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# Beyond the "Politics of Toil": Collective Mobilization and Individual Activism in Toronto's Portuguese Community, 1950s–1990s

Gilberto Fernandes

The following article examines the changing political attitudes of Portuguese immigrants in Canada from the arrival of the first cohort in the 1950s to the emergence of the second and third generations in Canadian mainstream society in the 1990s. It explores historical factors that have influenced the political profile of Portuguese Canadians, including its predominantly working-class makeup; its lack of formal education and democratic culture resulting from Portugal's authoritarian legacy; and its internal factionalism along regional, ideological, generational, and class lines. Fernandes offers a historical critique of sociological models— "socio-economic status" and "socialization"—commonly used for measuring and explaining immigrant political participation, and stresses the importance of diachronic studies in dispelling essentialist assumptions regarding immigrant communities. The author argues that generalist notions of "political participation" and "political constituency" miss important distinctions between representative and direct forms of political action, collective mobilization and individual activism, as well as state level and grassroots politics. He claims that each of these political processes operates according to its own distinct internal dynamics, at times responsive, at other times alienated from one another, which must be analyzed using appropriate scales of observation (macro and micro).

L'auteur examine l'évolution des attitudes politiques des immigrés portugais au Canada depuis l'arrivée dans les années 1950 de la première cohorte jusqu'à l'émergence dans les années 1990 des deuxième et troisième générations dans la société canadienne majoritaire. Il étudie certains facteurs historiques qui ont influencé le profil politique des Canado-portugais, y compris sa composition de classe ouvrière prédominante, son manque d'éducation et de culture démocratique formelles – résultat de l'héritage autoritaire du Portugal – et ses factions internes régionales, idéologiques, générationnelles et de classe. Fernandes propose une critique historique de modèles sociologiques – le « statut socio-économique» et la « socialisation » – couramment utilisés pour mesurer et expliquer la participation politique des immigrants; il souligne l'importance des études diachroniques pour dissiper les hypothèses essentialistes sur les communautés immigrantes. L'auteur fait valoir que les notions généralistes

de la « participation politique » et de la « circonscription politique » écartent des distinctions importantes entre les formes représentatives et directes de l'action politique, la mobilisation collective et l'activisme individuel, ainsi que la politique au niveau de l'État et à la base. Il affirme que chacun de ces processus politiques fonctionne selon ses propres dynamiques internes distinctes, parfois sensibles, à d'autres moments aliénées les unes des autres, qui doivent être analysées en utilisant des échelles d'observation appropriées (macro et micro).

The few social studies conducted on the Portuguese in Canada have characterized this immigrant group as politically inactive. Produced during the early stage of the community's urban settlement, their findings, however, have yet to be further substantiated and updated. In fact, even the most superficial assessment of Portuguese-Canadian media reveals a more complicated political reality than what is suggested in surveys that measure participation solely through electoral results. This article provides a review of the political history of Toronto's Portuguese community and addresses the apparent inconsistency between group representation at the state level and community politics at the grassroots level. Here, I will examine what accounts for immigrant political participation, what factors have determined the extent of their political activity, and how these have developed over the years. In doing so, I will incorporate insights from two dominant paradigms in sociology that focus on measuring and explaining immigrant political participationthe socio-economic status model and the socialization perspective.

Recently the topic of political participation among Portuguese immigrants has attracted the attention of researchers like Wenona Giles, Irene Bloemraad, Luis Aguiar, and Susana Miranda, who have highlighted particular historical episodes that challenge the common perception of passivity.<sup>1</sup>

Past studies of the Portuguese in Canada have largely neglected the political dimension. The first comprehensive historical account of Portuguese immigration to Canada, by Grace Anderson and David Higgs (1976), is still the only work available that covers, albeit briefly, the political dimension of this community during the early years of settlement. Published shortly after Portugal's revolution of 1974, which had tremendous effects on its immigrant communities abroad, it misses

the fundamental changes in the political life of the Toronto community occurring during that period. Nevertheless, it rightly points out that political arguments in those first decades of urban settlement were framed largely around the homeland, involving a highly politicized minority of oppositionists to the dictatorial regime and a small professional and business elite that was sympathetic to the Portuguese government, gravitating around the consul-general and the few Portuguese parishes. Anderson and Higgs also pointed out the "lack of a clear 'Portuguese' vote supporting candidates who have a concern with Canadian-Portuguese issues," and that "the Portuguese have not developed a strong political representation at any level of Canadian government—municipal, provincial or federal—by the mid-1970s."<sup>2</sup>

In the few pages dedicated to this topic in other broad studies on the Portuguese, social scientists have suggested that the lack of political representation among this group is a clear indicator of "a certain political backwardness and even an aversion for things political."<sup>3</sup>

A similar assessment gains essentialist tones with Onésimo T. Almeida, a well-respected Portuguese-American philosopher, who suggests that the absence of elected representatives and the inability of Portuguese immigrants to sustain political involvement over long periods of time is due to their mental structures, which, he argues, privilege emotion over reason.<sup>4</sup> A popular Portuguese saying, repeated by Carlos Teixeira, maintains that the only politics known to this group of immigrants are those of toil, meaning that all virtue and progress comes from work instead of talk.5 With no detailed study available on the political life of Portuguese immigrants, the old succinct observations offered by social scientists, which use snapshot models to explain contemporary phenomena, are regularly repeated without factoring in change and continuity. When asked about the community's political activity, the immediate reaction of most of the individuals interviewed for this paper was to disparage its lack of participation. The reasons commonly cited to explain this inactivity are its predominant working-class profile and consequent lack of time and resources, its poor democratic culture resulting from Portugal's political history, its low levels of education and language skills, its primary preoccupation with homeland politics, and its lack of unity. But once engaged, the interviewees qualified their statements by adding that the community has come a long way in developing its political clout. Indeed, there has been a significant increase in Portuguese candidates in recent decades<sup>6</sup> and a great number of lobbying efforts at different levels of government, dealing with issues pertaining to this immigrant group.

In this study, I propose a working periodization—the years of settlement (1950s–1970s), years of maturation (1970s–1980s), and years of political emergence (1990s–today)—each corresponding to a particular political dynamic, with its distinct agents of mobilization. Rather than simply providing a chronological account or a summation of events and personalities over the years, I intend to show how history, with its account of time, can shed new light on some theoretical paradigms developed by sociologists on this matter. Hence, this article refutes the claim made by Caroline Brettell and James Hollifield—proponents of greater interdisciplinarity in migration studies—that historians "eschew theory and hypothesis testing" or that "they are less concerned with explaining how social structures influence and constrain behavior." Their assessment of the "canyon" separating history from the other social sciences

is based on a perceived disconnection between bottom-up or micro approaches, which, according to Brettell and Hollifield, characterize historical studies on migration, and the top-down or macro approaches of disciplines like political science and sociology. But since history has repeatedly addressed this apparent inconsistency between macro and micro perspectives, historians may well have something to offer to other disciplines and their analysis of immigrant political participation.

Although migration studies include contributions and methodologies from several disciplines, social scientists in this field have often adopted macro econometric views of migration, focusing on large processes and sweeping social samples. Econometric assessments depict migrants as labour instead of people, with specific challenges, aspirations, and agency. When seen through such a prism, immigrants appear as passive recipients of ruling structures, with little ability to resist change or affect those structures that dominate their lives. One such overarching theory is the classic socio-economic status (SES) model, which equates increased income, education, professional status, length of stay, and age with higher political participation.8 Despite focusing on an individual's characteristics, this is a macro analysis of the accumulated effect of each of these variables. While there certainly are many commonalities among immigrant groups, which are the fodder for valuable typologies and charts, generalizations should not disregard the particularities of each group. Critics of the SES model propose a micro analysis of participation and take a closer look at different constituencies within a given immigrant community, examining grassroots institutions and various forms of activism, seeking to trace the socialization processes that led to alternative political dynamics. While the former abstain from confronting the dominant structures into which immigrants are supposed to incorporate, the latter examine the configuration of that political system along with the conduct of its participants.9 A historical examination of the socialization of immigrant communities, covering both sending and receiving societies, can reveal characteristics that complicate the classic socio-economic logic and expose the successes and shortcomings of a country's political system.

The Portuguese were one of the last large European groups to arrive in the postwar period. The male pioneers who came in the 1950s to work as farmhands and railway construction workers quickly moved to urban settings in pursuit of better-paid jobs. After settling in the cities, they began sponsoring their families and friends, initiating a large migration chain. The immigration regulations introduced in 1967, designed to select highly skilled applicants, made it more difficult for Portuguese to migrate to Canada under the economic category, since most candidates had very little human capital. Between 1967 and 1973, when the right to apply for landed status from within Canada was revoked, many Portuguese immigrants continued to arrive under the family reunification category or as visitors who would then apply for residence from inside the country. Portuguese immigration to Canada began to dwindle in the mid-1970s, becoming practically insignificant in the 1990s. Besides the changes in Canadian immigration policy, external factors contributed to this decline, like the world economic recession triggered by the oil crisis of 1973-1974, and the political change in Portugal in 1974. Portugal's joining the European Economic Community in 1986 bolstered the new democratic regime and helped modernize the country's economy, so it became possible for Portuguese citizens

to seek employment anywhere in the Schengen Area, further diverting the migratory flow away from North America.

Grossly neglected during the authoritarian Estado Novo regime of dictator António Oliveira Salazar (1932–1974) and its successor Marcelo Caetano (1968-1974), rural areas in Portugal offered few economic prospects to its habitants. That negligence was extreme in the Azorean archipelago, from which most Portuguese immigrants in Toronto and North America come. Since the 1800s, Azoreans have turned to migration as the only viable escape from misery. Though relations between the islands and the mainland have improved since the 1970s, Azoreans have for a long time interacted almost exclusively with their North American diasporic communities, and that relationship has greatly influenced their cultural makeup, rooted in the notions of insularity and selfsufficiency. Relations between Azoreans and mainlanders in Toronto, who for the most part interacted for the first time in Canada, were mired in an underlying antagonism that surfaced occasionally, although it rarely escalated into open conflict. Both sides nourished depreciative stereotypes about each other, contributing to an "us" versus "them" divide, especially among first-generation immigrants.<sup>10</sup> Mainlanders questioned the "Portugueseness" of Azoreans on account of their accent, religious fervour, and "backward" customs. Ostracized for their perceived difference, the Azorean majority withdrew from secular Portuguese organizations and community functions, dominated as they were by the "snobbish" and "individualist" mainlanders. Consequently, those from the mainland engaged in secular community activities more intensively than their Azorean counterparts, arguably leading to greater involvement in politics among mainlanders, who have often protested the lack of civic interest of islanders. In truth, Azoreans in Toronto have displayed a substantial voluntaristic ethic, devoting much energy to church activities, organization of large religious ceremonies, and fundraising campaigns during humanitarian crises.

Despite their differences, the majority of islanders and mainlanders in Toronto share a common rural and fishing background, both becoming urban working class in Canada. The bulk of the community has been entrenched in construction, manufacturing, and low-skilled service work. The first-generation archetypal story is one of hardship, long hours of strenuous and sometimes dangerous work, many insecure jobs, with little or no career advancement, and much personal and familial sacrifice. After a long exhausting day, the last thing on the mind of such a typical immigrant worker was politics. Even if the desire was there, free time was a luxury that few possessed, considering that many had multiple jobs, and, in the case of the women, had to balance their jobs with housework.

Perhaps the most significant factor that contributed to the low formal political participation among Portuguese immigrants is the legacy of Salazar's conservative dictatorship: the lack of democratic culture, the perception of politics as a practice for the elites, the clear separation between the state and the people, the cult of humility and respect for all forms of authority, the constant fear of repression for insubordination, the perception of hard work and self-sacrifice as dogmatic virtues, and the rejection of progressive ideals, especially socialist ones. The conservative dictatorship of the Estado Novo (1933–1974) was the longest of its kind in Europe and one of the last to fall.

If there was a common political strategy and ideological thread in the forty-one years of dictatorship, it was the absolute abjuration of conflict and the imposition of a phony social peace and stability through repression. The Constitution of 1933, the formative document of the Estado Novo, obliterated all democratic liberties. Promoting "social harmony" between capital and labour, it abolished free unionism and labour activism, replacing it with overarching state-run syndicates in which both classes were to mingle peacefully for the benefit of the nation, guided by a corporatist ideology that was never truly followed. Freedom of association was eliminated, as every organization, whether political, cultural, or recreational, had to be authorized and its executive bodies approved by the state, which could at any moment dismiss anyone from these associations or dissolve them entirely. The right of assembly was trampled. All social and political meetings required assent of government authorities, thus preventing legal expression of dissent. By extension, political parties were also prohibited, with the exception of the União Nacional, the party of the regime. Other measures curtailed social and political deviations: censorship, intelligence gathering, intimidation, and violent repression by the political police force (PIDE), which was overseen by Salazar himself. Its agents were free to arrest whomever they desired and to hold them indefinitely without need for legal authorization. Fear of reprisal was an everyday reality in Portugal, as the PIDE used a vast network of civilian informants, ready to denounce anyone who was perceived to dissent.11

Explanatory models that focus solely on economic factors miss other fundamental considerations that motivate people to migrate. For instance, many families left Portugal to prevent their sons from being conscripted to fight in the colonial wars of 1961–1974. For a smaller number of those arriving under the economic category, escaping political persecution was also an important motivator. Nevertheless, the culture of fear crossed the ocean, and, until 1974, rumours persisted that the PIDE had infiltrated the community, either through actual agents or informants. Whether or not they were true, these allegations reveal, in Foucaultian terms, the continuation of a political panopticon of fear. Considering that a great number of immigrants intended to return to Portugal, it seemed wise to abstain from engaging in anything that could be considered controversial, lest their actions in Canada come back to haunt them.

The modest political activity of Portuguese immigrants during the settlement years is also related to their low literacy rate, and, by extension, their poor knowledge of English (or French). Under Salazar, there was little effort to promote formal education. Based upon the ideas of "God," "Fatherland," "Authority," "Family" and "Work," the regime promoted a simple ideology that provided "clear and uncontroversial 'certainties' that could legitimize and facilitate the right to command, as well as nullify and illegitimize a velleity to resist, justifying and making acceptable, like the things of nature, the duty to obey." Running the public school system was the Catholic Church, which had been placed at the service of Salazar after a concordat signed with the Vatican in 1940. The role of the school, which was essentially a proselytizing institution, was to produce a docile youth and legitimize the moral authority of the regime. Writing about his childhood in rural Portugal, Frank Marques recalled how school terrified him and planted the seeds of deference early in his life:

As we progressed to learn the alphabet, and later the basics of math, we had learned that beatings were to be part of our

school life. Those who grasped the studies quickly did not have to worry too much about getting whipped, but those unfortunate kids with slower learning capabilities lived in terror, which spread over everybody in the room. As soon as the thought of school entered our minds, our hearts beat faster as shivers ran up and down our spines. . . .

In school it seemed we were being prepared for a war. Orders would be given and followed without excuses or explanations, like in the army. We, the little soldiers, were frightened from the first days; and the end of school (four years of public school at that time) was seen by the majority as an escape, and the beginning of freedom. . . . We knew how to obey our leaders, we were timid to strangers and spoke only when spoken to.<sup>14</sup>

Despite mandatory schooling, dropping out to earn money for the household was a common practice in rural areas. Besides, college and university were accessible to only the most affluent. The sons of poor families who wished to pursue higher education were left with studying for the priesthood. In Canada, this pattern continued, as many Portuguese immigrant children were encouraged to leave school and enter the labour force in order to contribute to the economic welfare of the household, or were pushed out by streaming in the school system. The educational deficit and high school dropout rate have been a primary concern of community activists for years. <sup>15</sup> Ironically, the issue that has generated most public embarrassment among community leaders is also the one that has brought them most praise, for their lobbying of officials, their outreach programs, and their studies on the subject. <sup>16</sup>

"Lack of unity" is a common grievance among community leaders, who perceive it as a major deterrent to gathering political strength. Certainly there is a strong sense of solidarity based on national background, which is celebrated effusively from time to time, but the Portuguese community, as any other immigrant group, is not homogenous. There are divisions along regional, class, religious, political, and generational lines. Arguably, the greatest tension is between community leaders, since, as one put it, "division [among the Portuguese working-class] never existed, simply because they were never agents of the community identification as such." Leaders were often scorned by the community for the "individualistic and selfish nature" of their goals, their quarrels, and their factionalism.<sup>17</sup> Even though the mass of Portuguese immigrants was largely disconnected from political activities during its years of settlement, the community was not entirely invisible, for self-appointed leaders often spoke in the media on behalf of their peers. This was also a period of fierce competition in internal politics, as Portuguese government officials, Catholic priests, business and professional elites, and political radicals fought for control of its institutions and the title of true representatives of the community. Though every interest group had its own internal conflicts, the main divide was between those who sympathized with the Portuguese regime and those who opposed it.

On one side of the spectrum was the Portuguese Canadian Democratic Association (PCDA), founded in 1959 by political dissidents who had fled Portugal after supporting the unexpectedly popular presidential candidacy of renegade General Humberto Delgado in the fraudulent elections of 1958. The PCDA was associated with the Frente Patriótica de Libertação Nacional (National Liberation Patriotic Front—FPLN), an international coalition of exiled left-wing oppositional groups of different political stripes, directed by Delgado in Algiers. While their

acting committee was based in Algeria, where President Ben Bella had granted asylum to a group of Portuguese rebels, the FPLN coalesced some of the most influential figures in the international Portuguese resistance, exiled in Brazil, Morocco, Venezuela, France, and other European countries. The PCDA played a small part in planning the hijack of the luxury liner Santa Maria in January 1961, by serving as the Canadian mouthpiece for the rebels Humberto Delgado and Henrique Galvão, thus contributing to the success of their mission to draw international attention to the struggle for democracy in Portugal. At the height of the Santa Maria episode, which had great exposure in the Canadian media, a group of Portuguese citizens pledged their support for Salazar's regime by delivering a petition containing 714 signatures to the Portuguese consul in Toronto. The gathering was organized by thirty-year-old Renato Graça of Hamilton with the support of local Portuguese Catholic priests. They were able to mobilize people from Hamilton, Galt, Oshawa, and Toronto. As is the case with this kind of event, the numbers reported varied drastically, from "more than a 1,000" Salazar sympathizers (Toronto Daily Star), to just 200 (Globe and Mail). Graça explained to a reporter that the petition had been motivated by what he perceived to be a slanted media coverage of the ongoing Santa Maria incident, which gave too much voice to the enemies of the regime, thus making it seem as if the majority of Portuguese were opposed to Salazar. Graça confessed being "rather emotional that so many people would come out. . . . This shows the Canadian press has freedom. It shows the government has support."18 Regardless of Graça's intentions towards the media, the focus of their story was the violent reaction of the loyalist camp towards its democratic adversaries. The PCDA had organized a motorcade made up of nine cars to protest the petition. They drove around the consulate building honking their horns and waving signs and flags in support of Delgado and Galvão. As the parade came around the building a second time, a number of loyalists who had descended to the street blocked the road and engulfed the motorcade. A few of the pro-Salazar supporters began to damage, rattle, and eventually flip one of the vehicles. One of the democrats was punched through his car window, while other angry rioters tried to poke their opponents using their own flagpoles. The violence lasted ten minutes until the Metro Toronto police arrived and dispersed the crowd, arresting one pro-Salazar supporter who was later released and put on a bus back to Hamilton.

Speaking to the Star on the morning after the riot, the president of the PCDA, Fernando Ciriaco da Cunha, claimed to have recognized three men who tried to pull him out of his car, as agents of "the Portuguese Gestapo," whom he had met in Portugal when working as a tax inspector. He explained that "these men are taken off the regular force in Portugal and put on double pay. They immigrate to a country as anyone else would and get a job. Then they report on the activities of anti-government Portuguese groups in foreign countries. Police in Portugal contact relatives and exert pressure on them to write to these people urging them to keep quiet. . . . These men are real gangsters. They spend two years in a country then report back to Portugal."19 He added there had been cases when immigrants visiting Portugal for the holidays were arrested on information provided by these infiltrated agents.<sup>20</sup> Later that year, the same allegation was made on the CBC-TV program Intercom, this time by the PCDA secretary, Firmino de Oliveira, who claimed that PIDE agents were infiltrated in Toronto and Montreal,

and that Portuguese immigrants were "frightened to speak their mind. They fear their relations in Portugal will be harmed or that they will never be able to return to Portugal for visits." He recounted a case in which a man was arrested in Portugal because his brother was involved in anti-Salazar activities in Canada.<sup>21</sup>

Over the years, the PCDA would continue to inform their fellow immigrants and Canadian authorities about the many human rights abuses committed by the regime, organizing demonstrations, conferences, <sup>22</sup> and cultural events with established writers, artists, intellectuals, and political personalities from Canada and Portugal.

Some members of its executive came from Montreal, where a small pocket of vocal anti-fascists was operating. One was Domingos Costa Gomes. A member of the Portuguese Communist Party since 1943, Gomes was an active agent in the clandestine anti-fascist resistance who developed a system for smuggling party delegates across the Spanish border, among whom was the charismatic leader Álvaro Cunhal. In Portugal, he had been a lawyer representing political prisoners. After being arrested for the second time in 1964, Gomes managed to escape to France. From there he moved to Switzerland, then Belgium, and finally Montreal, where he arrived in 1966. There he joined fellow political exiles Henrique Tavares Bello, Rui Cunha Viana, and Jaime Monteiro, becoming involved in their opposition movement. While in Montreal, Gomes wrote for the pro-democratic Luso-Canadiano newspaper—which had many subscribers in Toronto—and became president of the Movimento Democrático Português, a twin organization of the PCDA. After moving to Toronto, he continued his political work with the PCDA and co-founded the Portuguese Canadian Congress in 1969, serving as its first president.

On the other side were organizations and individuals who gathered around the Portuguese consulate and Catholic parishes, particularly St. Mary's Church. The parishes and priests that ran them played an important role in the early years of the Toronto Portuguese community. Parishes were some of the first venues for social gathering, as they provided reading rooms with Portuguese newspapers, hosted cultural and recreational events, and delivered essential services to newcomers. St. Mary's was the first parish in Toronto to have a Portuguese congregation, attended primarily by Azoreans.

After 1958 a succession of power-hungry Portuguese clerics came to direct it, culminating in the arrival of Father Alberto Cunha in 1966. Cunha, who enjoyed good relations with the Portuguese consulate, was a fervent nationalist and a staunch defender of the dictatorial regime and its colonial empire. Known as an authoritative figure with "rather negative attitudes towards any new agencies or development which might detract from his own position in the Portuguese community,"23 Cunha was a gifted communicator who, during his inflammatory sermons, often attacked democrats operating in Toronto and called his flock to shun them and their activities. In his first year in Toronto, Cunha organized the first Portugal Day commemorations of 10 June, held at the Exhibition Coliseum, which gathered several thousand Portuguese.<sup>24</sup> From that moment on, he assumed responsibility for planning the annual event. That same year he also organized the first Holy Christ of Miracles (Senhor Santo Cristo dos Milagres) procession in Toronto, a long-standing Azorean tradition perpetuated in Canada,

and one of the largest public events organized by that community, attracting Portuguese immigrants from all over North America. In 1968, Cunha co-founded the newspaper O Jornal Português, housed in a building owned by his parish. Fronted by Fernando Pedrosa, this newspaper, like others in its day, was filled with loose insinuations, diatribes, and personal attacks on members and organizations in the community that opposed the Portuguese regime, serving as the secular voice for the polemical priest. Between 1973 and 1974, he also produced the show Ecos de Portugal on CHIN Radio, until it was cancelled by Johnny Lombardi after the PCDA held a public demonstration in front of the station following the revolution of 25 April. Cunha's many political and business dealings in the community over the years were mired in controversy. In the 1990s, a number of highly publicized trials revealed that he had been involved in criminal activities, including tax evasion and financial exploitation, along with other improper actions for a clergyman.25

The history of the Portuguese Canadian Congress (PCC) is a good example of the quarrelsome dynamics in community politics during its early years. The controversial death of the twenty-year-old Azorean immigrant Angelo Nóbrega, shot in the head by Toronto police detective Kevin Boyd after a routine traffic stop in the early hours of 5 May 1969, caused a commotion among the city's Portuguese. On the morning of 17 May, over five hundred community members marched silently from Queen's Park to City Hall, led by a group of fifteen children carrying a black banner with the inscription "Justice Ignored! Protesting Violence." Responsible for organizing this march was José Rafael, a radio announcer, travel agent, and head of the Portuguese Immigrant Aid Society. Speaking to the sombre protesters at Queen's Park, he instructed them, "Walk silently and in perfect order. It is only in this way we can protest the violence of the police. The only way we can show we do not need weapons pointed at us. We can obey and will obey." A petition was circulated to protest the ill treatment of immigrants by the Toronto police and their unnecessary use of violence, later to be sent to Prime Minister Trudeau and leaders of the opposition.<sup>26</sup> The PCDA sent a letter to the Ontario Human Rights Commission requesting that it assess whether discrimination had played a part in the fatal outcome. After a polemical inquiry, the officer was released with impunity, which further upset the Portuguese community. Interviewed by a newspaper in Portugal, Domingos Costa Gomes expressed how the Portuguese in Toronto "acutely felt the necessity to create an umbrella organization that could represent the Portuguese community of Ontario."27 Founded in September 1969, the PCC was to be "the spokesman for the Portuguese in their official contacts with the local authorities, the provincial and federal governments, the representatives of other ethnic groups, and/or representatives of the Portuguese government,"28 and promoted increased "participation of Portuguese in the social, cultural and political life of Canada."29 In the following December, member associations that were connected with the Portuguese parishes, or whose executives endorsed the dictatorial regime, deserted the Congress and formed the Federation of Portuguese Canadian Organizations of Ontario (FPCOO). This opposing umbrella organization hastily communicated its disapproval of the congress to the Canadian authorities, protesting that the latter was "not capable of properly representing the interests of the Portuguese Community in Ontario and has no power or authority thereof."30 A spokesperson for the FPCOO claimed that "the

Portuguese community was embarrassed last May when a Portuguese boy, Angelo Nóbrega, was shot in a scuffle with Toronto police and persons representing themselves as spokesmen for the Portuguese community made extreme charges and organized protest demonstrations," and that "most of the 35,000 Portuguese in Metro were willing to wait for the official investigation and inquest before making up their minds." He also added that "the new federation plans to stay out of Portuguese domestic politics."<sup>31</sup>

A new executive board was elected less then three months after the PCC's inauguration and a few days after the dissident FPCOO was announced. The departing president Gomes, who had been the victim of a smear campaign unleashed by his opponents, attacking him for his political beliefs and personal associations, refused to run again since he was soon returning to Portugal. In a letter to the editor of *O Jornal Português*, Gomes described the "divide and rule" tactics of his opponents: "Creating phantom organizations, introducing intrigues among the elements of the Board, dwarfing people . . . these are the methods employed by these fishermen of blurry waters." The FPCOO vanished after the new PCC board was elected, perhaps because the new executive, composed by businessmen and professionals, was less politicized. *O Jornal Português*, however, maintained its skepticism towards this organization.

By the end of 1970, the entire PCC board stepped down and a new executive emerged, renewing polemics. The new president was Fernando Costa, a chemical engineer and college teacher of Portuguese-Indian descent who had been involved with the PCC since its creation. A government official described him as a "controversial and aggressive (overbearing?) personality . . . viewed with some suspicion and no little dislike by the members of the community." He was also a member of the Progressive Conservative Party who actively canvassed Portuguese associations.

Costa requested a grant from the Citizenship Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services to hire staff. In his request, he mentioned that the PCC represented "about 400 Portuguese, some as direct members, others as members of affiliated organizations. The newly elected executive hopes to have thousand members within short time. . . . We have 6 members who are doctors in medicine, 1 lawyer, 1 pharmacist, about 50 businessmen, 3 catholic priests head of parishes, 1 United Church minister head of the church at Queen St., etc."34 After the request, the ministry began scrutinizing the Portuguese community and discovered "such complexity of division and strong feeling that we probably could not work with or help any group without getting some flak from the others."35 In March 1971, Minister Yaremko informed Costa that his request had been accepted, announcing a non-recurring grant of \$1000. But during that same month, Costa resigned after clashing with the remaining members of the executive—most of them also members of the PCDA—on the policies and orientation of the congress, coupled with the habitual ideological and personality conflicts.

The disagreement began after Mayor William Dennison invited the PCC to organize the city's annual Portuguese Week celebrations in June. Costa learned that "Fr. Cunha's group" intended to carry out its own festivities. To avoid the public embarrassment that such disharmony could generate, Costa prepared a letter to the mayor stating his resolve

to invite the consul to do the honorary raising of the Portuguese flag at City Hall, and reserve a spot on the program for the parishes to conduct their religious ceremonies. Costa then hurriedly called a meeting to which he summoned a select few who he knew would approve his letter, but the remaining members found out about this circumspect meeting and decided to attend. Outraged by the president's undemocratic ways, the meeting escalated to a near-physical confrontation. Manuel Sanches, president of the PCDA and of the congress's General Assembly, called Costa out of order, to which he responded with his resignation. The letter was disavowed by the majority of directors because they did not recognize the Portuguese consul or the government that nominated him to be legitimate representatives of the Portuguese people, and rejected the sponsoring of religious activities, arguing it contravened the secular statutes of the PCC. Their staunch dislike of the clergy, however, may have been a greater motivator.

In the end, notwithstanding the divide-and-rule tactics of its opponents, it was the personal rivalries and internal factionalism that led the congress to self-destruct. As the PCC crashed and burned, the same associations that had founded the FPCOO assembled the Portuguese Week Organizing Committee and carried on with their program. But the members of the PCDA did not throw down their arms. Instead, they organized two rallies; the first on 10 June, during the raising of the Portuguese flag at City Hall, and a second three days later. About sixty demonstrators gathered on each occasion, and a few were involved in minor skirmishes. Besides drawing attention to the political situation in Portugal, they criticized the organizing committee for inviting the consul to be its honorary president and giving its "tactical support" to the dictatorial regime.

In reaction to comments made by Mayor William Dennison during this episode, the PCDA released a statement to the Canadian media:

While attending this ceremony organized by sympathizers of that regime, Toronto Mayor William Dennison criticized this group of democrats. "Leave those differences behind you," Mayor Dennison told the group. "Start out afresh to do something for Canada and by so doing you will be doing something for yourselves." We strongly protest against this biased attitude of Mayor Dennison. We want to make quite clear that we are not only concerned with the problems of our mother country . . .

Is it not sufficient proof [of] our participation in the life of this hospitable country that received us . . . the fact that we use the democratic laws we now enjoy to express our contempt for the Caetano regime? A regime that has time and again been condemned by most United Nations members, Canada included, for not heeding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights? . . . Our Portuguese democratic members do not intend to be only recognized as hard working, honest and law-abiding people. We intend to participate in a world where all are able to live freely and democratically.<sup>36</sup>

A memorandum of the Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship in May 1971 reported that "the most active members of the Congress are the collective church group members." Worried that they would be indirectly funding a communist organization, the department withheld the grant until it confirmed that the executive was no longer affiliated with the PCDA, so the cheque was presented to the PCC after Portuguese Week celebrations. According to Anderson

and Higgs, "Under the leadership of a local businessman and a child psychologist the Congress recovered some of its lost influence but by 1974 it was moribund." 38

The Carnation Revolution of 25 April 1974, which toppled the Estado Novo and ended the colonial wars, inaugurated a new chapter in the history of Portugal and its communities abroad. From that moment on, Portuguese immigrants in Canada began following the day-to-day occurrences in their native country with greater attention, developing closer ties with the homeland than before. The initial revolutionary enthusiasm was soon replaced with uncertainty and worry for their families and possessions in Portugal, as they witnessed the critical events that nearly led the country into a civil war between communists, social-democrats, and conservatives. This instability was transferred to Toronto, where tensions between supporters of Salazar/Caetano and the outspoken anti-fascists reached new heights. The latter, vindicated by the events in Portugal, shed their pariah status and were reinvigorated. On the other side, where there was once a tame conservative majority, a defiant reactionary minority now developed, radicalized by political refugees from Portugal and the former colonies. Also active in the immediate post-revolutionary period was the Frente de Libertação dos Açores, a right-wing Azorean separatist movement that drew most of its support and resources from the diasporic communities in North America. Those previously indifferent to politics were momentarily aroused by the revolutionary spirit and became acquainted with a new political lexicon. Arguably the most profound change brought by 25 de Abril was the fact that people in the community felt less fearful of each other and were more at ease about speaking their minds.

Throughout those years of unstable transition to democracy, when governments were falling one after the other, the common Portuguese immigrant, not used to politicians and their contests, mistaken by bickering or pursuit for a *poleiro* (perch), became disillusioned and recovered some of the cynicism towards politics and those involved with them. Nevertheless, the cultural and political catharsis of 25 April, its songs, its slogans, its images of fist-pumping celebrations and massive rallies, introduced a new reference in the mind of Portuguese Canadians that could be invoked at any point to muster political will. For instance, Peter Ferreira, a politically active member of the community, got his first taste of politics in 1974: "Prior to that I didn't really pay much attention to what was going on. . . . In a way, the Carnation Revolution in Portugal guided me into what I was hoping to be or become later in life."

Another episode marking the development of a greater political consciousness among the Portuguese in Toronto followed the rape and murder of Emanuel Jaques, which were momentous for not only this community but the city in general. The gruesome crime that victimized the twelve-year-old shoeshine boy shocked Torontonians and was the catalyst for a profound revamping of the strip of Yonge Street in the city's downtown area, at the time a bustling ground for the sex industry. The highly publicized crime shattered the image of Toronto the Good and exposed the dangers of such an industrial city—for many immigrants, the first they have ever lived in. The Portuguese of Toronto mobilized took their revolt to the streets. After organizing one of the largest funerals in the history of the city, this community, led by Lamartine Silva (a real estate broker) and José Rafael, displayed its numeric strength in a rally, with an estimated fifteen thousand participants, to demand that

the city clean its "devious" quarters and ask for severe penalties for the perpetrators.

As Bill Moniz captured in his documentary, this episode also helped mobilize the gay community of Toronto and raise awareness to the city's growing multicultural composition. The event garnered the interest of Canadian politicians who realized the electoral potential of the Portuguese constituency and began visiting its associations and events more avidly. In his documentary, Moniz's affirms that the "shoeshine boy" protest "acted as a wake-up call for the community, that it helped develop a social and civic conscience, making it more united and stronger in purpose. \*\*O Supporting this statement is the fact that in the municipal elections of the following year, five Portuguese Canadians ran for City Council (one of them Bill Moniz) and one for Toronto School Board trustee. Up to that point there had been only two Portuguese candidates running as school trustees.

But while the momentum generated by that event might explain why so many were compelled to run that year, the fact is that it did not last long. After 1978, the average number of Portuguese candidates per election fell to one and the community had to wait another ten years before a Portuguese was finally elected to City Council. Nevertheless, it is wrong to assume that ethnicity is the most important attribute that immigrant voters will look for in a candidate. In 1978, when Portuguese Canadians had a decent chance at electing one of their own for the first time, the Correio Português, one of the most widely read newspapers in the community, reflected the general ambivalence towards ethnic representatives: "It should not be the fact that the candidate running for public office is a citizen of Portuguese origin that decides our vote, by attraction or sympathy. Each voter must decide consciously and not be tempted by his Portuguese affinity. In many situations, it may even be better not to have anyone representing us. They will be our mirror and if the mirror is not crystal . . . our image can be distorted, with all the inconveniences that may bring."41

During these years of political maturation a new generation of community activists emerged, many of whom were affiliated with political parties (in particular the New Democratic Party) and whose main focus was the socio-economic problems directly affecting Portuguese immigrants in Canada—though most of them followed Portuguese politics closely. These were immigrants who grew up in Toronto, in a working-class environment, and possessed a higher degree of education then most of their peers.

Many gathered around the socially progressive newspaper *Comunidade*. Founded in 1975 by the Movimento Comunitário Português, a social platform created by a small group of social workers based out of the West End YMCA, *Comunidade* was innovative in the sense that, contrary to other Portuguese-Canadian newspapers, most of its content was original and focused on the situation of immigrants in Canada. In addition to the combativeness that characterized it as a champion of the working class, it urged greater participation in the labour movement and sought to educate immigrants about their rights and responsibilities under the Canadian political system. In spite of its socialist propensity, *Comunidade* had a sizeable audience during its five years of existence. While this indicates an increased affinity or tolerance of the left, it can best be explained by the fact that it dealt



The crime that victimized Emanuel Jaques and the ensuing trial attracted much attention from the media, which reported the gruesome details of the young boy's rape and murder as they were revealed in court. The shocking revelations infuriated the public and an estimated fifteen thousand demonstrators rallied at Nathan Phillips Square in what became known as the Shoeshine Boy protest. Photo published in Comunidade 31, year 2 (1977).

with issues commonly encountered by Portuguese immigrants in their everyday life. Other community newspapers reported news primarily from Portugal and filled their pages with erudite and abstract articles, too obscure for the common immigrant. Leftist connotations continued to be a hurdle for those trying to mobilize the community. However, these new activists were more successful than their predecessors in gathering social trust and ascending to positions of leadership through their work as social service providers.

The majority of political leaders in the community had a post-secondary education, confirming the predictive value of this variable for the SES model. Those on the side of socialization, like Wendy Tam Cho, qualify this position, arguing that "it is not higher education per se that increases one's likelihood of voting, but rather the socialization process that is provided through education. . . . Socioeconomic status is effective in raising participation levels only insofar as its indicators represent exposure to and embracing of the norms of the [Canadian] political system."

Socialization in Canadian norms certainly played a role in Martin Silva's<sup>43</sup> politicization. Martin left Aveiro in 1968, at the age of sixteen, to join his parents in Canada. He completed Grade 13 at Harbord Collegiate and started an undergraduate program at the University of

Toronto but quit when the opportunity came to work as an announcer for CHIN Radio. Martin recalls that he learned how to think critically—a requisite of political consciousness—upon realizing that "so much could change with a single plane trip." Exposure to Canadian society through the school system and everyday life drastically changed his outlook on history, religion, culture, and politics.

Then there are those like Domingos Marques<sup>44</sup> and João Medeiros,<sup>45</sup> who developed their own critical thought in Portugal while studying in the seminary during the papacy of John XXIII, and witnessing the stirring effects of Vatican II. In a setting that was radically different from the Canadian socio-political environment, they also learned practical and transferable organizational skills, by planning sports, and cultural and educational activities in the seminary.<sup>46</sup> In Canada, both obtained a post-secondary education, although the decision to continue their studies was already motivated by their civic and political involvement.

A large number of civic leaders involved in progressive organizations in the Portuguese community have also been dedicated members of the New Democratic Party, helping in campaigns or running for office themselves. Considering that the bulk of Portuguese Canadians were raised with conservative and anti-socialist values, it seems odd that so



A small but vocal group of demonstrators at the Shoeshine Boy rally demanded that Emanuel Jaques's murderers be hanged. Other well-established community members reproached their extremism, worrying about the negative impact it could have on the public perception of Portuguese immigrants. In this photo, a sign is hung in front of the old Toronto City Hall, in Portuguese: "Judge: Guilty or not! Defendant: Not guilty? Sentence hanging." Photo published in Comunidade 31, year 2 (1977).

many early political candidates decided to run with the NDP. This fact becomes even more puzzling when we consider that these candidates were generally shunned in the community for their party affiliation. Out of the three Portuguese candidates running in Ward 4 (Trinity-Bellwoods) in the 1988 Toronto municipal election, Martin Silva—who won the riding for the NDP, becoming the first Portuguese to be elected for City Hall—is convinced that he received the fewest Portuguese votes. His assertion is especially significant because one Portuguese competitor had been arrested for electoral fraud prior to election day and the other barely campaigned. A popular radio announcer and entertainer, Martin recalls how people in the community disapproved of his becoming a city councillor. He offers two explanations for this reaction: some "still [believed] you have to bow and take off your hat for the *regedor da freguesia* or the local president," and "they couldn't stand the NDP."

If the political alignment of Portuguese-Canadian candidates was proportional to the voting tendency of the community, we would expect to see more people involved with the Liberal party—as with other immigrant communities, Portuguese support for the Liberals is strong.

Mário Silva,47 a member of the Liberal Party since his youth, recalls how very few Portuguese were involved with the party in riding associations, volunteering in campaigns, or attending conventions. A possible explanation lies in the structural differences of political parties and their presence in the neighbourhood. For recent immigrants with few resources, human capital, or social networks, trying to enter the political game without a ready-made support system is a challenge. The fact that the NDP was the only party in Toronto to run officially at the municipal level (it ceased to do so in 1994) partially explains this discrepancy. NDP candidates may not have benefited from the "Portuguese vote" but certainly did capitalize on partisan loyalty, the endorsement of other well-established New Democrats, party resources, and know-how. The Liberal party operated differently in the riding. As Mário put it, "You got to get your own volunteers. The volunteers from the previous candidate, chances are, will not be there for you, out of loyalty to the other candidate. And there is no money in the bank. You really have to go out there and fundraise." Certainly there were politically ambitious centrist and right-wing individuals in the community, but without a ready-made party machine to support a municipal campaign—usually the first chapter of a political career—they may have felt discouraged from running.

Still, political parties and elections were external structures for political access that may have been too foreign to most Portuguese immigrants. Mainstream political parties, which have traded neighbourhood engagement for mass-media marketing strategies, have recently rediscovered the importance of grassroots structures in recruiting voters. During their absence, other civic organizations, like labour unions, advocacy and social service agencies, and ethnic and religious associations took their place as the most viable institutions for incorporating immigrants into the host countries' political system and for accessing decision-makers.<sup>48</sup>

Irene Bloemraad examined the role of ethnic civic institutions when comparing U.S. and Canadian naturalization rates, using the Portuguese and Vietnamese communities in both countries as samples. She set out to discover why naturalization rates in Canada departed from historical parity with those in the United States, increasing steadily since the early 1970s. She attributes this rise to the introduction of official multiculturalism in Canada in 1971 and the subsequent government assistance to ethnic-oriented projects. A wide range of organizations emerged or were reinvigorated with these multicultural funds, strengthening the civic life of ethnic communities, which, in a Tocquevillian sense, is conducive to greater political participation. Indeed, these years of political arousal in the Portuguese community coincided with the introduction of official multiculturalism in Canada. Though not stripped of controversy,<sup>49</sup> the multiculturalism act granted political leverage to immigrant communities by curbing cultural and racial discrimination, recognizing their legitimacy as particular constituencies, and pledging substantial funding for "ethnic" organizations. Naturally, it was during the 1970s-1980s that most cultural, sports, and recreational clubs and associations were founded, but also most of its social-progressive organizations. The advocacy agencies that sprouted during this period were the first well-organized, assertive attempts at tackling the socio-economic problems affecting this community. Three of the most influential were PIN, FPCBP, and ACAPO.

The Portuguese Interagency Network (PIN) was founded in 1978 by social workers concerned with the lack of communication between the

Portuguese organizations and the absence of well-researched needs assessments on the community. PIN was one of the community's busiest advocacy organizations until the mid-1990s, when it was hit by the public spending cuts of the Harris government, finally dissolving in 2009. In the absence of an overarching representative institution, it became the go-to organization for all levels of government whenever they wanted to communicate with or obtain information on the Portuguese community. Though serving as a consultative body, funded by the government, PIN did not withdraw from social activism, engaging in campaigns for health education, adult literacy, and skill training, promoting cultural and linguistic inclusiveness, and advocating better and more accessible public services.

The Federation of Portuguese Canadian Business and Professionals (FPCBP) was founded in 1981 by immigrants of higher socio-economic status in an attempt to coalesce the small business community and attract Portuguese professionals at large, encouraging their greater involvement in community affairs. While encompassing some of the highbrow mannerisms of an earlier elitist club (Pro-Culture), the FPCBP has been involved in social development. Its preoccupation has been to raise the profile of Portuguese immigrants in Canadian society and serve as a Toronto-centred voice for community dealings with the government. Worthy of note is the fact that many of its directors have been active members or supporters of the Liberal Party—including the current MPP for Mississauga South, Charles Sousa.

By the late 1990s, there were 198 Portuguese social and cultural institutions in Canada (111 in Ontario), thirty-eight religious institutions, over 4,600 ethnic businesses (3,500 in Ontario), and a vast assortment of media outlets (fifty newspapers, thirty-seven bulletins, seventeen magazines, and many TV and radio shows), the bulk of them in Toronto. 50 Considering the absence of associational activity in pre-1974 Portugal, the civic and voluntaristic commitment demonstrated by this group of immigrants is remarkable. Nevertheless, the civic energy suggested by the number of Portuguese clubs and associations has not translated into political vigour. The history of Portuguese cultural and recreational organizations in Toronto is characterized by ideological rifts and petty personal rivalries. The inability of its members to reach consensus through systematic debate reflects a lack of democratic maturity. According to Martin Silva, it's this dynamic that led to the "geometrical progression" of clubs and associations in Toronto: "In the First Portuguese Canadian Club you had elections and there were two lists running. The list that lost did not hang around the first, criticizing the existing executive to prove that they were better. They went away and formed another club. And the next year, in that new club, there would be elections. Two lists would run. Whichever list would lose: 'Why did I lose? I am the best!' Away they would go to form another club."

The fragmentation of Portuguese associations hindered the possibility of large collaborations. Furthermore, in simple market logic, the supply of these organizations was much larger than the actual demand, resulting in deflated memberships, making it difficult for them to remain open for long. Martin Silva understood the practical benefits of unity when he formed the Alliance of Portuguese Clubs and Associations of Ontario (ACAPO) in 1986. "At the time," he says, "I counted 23 different clubs. . . . If all the clubs were within one [body] they could pay the mortgage on a building of \$22 million." ACAPO was born after several

of these Toronto organizations came together to organize the first anniversary of the Portugal Village, a designated Business Improvement Area in the Trinity-Bellwoods area. In their first meeting, it was decided that this association should organize the Portugal Day celebrations of 10 June, officially proclaimed by the Ontario government that year.

But the old political dynamics of the community resurfaced and once again deterred success. Many community pundits associated ACAPO with the political affiliation of its main promoters, identifying it as a haven for the NDP (in which both Martin Silva and Domingos Marques presided). In reality, despite an initial intention to become the coveted political umbrella representing Portuguese Canadians across Ontario, ACAPO never became a political organization; besides, its associates had varied political creeds. ACAPO's primary concern was organizing the Portuguese Week celebrations, a responsibility they have assumed ever since its foundation.

As in the previous generation, political interests motivated confrontations among community leaders, only this time they referred to the country as a whole. Both sides of the spectrum acknowledged the need for a large representative Portuguese body. The dispute was over who should lead the community into such a unified front. The FPCBP had tried to take the organization of the Portuguese Week away from the traditional committees, made up of a select few high-profile individuals. Now that ACAPO was actively seeking the same, the chances of success were lowered. According to a former president of ACAPO,<sup>51</sup> party differences led some within the FPCBP to boycott the association, exploiting the community's antipathy for the NDP to remove support for its activities. Despite these initial difficulties, ACAPO established itself in the community and grew into what is today one of its most recognized institutions, responsible for making the June celebrations in Toronto one of the largest Portuguese cultural manifestations in Canada. Its creation was a milestone in civic maturation, since it proved that it was possible for so many different associations to collaborate in a joint community project.

In 1991, ACAPO, the FPCBP, the Canada-Portugal Chamber of Commerce, the University of Toronto Student Association, and PIN assembled an organizing committee to set up a national conference to discuss the creation of an umbrella organization. 52 The Portuguese-Canadian media and Portuguese Embassy also gave their support. Over the next two years, a project coordinator, hired with government funds, took on the hefty task of rallying civic-minded members from Portuguese communities across Canada to attend this meeting and support this ambitious idea. Two years later, 300 people gathered in Ottawa to attend the national conference, where the Portuguese-Canadian National Congress (PCNC) was created. After many failed attempts, community leaders were finally able to coalesce and create a representative organization that could act "on the social, economic, cultural and political development of the community, matters of social justice, human rights, the promotion of the full participation by community members in Canadian society, and to serve as a consultative body for the various levels of government."53

As they became more integrated in Canada's multicultural political network, community leaders felt increasingly pressured to conform to the expectations of the general polity: "We knew that a good number of other ethnic groups (some smaller than ours) already had national

organizations in place for a few years. We knew that the Canadian Ethnocultural Council . . . as well government officials, frequently asked when we (the Portuguese) were going to establish a national organization."<sup>54</sup> Though it has struggled to capture the bulk of Portuguese Canadians, the PCNC has articulated some of the problems affecting the community and lobbied both Canadian and Portuguese government officials on a wide range of fronts, such as immigration laws, the situation of non-status people, the penal code, and foreign policy (i.e., Canadian intervention in East Timor). The PCNC has also developed social campaigns on issues including the promotion of greater civic and political participation among Portuguese-Canadian youth.

During the post-1974 decolonization of Portugal's former African territories, committees were set up in Toronto to pressure Canadian authorities into absorbing some of the population exodus and issue emergency visas for Portuguese émigrés, each competing to become the official spokesperson for the community. In the aftermath of a devastating earthquake that hit the Azores in 1980, which displaced nearly fifteen thousand individuals, another committee was formed to urge Canadian authorities to provide humanitarian aid to the area, but it too failed to take the next step in becoming a permanent representative institution.

These and other attempts at creating a Portuguese-Canadian political umbrella organization were made over the years and always failed in the end. Why then was Ottawa '93 able to prevail? Three factors seemed to have contributed to its success:

- the availability of government funding, which allowed the hiring of a coordinator who could dedicate herself fully to organizing the national conference;
- 2. the increasing cost of Portuguese lack of political representation to community leaders, now more integrated in Canadian society and constantly questioned about their community's shortcomings;
- the higher political sophistication of the participants, who could now tap into a pool of civic experience and with accumulated knowledge of how to structure a democratic institution.

In the words of one participants, "Now you are dealing with professionals. . . . All the old dinosaurs—some of them their English is poor—they can't really challenge you in a big discussion . . . and even if there are divisive forces, they really don't fit anymore because the structure of that organization just throws it in the garbage." <sup>55</sup>

The creation of the PCNC marks the conclusion of a period of political maturation and the beginning of another, characterized by its gradual emergence onto the Canadian political scene. Though missing the necessary hindsight for historical analysis, we can already perceive some of its original features. The number of Portuguese-Canadian candidates running for office, both inside and outside of Toronto, has steadily increased. This political emergence is paralleled by larger developments in other areas of society, such as the arrival of the second and third generation to the workforce, fluent in English and better integrated in Canada, yet still affiliated with some form of Portuguese identity;<sup>56</sup> greater employment diversification, hence more pathways for class mobility, which has produced a larger middle class and a substantial number of professionals; and an overall greater educational capital.

Another important development is the increasing suburbanization of this immigrant group, as those first- and second-generation families who achieved financial autonomy have started to move out of Toronto. Carlos Teixeira, who has investigated this trend at length, found that "the Portuguese who remain in West Central Toronto are more likely to be first generation, older, and of considerably lower socio-economic status than those who moved to Mississauga."57 Worthy of notice is the fact that three of the four Portuguese-Canadian members of provincial Parliament thus far have been elected in Mississauga. Besides reflecting the geographical dispersion of Portuguese Canadians, this also suggests a decreasing reliance on the co-ethnic vote (Portuguese are a minority in these ridings), which points to a greater integration of the candidates. While the campaigning strategy of those early candidates in the Toronto neighbourhood consisted primarily of capturing the coethnic vote, today, successful Portuguese politicians have realized that, as Mário Silva observed, "You don't have to have 15 per cent of the people speaking Portuguese. If you can get even 2 per cent or 3 per cent of them who are committed to you, who come out for a nomination, help you out, that is more than enough to do well." Although content with their role as Portuguese representatives, these recent politicians want to do well in a broader sense and not to be pigeonholed as "ethnic candidates."

According to Jeffrey Reitz, those on the margins of society, who suffer the greatest deprivations and have the most interest in changing the system that oppresses them, are the least likely to participate in its formal political life, since the practical benefits of symbolic actions in the political arena are less than the efforts made by one person in the economic arena. In addition, he notes that the sense of commitment to a social and political system expressed by filling out the ballot is understandably lower among those who feel marginalized by it. Thus, Reitz concludes that "those who retain strong ties to an ethnic group are less likely to participate in Canadian politics than those who have abandoned such ties. If political participation reflects a feeling of belonging to the larger society, then certainly ethnic group members who maintain group cohesion seldom share this feeling."<sup>58</sup>

There is a structural flaw in this logic. It bears stressing that those in the Portuguese community who have been most active in conventional politics and grassroots advocacy are the sons and daughters of welders, worm-pickers, cleaning ladies, fishers, and other labourers who developed a political consciousness upon observing the social injustices and harsh living conditions of their own working-class families and immigrant peers. In several cases, they became politically engaged while providing social services in "ethnic" organizations. Reitz's interpretation also ignores the contribution that marginalized immigrant/ethnic communities have made to the Canadian political ethos and how they have appropriated its ideological currency in their struggle for inclusion. Furthermore, it belittles political activity that refers to the homeland as inconsequential to Canadian society, which is decreasingly the case in our globalized world. The socialization model offers the opposite reading: "Rather than constraining the individual within the ethnic community, the community itself, including its organizations, may provide the basis for political activity."59

Yet the two conclusions do not necessarily exclude each other. The disparity may simply derive from differences in the sample and the scale

of observation. If we look at this constituency's political participation in its electoral turnout, seeking the "average" citizen in a sweeping sample, the conclusions offered by the socio-economic status model are valid for the Portuguese community. But if we observe it at the grassroots level, seeking the "exceptional" individuals who became civic and political leaders, the argument that ethnic ties can be conducive to politicization also holds. For instance, Mário Silva, the first Portuguese-Canadian member of Parliament, who comes from an Azorean working-class family, began his civic activity in a youth church group. During his first election, the Portuguese community was marginally there for him, but the second time around they gave him a much greater endorsement. As he understands it, once the majority of Canadians voted for him, the Portuguese realized he was a viable candidate and only then began supporting him, since, as he puts it, "communities that are marginalized don't want to take risks." This is a good example of how the "ethnic vote" sometimes follows electoral success instead of the other way around. Such lag between the group and its representatives reveals two spheres of political engagement, which, despite their connection, have their own specific dynamics that must be studied using appropriate paradigms.

When drawing models to explain the political participation of a particular constituency, it is essential that we distinguish collective mobilization from individual activism. The common deduction is that a community is as strong as its leaders, and vice versa. However, liberal-democratic systems are biased towards political representation. As "ethnic constituencies," immigrant communities seem to be more active in specific causes that deal with tangible issues or yield obvious and immediate benefits, often leading to direct forms of political action. The Portuguese in Toronto have come together in large numbers on a few occasions, to protest perceived injustices committed to members of the community or to provide aid during humanitarian causes. They have made their voices heard during distressing incidents such as the shooting of Angelo Nóbrega, the murder of Emanuel Jaques, and the Azorean earthquake of 1980, to name a few. Development projects in their native towns and other social causes in their homeland have also prompted Portuguese immigrants to organize large fundraising campaigns.

As these episodes suggest, Portuguese-Canadians do not suffer from insurmountable disagreement and have occasionally tapped into a dormant sense of ethno-national solidarity to summon political energy as a cohesive constituency. Still, effective political intervention in a democratic system requires concerted representation, which community leaders and their institutions have assumed, even when lacking substantial support from those for whom they claim to speak. Political energy generated by casual mobilization is hardly sustained without a capacious institutional structure, administered by competent individuals who can afford the time and the energy. In order to build these structures, those individuals must share some basic precepts and be able to accommodate dissent, otherwise that structure quickly collapses. While the bulk of the Portuguese community may not have been hopelessly fragmented, division among its leaders has often been strong enough to weaken its political power in our representative democratic system. In other words, too much politics at the micro level have reduced its intensity at the macro level, hence contributing to the "top-down" perception that the Portuguese community is politically apathetic.

Politics played an important role in the history of the Portuguese community, even though its electoral participation was low. While the number of co-ethnic elected officials is an important measure of immigrant political participation, it is not the only one. We should not discount direct forms of action or homeland political concerns from our analysis of political integration simply because they fall outside the conventional political system of the host nation-state. Lack of participation in its electoral contests may not mean that immigrants are apathetic but simply that politicians have not captivated them or addressed their concerns. Moreover, immigrant advocacy and representation are not exclusive to politicians and mainstream ethnic umbrella organizations.

When assessing immigrant political participation we should also consider forms of action that are not bound to ethnicity and instead rely on other affiliations. Labour politics, for instance, an area in which Portuguese participation has vastly increased in recent years, is still largely understudied. New activists, associated with larger socio-political movements, have begun to emerge in the Portuguese community, introducing new issues such as sexuality and disability. Greater involvement in civic and political agencies that do not rely solely on ethnic unity and gather around specific causes, suggests that Portuguese Canadians are associating with alternative solidarities, diversifying their political scripts and methods, and thus expanding their political clout in tandem with the complexity of their identities. Ultimately, the accumulated experience of veteran activists, the emergent diverse socio-economic profile, and the availability of internal structures of political access that can engage new political agents and convey the community's multiple voices will generate dynamics that will once more change the political profile of the Portuguese in Canada.

At times, what accounts for continuity at the macro level does not correspond with changes at the micro level. Unlike other social sciences that often study contemporary phenomena without accounting for these two elements, history must deal with change and continuity in all their permutations. In doing this, history can integrate macro and micro theoretical paradigms (such as the SES model and the socialization perspective) in the study of a social phenomenon as it develops. In-depth historical research—covering both the pre- and post-arrival factors determining the cost and benefits of participation, the available repertoire of political action, and the internal and external solidarities—provides a more complex reading of an immigrant community's political activity. Thorough historical studies on the political incorporation/marginalization of newcomers and ethnic minorities are crucial to advance our understanding of a country's political system—especially one as diverse and globalized as Canada's—and assess its democratic capacity for reflecting the concerns and aspirations of its changing population. This is an area of Canadian immigration and political history about which a lot more remains to be said.

#### Notes

 Such as labour organization among Portuguese female workers in the building-cleaning industry and a garment factory in Toronto, in Wenona Giles, Portuguese Women in Toronto: Gender, Immigration and Nationalism (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002); and in Susana P. Miranda, "Portuguese Women's Activism in Toronto's Building Cleaning Industry, 1975–1986," in The Portuguese in Canada: Diasporic Challenges and Adjustment, ed. Carlos Teixeira and Victor M. P. da Rosa, 2nd ed., 109–135

- (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009); citizenship acquisition and formal participation, in Irene Bloemraad, *Becoming a Citizen: Incorporating Immigrants and Refugees in the United States and Canada* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); and anti-deportation activism, in Luis L. M. Aguiar, "Portuguese Mobilization against Deportation: The Case of Hélder Marques," in Teixeira and da Rosa, 136–160.
- Grace Anderson and David Higgs, A Future to Inherit: The Portuguese Communities of Canada (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, and the Multiculturalism Program, Department of the Secretary State of Canada, and the Publishing Centre, Supply and Services Canada, 1976), 173.
- Joao A. Alpalhão and Victor M. P. Rosa, A Minority in a Changing Society: The Portuguese Communities of Quebec (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1980), 218.
- Onésimo T. Almeida, "Value Conflicts and Cultural Adjustment in North America," in *The Portuguese in Canada. Diasporic Challenges and Adjustment*, 2nd ed., ed. Carlos Teixeira and Victor M. P. da Rosa. 255–268 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).
- Carlos Teixeira, "Portuguese," in Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 1078–1079.
- 6. I have counted fifty-five candidates (twelve women and forty-three men) of Portuguese descent running in municipal, provincial, and federal elections in Toronto and Mississauga since 1972—there were none previous to that date. There were ten candidacies in the 1970s; twenty-three in the 1980s; thirty-three in the 1990s; and thirty-nine in the 2000s. Since 1985, there have been nine school board trustees, two city councillors, four members of Provincial Parliament, and one member of Parliament from this area. It's possible that I missed other candidates, particularly in municipal elections in Mississauga and in areas of Toronto with a lower concentration of Portuguese immigrants. It is also possible that a small few have Portuguese surnames but have little or no relation with Portugal (i.e., Goans or Sri Lankans). I may have also missed female candidates whose surnames have been changed through marriage.
- 7. Caroline Brettell and James F. Hollifield, eds., *Migration Theory: Talking across Disciplines* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 4.
- 8. For more on the SES model I suggest Richard Brody, "The Puzzle of Participation," in The New American Political System, ed. A. King, 287-324 (Washington DC: American Enterprise Institute, 1978); Bruce London, "Racial Differences in Social and Political Participation: It's Not Simply a Matter of Black and White," Social Science Quarterly 56, no. 2 (1975): 274–286; Dale Marshall, "Who Participates in What?," Urban Affairs Quarterly 4, no. 2 (1968): 201-223; Lester Milbrath and M. Goel, Political Participation (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1977); A. Richmond and J. Goldlust, Family and Social Integration of Immigrants in Toronto (Toronto: Ethnic Research Program, York University, 1977); S. J. Rosenstone and J. Hansen, Mobilization, Participation and Democracy in America (New York: MacMillan, 1993); Sidney Verba and Norman Nie, Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality (New York: Harper and Row, 1972); Susan Welch, John Comer, and Michael Steinman, "Ethnic Differences in Social and Political Participation: A Comparison of Some Anglo and Mexican Americans," Pacific Sociological Review 18, no. 2 (1975): 361-382; Charles Wright and Herbert Hyman, "Voluntary Association Memberships of American Adults: Evidence from National Sample Surveys," American Sociological Review 23, no. 3 (1958): 284-294.
- 9. Included in this group are Jerome Black, "The Practice of Politics in Two Settings: Political Transferability among Recent Immigrants to Canada," Canadian Journal of Political Science 20, no. 4 (1987): 731–53; Bloemraad, Becoming a Citizen; Wendy K. Tam Cho, "Naturalization, Socialization, Participation: Immigrants and (Non-) Voting," Journal of Politics 61, no. 4 (1999): 1140–1155; Jane Junn, "Participation in Liberal Democracy: The Political Assimilation of Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities in the United States," American Behavioral Scientist 42 (June/July 1999): 1417–1438; Michael Parenti, "Ethnic Politics and the Persistence of Ethnic Identification," American Political Science 61, no. 3 (1967): 717–726; Alejandro Portes,

- Robert Nash Pasker, and José A. Cobas, "Assimilation or Consciousness: Perceptions of U.S. Society among Recent Latin American Immigrants to the United States," *Social Forces* 59 (September 1980): 220–224; Raymond E. Wolfinger, "The Development and Persistence of Ethnic Voting," *American Political Science Review* 59 (December 1965): 896–908; Janelle Wong, *Democracy's Promise: Immigrants & American Civic Institutions* (University of Michigan Press, 2006).
- 10. The second generation is trading these regional distinctions for a broader, more inclusive "Portuguese-Canadian" identity. For more on this, see Edite Noivo, *Inside Ethnic Families: Three Generations of Portuguese-Canadians* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997): 63–64.
- 11. For more on the Estado Novo and the transition to democracy, see António Costa Pinto, Salazar's Dictatorship and European Fascism: Problems of Interpretation (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); Kenneth Maxwell, The Making of Portuguese Democracy (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Fernando Rosas, ed., História de Portugal: O Estado Novo, vol. 7, gen. ed., José Mattoso (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1994); Phillippe Schmitter, Portugal: do Autoritarismo à Democracia (Lisbon: Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, 1999).
- 12. Members of the Portuguese Canadian Democratic Association discovered that one of its presidents was relaying information to PIDE about the activities of this organization. "Origens da Portuguese Can. Democratic Association," *Aliança* 1, no. 4 (April 1988): 1, 4. Domingos Marques collection, recently deposited at the Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collections, York University (YA). Currently being processed.
- 13. Rosas, História de Portugal, 291-292. My translation.
- Frank Marques, "Memories of Childhood," in Comunidade 1, no. 2 (August 1975): 8. Domingos Marques collection, YA.
- See, for example, Louise Brown, "Keeping Immigrant Kids in School," Toronto Star, 2 April 2008).
- 16. In 1981, a number of outspoken Portuguese-Canadian parents founded the Toronto Portuguese Parents Association (TPPA) in liaison with the Toronto Board of Education to advocate for better education of students of ethnic and racial minority. In 1995, after a meeting with Minister of Education David Cooke, the TPPA, in conjunction with the two school boards of Toronto, formed the Portuguese-Canadian Coalition for Better Education, which lasted until 2005. Of all the activities developed by these organizations, the Tutoring Program / On Your Mark is perhaps the most successful program, which continues to be operated by the Working Women Community Centre. The records of this organization have been recently deposited at the YA and have not yet been processed.
- Eduardo Couto in *The Portuguese Community of Toronto: Needs and Services*, Report, 8–9, 1982, file 164, Portuguese Interagency Network, Nadine Nowlan Fonds 1359, series 407, City of Toronto Archives.
- Jeremy Brown, "1,000 Portuguese Riot on Bay Street," Toronto Daily Star, 30 January 1961.
- "Bay St. Riot Claim, 'I Recognized Salazar Gestapo," Toronto Daily Star, 31 January 1961.
- 20. Ron Lowman, "Claimed Outsiders Aided Portuguese Bay St. Riot," *Toronto Daily Star*, 1 February 1961.
- 21. Jeremy Brown, "Portuguese Riot in Toronto: Pro-Pirate Parade Routed," and "1,000 Portuguese Riot on Bay Street," *Toronto Daily Star*, 30 January 1961; "Portuguese Stage Riot on Bay St,." *Globe & Mail*, 30 January 1961.
- 22. Including the Conference for the Amnesty of Portuguese Political Prisoners, 28–30 October 1966, chaired by Pierre Berton and sponsored by such dignitaries as Northrop Frye, Tommy Douglas, and other high-profile Canadians.
- D.R. Colombo, director, Citizenship Branch, to Don Martyn, executive director, Ontario Department of Provincial Secretary and Citizenship, 27 April 1971, Correspondence of the Provincial Secretary (CPS), box 233, B229091, RG 8-5, Archives of Ontario (AO).

- 24. Domingos Marques and João Medeiros, *Portuguese Immigrants: 25 Years in Canada* (Toronto: Marquis, 1975) 1980.
- Dale Brazão and Kevin Donovan, "Non-Profit Projects a Holy Mess," Toronto Star, 27 May 1995.
- "500 Portuguese in Silent March Protest Police Shooting of Youth," Toronto Daily Star. 17 May 1969.
- "Portugueses no Canadá: dificuldades de integração," in O Jornal Português (Diário de Lisboa) 2, no. 45 (28 November 1969): 3; O Jornal Portugues microfilm, reel 2 (21 November 1969 to 10 November 1970), N479, AO. My translation.
- 28. Portuguese Canadian Congress by-laws, 26 September 1969, CPS.
- 29. "Portugueses no Canadá."
- Cândido Guerreiro, First Portuguese Canadian Club of Toronto to Premier John P. Robarts, 5 January 1970, CPS.
- 31. Newspaper clipping, December 1969, CPS.
- Domingos Costa Gomes, letter to the editor, O Jornal Português 2, no. 49 (January 1970): 7, reel 2, N479, AO. My translation.
- D. R. Colombo to John Yaremko, Ontario minister for social and family services, 10 February 1970, CPS.
- Fernando Costa to D. R. Colombo, director, Citizenship Branch, 23 December 1970. CPS.
- D. R. Colombo to R. M. Warren, deputy minister, Ontario Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship, 8 March 1971, CPS.
- O Boletim 1, nos. 9–10 (June–July 1971): 11. Information bulletin published by the Portuguese Canadian Democratic Association, part of that organization's archival collection recently deposited at the YA. Not yet processed.
- Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship memorandum to D. R. Colombo, 6 May 1971, CPS.
- 38. Anderson and Higgs, Future to Inherit, 158.
- 39. Born in the coastal city of Lourinhā, Peter arrived in Canada in 1964 at the age of eight. He was president of the PCNC and the FPCC from 2001 to 2007 and has been president of the Canadian Ethnocultural Council since 2006. In 1986 and 2004 he was elected trustee with the Peel-Dufferin Catholic District School Board, becoming the chairman of that board between 2005 and 2006. Peter also ran for the City Council of Mississauga in 2003. Initially a supporter of the Liberal Party, Peter is now affiliated with the the New Democratic Party (NDP), for which he ran provincially in 2007 and federally in 2008. Peter is an immigrant consultant. Interviewed on 7 May 2008.
- Bill Moniz, The Shoeshine Boy. Documentary (95 min.), Vista-Global Productions, 2006.
- "Cinco Portuguese Candidatos às Eleições Municipais Pelo Bairro 4," in Correio Português, 30 September 1978. Correrio Portuguese microfilm, reel 1 (1978–1982), N473, AO. My translation.
- 42. Tam Cho, "Naturalization, Socialization, Participation," 1144.
- 43. Martin is a long-time host at CHIN Radio and has been a member of the NDP since an early age. He was elected Catholic representative for the Public School Board in 1985. In 1988 he was elected Toronto City councillor, and re-elected in 1991 and 1994. He also ran provincially in 1995, and again municipally in 1997, losing both times. In 2006 he was appointed to City Council to replace Olivia Chow. Interviewed on 12 March 2008.

- 44. Born in Aveiro, Domingos came to Canada at the age of nineteen (coincidently, on the same plane as Martin Silva). Domingos recently retired from his rehabilitation consulting business for injured workers. He is a co-founder of the extinct Movimento Comunitário Português and co-founder/director of the newspaper Comunidade and the short-lived Silva Magazine. In 1991 he was elected Metro School Board trustee with the NDP, and defeated in 1994. Domingos was also president of ACAPO in its early years.
- 45. Born in the island of São Miguel, Azores, João came to Canada in 1971, at the age of twenty-six. João is a social service provider. He is also a co-founder of the Movimento Comunitário Português and co-founder/director of the newspaper Comunidade. He ran for City alderman with Joe Pantalone and the NDP in 1978, finishing in fourth place, ahead of four other Portuguese candidates. He is also a former director of PIN.
- 46. They are perfect illustrations for Jerome Black's ("Practice of Politics") argument for the transferability of political skills between distinct polities and the capacity for new political learning among adult immigrants.
- 47. Born in the Azores, Mário immigrated to Canada in 1979 at the age of nine. He has been involved in a wide number of civic organizations and was elected to Toronto City Council in 1994, 1997, and 2000. In 2004, Mário became the first Portuguese Canadian to sit at the House of Commons, representing the riding of Davenport. He was re-elected in 2006 and 2008. Interviewed on 28 April 2008.
- 48. Wong, Democracy's Promise, 3.
- For a summary overview of the negative reactions to Canadian multiculturalism, see Yasmeen Abu-Laban and Daiva Stasiulis, "Ethnic Pluralism under Siege: Popular and Partisan Opposition to Multiculturalism," Canadian Public Policy / Analyse Politiques 18, no. 4 (December 1992): 365–386.
- 50. Numbers taken from Carlos Teixeira ("Portuguese"). It must be noted that any tally of Portuguese organizations might be slightly inflated because many clubs and associations are virtually dead, though technically have not yet closed.
- 51. Interviewed on 12 and 18 April 2008. The interviewee chose to remain anonymous.
- 52. Ana Cristina Borreicho, "Planning and Consultation Session," Portuguese Interagency Network, 1991, Domingos Marques collection, YA.
- Portuguese-Canadian National Congress brochure, http://www.congresso. ca/congresso/enbrochure.htm, accessed May 2008.
- Ana Cristina Costa, From Coast to Coast: A Community in Transition, conference report, Portuguese National Conference, March 1993 (Ottawa: University of Ottawa, 1995): 2. Congresso Nacional Luso Canadiano, file 14, series 1163, fonds 255: Mário Silva fonds, City of Toronto Archives.
- 55. Anonymous interviewee, 12 and 18 April 2008.
- 56. On this topic, see Manuel A. Oliveira and Carlos Teixeira, "'Second Generation,' Cultural Retention and Ethnic Identity: Young Portuguese and Portuguese Descendants in Canada," in "Luso-Canadians: The Portuguese in Canada," special issue, *Portuguese Studies Review* 11, no. 2 (July 2004): 2–23.
- 57. Carlos Teixeira and Robert A. Murdie, "On the Move: The Portuguese in Toronto," in Carlos Teixeira and Victor M. P. Rosa, eds., *The Portuguese in Canada: Diasporic Challenges and Adjustment*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).
- Jeffrey Reitz, The Survival of Ethnic Groups (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1980). 227.
- 59. Black, "Practice of Politics," 739.