market appropriated by each English port. The row "Other" contains all cod shipments associated with English shipmasters but for which no port of origin was specified.

Table 15:  
Origins of French Shipmasters in Porto's Cod Trade, 1639-1679<sup>1</sup>

<u>Origin</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Total Cod (Quintals)</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Bayonne	22	5,088	5
Bordeaux	14	3,507	3
Brittany	1	56	0
La Rochelle	39	18,663	18
Marseilles	1	115	0
Nantes	14	4,315	4
Olonne	54	48,553	47
Paris	1	590	0
Rouen	2	100	0
St. Malo	6	3,036	3
Other	30	19,866	19

SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1639, Cabido No. 114, f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 115 (1640), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 116 (1641), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 117 (1642), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 118 (1643), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 120 (1645), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.140-f.153; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.140-f.154; Cabido No. 124 (1648), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 128 (1650), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 132 (1653), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 134 (1654), f.140-f.161v; Cabido No. 135 (1655), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 137 (1655), f.100-f.101v; Cabido No. 138 (1656), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 140 (1657), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 142 (1658), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 143 (1659), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 144 (1660), f.120-f.123; Cabido No. 145 (1661), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 146 (1663), f.140-f.146; Cabido No. 147 (1664), f.100-f.104; Cabido No. 149 (1666), f.100-f.108v; Cabido No. 150 (1667), f.100-f.105v; Cabido No. 153 (1669), f.100-f.110; Cabido No. 154 (1670), f.90-f.99; Cabido No. 157 (1674), f.90-f.94; Cabido No. 158 (1675), f.100-f.104v; Cabido No. 159 (1676), f.107v-f.112; Cabido No.

161 (1677), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 162 (1678), f.110-f.130; Cabido No. 163 (1679), f.100-f.110.

NOTES:

1.The "No." column contains the number of entries recorded from each respective port; "Total Cod" signifies the number of quintals of all cod brought into Porto by a shipmaster from each given French port; "Percent" represents the share of the Frenchcod market appropriated by each French port. The row "Other" contains all cod shipments associated with French shipmasters but for which no port of origin was specified.

Table 16:  
Volumes of Cod in Quintals in Redízima Accounts of Porto by  
Decade<sup>1</sup>

<u>Decade</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Vento</u>	<u>Pasta</u>	<u>Refugo</u>
1639-1649	148	67,334	46,796	1,859
1650-1659	171	105,466	36,041	3,432
1660-1669	111	51,072	13,093	453
1670-1679	149	86,135	7,671	0

SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1639, Cabido No. 114, f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 115 (1640), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 116 (1641), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 117 (1642), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 118 (1643), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 120 (1645), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.140-f.153; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.140-f.154; Cabido No. 124 (1648), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 128 (1650), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 132 (1653), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 134 (1654), f.140-f.161v; Cabido No. 135 (1655), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 137 (1655), f.100-f.101v; Cabido No. 138 (1656), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 140 (1657), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 142 (1658), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 143 (1659), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 144 (1660), f.120-f.123; Cabido No. 145 (1661), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 146 (1663), f.140-f.146; Cabido No. 147 (1664), f.100-f.104; Cabido No. 149 (1666), f.100-f.108v; Cabido No. 150 (1667), f.100-f.105v; Cabido No. 153 (1669), f.100-f.110; Cabido No. 154 (1670), f.90-f.99; Cabido No. 157 (1674), f.90-f.94; Cabido No. 158 (1675), f.100-f.104v; Cabido No. 159 (1676), f.107v-f.112; Cabido No. 161 (1677), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 162 (1678), f.110-f.130; Cabido No. 163 (1679), f.100-f.110.

NOTES:

1. The "No." column represents the number of cod shipments registered in each given year. The amounts under the headings vento, pasta, and refugo represent the total quintals of cod for each major cod category registered in Porto. No refugo cod entered Porto from 1670-1679.

Table 17:  
 Volumes of Cod in Quintals in Redizima Accounts by Month:  
 Porto, 1639-1679<sup>1</sup>

Vento					
<u>Month</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>England</u>	<u>France</u>	<u>Other</u>
Jan	13	7,664	5,099	865	1,700
Feb	22	12,079	5,545	1,825	4,710
Mar	31	16,628	6,947	5,274	4,407
Apr	37	18,959	10,541	2,656	5,762
May	18	11,914	7,470	4,134	310
Jun	16	6,006	1,987	2,129	1,890
Jul	25	9,314	6,364	1,812	1,139
Aug	16	12,536	9,596	944	1,996
Sep	37	25,840	20,099	2,777	2,965
Oct	120	126,488	97,506	2,794	26,188
Nov	69	63,572	40,912	576	22,084
Dec	35	26,439	15,108	9,275	2,056
Unknown		22,683	18,735	2,299	1,649
Pasta					
<u>Month</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>England</u>	<u>France</u>	<u>Other</u>
Jan	12	3,004	554	0	2,450
Feb	15	4,852	4,086	150	616
Mar	10	3,140	2,712	0	428
Apr	10	5,536	1,742	0	3,794
May	0	0	0	0	0
Jun	15	13,723	0	13,676	47
Jul	28	28,671	335	25,378	2,958
Aug	29	22,551	154	18,724	3,673
Sep	15	4,781	2,213	317	2,251
Oct	53	6,762	1,563	2,823	2,377



Nov	50	6,967	2,962	0	4,006
Dec	20	4,647	1,177	3,274	196
Unknown		2,386	379	1,402	606

SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1639, Cabido No. 114, f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 115 (1640), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 116 (1641), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 117 (1642), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 118 (1643), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 120 (1645), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.140-f.153; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.140-f.154; Cabido No. 124 (1648), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 128 (1650), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 132 (1653), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 134 (1654), f.140-f.161v; Cabido No. 135 (1655), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 137 (1655), f.100-f.101v; Cabido No. 138 (1656), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 140 (1657), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 142 (1658), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 143 (1659), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 144 (1660), f.120-f.123; Cabido No. 145 (1661), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 146 (1663), f.140-f.146; Cabido No. 147 (1664), f.100-f.104; Cabido No. 149 (1666), f.100-f.108v; Cabido No. 150 (1667), f.100-f.105v; Cabido No. 153 (1669), f.100-f.110; Cabido No. 154 (1670), f.90-f.99; Cabido No. 157 (1674), f.90-f.94; Cabido No. 158 (1675), f.100-f.104v; Cabido No. 159 (1676), f.107v-f.112; Cabido No. 161 (1677), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 162 (1678), f.110-f.130; Cabido No. 163 (1679), f.100-f.110.

#### NOTES:

1. The "No." column represents the number of shipments registered for each cod category in the respective month. Often ships carried both vento and pasta in the same cargo. This explains the relatively high number of pasta entries, especially in the fall. The "Other" column consists of cod brought into Porto for which no master origin was provided. The "Unknown" row in the month column represents cod shipments without proper date identification. Note that no pasta cod was recorded in the month of May during the entire period under study.

Table 18:  
English Cod Vessels Inspected by Porto Health Officials, 1657-1698

1657 - 7	1677 - 8	1690 - 7
1658 - 16	1678 - 12	1691 - 12
1659 - 10	1679 - 15	1692 - 4
1660 - 3	1680 - 15	1693 - 15
1672 - 16	1681 - 23	1694 - 19
1673 - 5	1682 - 18	1695 - 4
1674 - 15	1684 - 9	1696 - 18
1675 - 12	1685 - 1	1697 - 19
1676 - 19	1686 - 21	1698 - 8

Table 19:  
French Cod Vessels Inspected by Porto Health Officials, 1657-1697<sup>1</sup>

1599 - 1	1678 - 1
1657 - 3	1679 - 5
1658 - 2	1680 - 13
1659 - 2	1681 - 10
1661 - 2	1682 - 8
1672 - 6	1683 - 4
1674 - 2	1684 - 7
1675 - 1	1686 - 8
1676 - 1	1694 - 2
1677 - 8	1697 - 1

SOURCE: J. A. Pinto Ferreira, Visitas de Saúde às Embarcações Entradas na Barra do Douro nos Séculos XVI e XVII (Porto: Câmara Municipal do Porto/Gabinete de História da Cidade, 1977), 86-415.

NOTES:

1. The Visitas collection showed one French master bringing cod to Porto in 1599.

Table 20:  
Yearly Wholesale Cod Price Averages in Réis per Quintal: Porto,  
1639-1679<sup>1</sup>

Year	Vento		Pasta	
	<u>No.</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Price</u>
1639	11	2,179	9	1,320
1640	7	2,280	6	1,400
1641	4	2,283	5	1,580
1642	6	1,900	7	1,196
1643	5	2,536	5	1,143
1644	5	2,734	3	1,200
1645	7	3,069	5	1,840
1646	7	2,691	7	1,624
1647	10	2,483	10	1,404
1648	9	2,490	13	1,064
1649	9	2,328	13	1,406
1650	2	2,360	7	1,387
1653	9	2,778	9	1,609
1654	19	2,271	16	1,287
1655	23	2,195	14	0,964
1656	15	2,468	11	1,513
1657	16	2,449	5	1,450
1658	21	2,640	12	1,327
1659	10	2,805	12	1,301
1660	6	3,027	5	1,400
1661	10	2,919	5	1,311
1663	6	3,475	2	1,975
1664	5	2,900	2	1,650
1666	5	4,890	1	2,650
1667	9	4,306	5	2,160

1668	6	3,695	12	1,518
1669	31	3,423	14	1,161
1670	44	2,900	14	1,059
1674	16	3,441	4	0,913
1675	14	3,023	5	0,955
1676	16	2,625	5	0,952
1677	19	2,487	1	1,000
1678	12	3,568	5	1,280
1679	5	4,150	6	1,067

SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1639, Cabido No. 114, f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 115 (1640), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 116 (1641), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 117 (1642), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 118 (1643), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 120 (1645), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.140-f.153; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.140-f.154; Cabido No. 124 (1648), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 128 (1650), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 132 (1653), f.140-f.150; Cabido No. 134 (1654), f.140-f.161v; Cabido No. 135 (1655), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 137 (1655), f.100-f.101v; Cabido No. 138 (1656), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 140 (1657), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 142 (1658), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 143 (1659), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 144 (1660), f.120-f.123; Cabido No. 145 (1661), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 146 (1663), f.140-f.146; Cabido No. 147 (1664), f.100-f.104; Cabido No. 149 (1666), f.100-f.108v; Cabido No. 150 (1667), f.100-f.105v; Cabido No. 153 (1669), f.100-f.110; Cabido No. 154 (1670), f.90-f.99; Cabido No. 157 (1674), f.90-f.94; Cabido No. 158 (1675), f.100-f.104v; Cabido No. 159 (1676), f.107v-f.112; Cabido No. 161 (1677), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 162 (1678), f.110-f.130; Cabido No. 163 (1679), f.100-f.110.

#### NOTES:

1. The "No." columns contain the number of shipments registered in Porto for vento and pasta cod in a given year. Many vessels carried both cod categories in one cargo. Price quoted is the average wholesale price per quintal recorded for dízima amounts on a given year.

Table 21:

Vento and Pasta Wholesale Prices in Réis per Quintal: Porto, 1648

-----

vento

17 Feb.....	2,500	r/q <sup>i</sup>
22 Apr.....	1,850	r/q <sup>i</sup>
same ship.....	2,400	r/q
29 Apr.....	2,000	r/q
23 Sep.....	2,600	r/q
5 Oct.....	2,520	r/q <sup>j</sup>
-----	2,520	r/q <sup>k</sup>
-----	2,520	r/q
-----	2,520	r/q
-----	2,520	r/q

pasta

17 Feb.....	920	r/q
30 Jun.....	1,350	r/q
-----	1,130	r/q
----- (July?).....	1,200	r/q
-----	1,400	r/q
-----	1,400	r/q
23 Sep.....	900	r/q
5 Oct.....	900	r/q
-----	720	r/q
-----	720	r/q
-----	720	r/q
-----	720	r/q

-----

SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1658, Cabido No. 124, f.141-f.151v.

NOTES:

1. The abbreviation "r/q" represents réis per quintal.

2. One ship brought a cargo of vento but the dízima was divided into ten separate sets, five were priced at 1,840 réis per quintal while the other five were priced at 2,400 réis per quintal.

3. Three cargoes of vento cod arrived in October but for which no volumes or unit prices were provided.

4. The designation "-----" means that no date was provided.

Table 22:

Vento and Pasta Wholesale Prices in Réis per Quintal: Porto, 1658

-----  
vento

----	(Jan?)	.....	2,680	r/q
----		.....	2,650	r/q
----		.....	2,680	r/q
4	Feb.	.....	2,770	r/q
7	Mar.	.....	2,500	r/q
11	Mar.	.....	2,710	r/q
----	(Apr?)	.....	2,450	r/q
----		.....	2,450	r/q
24	May	.....	2,600	r/q
9	Jul.	.....	2,700	r/q
----	(Jul?)	.....	1,800	r/q
19	Jul.	.....	2,880	r/q
23	Sept.	.....	2,550	r/q
25	Sept.	.....	2,580	r/q
15	Oct.	.....	2,890	r/q
22	Oct.	.....	2,800	r/q
----		.....	2,800	r/q
----		.....	2,800	r/q
----		.....	2,600	r/q
15	Nov.	.....	2,750	r/q
16	Nov.	.....	2,990	r/q

pasta

----	(Jan?)	.....	1,464	r/q
----		.....	1,400	r/q
----		.....	1,400	r/q
4	Feb.	.....	1,380	r/q
27	Mar.	.....	1,000	r/q
12	Apr.	.....	2,460	r/q
23	Sep.	.....	1,320	r/q
15	Oct.	.....	1,260	r/q
22	Oct.	.....	1,350	r/q
----		.....	1,300	r/q
----		.....	1,350	r/q
----		.....	1,350	r/q <sup>1</sup>
15	Nov.	.....	1,350	r/q

-----  
SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1658, Cabido No. 142, f.140-f.148.

NOTES:

1. Cod category not identified, but, given the stipulated price, it was probably pasta. The "r/q" stands for réis per quintal.



Table 23:  
Vento and Pasta Wholesale Prices in Réis per Quintal: Porto,  
 1668

-----  
vento

----	.....	3,400	r/q <sup>1</sup>
20 Jul.....	.....	3,600	r/q
7 Nov.....	.....	4,000	r/q
----	.....	4,000	r/q
----	.....	4,000	r/q
----	.....	4,100	r/q

pasta

20 Jul.....	.....	2,040	r/q
23 Jul.....	.....	2,200	r/q
3 Aug.....	.....	1,400	r/q
----	.....	1,400	r/q
----	.....	1,400	r/q
----	.....	1,220	r/q
17 Aug.....	.....	1,320	r/q
----	.....	1,350	r/q
----	.....	1,200	r/q
----	.....	1,200	r/q
----	.....	1,200	r/q

-----  
 SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da  
Redízima...1668, Cabido No. 176, f.101-f.105v.

NOTES:

1. The "r/q" stands for réis per quintal.

Table 24:  
Vento and Pasta Wholesale Prices in Réis per Quintal: Porto,  
 1678

-----  
vento

1 Mar.....	2,850 r/q <sup>1</sup>
5 Mar.....	2,860 r/q
22 Mar.....	2,650 r/q
1 Oct.....	5,000 r/q
8 Oct.....	4,000 r/q
24 Oct.....	2,020 r/q
-----	4,000 r/q
-----	4,000 r/q
-----	4,000 r/q <sup>2</sup>
26 Nov.....	2,800 r/q

pasta

---- (Jan?).....	600 r/q
5 Mar.....	1,100 r/q
8 Oct.....	2,000 r/q
-----	1,200 r/q

-----  
 SOURCE: A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1678, Cabido  
 No. 162, f.110-f.116.

NOTES:

1. The "r/q" stands for réis per quintal.
2. The cod category was not specified in this particular entry, but given the price quoted, it was probably vento cod.

Table 25:  
Church Revenues from Cod and all Fish in Porto, 1639-1679

<u>Year</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>Fish Revenues</u>	<u>Cod Revenues</u>	<u>Cod %</u>
1639 <sup>2</sup>	197,899	190,599	96%
1640	173,073	149,569 <sup>3</sup>	86%
1641	405,897	122,079	30%
1642	324,527	88,766 <sup>4</sup>	27%
1643	238,666	163,571 <sup>5</sup>	69%
1644	102,753	49,481	48%
1645	250,011	163,607	65%
1646	319,868 <sup>6</sup>	258,832	81%
1647	557,970	407,654	73%
1648	508,642	298,603 <sup>7</sup>	59%
1649	1,952,944 <sup>8</sup>	447,996	23%
1650	726,871	142,244	17%
1653	268,508 <sup>9</sup>	234,837	88%
1654	709,948	547,174	77%
1655	332,969	270,680 <sup>10</sup>	81%
1656	291,911	168,185	58%
1657	287,974	243,935	85%
1658	440,488	406,288	92%
1659	276,479	225,171	81%
1660	109,187	75,986	70%
1661	165,942	152,079	92%
1663	158,883	127,245	80%
1664	103,720	88,370	85%
1666	153,883	43,626	28%
1667	309,869	222,457	72%
1668	283,881	246,651	87%
1669	642,608	588,047	92%
1670	810,338	801,163	99%
1674	486,618	455,532	94%
1675	290,904	279,778	96%
1676	306,545	290,430	95%
1677	378,724	375,958	99%
1678	406,843	338,018	83%
1679 <sup>11</sup>	157,764	103,852	66%

SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redízima, 1639, Cabido No. 114, f.224; Cabido No. 115 (1640), f.211v; Cabido No. 116 (1641), 206v; Cabido No. 117 (1642), f.140-f.235; Cabido No. 118 (1643), f.206; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.205; Cabido No. 120 (1645), 210; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.233; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.211; Cabido No. 124 (1648), f.204v; Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.197v; Cabido No. 128

(1650), f.197v; Cabido No. 132 (1653), f.212v; Cabido No. 134 (1654), f.140-f.161v; Cabido No. 135 (1655), f.140-f.154v; Cabido No. 137 (1655), f.100-f.101v; Cabido No. 138 (1656), f.140-f.152; Cabido No. 140 (1657), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 142 (1658), f.140-f.148; Cabido No. 143 (1659), f.140-f.147; Cabido No. 144 (1660), f.120-f.123; Cabido No. 145 (1661), f.140-f.146v; Cabido No. 146 (1663), f.140-f.146; Cabido No. 147 (1664), f.100-f.104; Cabido No. 149 (1666), f.100-f.108v; Cabido No. 150 (1667), f.100-f.105v; Cabido No. 153 (1669), f.100-f.110; Cabido No. 154 (1670), f.90-f.99; Cabido No. 157 (1674), f.90-f.94; Cabido No. 158 (1675), f.100-f.104v; Cabido No. 159 (1676), f.107v-f.112; Cabido No. 161 (1677), f.140-f.144; Cabido No. 162 (1678), f.110-f.130; Cabido No. 163 (1679), f.100-f.110.

#### NOTES:

1. From 1639-1653, rendimento do pescado, or fish revenues, were listed at the end of each volume for the given year. From 1654-1679, no such totals were provided, hence the amounts shown here for those years were estimated by adding all redizima in the Titulo do Pescado (fish section in account books) for the respective year. Annual yields from cod shipments alone were not indicated in the records either. The figures shown in this table represent a tally of all cod entries listed, keeping in mind that not all pertinent information was always available. These tentative calculations serve to illustrate the role cod played in the fishery industry in seventeenth-century Porto, but they are not meant to be taken as exact numbers.

2. Cabido No. 114 (1639) is one of the few Redizima books with an indicated annual fish revenue at the end of the Titulo do Pescado, on f.144. The total dizima for that year was 1,978,994 réis, thus the Cabido got 10% of that 10%, which came to 197,899 réis. In other words, the approximate value of the fishery for 1639 in Porto was 19,789,940 réis, of which cod was 96%.

3. Cod total does not include amounts from pescados, even though cod was once labelled pescado this year. See A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1640, Cabido No. 115, f.140, f.142.

4. Records for 1642 include cod entries without reference to volume and unit prices. At least three shipments were noted as vessels carregado de bacalhao (loaded with cod) with no other quantitative information provided. See A.D.P., Livro do

Rendimento da Redízima...1642, Cabido No. 117, f.146v-f.147.

5. Two pages missing; A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1643, Cabido No. 118, f.149-149v.

6. Records for 1646 indicate that the dízima from the Titulo do Pescado was 2,767,104 réis, and that the church portion, or the redízima, was 276,710 réis. See A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1646, Cabido No. 121, f.153v. Yet at the end of the same book, f.233, the rendimento do pescado (year-end fish revenues) was listed as 319,868 réis. It appears, therefore, that year-end totals may have included fish revenues not listed in the fish section of the book, or revenue from some other merchandise could have been lumped with the fish revenue.

7. Three cod entries were found this year without reference to volume, unit price, or dízima amounts. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1648, Cabido No. 124, f.151v.

8. This total probably included revenues from salt as well. See A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1649, Cabido No. 126, f.197v.

9. The Rendimento (Revenue) page for 1653 lists the year's revenues from pescado e sal (fish and salt) as 2,816,821 réis. See A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1653, Cabido No. 132, f.212v. It is difficult to gage the fish portion from that amount, though the sum of fish revenues listed in the Titulo do Pescado is 268,508 réis.

10. From 1655-1664, the majority of fish entries had their sums split up, with half entered in the Cabido book, and the other half listed in the Livro Novo, the source of which is unknown. The totals for this decade, therefore, represent approximately half of the actual fish revenues listed in the Titulo do Pescado. Unfortunately, no Rendimento totals were provided at the end of the Cabido books from 1654-1679, making it difficult to determine how year-end revenues were accounted. If the entire cod redízima volume/value were considered for 1655, for example, the total would be 455,376 réis, almost double the "halved" amount listed in this table.

11. Totals for 1679 are highly speculative because many entries in this volume have pertinent information missing, such as unit prices.

Table 26:  
Church Revenues from Fish in Porto, 1680-1713<sup>1</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>Fish Revenues</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Fish Revenues</u>
1680 <sup>2</sup>	305,640 <sup>3</sup>	1692	5,860,810
1681 <sup>4</sup>	451,999	1693	692,668
1681	972,466	1694	1,334,724
1682	606,379	1695	565,260
1683	400,155	1699	1,159,002
1685	549,498	1700	1,015,890
1686	738,760	1701	932,333
1687	613,758	1702	945,310
1688	760,565	1703	918,520
1689	336,774	1704	1,084,370
1690	379,924	1705	851,430
1691	145,890	1713 <sup>5</sup>	900,000

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SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redizima... 1680, Cabido No. 164, f.319v; Cabido No. 167 (1681), f.283; Cabido No. 168 (1681), f.325; Cabido No. 169 (1682), f.350; Cabido No. 171 (1683), f.269-f.270; Cabido No. 172 (1685), f.296; Cabido No. 173 (1686), f.290-f.291; Cabido No. 174 (1687), f.202; Cabido No. 175 (1688), f.396; Cabido No. 177 (1689), f.281; Cabido No. 178 (1690), f.283; Cabido No. 179 (1691), f.283; Cabido No. 180 (1692), f.187; Cabido No. 181 (1693), f.239v; Cabido No. 182 (1694), f.255; Cabido No. 183 (1695), f.284-f.284v; Cabido No. 185 (1699), f.194; Cabido No. 186 (1700), f.193; Cabido No. 187 (1701), f.190; Cabido No. 188 (1702), f.187-f.187v; Cabido No. 189 (1703), f.196; Cabido No. 190 (1704), f.151v; Cabido No. 191 (1705), f.152; Cabido No. 192 (1713), f.160v.

NOTES:

1. Despacho or dispatch books from 1681-1713 include a Rendimento (Revenue) section, with year-end revenues for pescado. No entry books survived for this same period. Consequently, cod revenues for each of those years cannot be ascertained, nor compared to overall fish revenues. Table 25 gives some idea of the annual percentage of cod in relation to total fish revenues from 1639-1679, and the present table provides some hints on the state of the fishery for the next 30 years. One might presume that cod continued to be a significant portion of fish revenues at that time.

2. All amounts listed in this table were found in Despacho books, except for years 1680, 1681, 1682. Because these three volumes had no unit prices listed with the cod entries, it proved impossible to calculate any percentages for comparison purposes.

3. All amounts listed in this table represent the Rendimento do Pescado (fish revenues) found in the year-end summary of revenues for each Despacho book. The sum of 305,640 réis for 1680, however, was listed as the Redízima do Bacalhao or "Cod Tithes". See A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1680, Cabido No. 164, f.319v.

4. The year 1681 is unique for it is the only time that an entry as well as a dispatch book was found both which provide a Rendimento do pescado (fish revenues). The Despacho year-end total for fish revenues is 451,999 réis, while the entry book states 972,466 réis. See A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1681, Cabido No. 167, f.283; and Cabido No. 168 (1681), f.325. It appears, therefore, that the church recorded its revenues from imports and exports separately. This possibility adds another dimension to fish revenues listed in the other tables. From 1639-1679, few Despacho books survived, and those existing few provided no information on annual fish revenues.

5. Only two other Cabido volumes survived for the early eighteenth century which provide some information on year-end revenues. Though beyond the scope of the present study, the totals shown for pescado for 1747 and 1748 were 6,400,000 and 5,475,509 réis, respectively, yet it appears that these sums were not for fish alone, but included other merchandise. The combining of revenues may have occurred in previous years as well. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1747, Cabido No. 194, f.382; Cabido No. 195 (1748), f.382.

Table 27:  
Minor Suppliers of Cod in Porto, 1597-1698<sup>1</sup>

<u>Date</u>	<u>Origin of Cargo</u>	<u>Master Origin</u>
1597	Asturias, Biscaia, Germany, Stockholm	Port/Spn
1598	Terra Nova	--
1657	Bordeaux, Bayonne	Flemish, Hamburg
1658	Galicia, Terra Nova	Swedish, Hamburg
1659	Terra Nova (2)	--
1660	Terra Nova, Genova	--
1673	TN, Galicia (2), Ireland/England	Spn/Eng/Port
1674	Ferrol, Bayonne, La Rochelle, Spain	Port/Spn
1675	San Sebastian (3), Bordeaux, TN (2)	Spn/Port/German?
1676	Flessinga (2), La Coruna,	Dutch ?
1677	San Sebastian (3), Middelburgo	--
1678	La Rochelle	Port (Viana)
1679	Dartmouth, Vila do Conde, Terra Nova	Eng/Port/Fren
1680	Bordeaux, Galicia	French
1681	Bayonne	Port (Setubal)
1682	Olonne (Vila do Conde), Terra Nova	--
1684	Vannes, Bayonne, Terra Nova	Fren/Port/Spn
1692	Terra Nova (cod + whale oil)	Swedish
1694	Terra Nova (4), Nantes, Bayonne	Port/Eng
1696	Terra Nova, La Coruna (3), Galicia	Eng/Port
1697	London, Terra Nova	Portuguese
1698	Terra Nova	--

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SOURCE: J.A. Pinto Ferreira, Visitas de Saúde às Embarcações Entradas na Barra do Douro nos Séculos XVI e XVII (Porto: Câmara Municipal do Porto/Gabinete de História da Cidade, 1977), 86-415.

NOTES:

1. TN stands for Terra Nova; numbers in brackets indicate the number of times that type of entry was located for a given year; place names in brackets indicate a stopover.



Table 28:  
Cod Exports from Porto to Brazil in the Seventeenth Century

<u>Year</u>	<u>Quintals</u>	<u>Coarttyrolas</u>	<u>Barris</u>	<u>Pipas</u>	<u>Quartolas</u>
1647	320	68	4		
1648	78	56	4		
1652		42		8	
1653		40			
1655		106			
1680	40			32	
1681				169	
1682				2	
1683				45	2
1685				4+	
1687	(378) <sup>1</sup>			91	
1688	(1044)			164	
1689	17				
1691	(43)		5		14
1693	(7@)				
1694	87+				
1695	3+				
1696	7				
1699	183+				
1700	(174)+			53	
1701	28				
1703	45				
1704	(38)			10	
1705	(40)		5		11

-----  
SOURCE: Arquivo Distrital do Porto, Livro do Rendimento da Redízima (Despacho)...1647, Cabido No. 123, f.81-f.213v; Cabido No. 125 (1648), f.60-f.77v; Cabido No. 130 (1652), f.40-f.44, f.108, f.200-f.208; Cabido No. 131 (1652), f.47-f.48v; Cabido No. 136 (1655), f.40-f.53v; Cabido No. 165 (1680), f.65, f.66v; Cabido No. 166 (1681), f.42-f.67v; Cabido No. 170 (1682), f.170, f.198v; Cabido No. 171 (1683), f.100-f.179v; Cabido No. 172 (1685), f.124v, f.161v; Cabido No. 174 (1687), f.61v, f.78, f.196; Cabido No. 175 (1688), f.61-f.181; Cabido No. 177 (1689), f.40, f.52v; Cabido No. 179 (1691), f.60-f.161; Cabido No. 181 (1693), f.187, f.239v; Cabido No. 182 (1694), f.186v-f.198, f.255; Cabido No. 183 (1695), f.173v, f.284; Cabido No. 184 (1696), f.123; Cabido No. 185 (1699), f.91v-f.134, f.194; Cabido No. 186 (1700), f.73-f.83; Cabido No. 187 (1701), f.66-f.68; Cabido No. 189 (1703), f.105, f.196; Cabido No. 190 (1704), f.68, f.151v; Cabido No. 191 (1705), f.78v, f.152.

NOTES:

1. Bracketed figures are estimated volumes indicated in the records. A plus sign (+) indicates that more cod entries were found listed in other units, in arrátels or arrobas. The (7@) for 1693 stands for 7 arrobas of cod.

C H A P T E R     5: From Mercadora to Regateira: The Transformation of Traditional Marketing Structures and Elimination of Female Fish Merchants in Seventeenth-Century Portugal

The best documentation on the early Portuguese fishery were found in Porto, and the archival records say much more about the fish trade than about the fishery. What they say about the trade, and the cod trade in particular, is twofold: first, for all intents and purposes Porto's cod trade was from at least 1639 controlled by foreign interests. English and French ships entered the Douro River with hundreds of quintals of cod at a time - vento and pasta - and unloaded at Porto's harbour. Second, not only were few Portuguese ships involved in the trade, but as the seventeenth century progressed, fewer and fewer Portuguese merchants had any role in merchandising cod. From the mid-1650s, English merchants in particular dominated the wholesale operation in Porto.

The implications of such a takeover were especially noticeable among a certain segment of Porto's merchant community, the women. Female fish merchants were a force to be reckoned with in the cod trade up to the late 1650s, but by the late seventeenth century they were barely visible. As the English "factory" became more established in Porto, the native merchant class, previously-protected and privileged, was shaken up if not actually disbanded.

The changes that took place in Porto in the mid-seventeenth century leading up to the disappearance of female cod merchants were likely rooted in circumstances beyond the confinements of the Cabido Redizima series, which barely covers forty years. What came first, the English cod merchant or the need for the English cod merchant? The Portuguese were notorious for neglecting their own turf as they sought fortunes in someone else's. Portugal's overseas expansion led to temporary national glory and accrued profits for an already privileged few; it did little for the well-being of the general populace. Even their fishery declined in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Instead of great fishers the Portuguese became great fish importers - nay, great fish buyers, for someone else did the importing.

Sometime during the transition from the regional or national economy to overseas trade Portugal lost control of a vital economic sector, the provisioning business. The Portuguese could not feed themselves and so had to grant greater and greater privileges to foreigners who brought in essential foodstuffs, especially grains and fish. In the process, officials had to deregulate local markets to accommodate the foreign merchant. Municipal governments had been accustomed to wide-ranging powers, including the running of local economies through the granting of retail licenses, collecting sales taxes, and price fixing. It was in this

regulated market that female cod merchants prospered.

This is not to say that women like Maria Rois and Angela Lopes participated in what Fernand Braudel termed the "elementary economy" or the "non-economy" - that is, the economy of self-sufficiency. In his attempts to differentiate between simple and complex economies, Braudel found that women were greatly involved in the local market, selling everything from produce to fish, under the watchful eye of urban authorities. Regulations on prices especially were so strict that infractions were subject to heavy fines, including torture.<sup>1</sup> Although Braudel did not specifically address the issue, he gave the impression nonetheless that women were engaged in the elementary market and were not among the "professional merchants" who traded outside protected or regulated spheres.<sup>2</sup>

This might have been true in early modern France - from whence Braudel acquired most of his examples on women in market towns - but the situation was clearly different in some coastal communities in northern Portugal. Portuguese women were involved in small, local markets as well as in international trade, including merchandising cod from

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<sup>1</sup> Fernand Braudel, Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century: The Wheels of Commerce, Volume II, Translated from the French by Siân Reynolds (Cambridge: Harper & Row Publishers, 1982 [1979]), 21-32.

<sup>2</sup> Braudel, The Wheels of Commerce, 38-48.

Newfoundland. The major difference between Portugal's economy and that of most northern European countries was that the Portuguese operated under a more regulated system. In Portugal, the regulated economy was so entrenched that it transcended the local or regional market. Even overseas trade was intertwined in strict regulation in order to protect the crown's monopoly. When Portugal was forced to open up its markets to foreign interests, some native Portuguese merchants had difficulty competing because they had for long thrived in a protected environment. The influx of outsiders, especially the English, eroded a previously exclusive enclave. Not only did Portuguese merchants have to share their commercial privileges, but in certain sectors - such as the fishery - English merchants outmarketed the Portuguese altogether.

The connection between the rise of the English in Porto's cod trade and the drop in women's participation in this trade is difficult to ignore. By the 1650s and 1660s England's stranglehold on Porto's fish imports was nearly complete; by then female fish merchants were a dying breed. Naturally the Cabido records do not themselves state the causes for the transition in this particular port. Because no port records survived prior to 1639, we do not know when, let alone how the English were able to penetrate the local cod trade. Earlier, however, this study analyzed three important peace treaties signed between England and Portugal, in 1642, 1654, and 1661,

and how the treaties served as a means by which England turned Portugal into its economic satellite. Was there a correlation between these three treaties and the subsequent near-complete dominion of Portugal's cod trade by the English? Nothing was found in Porto to prove this, but records of the municipal council in Lisbon allow one to establish exactly this type of link.

. . . . .

The Great Empire will be by  
England. Great forces will pass by land and sea,  
The all-powerful for more than three hundred years;  
The Portuguese will not be pleased with it.<sup>3</sup>

Lisbon's municipal records for the seventeenth century describe in detail the history of relations between English merchants and Portuguese authorities. Unlike similar collections in Porto, which deal primarily with simple decrees on pricing and taxation, Lisbon's records reveal a constant preoccupation with abuses by foreign merchants. In fact, Lisbon's municipal council records provide some evidence of a cod trade radically different from the one in Porto. Though more sources exist in Porto documenting cod transactions on a

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<sup>3</sup> Nostradamus [1555], as cited in Carl A. Hanson, Economy and Society in Baroque Portugal, 1668-1703 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 260.

large scale, its records contained few examples of friction between local officials and foreign merchants. In Lisbon, on the other hand, city officials were plagued with cod-related problems, an indication that the trade was not as smooth in the capital city. Furthermore, most of the culprits were English, and often they were accused of improper dealings in cod.<sup>4</sup>

Between 1619-1683, English ships accounted for 46% of maritime traffic in Lisbon's port, a proportion significantly higher than the other two major foreign players: the Dutch with 15%, and the Hanseatic with under 12%.<sup>5</sup> By the 1690s the English had a dozen principal firms in Lisbon, which controlled imports of English cloth worth approximately £200,000 and this was apparently a time of decline from the "prosperous days" following the treaty of 1654.<sup>6</sup> English

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<sup>4</sup> There is very little reason to suspect that the situation between English merchants and Portuguese officials was profoundly different between Porto and Lisbon. One possible explanation for the more numerous conflicts found for Lisbon is that the English mercantile community was significantly larger in the capital city than anywhere else in Portugal and that, consequently, more problems arose. The difference between Porto and Lisbon can also be explained by the nature of the records located for each respective city.

<sup>5</sup> Mauro, L'Expansion européenne, 1600-1880 (1964), 494-496, as cited in Victor Morales Lezcano, Relaciones Mercantiles entre Inglaterra y los Archipiélagos del Atlántico Ibérico (1503-1783): su Estructura y su Historia (La Laguna de Tenerife, Canarias: Goya Artes Graficas, 1970), 62.

<sup>6</sup> A.D. Francis, The Methuens and Portugal, 1691-1708 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 20.



"factories" were also established in Viana, Coimbra, and Faro, but the only two major ones were in Porto and Lisbon. A major difference between the two is that Lisbon merchants were mainly importers whereas Porto's English community also dealt in exporting Portuguese products, such as wine and fruit, to England; the Lisbon group also exported some wine, especially after the Methuen Treaty of 1703, but it was always engaged more in imports of English goods, for which the Portuguese paid bullion.<sup>7</sup>

While a fair amount is known about England's textile trade with Portugal in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, virtually nothing has been uncovered about the English cod trade in Lisbon during the same period. Lisbon's early port records have disappeared, though we know that in 1700 English vessels carried approximately 20,000 quintals of fish to Lisbon.<sup>8</sup> Lisbon's municipal records do not provide enough information on the extent of English imports of cod from Newfoundland, but they do offer a rare glimpse into the effect the well-known treaties between England and Portugal - heretofore only analyzed in conjunction with the bigger textile and wine trade - had on local fish markets.

On 20 November 1638 Lisbon sent a petition to the crown

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<sup>7</sup> Francis, The Methuens and Portugal, 22.

<sup>8</sup> Francis, The Methuens and Portugal, 19.

requesting support in its decision to prohibit foreign merchants from selling merchandise in any other form than bulk or wholesale. Lisbon officials reminded the king that this law had been in place for more than two hundred years. Only two exceptions had been made in the past, both cases involving cod merchants, at which time officials had explicitly declared that those were isolated cases.<sup>9</sup> Although nothing else is known about these two exceptional deals, at stake in 1638 was Lisbon's jurisdiction over the retail sector.

City council was under pressure to allow foreign merchants to set up shop in Lisbon. In 1633 and in 1636, in fact, council requested the crown's permission to grant retail licenses to foreigners residing in Lisbon and possessing Portuguese spouses.<sup>10</sup> The request stipulated that there were not enough native Portuguese merchants in Lisbon at that time,

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<sup>9</sup> Eduardo Freire de Oliveira, Elementos para a História do Município de Lisboa, Seventeen Volumes (Lisbon: Typographia Universal, 1882-1911), Part I, Tomo IV, 354-355. City officials began by reminding the king of the regulations set by his predecessors, including D. John I and D. Manuel I, who at that time already recognized that by allowing foreign merchants the right to come into the city and sell retail, foreign merchants would bypass Portuguese intermediaries, leave with all the profits, and negate the Portuguese a chance to participate in the negotiations of such commerce. Thus, a decree was passed back in 1390 (1428) restricting foreigners access to markets, and in fact establishing for Lisbon twelve brokers or commission agents who would negotiate with all incoming foreign merchants the purchase of their products, reserving the rights of resale to the Portuguese.

<sup>10</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Tomo IV, 7-8, 200-201.

because many of them had left, though reasons for this exodus were not provided. Council complained that a crown official was interfering with city business by pushing for a return of the exemptions to English cod ships. For his part, the exchequer maintained that in granting this favour the city would attract more fish boats into its ports, and that the English would leave if they did not get these concessions.<sup>11</sup>

The city feared, however, that if they conceded this privilege to English cod merchants, others would naturally follow with the same demands. Furthermore, as Lisbon officials pointed out, similar restrictions applied to Portuguese merchants entering English or other foreign ports. Indeed, the English wanted to do in Lisbon what in London was prohibited to the Portuguese. As for the threat that ships would turn around with their unloaded cargoes, Lisbon officials were not convinced that English merchants would chance it given the unfriendly seas in the region. Pirates had captured 13 cod ships the previous year.<sup>12</sup>

The crown decided in favour of the city. Municipal officials convinced the king and ministers that restricting the sale of merchandise to Portuguese merchants would be more

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<sup>11</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Part I, Tomo IV, 355-356.

<sup>12</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Part I, Tomo IV, 356-357.

profitable for the crown.<sup>13</sup> The victory was short-lived, however, for on 17 October 1645 the crown asked why Lisbon's municipal council had decided not to allow the French and English to sell dry and green cod (secco e verde), and other provisions, wholesale and retail in shops to the public.<sup>14</sup> Lisbon officials failed to explain themselves to the king's satisfaction, and on 28 April 1646 the crown made certain allowances to foreign cod merchants. Despite the loss in revenue this meant to both levels of government, the Portuguese king conceded English and French cod merchants a free trade deal permitting them to sell cod wholesale or retail, set their own prices, and remain exempt from local taxes. In essence, foreign cod merchants were exempted from municipal regulations. This was in effect as long as foreigners sold the cod aboard their ships upon arrival. In other words, they could not land the fish and sell it. Once the vessel and crew left harbour, the remaining cod was subject to city taxes and regulation.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The letter did not adequately explain this financial advantage. Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Part I, Tomo IV, 362.

<sup>14</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Tomo IV, 618.

<sup>15</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Tomo V, 26-27. The decree stipulated that cod sold aboard ships was still subject to royal duties, but that the city could not impose any of its taxes on these transactions. The loss was therefore greater for the Lisbon treasury, though the crown also missed out on income from the retail sector.

One can only speculate about the pressure put on King John IV to grant such privileges to foreign merchants, specifically English and French, but undoubtedly the peace treaties following Portugal's liberation from the Spanish crown in 1640 had a role to play. Lisbon officials, for their part, were outraged at the results of such concessions, as they informed the crown on 14 November 1653. Due to their unharnessed liberties, the petition stated, foreigners were creating a public scandal by showing disrespect for city regulations, and charging excessive prices for cod, at the rate of 4,480 réis per quintal, or 35 réis per arrátel.<sup>16</sup>

The outcry from Lisbon officials was politically motivated, in part, for essentially the city had lost control over an important group of merchants, and a sizeable source of revenue. Their complaint about excessive cod prices had some validity, however, for at that time in Porto, pasta prices ranged from 1,155 to 1,650 réis per quintal, and vento was 2,400 to 3,100 réis per quintal.<sup>17</sup> Municipal authorities also complained that foreign cod merchants did not conduct business in their ships only, as required by the 1646

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<sup>16</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Tomo V, 457-461. Note that if this calculation is correct, then the Portuguese quintal was equivalent to 128 pounds in seventeenth-century Lisbon.

<sup>17</sup> Arquivo Distrital do Porto (A.D.P.), Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1653, Cabido No. 132, f.140-f.149.

legislation, but rented spaces around the city, where cod was sold at retail. In fact, retail sales were so profitable that foreign cod merchants refused to sell their cod wholesale to Portuguese merchants. In other words, already in the mid-1640s deregulation in Lisbon's fish trade had displaced native cod merchants, some of whom were probably women.

In a letter dated 12 November 1654, city authorities outlined their worries about other ships coming to Lisbon and doing the same with their merchandise. Though officials referred to "foreigners", and the 1646 decree applied to "foreign" cod merchants, the main source of contention was the English because they were already the biggest cod suppliers in Lisbon. In every communication municipal officials betrayed their true nemesis, for although they resented all foreign merchants coming into port and deciding the law, the city was especially critical of the liberties English merchants possessed, liberties they did not enjoy in any other country, and that Portuguese merchants were not accorded abroad. Once again, city officials reminded the crown that it, too, lost in the process for the crown would receive a share of cod taxes ordinarily collected from retail sales. Furthermore, the foreigners' intrusion into the retail level was detrimental to the average consumer, for they sold cod at higher prices than would be allowed if the city controlled the market. The higher cost for cod was especially hard on religious orders

and the poor, for whom cod was the mainstay, Lisbon's council claimed.<sup>18</sup>

Interestingly, in this petition, city officials did not request a return to the status quo of 1638, but merely asked for a reaffirmation of the terms of the 1646 declaration - that once cod was brought on land it was subject to municipal intervention including taxation. The crown's response has not survived, but its decision is not difficult to guess. Four years later, on 8 November 1658, the city once again pleaded with the crown to regulate the matter. Lisbon officials reminded the crown that they had always had the right to establish prices in foodstuffs and that foreigners had never been allowed to deal in the retail market. For the sake of maintaining peace, however, the English were granted the right to sell textiles (fazendas)<sup>19</sup> and fish at wholesale or retail prices, as they chose, but only on board ship upon arrival. Foreigners took advantage of these liberties, municipal officials complained, for council was then faced with seven ships loaded with cod whose merchants were not satisfied with selling it aboard their vessels. Instead, these merchants had English agents in the city selling cod to Portuguese women who

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<sup>18</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Part I, Tomo VII, xvi-xviii.

<sup>19</sup> Fazendas can mean goods or merchandise, and cloth or textile material. In this case the privilege was probably restricted to English textiles.

in turn sold it in shops and warehouses across the city.<sup>20</sup> According to Lisbon authorities, this practise exceeded the peace agreement, robbed the city and crown of tax revenues and resulted in unregulated cod prices for the public.<sup>21</sup>

The limits outlined in the 1646 crown decision were obviously not respected by at least some cod merchants and not seriously upheld by the crown. On 1 December 1673, for instance, even the English consulate complained to the crown about the city's interference. Two English ships loaded with cod arrived in Lisbon and the cargoes were handled by English merchants, who took the cod to shops in the Ribeira district. The city responded by closing down these shops in order to protect its jurisdiction over retail sales and taxes, but the English filed a complaint.<sup>22</sup>

Whether this bold move was successful remains unclear, but the following year council was faced with a similar

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<sup>20</sup> Though English agents handled their merchandise wholesale, it appears that they hired local regateiras to do the retail sales, whether in the fish business or in other commodities. In 1701, for instance, an English visitor to Lisbon noted that English merchants had local market women sell their grain, and that merchants received their payments from the market women every Saturday night. H.E.S. Fisher, The Portugal Trade: A Study of Anglo-Portuguese Commerce, 1700-1770 (London: Methuen & Co., 1971), 68.

<sup>21</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Part I, Tomo VII, xciii-xcv.

<sup>22</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Part I, Tomo VIII, 13-14.



problem, and it notified the crown that the dispute from the previous year remained unresolved.<sup>23</sup> By 1674 city officials conveyed a sense of frustration and cynicism in their dealings with the crown over the issue of cod sales. That year English merchants received royal approval to sell cod at 6,400 réis (44.8 shillings) per quintal, presumably aboard ship, but once again they were caught selling it in the city and were apprehended. While Lisbon representatives were careful not to criticize the king for the generous price awarded English merchants, council was quick to point out that prices could have been lower. If the war with Holland justified the higher prices in the past, they said, that war was now over. Furthermore, they argued, the English should not be allowed to sell cod in Lisbon for a price twice as high as they sold it in Porto.<sup>24</sup>

Much to the city's dismay, the crown decided in favour of the English. Lisbon's response was unequivocal. How could the peace treaty give English merchants residing in Lisbon

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<sup>23</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Part I, Tomo VIII, 55.

<sup>24</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Part I, Tomo VIII, 54-59. In Porto in 1674, pasta cod was priced at 800 to 1,250 réis per quintal; vento prices ranged from 2,000 to 4,050 réis per quintal, but only one cargo was sold at the latter rate - most vento was priced at 3,650 réis per quintal. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1674, Cabido No. 157, f.90-f.94.

special privileges over the Portuguese themselves,<sup>25</sup> municipal authorities wondered. Continuance of these privileges, they argued, would result in a loss of more than 300,000 cruzados per year to the city, and undue hardship for religious groups and the poor who were most dependent on this food.<sup>26</sup>

The tendency of Lisbon's municipal council to stress the suffering incurred by poor residents was probably exaggerated. Most of the time, cod was too expensive for poor people anyway. Besides, authorities contradicted themselves, for in 1667 they notified the crown of a shortage of sardines in Lisbon, and stated that the crisis hurt the poor most because sardines was their sustenance, especially in winter months. The city claimed that there was more money to be made in cod, and thus merchants did not bother with sardines. Lisbon officials blamed this situation on the free trade deal granted to foreign merchants, who brought in cod fished by foreigners, profitable to foreigners only, and destructive of the local fishery. A sardine shortage led to rising prices of other commodities, such as meat. Furthermore, since many local women made their living selling sardines, Lisbon's council

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<sup>25</sup> English merchants were in fact selling cod retail without having to pay retail sales taxes, whereas Portuguese merchants were still regulated by municipal laws.

<sup>26</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Part I, Tomo VIII, 67-69.

argued, the decline in sardine supplies led to a great deal of unemployment among women.<sup>27</sup>

How widespread was the suffering from the alleged sardine shortage remains uncertain, for this was the only reference found on the matter. The officials' estimation that a decline in the local sardine fishery would affect the poor was probably accurate, but the connection between this decline and the rise of English cod merchants in Lisbon is not clear. Lisbon officials offered contradictory evidence. On the one hand, they claimed that allowing English agents to sell cod in the city was detrimental to native merchants for the latter were excluded from the trade. On the other hand, the municipal council also stated that the sardine fishery had suffered because everyone preferred the more profitable cod trade. Furthermore, if cod prices in Lisbon were as exorbitant as city officials maintained, then sardine merchants should have enjoyed an advantage in selling the less expensive sardine. The real point of contention was more likely connected to foreigners selling cod tax-free.

As the century progressed, Lisbon received little relief from the crown on the controversial privileges. In fact, by the early 1700s these concessions had been expanded to include other merchandise as well as other nations, for the crown

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<sup>27</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Tomo VIII, 230-232.

warned Lisbon's council that the English and Dutch were free to sell grain without incurring local duties.<sup>28</sup> There is no reason to believe, however, that Lisbon officials stopped fighting. In 1695, for example, the crown legislated that ships loaded with cod from Newfoundland were not required to have health certificates because there was no one in that region to supply masters with said documents, and there was no danger if they were carrying cod only.<sup>29</sup> Yet in 1751 the English filed a complaint outlining abuses suffered by the English arriving with cod shipments. For no apparent reason, health officials had placed guards aboard these ships at the expense of the shipmasters.<sup>30</sup>

Clearly Lisbon's municipal council fought hard against attacks on its regulatory powers, but in the end "free trade" won. The crown had its own reasons for overruling Lisbon's objections to the English interlopers. Consequently, if city officials are to be trusted, Lisbon consumers paid higher prices for cod than they would have paid had the municipal council been allowed to regulate prices as per custom; Portuguese merchants were supplanted by a growing, arrogant foreign community; the city and state lost tax revenues

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<sup>28</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Tomo X, 343, 457.

<sup>29</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, Tomo X, 427.

<sup>30</sup> Freire de Oliveira, Elementos, XV, 215-217, 293.

because foreigners were exempted from sales taxes; and the local fishery suffered because it could not compete with the more profitable cod trade. The credibility of some of these arguments put forth by Lisbon officials may be suspect, but one point was certainly accurate: if the local sardine or other type of fishery declined, women were especially affected for they were the majority of fish vendors.

Lisbon officials clearly blamed the peace treaties with England for the disarray in the cod trade, and they were not alone in denouncing the English for exploiting the terms of the agreements. Duarte Ribeiro de Macedo, a Portuguese diplomat stationed in France from 1668-1676, was similarly disturbed by the decline in Portugal's economy in the second half of the seventeenth century, a period when the ports of northern Europe enjoyed tremendous growth. In her analysis of his correspondence, Portuguese historian Virginia Rau observed that from 1670 onwards, Ribeiro de Macedo's letters reflected one dominant preoccupation: the unstable state of commerce in Portugal, the urgent need to protect Portuguese commercial interests, and the measures needed to promote its growth both nationally and internationally. He continuously called for the development of national industries, a prohibition in the exports of primary products from Portugal, a ban on the import of luxury products, and the necessity of a solid merchant

marine.<sup>31</sup>

What he noticed most was the apparent prosperity in France in comparison to the poor state of Portuguese commerce all over northern Europe, which he contended was due to the low value of Portuguese currency.<sup>32</sup> One of the most critical observations made by Ribeiro de Macedo was that France, under Colbert, had imposed heavy duties on the import of sugar from outside its colonial holdings, a move that severely hurt Portugal's sugar exports from Brazil, one of its major commodities. In response to France's protectionist measures, Holland imposed a heavy duty on imported French wine, paper, and dried fruit. Why, wondered Ribeiro de Macedo, did Portugal not do likewise? The reason, according to him, was that Portugal could not entertain the same protectionist legislation against French merchandise due to stipulations in the peace treaties which Portugal had to sign with France during the wars of independence from Spain between 1640-1668.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Virginia Rau, "Política Económica e Mercantilismo na Correspondência de Duarte Ribeiro de Macedo (1668-1676)," Separata de Do Tempo e da História, II (Lisboa, 1968), 7.

<sup>32</sup> Rau, "Política Económica," 10-11.

<sup>33</sup> Rau, "Política Económica," 23. After its declaration of independence from Spain in 1640, the Portuguese crown sought legitimacy from the European community at large, and not from England only. Thus, the Portuguese signed various peace and trade deals with the Dutch, French, and Swedish - as well as the English - in the early 1640s. Alliances with the

He could not help noticing, however, that Portuguese currency continued to flow out of his homeland, for he was notified of a ship returning to France with 40 or 50 thousand cruzados in 1671.<sup>34</sup> The constant devaluing of its monetary system brought hard criticism and hard times to those in Portugal; abroad the policies led to discredit and lack of confidence. Even Ribeiro de Macedo had to admit that Portuguese coins had devalued greatly in France, and he warned his officials that changing them, whether by making them heavier or lighter, did not alter the situation; the foreigners, he said, were in charge, and with each Portuguese move foreign merchants in turn altered the prices of their merchandise. The result was that they ended up with Portuguese money. He was told of another ship arriving in a French port in 1672, with 30,000 cruzados, which he believed had been to Porto, and he was aware of another leaving La Rochelle full of merchandise, which he was certain would return full of money and nothing else. This was the reason, he argued, why those foreign parts had so much and Portugal

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French and Dutch were never as stable and long-lasting as those with England, however, perhaps because the English were already well-established on Portuguese soil by 1640. Though most foreign merchants enjoyed generous trading privileges in Portugal at one time or another, no other nation was capable to take advantage of the desperate Portuguese as much as the English did.

<sup>34</sup> Rau, "Política Económica," 24-25.

and Castile had so little. The French had 150,000 people employed in the Portuguese trade, whereas Portugal could not even sustain one shipment to France.<sup>35</sup>

Ribeiro de Macedo was acutely aware of the trade imbalance between Portugal and northern Europe, but he was especially resentful of the role played by France and England in weakening Portugal's economy. In fact, Ribeiro de Macedo claimed that the general belief among his colleagues, Portuguese and otherwise, was that the real cause of Portugal's poverty was the English having taken all its money. For this reason he cautioned the king to stop the flow of Portuguese money abroad, and that the only way to do this was to stop importing so many foreign products.<sup>36</sup> He encouraged the crown to promote emigration of trades people from France to set up shop in Portugal, a scheme which would provide the nation's needs for many goods, reduce imports, and keep currency at home.<sup>37</sup>

Ribeiro de Macedo blamed both the French and English for bankrupting Portugal, but he was especially bitter toward the latter. The English were favourite targets despite the fact that the French and Dutch eventually received similar

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<sup>35</sup> Rau, "Política Económica," 26.

<sup>36</sup> Rau, "Política Económica," 29.

<sup>37</sup> Rau, "Política Económica," 37-39.



concessions from Portugal. The English presence must have been more substantial, for the French, too, resented the privileges enjoyed by English merchants in Portuguese soil. In 1713 the French Consulate commented that the Portuguese were happy with the end of war (War of the Spanish Succession, 1701-1713) and that they had never wanted to be at war with the French because the Portuguese were primarily anglophobes. "On n'avait jamais vu ce pays si misérable; le négoce s'y est perdu, les anglais en ont emporté tout l'argent pendant la guerre; rien ne peut le remettre que la flotte du Brésil qui viendra désormais décharger dans ce port l'or et les marchandises."<sup>28</sup>

Undoubtedly the Portuguese government was aware of the outflow of bullion from Portugal primarily into English hands, but enough Brazilian gold reached the Portuguese crown to keep it satisfied.<sup>29</sup> As Fernand Braudel explained it, "the

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<sup>28</sup> The French Consulate also lamented the bad state of the bar in Porto, which blocked the passage for six months of the year, starting in October. The Portuguese appear to have been too excited about Brazilian gold to deal with some pressing problems at home. Frédéric Mauro, "Porto et le Brésil (1500-1800)," Revista de História, Vol. II (1979), 345-347.

<sup>29</sup> King D. John V (r.1706-1750) was considered one of the richest monarchs in all of Europe, and in Lisbon "the rich became excessively rich and the poor wretched." Braudel, The Wheels of Commerce, 211. Also see Jan de Vries, Economy of Europe in an Age of Crisis, 1600-1750 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 144.

English solution was the easy one."<sup>40</sup> Portugal needed manufactured goods for the growing Brazil trade and in came the English. While Portuguese overseas trade slithered under an outmoded, bureaucratic public monopoly controlled by aristocrats, the rest of Europe, and especially the English and Dutch, developed numerous private chartered trading companies with solid bases in their respective home countries as well as abroad. It is not known why the Dutch were relatively uninterested in the Lisbon market in the seventeenth century,<sup>41</sup> but the English used a moribund Portuguese economy to their maximum benefit. The English agreed to buy Portuguese wine, but Portuguese vineyard-owners were obliged to sell their product to English merchants at prices set by the English. The irony is inescapable: a traditional regulated economy was deregulated to conform to the demands of foreign interests only to have those interests

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<sup>40</sup> Braudel, The Wheels of Commerce, 212.

<sup>41</sup> Fernand Braudel has suggested that by the time of the gold rush of the early eighteenth century, English control of the Lisbon trade was a fait accompli. By 1730 a French observer commented that "'The trade carried on by the English in Lisbon is the most considerable of all; many people think it is as much as all the other Nations put together'," even though the French had their own large colony in Lisbon. Braudel, The Wheels of Commerce, 212. The Dutch, of course, might have ignored Lisbon because they were successfully occupied elsewhere. In the second half of the seventeenth century approximately 400 European vessels left per decade for the formerly Portuguese Asian trade, of which more than half were Dutch. See de Vries, Economy of Europe, 130-131.

regulate the economy according to their needs. Portugal became England's "commercial colony" par excellence.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, unlike Iberian pursuits in their overseas colonies, the English did not focus on extracting raw materials from Portuguese soil; they created a market for their own goods.<sup>43</sup>

According to Braudel, England's success in Portugal was as much a result of English steadfastness as Portuguese inertia.<sup>44</sup> The fact is that the English - for reasons still hotly debated - embraced mercantilist thinking earlier than did the Portuguese, and all endeavours were taken in England to ensure a balance of trade and to prevent the outflow of bullion. This attitude was succinctly expressed by English diplomats soon after the signing of the Methuen Treaty in 1703. Instead of paying the Portuguese a cash subsidy as stipulated in the treaty, the English proposed to settle the account with wheat and other cereals "'so as both to acquit herself of her obligations and to allay anxiety about letting specie out of the kingdom'."<sup>45</sup> The gilded but hungry Portuguese had no choice but to accept.

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<sup>42</sup> Braudel, The Wheels of Commerce, 212.

<sup>43</sup> De Vries, Economy of Europe, 128.

<sup>44</sup> Braudel, The Wheels of Commerce, 212.

<sup>45</sup> Cited in Braudel, The Wheels of Commerce, 205.

Another characteristic of this new economic order, which "closed on Portugal like a trap,"<sup>46</sup> was the English proclivity to monopolize trade from production to consumption. Thus, unlike the Portuguese, the English not only strove to dominate the Newfoundland fishery, they also protected their navigation. This allowed them to safeguard their position in Newfoundland and to foster their shipping industry, which in turn facilitated their carrying trade to European and colonial markets. In 1630 an order in council stipulated that fish leaving from ports in the Western Country, including cod from Newfoundland, could be exported in English ships only,<sup>47</sup> and this ban was reinforced the following year.<sup>48</sup> With the Navigation Act of 1651, the English Parliament forbade the import or export of any salt fish, oil, or whale product in foreign ships.<sup>49</sup> In 1666 Parliament introduced another bill

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<sup>46</sup> Braudel, The Wheels of Commerce, 211.

<sup>47</sup> M.H.A.-M.U.N., Privy Council, "Order in Council [1630]," 16-B-3-037.

<sup>48</sup> M.H.A.-M.U.N., Privy Council, "Order in Council [1631]," 16-B-3-043, 16-B-3-010.

<sup>49</sup> Leo Francis Stock, ed., Proceedings and Debates of the British Parliaments respecting North America, 1542-1688, Volume I (Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1924) 225, 241-242. Only after much heated debate did the English allow the transporting of fish in foreign bottoms, in 1657. The reason for this bill was to supply Spain with the desired cod fish, who had always been England's best customers for this commodity, and that otherwise the fish "will stink on our hands". The bill was only in effect for two years, though supporters of the legislation maintained that without the

to control the fishery, this time prohibiting the import of fish caught by foreigners.<sup>50</sup> The English protected and promoted their cod fishery off Newfoundland, whereas the Portuguese never did. The English also promoted and protected their cod trade in Portugal, and the Portuguese crown allowed it - for political, dynastic, and strategic reasons, but much to the outrage of Lisbon's municipal government.

Although relations between the Portuguese and English cod merchants were apparently seldom friendly in Lisbon, no such situation seems to have existed in Porto.<sup>51</sup> The kind of problems outlined in Lisbon's municipal records only arose after the impact of the peace treaties was felt. Porto's church and health inspection records say nothing about conflicts between the various parties involved in the cod trade, though the occasional disagreement was inevitable.<sup>52</sup>

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Spanish market the English trade in the Newfoundland cod fisheries would fail.

<sup>50</sup> Stock, Proceedings and Debates, 1542-1688, Volume I, 332.

<sup>51</sup> Francisco Ribeiro da Silva's study on Porto during the Spanish annexation makes no particular reference to any important disputes between foreign merchants and the local government.

<sup>52</sup> Health inspectors and church officials would not have been particularly interested in recording disputes of this nature, though a church record from 1713 indicates that some English merchants tried to argue against paying the portagem or customs duties in Porto, but the document does not stipulate the merchandise in question. The English appeal was unsuccessful. A.D.P., Livro das Sentenças, Cabido No. 728,

It is not even clear if the peace treaties had the same effect in northern Portugal, or whether the 1646 privileges awarded by the crown to foreign cod merchants in Lisbon applied to Porto's community as well.

It is difficult to explain how a treaty made between the Portuguese crown and the English parliament could affect Lisbon more than Porto, but that may have been the case. Certainly Lisbon officials alluded to such a possibility, for they complained in 1653 and in 1674 that English cod merchants in Lisbon charged about double the prices found in Porto at that time.<sup>53</sup> Why was cod so much more expensive in Lisbon? Perhaps Porto had its own arrangement with the English community, a preventive measure against similar problems witnessed in Lisbon. Higher cod prices in Lisbon may have been a result of less competition from other cod suppliers, though English merchants enjoyed a near monopoly in Porto as well. Without adequate information on port activities in the early modern period, complications in Lisbon's cod trade

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f.291-f.330v. I am grateful to P. Manuel Leao, of the Colegio do Sardoal, Gaia, for bringing this reference to my attention. Also in 1609 questions arose in Viana do Castelo about English merchants being exempted from paying the dízima on items they brought directly from England, according to privileges granted by D. Manuel I (r.1495-1521). Arquivo Municipal de Viana do Castelo (A.M.V.C.), Foral Grande, No. 954 (1609), f.32-f.32v.

<sup>53</sup> Provided that Lisbon municipal officials can be trusted with their reports on cod prices charged in Lisbon by English merchants.

cannot be properly examined.<sup>54</sup> It would certainly be fascinating to know, for instance, why English merchants were able to price cod in Lisbon at 35 réis/arrátel (0.28 shillings per pound) in 1653, when it cost approximately 22 réis/arrátel in Porto; and 50 réis/arrátel (0.35 shillings) in 1674 when Porto's price was an average of 27 réis/arrátel (0.19 shillings).<sup>55</sup> It seems as if Lisbon's council had reason to complain.

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<sup>54</sup> The only other known source to deal with Lisbon's port traffic is the Livros para as visitas das naus, records kept by inquisitional officials after inspecting foreign ships coming into Portuguese ports. For many Portuguese ports, these church visits are the only existing early records of harbour activity, but unlike the health inspection Visitas found in Porto, the inquisitional visit was not motivated by a fear of physical disease but of a moral one instead. The result was that church officials focused on ships from heretic countries, and only took notice of religious paraphernalia. As Virginia Rau lamented, these records are useful to determine the types of books and art coming into Portugal, but they cannot be considered economic documents. Virginia Rau, "Subsídios para o estudo do movimento dos portos de Faro e Lisboa durante o século XVII," separata dos Anais, II Série, Volume 5 (Lisboa, 1954), 217.

<sup>55</sup> See Table 20 (Chapter 4) for yearly averages of cod prices in Porto; calculations were based on the Portuguese quintal of 128 pounds; an arrátel equals 16 ounces, or one pound. Prices rose and fell through the years, and fluctuated within the same year and between regions, but it is interesting to note that in 1681, cod cost 34-40 réis/arrátel in Ponte de Lima, and 33 réis/arrátel in 1683. João Gomes d'Abreu Lima, "Ponte de Lima nas Vereações Antigas," Arquivo de Ponte de Lima, Vol. II, (1981), 24 and 34; Vol. IV (1983), 19. One would expect that cod in Lisbon would be cheaper than in a northern inland town for cod ships would have easier access to a major coastal port. In the case of Ponte de Lima and Lisbon, however, the records seldom indicated the cod category and this may have been the major factor in the different prices between the two communities.

While Lisbon's municipal records reveal much on the political intricacies of the cod trade in the capital city, a quantitative analysis of Lisbon's cod market in the early modern era remains elusive. Except for the few occasional references to prices discussed above, nothing is known about the volume and value of cod shipments handled at Lisbon's port over the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Municipal documents refer to the arrival of seven English cod ships in November 1658, but the volume, cod category, and unit prices were not recorded. The few remaining sources on cod destined for Lisbon come from the English themselves, who already in 1626 exported cod and lumber from Newfoundland to Lisbon.<sup>56</sup>

There is some evidence to suggest that although the English dominated the cod trade in Porto and Lisbon, the two markets were handled by distinctively different groups, and the latter market was more significant. Only a few English sources dealing with cod to Portugal are known to exist, yet none of these records refers to Porto, while several mention

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<sup>56</sup> Maritime History Archives - Memorial University of Newfoundland (M.H.A.-M.U.N.), Henry Hassarde, "Examination [1626]," 16-B-2-056. Also see, Joseph Burges and William Jones, "Examination [1634]," 17-C-1-006; Anon, "Extract from Journal [1698]," 16-D-2-041. For references to English cargoes for unspecified Portuguese ports, see Thomas Read, "Examination [1639]," 16-B-3-038; Robert Mollton, "Examination [1645]," 17-C-1-004.



Lisbon.<sup>57</sup> The meagre documentation on Lisbon's cod trade hinders any further development of a comparison between the two major markets, and the absence of English court records connected to Porto remains a mystery.

Lisbon officials had great difficulties with English cod merchants. Were Porto officials equally perturbed by the English mercantile community in their midst? There were certainly differences in the way in which municipal governments in Lisbon and Porto were organized. In Porto, city councillors met twice a week, on Wednesdays and on Saturdays; in Lisbon, meetings were held three times a week, on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Lisbon municipal officials apparently had a heavier load of responsibilities. More importantly, the crown appointed the vereadores, or city councillors, but in Porto they were chosen from among the local aristocracy, whereas in Lisbon the vereadores were usually selected from the judicial and professional

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<sup>57</sup> Most English court documents connected to Portugal fail to specify a Portuguese port, but among those with identifiable ports, Lisbon shows up most often. See, for example, M.H.A.-M.U.N., Petter Milbery, "Examination [1648]," 16-B-4-028, for a reference to an English cod vessel that sailed to Lisbon with "27 tons of dead freight," despite having called at various ports in Newfoundland. See also, 16-B-2-056, 16-B-2-059, 17-C-1-005, 17-C-1-006, 16-B-5-002, 16-A-1-013, 16-A-1-006, and 16-A-1-004, though the last three deal with Viana and Aveiro.

community.<sup>58</sup>

It is difficult to determine how the different composition of council members affected their dealings with the English mercantile group in their respective communities. Possibly Porto's aristocrats felt less inclined to fight on behalf of cod merchants given that the fishery in general hardly enjoyed an elevated status.<sup>59</sup> Some merchants or merchants' sons may have been among Lisbon's professional class who could have become city councillors. The fact remains that we do not know how Porto reacted to the growing English mercantile presence. This void is especially regrettable because, for Lisbon, we must rely on the possibly exaggerated reports from the city's vereadores about the repercussions of the Anglo-Portuguese treaties. In Porto, the deterioration of the Portuguese share of the cod trade was well documented by a generally impartial source - the church cared little who brought in the cod, as long as it received its tithes. Despite their token references to the poor,

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<sup>58</sup> Francisco Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo (1580-1640): Os Homens, as Instituições e o Poder, Two Volumes (Porto: Câmara Municipal do Porto/Arquivo Histórico, 1988), Volume I, 381-382.

<sup>59</sup> According to Charles Boxer, the Spaniards and Portuguese felt nothing but contempt for pilots, sailors, and mariners in the early modern era. He even found a contemporary who called the seafaring class "Dregs of the Sea." See Charles Boxer, Further Selections from the Tragic History of the Sea, 1559-1565, Second Series, No. CXXXII (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, for the Hakluyt Society, 1968), 9.

Lisbon officials were clearly more concerned about losing political and economic clout. They barely mentioned the displacement of female sardine vendors, but Porto's church authorities could only record what they saw. In the second half of the seventeenth century, they saw significantly fewer female cod merchants.

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Although Maria Rois "a Cabrita" merchandised fish from 1639-1679, there was a clear decline in the volume she handled between the first and second half of the seventeenth century. From 1643-1658 Rois showed up in the Cabido Redízima books 36 times and dealt with 2,509.5 quintals of cod, worth approximately 5,670,287 réis (£2,409.87); from 1659-1679, however, she managed only five cargoes of dízima cod totalling 585 quintals, valued about 1,505,812 réis (£527.03).<sup>60</sup> It

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<sup>60</sup> For specific cod entries connected to Maria Rois, please see A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1643, Cabido No. 118, f.147v; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.148, f.152; Cabido No. 120 (1645), f.147v, f.154v; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.146v, f.147v, f.150-f.150v; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.145, f.147, f.148, f.150v, f.152; Cabido No. 124 (1648), f.141, f.144v, f.147, f.150-f.151; Cabido No. 126 (1649), f.142, f.146-f.147; Cabido No. 128 (1650), f.143v [noted as Maria Rois a Palheta]; Cabido No. 132 (1653), f.148v-f.149; Cabido No. 138 (1656), f.148-f.149v; Cabido No. 142 (1658), f.140; Cabido No. 146 (1663), f.146; Cabido No. 176 (1668), f.103v-f.104; Cabido No. 154 (1670), f.92v; Maria Rois also dealt with a lot of sardines up to the 1650s, but was less visible in the trade thereafter. Time constraints prevented a proper

might be argued that Rois slowed down as she got older, but she certainly was not too old to trade 500,000 sardines on 01 February 1679.<sup>61</sup> The decrease in Rois' business had a lot less to do with her than with outside forces. Incomplete documents notwithstanding, some indications point to a fundamental transformation in Porto's fishing community: women were prominent fish merchants, regardless of volume, value, type, or origin of species, until the English came to town.

Portuguese merchants, including women, had a role in merchandising fish when native fishers brought in their cargoes, or when foreigners - who did not have a base in Porto - came in with their fish loads. The English, however, established their own merchant community in Porto during the 1640s,<sup>62</sup> and as their share of the market increased, fewer female merchants participated in the fish trade. Undoubtedly women continued to sell fish at the local market, or door-to-

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study of this branch of the fish business, however.

<sup>61</sup> This was the second time a fish shipment arrived in Porto specifically for Maria Rois (for the first shipment involving a cargo of 680 quintals of cod for Rois, see A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1658, Cabido No. 142, f.140). The sardines were worth about 300,000 réis and came from Sesimbra, near Lisbon, transported in a Portuguese ship. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1679, Cabido No. 163, f.108.

<sup>62</sup> The English were certainly living in Porto long before then, but the peace treaties of 1642 and 1654 facilitated their entry and undoubtedly led to an increase in their number.

door, but they were now relegated to the role of fish women, or market women - regateiras - who sold small amounts of fish for merchants, earning a 10% commission of sales, with 90% of the intake belonging to the merchant(s).<sup>63</sup> In the process, women disappeared from the Redízima records.<sup>64</sup> They no longer dealt directly with incoming shipments, negotiated contracts with shipmasters and other merchants, or made arrangements with town or church officials.

Maria Rois was not the only cod merchant whose volume of business decreased in the second half of the seventeenth century. From 1642-1679, a total of 76 entries were located in the Cabido series for female cod merchants and all but ten of them appeared before 1659. To be fair, 61 of those entries were linked to four merchants only, Maria Rois, Angela Lopes,

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<sup>63</sup> In Lisbon in 1552, women selling fish or vegetables on behalf of fishers or farmers, earned 10% of their daily sales. João Brandão, "Majestade e Grandezas de Lisboa em 1552," Arquivo Histórico Português, Volume XI (1919), 77. Although the evidence is for Lisbon and for the mid-sixteenth century, there is no reason to believe that regateiras earned significantly higher commissions anywhere else in Portugal or in the seventeenth century.

<sup>64</sup> Few women were connected with cod exports to Brazil, according to the Cabido's Despacho books, though most Despacho volumes exist for the second half of the seventeenth century when female fish merchants had already been displaced. Angela Lopes sent some olive oil on 9 January 1647 to Pernambuco, Isabel Dalmeida exported raisins that same year, while Isabel Pinheira exported 3 quintals of cod and one barrel of olive oil to Rio de Janeiro on 17 May 1688. Pinheira was the last female cod merchant found in the Cabido records. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1647, Cabido No. 123, f.81-f.81v; Cabido No. 175 (1688), f.112.

Maria Carvalha, and Catherina Fernandez.<sup>65</sup> These women clearly dominated the female segment of the cod market, but their business dwindled significantly beginning in the late 1650s. That such a thing should have happened to all four of them, at approximately the same time, suggests that external forces were a factor in their demise. Angela Lopes disappeared from the cod trade already in 1648. Catherina Fernandez dealt with 416 quintals of cod in 1657, worth 1,140,952 réis (£456.38); but she only handled 5.9 quintals, worth 16,830 réis (£6.73) in 1659, and that was her last cod transaction. Maria Carvalha dealt with substantial cod volumes in 1649 and 1650, worth 533,907 (£213.56) and 243,100 réis (£97.24) respectively, but after that date, she disappeared as well. As for Maria Rois, she had one more successful year in 1663, managing 290 quintals of vento cod worth approximately 1,039,000 réis (£363.65),<sup>66</sup> but her

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<sup>65</sup> For references on Angela Lopes, see A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1642, Cabido No. 117, f.143-f.144v; Cabido No. 118 (1643), f.145v-f.147v; Cabido No. 119 (1644), f.140; Cabido No. 120 (1645), f.154v; Cabido No. 121 (1646), f.151-f.151v; Cabido No. 122 (1647), f.144v, f.150v, f.152v. For Maria Carvalha, see A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1649, Cabido No. 126, f.140, f.143-f.143v; Cabido No. 128 (1650), f.140v. For Catherina Fernandez, see A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1653, Cabido No. 132, f.144v; Cabido No. 140 (1657), f.147-f.148.

<sup>66</sup> Surprisingly, the cod in question came from London in an English ship brought by an English master. The load included 255 quintals of vento, plus 35 quintals of peixe ardido, or burned fish. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1663, Cabido No. 146, f.146.

volumes dropped considerably thereafter. In 1668 she marketed 271 quintals of pasta cod, for 379,400 réis (£132.79), and in 1670 she dealt with a mere 24 quintals of vento, valued at 87,412 réis (£30.59).<sup>67</sup> Not only were her appearances less frequent, but the amount she handled was also greatly reduced. Only one more female merchant was found, nine years later, when Ilena Ribeira was awarded the dízima of 125.5 quintals of pasta cod in August 1679, worth 176,050 réis (£57.22).<sup>68</sup>

The hypothesis that women were systematically supplanted in the cod trade is supported by a very similar trend in the rest of the fish trade as well. Female merchants clearly dominated the sardine trade in the 1640s, but by the late 1650s a male presence in the business was discerned, and by the 1670s women's absence from the fish trade in general was unmistakable. A proper analysis of the fish trade, other than cod, is beyond the scope of the present study, but a glimpse at two junctures will serve to illustrate some of the changes observed over time. From 1640-1643,<sup>69</sup> for example, women's

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<sup>67</sup> In 1669 Maria Rois handled one quintal of peixe de pao (meaning not known), worth 3,500 réis. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1669, Cabido No. 153, f.100v.

<sup>68</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1679, Cabido No. 163, f.106.

<sup>69</sup> Only two sardine shipments were noted in 1639, one handled by Joao Rebelo and another by Maria Rois; two out of three cargoes of pescados went to female merchants, while the third was not stipulated. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1639, Cabido No. 114, f.140-f.144. The first page

share of the non-cod fish dízima was 93%, 100%, 100%, and 99%, respectively; by the 1670s, the numbers had almost reversed entirely. In 1670, six sardine shipments arrived in Porto, five of which were handled by men.<sup>70</sup> In 1675, only one woman was noted dealing in sardines and other fish, and her share of the sardine market was 18%.<sup>71</sup> Only one female merchant was noted in the sardine trade in 1676, while men handled 93% of the market.<sup>72</sup> Finally, in 1677 there were not many sardines or other fish in the Cabido records, but men controlled it 100%.<sup>73</sup>

Other than cod, most fish arriving in Porto in the 1640s and 1650s came in Portuguese vessels, primarily from the Lisbon area. By the mid 1650s the English began to arrive

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of this volume also notes that the dízima was sold a pregão, or auctioned.

<sup>70</sup> The shipmasters, almost all from the Lisbon region, usually handled the dízima themselves. The lone sardine dízima obtained by a female merchant in 1670 was auctioned to Maria do Anjo "e per ela Maria Luis a palheta". In other words, it appears that Maria Luis a Palheta received the dízima on behalf of Maria do Anjo. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1670, Cabido No. 154, f.90-f.91, f.93, f.96.

<sup>71</sup> Ana de Tavora dealt with 20,000 sardines in April, 1,200 mackerel in August, and another 800 mackerel in September. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1675, Cabido No. 158, f.100-f.102.

<sup>72</sup> Catherina Franciscos handled 20,000 sardines in September. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1676, Cabido No. 159, f.108v-f.112.

<sup>73</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1677, Cabido No. 161, f.141v-f.143.



with substantial volumes of sardines and herring, and they usually controlled these cargoes entirely - that is, the sardine and herring dízima was handed over to the English master or English merchant, whereas Portuguese masters more often than not were still connected to Portuguese merchants, most of whom were women. By the 1670s, however, even sardines from Portuguese waters ceased to be handled by Porto women; the dízima went to either the shipmaster or to a local male merchant. It appears, therefore, that women were displaced from the fish trade altogether, at least at the merchant level.

Something happened in the course of the seventeenth century that changed the role women played in the fish trade. The Cabido records offered no explanation for women's disappearance from the fish trade, but women's replacement primarily by foreign merchants is a good indication of reasons for the transformation. Most cod shipments handled by women were brought to Porto by French masters, and the preponderance of female merchants dealing with French cod is no coincidence, nor was it due to a specialty among women to handle pasta, though they dealt with a proportionately high number of pasta shipments, 45, compared to 31 of vento, and 11 refugo. Of the 65,050 quintals of cod connected to female merchants, 34,146 quintals were vento, 30,140 quintals were pasta, and 764 quintals were refugo. French cod masters were more dependent

on Porto female merchants for the same reason that all other non-English masters often used women to merchandise their cargoes: women were major fish merchants in Porto, only to be displaced by an ever-growing English mercantile community. Not surprisingly, therefore, Porto female cod merchants were especially visible in the 1640s, when the French were still arriving in Porto in substantial numbers. The French did not have a mercantile community set up in that city and so were more dependent on local contacts. Women dealt with nearly 40% of Porto's dizima cod trade in the 1640s, compared to 10% in the 1650s, 8.8% in the 1660s, and less than 2% in the 1670s.

Significantly, the few English cod shipments handled by female merchants were not connected with the main English ports which dominated Porto's cod trade in the seventeenth century. First of all, half of those transactions involving English masters and female merchants took place in the 1640s, when the English presence in Porto's fish trade was perhaps just taking form. Nine of those entries only indicated that the master was ingles or resided in England. The other nine English/female merchant transactions included two shipments each from London, Barnstable, Dartmouth, and Plymouth, plus one from Whitstable.<sup>74</sup> Once English cod merchants settled in

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<sup>74</sup> Another four cod shipments handled by women were found with possible links to English ports, but the cities were difficult to decipher. A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redizima...1653, Cabido No. 132, f.149; Cabido No. 140 (1657),

Porto, they seldom needed to deal with Portuguese merchants, female or otherwise. Did the advent of the English in Porto lead to the ultimate demise of female fish merchants? Could the English have set a standard later emulated by the Portuguese themselves? English dominance of the cod trade in Porto, with their own male merchants at the helm, must have had an affect on the local commercial realm. There was certainly much less work for Porto fish merchants once the English were established.

We know that in 1647 Porto officials prohibited single women from becoming regateiras,<sup>75</sup> perhaps similar constraints were placed on other women and on other types of work, but nothing was found to confirm this. The ban's effectiveness is questionable and it certainly did not apply to female cod merchants, for the unmarried Domingas Fernandez dealt with 15 quintals of dízima vento in June 1653.<sup>76</sup> In Lisbon, officials blamed the peace agreements between Portugal and England for the disintegration of the local cod trade. It is worth noting, however, that according to Lisbon's municipal records, English merchants already had English agents in place

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f.147v, f.148; Cabido No. 154 (1670), f.92v.

<sup>75</sup> Arquivo Histórico Municipal do Porto (A.H.M.P.), Livro das Vereações, 51 (1647), f.132v, as cited in Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 225.

<sup>76</sup> A.D.P., Livro do Rendimento da Redízima...1653, Cabido No. 132, f.144.

to deal with their cod shipments in 1646. Whether or not Lisbon had a tradition of prominent female fish merchants is not clear. The biggest concern for officials was their loss of tax revenue and regulative control over the local market. The "free trade" deal imposed from above brought with it some fundamental changes in the way in which the economy operated. Consequently, some traditional vested interests lost out because of new competition, new rules, and a new game. In Lisbon, this transition period appears to have been fairly painful, but unfortunately we know less about resistance to change in Porto - the very place with better evidence about the consequences of such a transition. But can we speak of a transition in women's economic roles in Porto? Did they ever enjoy a golden age?

Questions of transition are difficult to unravel whether the historian is dealing with industrial towns in northern Europe or with maritime communities in Portugal. The latter is least understood due to the infancy of research in the general area, but enough hints have surfaced to suggest that in certain regions, Portuguese society underwent some fundamental change in the seventeenth century, a change that manifested itself in the displacement of women from some specific economic roles. Evidence for this was found in Porto, but what of the rest of Portugal?

Part of the problem is that we know very little about

women's history in Portugal, let alone about conditions prior or subsequent to a transition period. Even for Porto the evidence is limited. The number of female cod merchants and the magnitude of their market share in Porto's fish trade diminished from 1639-1679, but the situation is less clear for the earlier part of the century and for the last two decades as well. It is doubtful, moreover, that women were ever recognized in most traditional trades in Porto. First of all, regulations on examining procedures referred to fathers, sons, or male servants/workers. Secondly, a list of 93 major trades found in Porto from 1580-1640 included one female occupation only, the weaver.<sup>77</sup> Outside of the fish trade, all indications point to the maintenance of the status quo, not to a transition in women's economic roles.

Some women were found in municipal records as shopkeepers, but it is not clear whether they operated these businesses on their own, with their husbands, or if they

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<sup>77</sup> Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 190, 198-201. A study on sixteenth-century Póvoa de Varzim, a coastal community just north of Porto, found only one reference to a woman's trade, that of weaver as well, whereas men, in addition to holding all the professions, showed up as vendors, shoemakers, soap makers, carpenters, tailors, merchants, millers, and so forth. Even selling fish was the job of the regateiro, though only one reference was found to this occupation. Manuel Amorim, "A Vila da Póvoa de Varzim no Século XVI," in Colóquio 'Santos Graça' de Etnografia Marítima, Actas: Povoamento, Administração, Aspectos sociais (Póvoa de Varzim: Câmara Municipal da Póvoa de Varzim, 1985), 151-152.

inherited them from their deceased husbands. Records for 1603 indicated two female wax makers, while in 1613 Margarida Monteiro pledged to cut beef like the men, and Catarina Monteiro did likewise in 1636.<sup>78</sup> Maria Ferreira was a blacksmith in 1636, while Ines Fernandes and Mecia Alvares were dyers, and Madalena Correia was a painter.<sup>79</sup> Again, it is not clear whether or not these women carried on these trades on their own, or if they inherited them from their husbands. Only Maria Ferreira was noted as a widow. In the health professions, women were primarily engaged as midwives or nurses in Porto, though with some restrictions, two female doctors were licensed elsewhere, Leonor Dias in 1606 in Evora, and Maria de Gouveia in 1610 in Obidos.<sup>80</sup> There is some evidence that women worked along side their husbands in some trades, for regulations in the rope making trade, for example, stipulated that "ropemakers and their wives" had to be

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<sup>78</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, No. 45, f.207v-f.209v, f.243-f.244; No. 40, f.60v, f.62-f.62v; Livro 8 do Cofre dos Bens do Concelho (1636), f.27, as cited in Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 226-227.

<sup>79</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro 8 do Cofre dos Bens do Concelho (1636), f.48; No. 6 (1609), f.18v; No. 7 (1610), f.23; No. 7 (1616), f.14v-f.21v; Livro das Vereações, No. 31, f.202; A.D.P., Registo Paroquial, Se, Baptismos, L. No. 5, f.147; as cited in Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 227-228.

<sup>80</sup> Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (A.N.T.T.), Doações, Ofícios e merces de Filipe II, L.18, f.289; Chancelaria de Filipe II, L. 1 dos Privilegios, f.131v; as cited in Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 228.

properly examined. Married couples were of course engaged in the hospitality business, particularly in the operation of eating establishments; 15 couples were thus noted in 1590, and 68 in 1621.<sup>81</sup>

Positions in the public service, however, were not open to women. Though men could obtain royal approval to leave their office to their daughters,<sup>82</sup> the latter did not occupy the post themselves. They could "rent" the office to someone else, for a fee, or most likely use it as part of a dowry; the future husband inherited a secure job.<sup>83</sup> This was apparently a fairly common practise in certain circles. For example, when Philip II confirmed the rights of the Duke of Bragança in Vila do Conde, the wording of the document, dated 9 June 1604, specifically noted that those privileges would pass on to the Duke's inheritors, either female or male.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Obrigações Ordinarias (1590), f.1-f.15v, f.61-f.80; Livro de Fianças (1621), passim; as cited in Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 229-230.

<sup>82</sup> Primogeniture was increasingly practised in seventeenth-century Portugal among the nobility, whose younger sons were forced more and more to seek their fortunes overseas. Hanson, Economy and Society, 19.

<sup>83</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, No. 35, f.150v, and No. 46, f.338v; as cited in Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 229.

<sup>84</sup> Interestingly, the crown also stressed that the civil and criminal jurisdiction granted to the Duke did not include rights to taxes and duties collected in Vila do Conde. These revenues were reserved for the municipal government and the crown, a source of income officials had to wrestle from a

Though the Duke's female descendants also stood to inherit the Vila do Conde grant, it is highly unlikely that women would actually occupy an official position in the running of the region. Instead, their husbands and sons would assume responsibility for the public posts. Official posts were usually passed on through the female or male line, but to males only. If a woman was in line to inherit a position, it became part of her dowry, and to be filled by her new husband. Indeed, the Duke himself obtained the post after marrying D. Catarina, who had inherited the seigneurie from her father, the Infante D. Duarte, brother of King D. John III.<sup>85</sup> This custom also applied to stations of lesser status but of some importance in a hierarchical society. After Barbara Ferreira de Almeida's father died in 1592, for example, her husband, a captain in the Indian fleet, took over her deceased father's position, as factor of the customhouse in Vila do Conde.<sup>86</sup>

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local convent whose female community insisted on their prerogative over Vila do Conde. Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde, Livro do Registo Geral, Vol. 2, f.356-f.365v, as cited in Boletim Cultural da Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde, Nova Série, No. 2 (July 1988), 24-30.

<sup>85</sup> Manuel A. Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI: Alguns documentos subsidiários para a sua história económica," Boletim Cultural da Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde, Nova Série, No. 9 (June 1992), 12-13.

<sup>86</sup> António Monteiro dos Santos, "Gaspar Manuel um Piloto Vilacondense," Boletim da Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde, Nova Série, No. 3 (March 1989), 21-23. It is also interesting that her name was derived from her mother's, Leonor de Almeida, since her father had been José Carneiro. Gaspar



To what extent inheriting jobs took place at the lower levels of society is less clear. Keith Matthews commented on the "hereditary nature" among those involved in the English Newfoundland cod fishery,<sup>87</sup> and the same was probably true for those working in the trade in the home front. Certainly municipal records in Porto referred to mothers and their daughters selling fish at the local market.<sup>88</sup>

Outside the fish trade, women were segregated to a few menial occupations, whether in Porto or in Lisbon. A 1552 survey of the capital city reveals that in approximately 50 major trades, including carpenters, hat makers, silk spinners, and violin makers, there were 3,800 workers, 800 of which were women, and they showed up primarily as vendors of the finished products.<sup>89</sup> More than 200 trades listed were predominately male, whereas female-dominated trades numbered 55. Significantly, the majority of these female trades were in

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Manuel, her husband, was the son of Cecilia Fernandes and Manuel Dias, the latter also a captain of the Indian fleet. For another example of a woman inheriting her father's post at the local customhouse, which was taken up by her husband, see Reis Laranja, "Vila do Conde no Século XVI," No. 13 (June 1994), 22.

<sup>87</sup> Keith Matthews, "A History of the West of England-Newfoundland Fishery," Doctoral Dissertation (University of Oxford, 1968), 12.

<sup>88</sup> A.H.M.P., Livro das Vereações, 47, f.23v; 48, f.75; 33, f.49; as cited in Ribeiro da Silva, O Porto e o seu Termo, Volume I, 186, 230.

<sup>89</sup> Brandão, "Majestade e grandezas," 212-213.

selling foodstuffs; all luxury items, however, such as silk, were sold by men. Women were fish net makers, innkeepers, measurers, sievers, street cleaners, and washerwomen, but many more were employed selling everything from wafers for the Eucharist to water, and of course fish products.<sup>90</sup>

A similar survey for Porto has not been found, but the circumstances were probably similar, for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The majority of women and men led subservient lives; a smaller number enjoyed great privileges, while others competed for the few liberties to which their economic position entitled them. Among these were Portuguese merchants, which in Porto's fish trade included a fair number of women.

There is little doubt that women had a unique position in some fishing communities, a role without comparison to most of their sisters elsewhere. This situation changed in bigger centres due to major forces from the outside, such as the English entry into Porto's cod trade in the seventeenth century.<sup>91</sup> The advent of a large scale cod trade

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<sup>90</sup> Brandão, "Majestade e grandezas," 70, 77, 78, 86, 89-91, 219, and 225-233.

<sup>91</sup> It would be helpful to know whether in addition to, or in concurrence with the English invasion of Porto's fish trade, Portuguese society experienced a conservative backlash in the second half of the seventeenth century, placing further constraints on women's public roles. Allusions have been made about such a phenomenon but the theme remains highly undeveloped in Portuguese historiography. In private

precipitated extensive reorganization at the national level, which in turn transformed some inherently regional or local modes of operation. Previously protected commercial niches, which prospered in the locally regulated economy, were threatened and even eliminated with the advent of "free trade" forced upon Portugal by England in the 1650s. Some of those who fell victim to this new order were women. What should be stressed, however, is not necessarily the ostensibly powerful position of some cod merchants, such as Maria Rois, but the apparent transformation of a traditional socio-economic system. Whether these changes resulted in a decline in women's status cannot be determined with certainty, but Angela Lopes and Maria Rois were probably the last vestiges of a privileged and protected merchant class.

Women were once mercadoras de bacalhao with all the prestige, responsibility, and benefits connected with that role. With the advent of the English mercantile "colony" in their communities in the seventeenth century, they were steadily displaced and restricted to the retail sector, the role of the regateira. The demise of the regulated market meant the demise of female cod merchants. While it is important not to discredit the role of the market woman in

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communication, Porto's historian Francisco Ribeiro da Silva admitted having an interest in this question, but his research into the matter is still in its infancy.

comparison to the merchant, there is little doubt that a devaluation took place in form and in substance. If nothing else, the merchant enjoyed higher status, earned more money, and made the record books.

## C H A P T E R    6: Conclusion

While stressing the importance of Newfoundland's early cod fishery to the economy of the West Countries, Keith Matthews pointed out that a "multitude of mothers, wives, women and children" were supported by and dependent on the trade.<sup>1</sup> Surely it was the other way around. Few women are known to have participated in the fishery itself, but in Portugal at least, women were no more dependent on the fishery than fishers themselves. Men fished and women were largely responsible for merchandised fish; neither part of the trade could manage without the other.

The significance was there all along, under their noses, but Portuguese historians have missed the point, and so have others. The type of questions traditionally asked in maritime studies have failed to get at the heart of the matter. Ask not how many women and children were sustained by the cod fishery - as if they lived in a vacuum - but how the fishery was sustained. In Bermeo, in Caxinas, and in Vila Chã, women's participation in the local fishery/trade was critical. How unique were these fishing villages and how far back can their custom of women-centredness be traced? Only further research will tell. Studies in Bermeo (Spain) and Caxinas

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<sup>1</sup> Keith Matthews, "A History of the West of England-Newfoundland Fishery," Doctoral Dissertation (University of Oxford, 1968), 63.

(Portugal) suggest that the status of women in those two towns was distinct in their respective region.<sup>2</sup> If this is the case, questions remain about the peculiarities of these fishing communities. Certainly men all along the Biscayan and Atlantic coast went off fishing.

It may be that the case for female fish traders or merchants found in Portugal's northern coast was unique to certain parts of western Europe, and maybe even peculiar to a few regions in the Iberian Peninsula. Alice Clark, for instance, contended that in England women were probably not fishmongers but only fishwives. In other words, women engaged in the local trading and selling of fish, but not in long distance transactions. She mentioned that Dutch women were noted for being merchants of fish, but not in England, though women were part of the Fishmongers Company in London in 1426.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Apparently women from Bermeo were especially known in the vicinity for their "precociousness and aggressiveness." See Charlotte Crawford, "The Position of Women in a Basque Fishing Community," in Anglo-American Contributions to Basque Studies: Essays in Honor of Jon Bilbao, edited by William A. Douglass, Richard W. Etulain, and William H. Jacobsen (Desert Research Institute Publications on the Social Sciences, No. 13, 1977), 152, (her note 2).

<sup>3</sup> Alice Clark, Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century, (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1919), 219-220. England may actually have had some ideas about women's roles that were significantly different from most other regions in western Europe. For example, it is noteworthy that already in 1585 an English cookbook was entitled the good housewife's Jewel, an early association with the women's domestic sphere. Except for England, this connection between women, cooking, housewife, and family was not generally found in other

Martha Howell, too, found that in Cologne, women were generally excluded from the more prestigious side of business, including the fish trade. Laws regulating local fish dealers prohibited women from cutting and weighing fish for sale, an ordinance that Howell interpreted to mean that women could only sell the small, whole fish, decidedly an inferior trade.<sup>4</sup>

The situation was markedly different in certain regions in the Iberian coast. A fair number of women participated in the early modern cod trade, as ship owners and especially as wholesale cod merchants. This was seen in Aveiro, Porto, Vila do Conde, and Viana do Castelo. The most complete and better detailed sources exist for Porto, and the documents reveal a significant decline in the number of female cod merchants and in the volume of cod they merchandised in the second half of the seventeenth century.

Porto's port records also show that the Portuguese were dependent on the French and English for cod during most of the seventeenth century. The French dominated Porto's pasta cod

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European cookbooks until the eighteenth century. See Alain R. Girard, "Du manuscrit à l'imprimé: le livre de cuisine en Europe aux 15e et 16e siècles," in Pratiques et Discours Alimentaires à la Renaissance. Actes du colloque de Tours de mars 1979. Centre d'études supérieures de la Renaissance, sous la direction de Jean-Claude Margolin et Robert Sauzet (Paris: G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1982), 112.

<sup>4</sup> Martha C. Howell, Women, Production, and Patriarchy in Late Medieval Cities (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 134-135.

trade until the 1650s, after which time their presence in the records greatly diminished. The English controlled the vento trade throughout the period under study, and their entry into Porto's market signalled the end to a local economic structure that privileged a native merchant elite, including female cod merchants. Women prospered in a regulated market that the English destroyed, or that the Portuguese allowed to be destroyed.

It might be inaccurate to give England full credit or full blame for its success in manipulating the Portuguese economy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Anglo-Portuguese treaties of 1642, 1654, 1661, and 1703 were powerful tools which England used to full advantage, but the treaties were more symptomatic rather than the cause of Portugal's economic stagnation. Few Portuguese in a position to determine fiscal policies showed an interest in promoting Portugal's economic independence. Not until Marquês de Pombal became chief minister, 1756-1777, did Portugal attempt to revitalize its declining commercial base, but by then it was too little too late. For most of Western Europe modernization of the economy had begun at least a century earlier. The English, at the forefront of this new order, were the



"business model of the future."<sup>5</sup> For many English merchants in the seventeenth century the future was harnessed in Portugal.

The future belonged to England, and in their determination to seize some of what had previously been exploited by the Portuguese and Spanish only, the English usurped the old usurpers. Some of the victims in this transition period were Porto's female cod merchants. They had been part of a traditional economy that lost out in the structural change imposed not from above but from beyond. Local modes of operation had little chance of survival in the emerging world economy, especially in economic sectors tied to international trade and under foreign control. The Portuguese government might have been able to slow the process but, given the mounting external pressures, it is doubtful that the privileges enjoyed by Maria Rois and Angela Lopes could have been salvaged.

Judith Bennett was right in recommending that in studying the history of women we do not confuse the exceptional for the rule,<sup>6</sup> though the former usually makes for more interesting

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<sup>5</sup> Fernand Braudel, Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century: The Wheels of Commerce, Volume II, Translated from the French by Siân Reynolds (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982 [1979]), 453.

<sup>6</sup> Judith M. Bennett, "Medieval Women, Modern Women: Across the Great Divide," in Culture and History, 1350-1600: Essays on English Communities, Identities and Writing, edited

reading. Maybe some of the most prominent female cod merchants found in Porto in the mid-seventeenth century were exceptional, but enough evidence exists to suggest that there was some fundamental difference between the economic roles appropriated by maritime women and non-maritime women. Studies on women in northern European towns concluded that, in the urban economy in the early modern period, generally women did not have a strong work identity.<sup>7</sup> There is little doubt, however, that if someone went up to Maria Rois on 17 August 1648 - the day of her court case in Lisbon - and asked her what she did, she would answer: "Sou mercadora de baqualhao."

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by David Aers (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), 161.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Mary Prior, "Women and the urban economy: Oxford 1500-1800," in Women in English Society, 1500-1800, edited by Mary Prior (London/New York: Methuen, 1985), 96.

## **NOTE TO USERS**

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# CURRENCY, WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

## Currency

Portuguese currency underwent numerous transformations in the early modern period, in value and in kind - that is, not only did Portugal's monetary system fluctuate as governments dealt with inflation and deflation, but the actual type of currency, or coin, changed in name and in form.<sup>1</sup> For purposes of the present study, however, all Portuguese monetary figures are indicated in réis (plural for real, sometimes spelled reais). Though occasionally the records referred to the cruzado, the real was the most common monetary unit found, especially in the seventeenth century.

The real was an extremely small unit, even in the early modern period. In 1700, for example, the real was only equal to approximately 0.081 of an English penny. The cruzado was approximately 400 réis, and up to about 1640 the cruzado was roughly equivalent to one English crown. Since the Portuguese economy was closely linked to its trade with England, and the

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<sup>1</sup> For a more elaborate discussion on the Portuguese monetary system in the early modern period, see Frédéric Mauro, Le Portugal et l'Atlantique au XVIIe siècle (1570-1670): Etude économique (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1960), 395-432.

cod trade in particular was dominated by English merchants in the second half of the seventeenth century, it makes sense to measure the Portuguese real against the English pound sterling. In the text, English equivalencies were noted as per the following approximate figures for the different periods in the seventeenth century. Thus, £1

in	1601-41	=	1,482 <u>réis</u>
	1641-43	=	1,800 <u>réis</u>
	1643-63	=	2,117 <u>réis</u>
	1688-1734	=	3,176 <u>réis</u> <sup>2</sup>

Naturally there were variations to these amounts according to the region, time of the year, and other market forces. The equivalencies provided in the body of the text can only be taken as rough estimates.

#### Weights and measures:

Given the nature of the commodity studied here, questions of weight are more relevant than questions of measuring systems. Although some references were found to cod sales, usually at the retail level, involving the number and/or length of the fish, the vast majority of records referred to cod transactions according to specified weight units. Again,

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<sup>2</sup> T. Bentley Duncan, Atlantic Islands: Madeira, the Azores and the Cape Verdes in Seventeenth-Century Commerce and Navigation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 263-266. See also John J. McCusker, Money and Exchange in Europe and America, 1600-1775: A Handbook (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 107-113.



no evidence exists to suggest that Portugal had a uniform measuring and weighing system. Though authorities attempted to implement and enforce national standards in weights and measures, regional differences survived well beyond the 1700s. This was especially true at the local market, but historians generally agree that in international trade the Portuguese used some standard weights. In the cod trade, the following were the most common weight units:

<u>arrátel</u>	= 16 ounces, or 1 lb., or 459 grams
<u>arroba</u>	= 32 <u>arráteis</u> (plural for <u>arrátel</u> ), or 32 lbs., or approximately 15 kilograms
<u>quintal</u>	= 4 <u>arrobas</u> , or 128 <u>arráteis</u> , approximately 128 lbs., or 58 kilograms <sup>3</sup>

Occasionally the records referred to a canada of wine given to officials during religious meals. The canada was an ancient Portuguese liquid measure equal to approximately 1.589 litres.<sup>4</sup> Some other measuring and weighing units sometimes surfaced in the records and they are treated in the footnotes in the text.

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<sup>3</sup> Duncan, Atlantic Islands, 259. My amounts differ slightly from Duncan's for I have taken into account information provided by the Portuguese historian Virgínia Rau, in "Achegas para o Estudo da Construção Naval durante os Séculos XVII e XVIII na Ribeira do Ouro - Porto," in Memórias (Lisbon: Grupo de Estudos de História Marítima, 1971), 71. See also Mauro, Le Portugal et l'Atlantique, lvi-lviii.

<sup>4</sup> Duncan, Atlantic Islands, 259-262.







