
The Many Identity Markers of Luso–Americans: Linguistic and Psychological Identities among First–, Second–, and Third–Generation Portuguese–Americans

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Abstract: In this work, I shall look at how some communities of Luso-Americans across the United States use (or rather, feel about) the Portuguese language and mores and, as generations go by, negotiate Portuguese traditions in order to maintain, (re)create, and enhance their ties to their (lost or distant) Lusitanian heritage.¹ I am particularly interested in how these hyphenated Americans leverage their ethnic, linguistic, racial, and psychological identities within multicultural, multiracial, and multilingual America.

Keywords Bilingual(ism), Culture, Diaspora, Ethnicity, Heritage, Hispanic, History of Mentalities, Identity, Luso-American, Markers, Mentality, Multicultural, Multiracial, Multiracial, Portuguese, Psychological identities, Race

I. Introduction

Living in a country where multiculturalism, multiracialism, and being multiethnic do not always correspond to (perfect or not-so-perfect) bilingualism—whereby bilingual speakers are able to reach a proficiency in the other language at the educated-native level—it is not surprising then that, through time, generations of Luso-Americans negotiate over and over the identity markers and psychological identities that tie or somehow reconnect them to their (lost or at least very loose) Portuguese heritage.²

The heavily-localized/fixed presence—e.g., New England, the New York/New Jersey area, and California—and an overall common legacy among these communities of Luso-Americans contribute to this ever-morphing sense

¹ A person who speaks Portuguese, regardless where he or she is from is called Lusophone. Lusophone is pronounced: /loofofónə/ and it means speaker of/from the Portuguese-speaking world. Luso-American, Luso-Canadian, Luso-French, Luso-German, Luso-Luxembourgish, Luso-South Africans, Luso-Venezuelan, and Luso-Australian, for example, refer to the descendants of Portuguese immigrants who settled in these countries.

² Proficiency is a foreign language is measured in different ways. Most schools, institutions, and businesses use the ILR scale to determine the proficiency in a given language, including English, for hiring purposes and for renewing the license of using their language skills in their current positions. Other language scales commonly used are the ACTFL language scale (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) <www.actfl.org> and the CEFER (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) <http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre1_en.asp>. ILR stands for Interagency Language Roundtable and it is "an unfunded Federal interagency organization established for the coordination and sharing of information about language-related activities at the Federal level." Those involved with the ILR are a "[...] loosely coordinated network of Federal, academic and NGO language specialists and managers who share a common goal of improving the nation's capacity to learn, teach, and effectively use foreign languages in the national interests." <<http://www.govtilr.org/IRL%20History.htm>>. The ILR committee has thus created a language scale divided into ten levels—namely, 0+, 1, 1+, 2, 2+, 3, 3+, 4, 4+, and 5—whereby individuals can be tested as to their listening, speaking, reading, and writing, proficiency in a foreign language from "No Proficiency" (0+) to "Functionally Native Proficiency" (5). [all web sites were accessed: June 22, 2016].

of psychological belonging that gives (linguistic and) social cohesion to an otherwise scattered and "invisible" (if compared to other ethnic groups of the United States) community of first-, second-, third-, or even fourth-generation Portuguese-Americans.

Language, dialect(s), idiolects, culture, and mores thus contribute to building numerous, diverse, and multilayered identity and psychological markers that assist Luso-Americans in claiming their role in the "ethnic garden"³ of the United States. For the most part, Luso-American Portuguese is a much localized idiolect, at times unintelligible to speakers of Portuguese—not only from Mainland Portugal, the Azores, and Madeira, but also from the rest of the Lusophone world, as in the case of Brazil, Portuguese Africa, and Portuguese Asia—who never left their homeland.

In other words, fossilized Portuguese accents and archaic grammatical and lexical forms that have fallen into disuse in the home country—once again, Mainland Portugal and the archipelagos of the Azores and Madeira—coupled with numerous neologisms, as well as copious lexical borrowings and calques from English, or even other languages (e.g., French, Italian, and Spanish), oftentimes contribute to this unintelligibility between *diasporic* Portuguese and the first-, second-, third-, or even fourth-generation of Luso-Americans from one side and the Portuguese who never left Portugal from the other.⁴

II. Where do Luso-Americans Live?

Entre os mais antigos e mais problemáticos tropos relacionados com a vivência do ser humano destacam-se aqueles de cunho étnico-religioso e as suas contrapartidas político-sociais, nomeadamente os do Exílio (Desterro) e da Diáspora [...].⁵

As stated above, most Portuguese and Luso-Americans are found today in the New England area, the New York/New Jersey region, and California, though there are also Portuguese immigrants and Portuguese-American communities in other parts of the country, as in Florida and Hawaii.⁶

Despite the fact that the Portuguese trace their presence in the United States and Canada to the early days of European exploration and expansion (1492 onwards) and Colonial times (1492-1763), present-day Portuguese presence in the United States is the result of late 19th-century immigration to the East Coast (New England, New York, and New Jersey) and at times concomitantly with the West coast (mainly California) and Hawaii.

Many Portuguese and Spanish explorers, who came to the New World, as well as crew members of their ships, were Sephardic Jews, particularly Portuguese-Jews with strong commercial and family ties with the rest of the then-in-expansion world, from Europe to the Far East, including the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia. Sephardic Jews of the Diaspora were instrumental in creating European settlements in the

³ Credit is due to Reinaldo J. Silva who coined this expression and used it in his brilliant article (Silva, 2005).

⁴ For an overview of Portuguese-American speech, also known as *Portinglês*, please see: (Cabral, 1987), (Machado, and Pereira Júnior, 2005), and (Pap, 1981).

⁵ (Levi, 2004a). "Among the oldest and perhaps the most controversial tropes on human beings stand out the ethnic-religious metaphors and their political-social counterparts, namely, those on Exile (Banishment) and Diaspora." [translation provided by the author].

⁶ (Davidson, 1996); (Hickey, 2010); *San Diego, a Place to Explore: Syllabus; 3-6 May 1995; San Diego, California; The Canadian Atlas: Our Nation, Environment and People.*

Americas with thriving economies and establishing trade routes that linked the Americas to Europe and Southeast Asia, as well as the rest of the world.⁷

Sephardic Jews, most of them Portuguese, were already living in Dutch New Amsterdam (1609-1664), and later British New York City (1664-1776), prior to the 1654 arrival of their coreligionists hailing from northern Brazil. 1654 is thus the beginning of the Sephardic Diaspora within the Americas. Being expelled from or voluntarily choosing to leave Brazil—despite their loyalty to Portugal and assistance in defeating the Dutch who had occupied northern Brazil (1630-1654)—Sephardic Jews started migrating north and settling in the three *Guianas* (former Dutch Guiana, now Suriname, French Guiana, and British Guiana), the Caribbean islands, New Orleans, Savannah, Charleston, Newport, New Amsterdam, and Trois Rivières (Canada), to name the most important sites where they eventually settled and started a thriving trade network that lasted for more than two hundred years.

The first record of a Portuguese man on American soil dates back to 1634: Mathias de Sousa (d. 1642?), a Portuguese Creole living in Maryland.⁸ Also during the Colonial times, there are records of Portuguese settlers in Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, Massachusetts. Today, Martha's Vineyard boasts thriving Luso-American communities in Oak Bluffs, Tisbury, and Edgartown; whereas, according to the 2000 US Census, Nantucket's Luso-American population makes up 6.1% of its 10,172 total population. A famous Portuguese American was Peter Francisco (1760-1831), most likely hailing from the Azores, who played a key-role in the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783).⁹

In the mid decades of the 19th century, during the heyday of the whaling industry (1846-1852), Portuguese men, soon followed by their families, settled in the New England area. Azorean and Cape Verdeans were among the first Portuguese to arrive and settle. Mainland and Madeiran Portuguese eventually also settled in this area, as well as in the New York and New Jersey region, with a few immigrants settling as south as Maryland (Baltimore) and Virginia (e.g., Fort Belvoir, Gainesville, Manassas, and Virginia Beach).

Portuguese presence in California is linked to the Azorean Diaspora in the United States, with strong presence in Artesia, Bakersfield, Castro Valley, Chino, Fremont, Fresno, Santa Cruz, San Diego, and San Jose, among the many towns and cities that they chose to call home.

Yet, the great bulk of Portuguese immigrants came from the Azores where the whaling industry was already established by the second half of the 19th century. It was "a very significant activity for the economy of the islands, mainly on Pico and Faial."¹⁰ Cities like Providence, Bristol, and Pawtucket, in Rhode Island, and New Bedford, Tauton, and Fall River, in Southern Massachusetts, soon became the hometowns of many Portuguese immigrants and their descendants.

Given that at this time the archipelago of Cape Verde, alongside the other Portuguese colonies in Africa and Asia, was under Portuguese rule, Cape Verdean immigrants who also settled in this area counted as Portuguese citizens. One can imagine the double discrimination that the Cape Verdeans had to endure. From one side the hatred and discrimination of White America—after all, this was before the Civil Rights Movement (1954-1968)—from the other side, there was the discrimination and the ill-treatment of their fellow Portuguese compatriots who, for fear of being lumped together as "people of color," wanted to disassociate themselves from the Cape Verdeans to the eyes of White Americans. For them, it was a matter of safeguarding their

⁷ For additional information on the Sephardic presence in the Americas, please see: (Levi, 2009c); (Levi, 2009d); (Levi, 2009e); (Levi, 2008); (Levi, 2005a); (Levi, 2005b); (Levi, 2004a); (Levi, 2003a); (Levi, 2003b); (Levi, 2002); (Levi, 2003c). <<http://www.triplov.com/cictsul/exodus.html>>. [last accessed: June 22, 2016].

⁸ (Berlin, 1998); (Bogen, 2001).

⁹ (Hall, 1936); (Shaffer, 1976).

¹⁰ *History of Whaling*.

psychological identity in order to survive, adapt, and eventually assimilate to the American "melting pot" then in-the-making.¹¹

In other words, Portuguese and Luso-Americans at this time were afraid of being discriminated against by White Americans since the latter, due to their ignorance, prejudice, and bigotry, considered all Portuguese as being "dark," "colored," or just outright "Black." The separation of the two Portuguese-speaking groups was evident in the recreational and social clubs, as well as the churches and religious associations (Catholic as well as Protestant) that soon were formed to cater to a growing Cape Verdean population in the greater New England area. The need to separate the two Lusophone communities, and their descendants, was thus more a psychological reaction and "adaptation" to the new environment rather than an innate dislike for people of other ethnic and racial backgrounds. For example, the most common racial slur against all Portuguese speakers used by Whites was the word "Brava," from one of Cape Verde's islands, which for White Americans meant "black." Ironically, people from Brava are for the most part light-skinned, at times even lighter than some Europeans!¹² Sic!

III. Hispanics In The United States: Is There A Connection With The Portuguese?

Censuses provide the concepts, taxonomy, and substantive information by which a nation understands its component parts as well as the contours of the whole; censuses both create the image and provide the mirror of that image for a nation's self-reflection.¹³

Though Mexican and Cuban immigrants had been living in the United States before 1970, it was in 1970 that the United States Census Bureau created the term "Hispanic" to distinguish among these Spanish-speaking groups as well as other Spanish-speaking people who were then immigrating to the United States.

As of 1917, Puerto Ricans are United States citizens; hence, they did not any longer meet the criteria of, as they do not qualify now, as "immigrants."¹⁴ However, they were included in the 1970 United States Census since censuses are meant to collect data on the residents of a specific area, to apportion congressional districts, and to determine allocation of federal funding specifically designed for educational purposes. Knowing the ethnic composite of each district would thus help address the specific needs of the population in every neighborhood of the country.

Once the term "Hispanic" was created then, it was a matter of getting the word out and making sure that everyone—non-Spanish-speakers and Spanish-speakers alike—eventually knew what the word meant. In other words, Spanish-speakers had to "own" the term "Hispanic." They had to identify with it. They had to feel it their own. Spanish-speakers, who until this time (though not always) used amongst themselves the term "Latino," now had another word that defined them as a whole, or rather, that described and represented them as

¹¹ Though in existence since the last two decades of the 18th century, the term melting pot was popularized in 1908 thanks to Israel Zangwill's play *The Melting Pot*. (McDonald, 2007, 50), (Zangwill, 1969).

¹² Cape Verde is an archipelago composed of ten islands. Brava is one of the four Leeward Islands, the other ones being Fogo, Santiago, and Maio. The Portuguese discovered the archipelago in 1456 and found it uninhabited. European settlers were soon outnumbered by slaves from most West African kingdoms. Miscegenation gave rise to a new society, a Creole society that speaks Cape Verdean Creole languages. The word Creole comes from the Portuguese *Crioulo* (he/she who is being raised at home within a bilingual/bicultural environment), i.e., an offspring of a European (Portuguese) man and an indigenous woman, "raised" in both cultures. There are more than fifteen Portuguese-based Creoles spoken in the world, from Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau to Macau (China), Malacca (Malaysia), and Jakarta (Indonesia).

¹³ (Hochschild, and Powell, 2008, 59).

¹⁴ On March 7, 1917, President Thomas Woodrow Wilson (1913-1921) signed the *Jones Shafroth Act* thus making Puerto Rico a Territory and Puerto Ricans *de facto* United States citizens.

a collective group living in Anglophone United States. As mentioned above, the difficult task was to make "Latinos" feel comfortable with this new term and identify with it psychologically:

Then it was up to Spanish-language media to get the [Hispanic] word out. The network that would later become Univision released this series of ads calling on "Hispanics" to fill out the 1980 Census. The ads feature "Hispanic" sports stars and... Big Bird [...].¹⁵

As it can be imagined, the "Hispanic" population in the United States is very heterogeneous. Hence, there are different criteria to appreciate and define the racial and/or the ethnic identity—among the many psychological identities that the word Hispanic “implies” in the United States—of each "Hispanic" group or subgroup within the broader "Hispanic" category, particularly if we consider the human tendency of being mobile, especially in the United States, and of intermarrying with other races and ethnic groups.

As one would expect, there are "Latinos" who despise the term "Hispanic." They see it as disrespectful, something that was imposed upon them, and, most of all, they associate it psychologically with class segregation and racist ideologies imposed upon them by bigoted Anglophone Americans:

[...] the 'Hispanic' label fulfills primarily ideological and political functions. It cannot replace preexisting theoretical (social class and minority group) and descriptive (national origin and socioeconomic status) categories of analysis; its presence in scientific and popular discourse adds nothing to knowledge while it strengthens racist stereotypes.¹⁶

On the other hand, some other people associate the term "Hispanic" with political machinations (regardless of their political ideology), used subtly, or even blatantly for that matter, to advance their political agendas, with no real concern for the actual needs of the Hispanic communities and their overall welfare: “[...] it identifies neither an ethnic group nor a minority group. It is the temporary outcome of political struggles between the major parties to win elections [...].”¹⁷

Assimilation and loss of identity, either intentional or unconscious, among other phenomena, also contribute to the gradual blurring of the concept "Hispanic." But, after all, what does the term "Hispanic" mean? And, more importantly, are the Portuguese and the rest of the Lusophone people dispersed throughout the world, "Hispanic"? Are Luso-American "Hispanic"? Yet, before we address this question, we would have to define the word Hispanic.

IV. Origins of the Term Hispanic

The word Hispanic derives from the Latin HISPANICUS, which was created after the Latin word HISPANIA, in itself a calque from the Phoenician quadrilateral root HSPM (*Hispania*), which meant "land of hyraxes (rabbits)." Thus, borrowing from their predecessors, the Romans referred to the newly-conquered Iberian Peninsula (206 BCE-27 BCE, annexed 10 BCE) as HISPANIA and called its inhabitants HISPANI, or rather, "people from the Iberian Peninsula."

The term HISPANUS thus referred to all citizens of the Roman Empire who were born in the Iberian Peninsula, i.e., present-day Portugal and Spain. Later, between the year 0 and the 13th century of the Common

¹⁵ (Bishop, and Vargas, 2014).

¹⁶ (Giménez, 1989, 558).

¹⁷ (Giménez, 1989).

Era, particularly between the 4th and the 8th centuries, with the gradual transformation of Vulgar Latin into many languages and dialects, known as the Romance languages, the languages and dialects that hailed from the Iberian Peninsula were then known as Luso-Hispanic.¹⁸ Portuguese is one of these languages.

In Medieval Europe (5th-15th centuries of the Common Era), the term *Hispanus* was used with the same meaning, or rather, someone who is from the Iberian Peninsula, regardless of his or her origin. For example, Pope John XXI (1275-1277) was known as Petrus Hispanus since he was born in Lisbon.

With the Modern Era (1415-c. 1815), instead, a time in which the Iberian Crowns were ruling the entire world with their empires that embraced the entire planet, the term Hispano was used solely to refer to anything and anyone hailing from Spain and its empire, whereas the word *Luso*, short for *Lusitano* (Lusitanian) was used more and more to denote everything related to Portugal, the Portuguese territories overseas, the Portuguese language, and the Portuguese-speaking people as a whole, hence the neologism Lusophone, created and used during the period of Portuguese Discoveries and Expansion overseas (1400-1668) and, as we shall see below, repackaged during the dictatorial regime (1932-1968) of António Oliveira de Salazar (1889-1970).

Of mixed ancestry (Celtic and Iberian), the Lusitanians were the inhabitants of present-day Portugal at the time of the Roman invasion of the Iberian Peninsula (2nd BCE-5th c. CE), which, as mentioned above, the Romans called *HISPANIA*, i.e., "land of hyraxes (rabbits)," most likely a name given by Phoenician traders in the 13th century before the Common Era.

In European History, as well as in Philology/Linguistics, Hispanic means "something or someone that hails from the Iberian Peninsula," i.e., Portugal and/or Spain. This term should not be confused with what the word Hispanic came to mean in the United States, i.e., the coming together of native pre-Columbian peoples with Spaniards, or rather, people from or whose ancestors came from present-day Spain, not Portugal.

All Portuguese-speakers, and their descendants, regardless of their geographical provenience, call themselves Lusophone (*lusófonos* in Portuguese). Yet, due to political reasons—namely, Portuguese Colonialism (1415-1999) and, most importantly, the stern colonial rule (1932-1968) of António de Oliveira Salazar (1889-1970) and the Colonial Wars in Portuguese Africa and Asia (1961-1974)¹⁹—the term Lusophone has found some resistance among many people, in Portugal as well as in the rest of the Portuguese-speaking world. Since Brazil became independent in 1822, it never experienced the last phase of Portuguese colonial rule and the brutal consequences of Salazar's colonial regime. Moreover, Brazilians are proud of their "Brazilianness." Even though they are Lusophone, they consider themselves Brazilians who speak Brazilian Portuguese.

Nevertheless, things changed after the fall of the dictatorial regime in Portugal (April 25, 1974), the democratization of Portugal, and the subsequent independence of the former Portuguese colonies in Africa (1975). Macau was returned to China on December 20, 1999, thus becoming China's second Special Administrative Region. East Timor became independent on May 20, 2002, since on December 7, 1975, it was unilaterally annexed by Indonesia at a time when it was still negotiating independence from Portugal.

Globalization and the establishment of the CPLP²⁰ (*Comunidade dos Países de Língua Oficial Portuguesa*, Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries)—an international and intergovernmental organization founded in 1996 to foster cooperation among all Lusophone countries and with allied nations throughout the world—contributed to an overall acceptance and usage of the term Lusophone.

¹⁸ The major Luso-Hispanic languages and dialects are: Galician, Portuguese, Mirandese, Asturian, Leonese, Aragonese, Castilian Spanish, Catalan, Mozarabic languages and dialects, Ladino Portuguese, and Ladino Spanish.

¹⁹ On July 31, 1961, the fort of São João Baptista de Ajudá was annexed by Benin (then known as Dahomey). On December 18-19, 1961, Portuguese India (1501-1961) was annexed by India.

²⁰ CPLP. <<http://www.cplp.org/id-2595.aspx>>. [last accessed: June 22, 2016].

Unfortunately, though, up until recently (roughly until the end of the 20th century), the Portuguese communities in the United States did not use the term or were totally unaware of its existence altogether. We should not forget that the Portuguese immigrants—like most immigrants who came to the United States before and after the Great Depression (1929-1933)—did not hail from a privileged social class. In fact, some of them were illiterate in Portuguese. Hence, they did not possess the linguistic tools that would have enabled them to serve as linguistic and cultural role models for their offspring. Lately, namely during the first decade of the 21st century, due to the influence of the Media and Academia—as in the case of prominent Luso-American celebrities and writers—Portuguese Americans began to use the term "Luso-American" more and more and with pride.²¹ In other words, they appropriated it and used it with a self of belonging, even if they do not speak Portuguese any longer or if they speak Portuguese as a Second or Third Language.

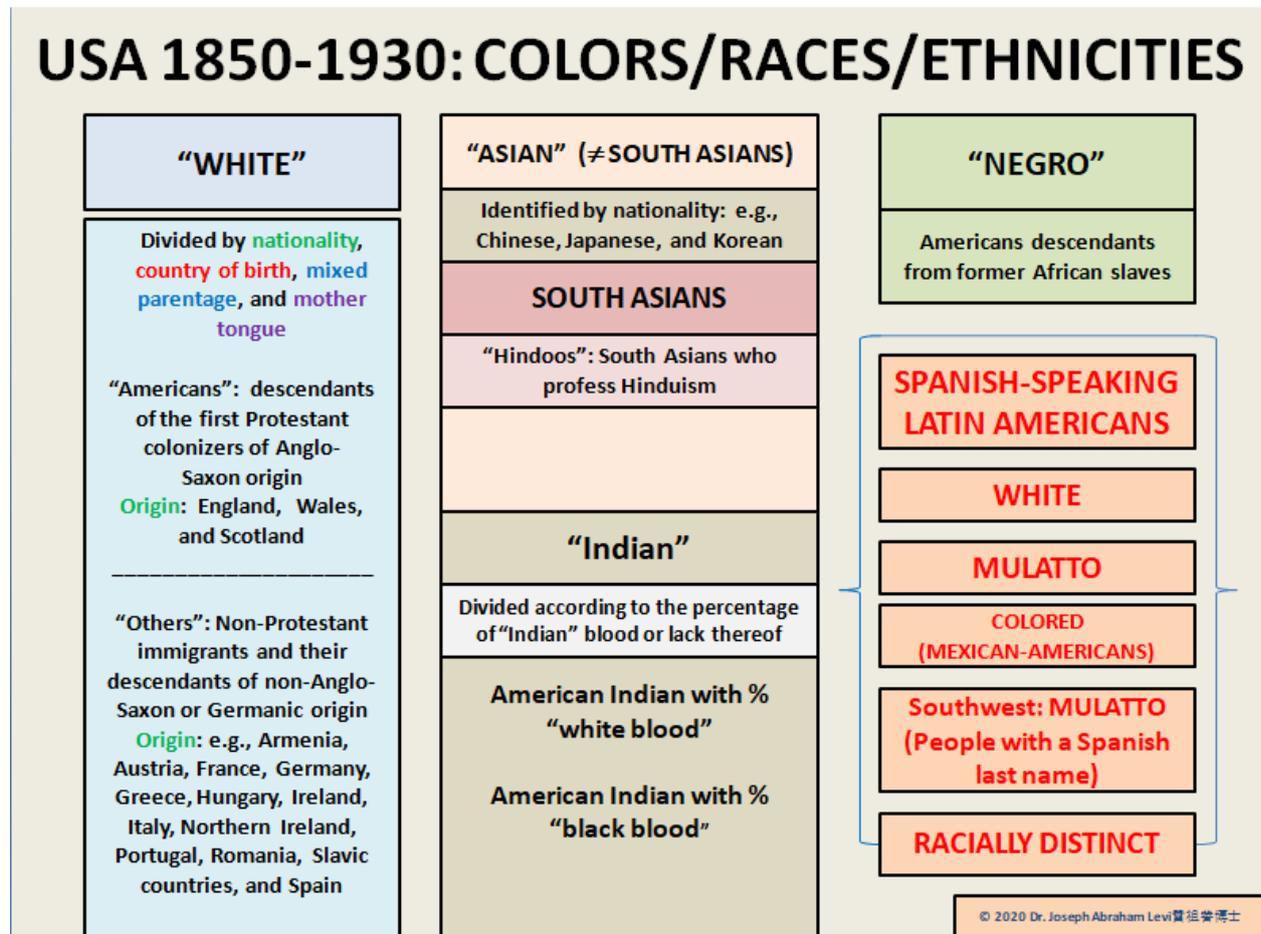
V. Hispanics and the United States Census Bureau

Between 1850 and 1930, demographic upheaval in the United States was connected to reorganization of the racial order. Socially and politically recognized boundaries between groups shifted, new groups emerged, others disappeared, and notions of who belonged in which category changed. All recognized racial groups—blacks, whites, Indians, Asians, Mexicans and others—were affected.²²

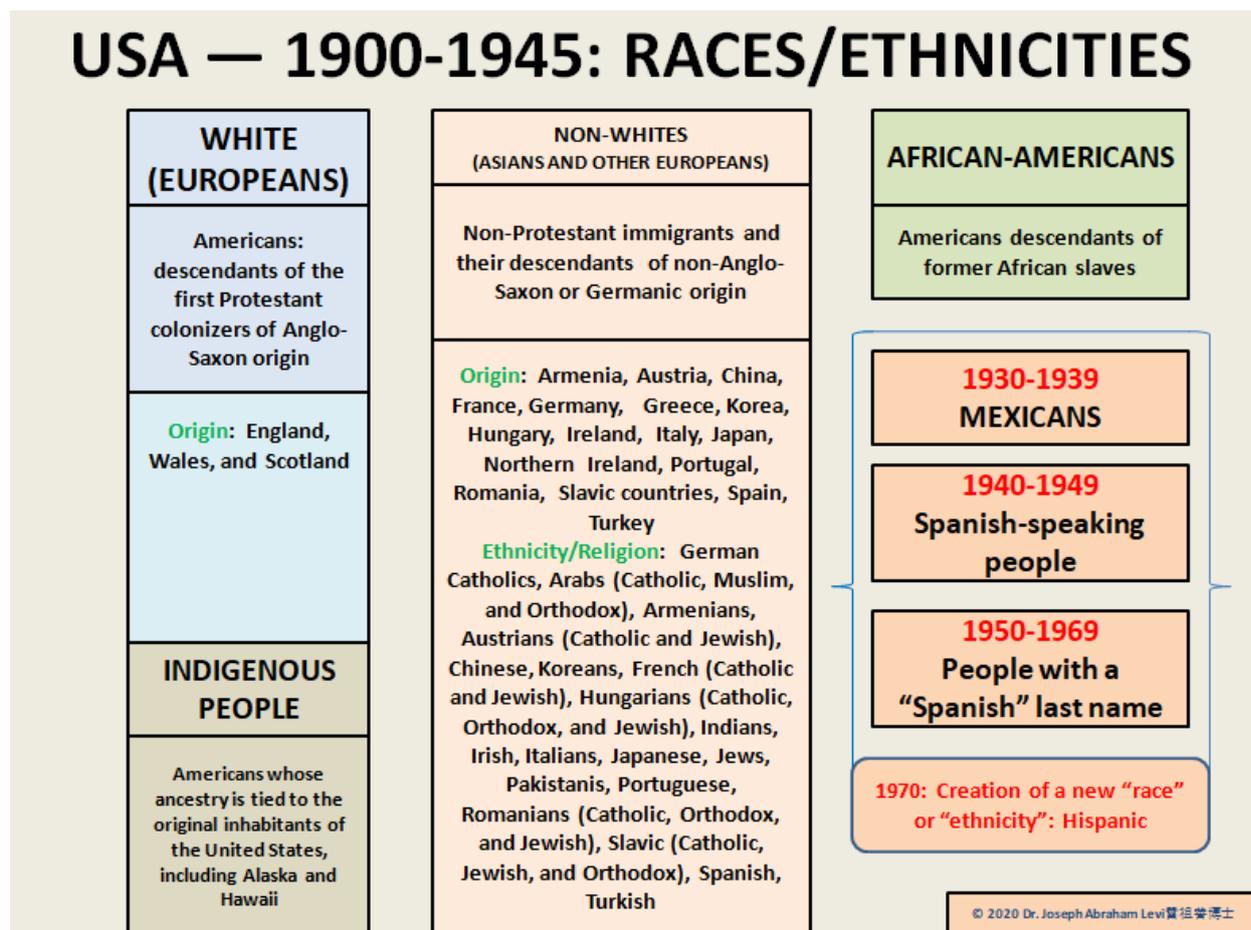
As we have seen above, the word Hispanic was born out of the necessity "imposed" by the 1970 Census. But how were "Hispanics" called by the United States Government before 1970? And how about the other ethnic and racial groups living in the United States before 1970?

²¹ Prominent Luso-Americans in the Media and in the Arts are: Keanu Reeves (1964-), Shiloh Thomas Fernandez (1985-), Tom Hanks (1956-), Emeril Lagasse (1959-), Vanessa Marcil (1968-), Meredith Vieira (1953-), Emma Lazarus (1849-1887), John dos Passos (1896-1970), John Philip Sousa (1854-1932), Daniel Steel (1947-), and Katherine Vaz (1955-).

²² (Hochschild, Powell, 59).



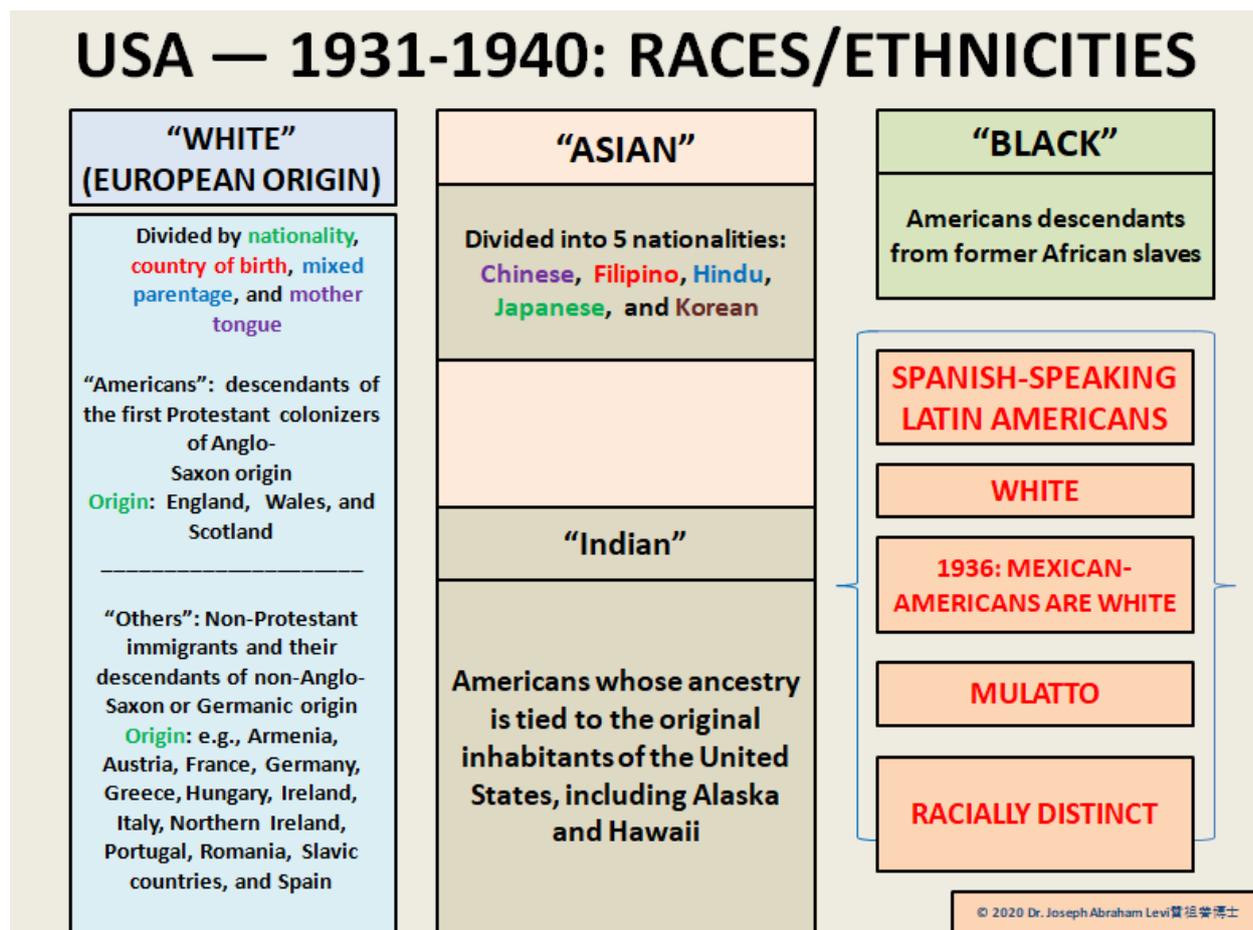
The chart above clearly shows that from before the end of the American Civil War (1861-1865) to right after the Great Depression (1929-1933), ethnic and racial groups in the United States were divided into four major "races," namely: "White," "Asian," "Negro," and "Indian." The "Asian" category did not include South Asians who formed the "Hindoos" (sic!) subgroup. In other words, there was a need to categorize South Asians who professed Hinduism. As for the "Indian" category, it embraced all peoples who traced their ancestry to the Native Population of the United States. However, this category was further divided according to the percentage of "Indian" blood, or lack thereof, and if the percentage of the non-Indian blood was "White" or "Negro." The "Negro" (sic!) race encompassed the descendants of the Africans who were brought over to the United States as slaves. The "White" race, instead, covered all Americans who claimed ancestry to the early European settlers and immigrants, those of Anglo-Saxon origin being the most privileged class.



In fact, though in theory all Europeans were "White," there were cases in which Irish, Central and Eastern Europeans (German-, Romanian-, and Slavic-speaking people), and Southern Europeans (Portuguese, Spanish, Italians, and Greek) were considered and treated as "non-whites." An often-perceived dark(er) skin color and religious differences were frequently at the base of blatant discrimination and xenophobia, not only towards the foreign born, but also towards the first-generation born in the United States. This was the case of the Greek, Irish, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish immigrants. This would also explain why the first generation of immigrants hailing from these areas in Europe chose not to transmit to their children the language and mores of their parents and grandparents. There was a general sense of shame and, most of all, there was psychological fear that their children would suffer discrimination for not being "fully" American/Americanized and part of the melting pot.

Spanish-speaking Latin Americans, instead, were divided according to their race and ethnicity, e.g.: "white," "mulatto," and "racially distinct." On the other hand, Mexican-Americans had their own category, i.e., "colored." As we can imagine, this caused a major uproar within Mexican-American communities around the country who felt disfranchised and discriminated against. Amidst this controversy, the 1940 Census eventually dropped such nomenclature.

Additionally, in the American Southwest the word "mulatto" referred to people with a Spanish last name. In other words, their surname automatically meant that they were racially and/or ethnically "mixed." Being descendants of Spaniards and the pre-Columbian native population somehow set them apart from the rest of the local residents, or rather, it was thought that being the result of this particular miscegenation warranted the creation of a different racial/ethnic category. Hence, in a sense, Southwesterners were the precursors of the nomenclature "Hispanic," created by the United States Census Bureau in 1970.



From a few years before World War II (1939-1945) to 1940, ethnic and racial groups in the United States were clustered into three major "racial" groups, namely: "White," "Asian," and "Black." The "White" cluster was further divided according to nationality, country of origin, mixed parentage, and mother tongue. The "Asian" group, instead, had only five nationalities, or rather, "Chinese," "Filipino," "Hindu" (sic!), "Japanese," and "Korean." Finally, the "Indian" grouping lost all the nuances of percentage of Native American blood since—due to the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act—the latter was determined by the local tribes.²³

The Spanish-speaking Latin American category, instead, remained the same except for the "Mexican American" subdivision. In the wake of the 1930 Census, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC),²⁴ Mexican-Americans, particularly in the American Southwest, and representatives from the Mexican Government in the United States—i.e., His Excellency Manuel C. Téllez, Ambassador of Mexico to the United States (1925-1931), and the Consul-General of Mexico in New York City—all joined forces to protest against the 1930 Census classification of Mexican-Americans as "colored," or rather, as "non-white."²⁵ After a few years of "negotiations," on October 15, 1936, the director of the United States Census Bureau, William Lane Austin (term: 1933-1941), finally put an end to the controversy by declaring Mexican-Americans "White":

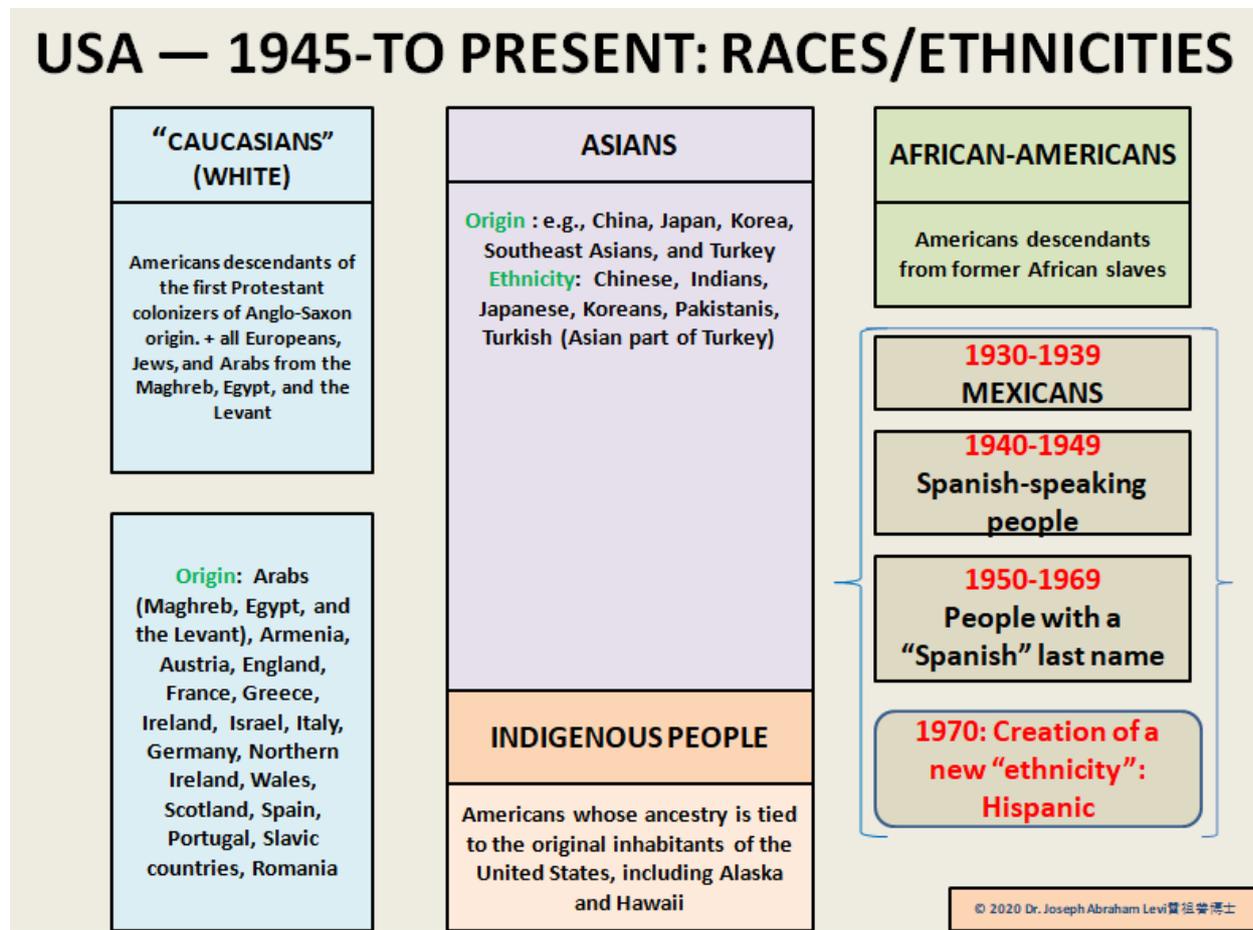
The text and the tables [...] must state definitively that the classification 'White' includes Mexicans. [...] Mexicans are Whites and must be classified as 'White'. This order does not admit of any further discussion,

²³ U.S. Bureau of the Census. (1937). *Indian Population 1930*, 1, 70.

²⁴ (Schor, 2005, 99).

²⁵ (Siegel, and Passel, 1979), p. 7.

and must be followed to the letter. Please acknowledge in writing receipt of this memorandum.²⁶



With the end of the World War II (1939-1945), United States censuses adapt to the changes in American society. Hence, "Blacks" are eventually called "African Americans" and "Indians" are now labeled "Indigenous People" or "Native Americans." We already have seen the controversy of the Spanish-speaking population in the United States. It took four decades to go from "Colored" to "Hispanic." Perceived "skin color," "race," and "ethnicity," coupled with the centuries-old bigotry and fear of the "other" were obfuscating the minds of Americans, particularly those in power, most of them of Anglo-Saxon and/or Central/Eastern European origin. But the time had come for a change. Reproduced below is the definition of the United States Census Bureau of people of Hispanic Origin. Interestingly enough, the term embraces culture, nationality group, country of birth of the person or of his/her ancestors. Race is not included. And, as we can see, there is no mention of Portuguese, Portugal, the Portuguese language, and/or of the Lusophone world:

VI. Hispanic Origin Main

People who identify with the terms "Hispanic" or "Latino" are those who classify themselves in one of the specific Hispanic or Latino categories listed on the decennial census questionnaire and various Census Bureau survey questionnaires – "Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano" or "Puerto Rican" or "Cuban" – as well as those who indicate that they are "another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin." Origin can be viewed as the heritage,

²⁶ (Schor, 2005): pp. 99-100.

nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person's ancestors before their arrival in the United States. People who identify their origin as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish may be of any race.²⁷

Are the Portuguese in the United States Hispanic?

The Office of Affirmative Action at Rhode Island College reproduced verbatim the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's definitions for various racial and ethnic identities. Here is what it says about the Hispanic group, please note the mention to Portugal and Brazil:

Hispanic

All persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. Only those persons of Central or South American countries who are of Spanish origin, descent or culture should be included in this classification. (Persons from Brazil, Guyana, Surinam or Trinidad, for example, would be classified according to their race and would not necessarily be included in the Hispanic classification. In addition, this classification does not include persons from Portugal who should be classified according to race).²⁸

As we can see, Portugal, Brazil, and all other Lusophone countries and areas of the world are not part of the Hispanic equation and Lusophone people "should be classified according to race." This means that a Luso-American should choose "Caucasian" or "White" if he or she has family, genetic, cultural, and/or emotional ties with Portugal and the Portuguese people; whereas a Luso-American who has family, genetic, cultural, and/or emotional ties with another Lusophone country or area of the world, should choose the race or ethnic groups that best describes him or her. The same would apply to a Brazilian, Cape Verdean, Angolan, and Macanese living in the United States.

A quick survey of recent and not-so recent Internet posts on whether Portuguese, Brazilian, and all Lusophone people—including their descendants who do not speak Portuguese any longer but who maintain some emotional and psychological ties to their ancestral culture—are or should be considered Hispanic will show us that the debate is very controversial. Barring the obvious ignorant and arrogant claims that all Lusophone people are Hispanic, what is the position of the United States Census Bureau on this issue?

In February 2013, in preparation for the 2020 National Census, the United States Census announced that it was planning to add Portuguese to its Hispanic designation of ethnicity since the Department of Transportation does already include Portuguese-speaking people in their definition of Hispanic Americans:

Hispanic Americans - which includes persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican, Central or South American, or others Spanish or Portuguese culture or origin, regardless of race.²⁹

Apparently, the SBA (U.S. Small Business Administration) follows the Department of Transportation's definition of Hispanic American. Hence, also this definition includes Portugal and, by way of the generic

²⁷ US Census. Population. Hispanic. <<http://www.census.gov/population/hispanic/>>. [last accessed: June 1, 2016].

²⁸ "Race/Ethnicity Definitions." *Rhode Island College*. <<https://www.ric.edu/affirmativeaction/raceDefinitions.php>>. [last accessed: June 22, 2016].

²⁹ "What is a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)?" *Getting a Better Understanding of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBW) Program. Office of Civil Rights. Frequently Asked Questions. Department of Transportation*. <<https://web.archive.org/web/20100109165512/http://www.fhwa.dot.gov:80/civilrights/faq.htm#q2>>. [last accessed: June 22, 2016].

category of "South America," Brazil, though not explicitly. Interestingly enough, there is no mention of the other Lusophone countries and areas of the world:

Hispanic American

SBA has defined "Hispanic American" as an individual whose ancestry and culture are rooted in South America, Central America, Mexico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, or the Iberian Peninsula, including Spain and Portugal.³⁰

As it can be imagined, the uproar among all Lusophone communities in the United States, including their descendants, was one that demanded attention and action. PALCUS (the Portuguese-American Leadership Council of the United States), is a non-profit organization that advocates for the interests of Portuguese-Americans in the United States. In 2013, PALCUS conducted a national survey among Lusophone people and their descendants to see what they thought about the United States Census Bureau's proposal of including Portuguese to the Hispanic category:

The US Census Bureau is planning to add Portuguese to the Hispanic designation of ethnicity for the 2020 National Census. As there has been much debate about whether or not Portuguese should be considered Hispanic, PALCUS is conducting national survey to gauge the overall sentiment of the Portuguese-American community on this issue.³¹

Also in this case, the results were clear: Lusophone people and their descendants are not Hispanic; their (ancestral) language is not Spanish; their traditions do not hail from Spanish-speaking countries or areas of the world; their ethnicity is not tied to a Spanish-speaking country or area of the world. Eventually, the United States Census Bureau decided against the inclusion of Portuguese in the Hispanic category (at least) for the 2020 Census:

Responding to a request for information concerning the attitudes of Portuguese Americans towards the possibility that the Portuguese American population might be counted in Census 2020 under the "Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin" category, PALCUS undertook a survey to gauge the sentiment of its constituents and others. The analysis of results, obtained from 6,051 complete responses to the survey, makes it possible to provide some answers. The data collected in this survey show that Portuguese Americans who responded overwhelmingly prefer to continue to integrate into American society as a white population of European descent rather than as part of the Hispanic/Latino minority population. Of the 6,051 respondents, 87.2 percent indicated that they are NonHispanic. This sentiment is pervasive among Portuguese American respondents of all adult ages and generations in the United States, but it is somewhat lower among biracial and multiracial Portuguese Americans, with only 73.2 percent not

³⁰ SBA. United States Small Business Administration. (03/06/2014). "What are the Eligibility Requirements of the 8(a) Business Development Program?" *SBA U.S. Small Business Administration*, p. 61. <<https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/files/Helpful%20Tips%20to%20apply%20to%20the%208%28a%29%20Business%20Development%20Program%20PowerPoint%20Presentation%20-%202003%2006%2014.pdf>>. [last accessed: June 22, 2016].

³¹ The Portuguese Circle. "Are Portuguese Hispanic? [Survey]." <<http://www.portuguesecircle.com/news/192-are-portuguese-hispanic-survey>>. [last accessed: June 22, 2016].

identifying themselves as Latino/Hispanic. If Portuguese were added to the Hispanic/Latino Census classification in 2020, 74 percent of all respondents specified that they would continue to indicate that they did not belong to this category [...].³²

VII. Psychological Identities at Work: Negotiating Luso-American Identity Markers

Linguists have long recognized the centrality of language to the demarcation of communal boundaries. [...] Language often functions as a "common code" and fosters group solidarity and group identification. In a multicultural or multidialectal environment, language has the power to open and close membership to an ethnic group. Recent sociological and anthropological studies have affirmed the primacy of language in interactions that test the boundaries of ethnic belonging.³³

In the United States, as elsewhere in the Portuguese Diaspora, the multilayered and very divisive ethnic and racial identities of Portuguese immigrants from the Azores, Madeira, and the Mainland transformed themselves into a collective and unified national and psychological identity when Portuguese immigrants and their descendants—particularly the first generation born in the United States—ultimately had to protect personal or communal interests or those of the new country.

In other words, ethnicity, race, and language are all intertwined when it comes to identify a group of people, even if their descendants do not any longer speak the language of their forefathers as their mother tongue. There is now in place a new sense of identity and belonging, one where race and ethnicity play a key role in defining and self-identifying themselves, with pride in their roots. There is a strong desire to maintain their ties with an often-imagined or perhaps idealized past.

It was exactly in this "new land" where "everyone is American" that a new Portuguese identity was born or reborn, if you will. Luso-Americans had to embrace it, as they eventually did, and accept it with pride. Among Luso-Americans, Portuguese identity is thus psychologically preserved through maintaining one's own ethnic identity within the broader American identity which Luso-Americans accept and recognize as their own, yet devoid of the socio-cultural components that in a way can hinder their unique "Portuguese" identity.

Hence, it is very common to see second-, third-, and even fourth-generation Luso-Americans attend and be active members of Portuguese social clubs—alongside Portuguese immigrants and first-generation Luso-Americans, the latter holding a high-degree of understanding of the Portuguese language, at least passively—even if they do not master the Portuguese language well or, as often it is the case, they do not speak Portuguese at all. This is because it usually takes three generations to completely be assimilated to the host country, thus losing most or all linguistic abilities to speak the ancestral language. As Joshua Fishman has superbly asserted:

[...] the first generation speaks the ethnic language at home, the second generation speaks the ethnic language at home but the dominant the dominant language in public, and the third generation speaks the dominant language both at home and in public.³⁴

³² (Scott, 2013): p. 22. <<http://files.ctctcdn.com/68a0a5b9001/e75321cc-23ae-4de6-a5f6-ba585fca91dc.pdf>>. [last accessed: June 22, 2016].

³³ (Ben-Ur, 2009): p., 151.

³⁴ (Fishman, 1965): pp. 143-155, paraphrased in (Zhou, and Li, 2008): p. 163.

This phenomenon goes across board and covers all *diasporic* ethnic and racial communities around the world. Economic, political, and social factors contribute to this change, since they are seen as a means to achieving status and power, as to counterbalance all forms of prejudice and overt/covert discrimination towards the "other," i.e., the immigrant who is not (fully) assimilated to mainstream America—the (in)famous “melting pot”.

In the past, until the mid 1970s, no Lusophone immigrant (e.g., Portuguese and Cape Verdean) wished that his or her children had to endure what he or she had to suffer in the United States: outright discrimination for being "different," for not speaking English well, or for speaking it with an "accent." The choice of not transmitting to their children their native Portuguese language and some aspects of their ancestral culture was seen as positive since, by being (predominantly) monolingual and *monocultural* their children would not have a "liability" or a "language handicap."³⁵ In other words: “The U.S. history of immigrant adaptation has shown a consistent trend of language shift from the ethnic to the dominant language intergenerationally.”³⁶ By the mid and late 1970s, and this is applicable to all immigrant communities in the United States, things began to change. From the "melting pot," whereby all had to assimilate to one culture, i.e., the American way of life, immigrant communities realized that there was nothing wrong to cherish their roots, and that included (re)learning the language(s) of their grandparents and be reacquainted with their cultural traditions. In other words, the famous "melting pot" was more and more looking like a "salad bowl,"³⁷ whereby all Americans—no matter their ethnic, racial, and linguistic background—as separate individuals, with distinct and cherished backgrounds, have indeed contributed to making America great and unique. The ethnic languages are thus a plus, not a minus, and in no way are they competing with English. In other words, "ethnic languages [do not compete] with English acquisition;" on the contrary, they contribute "rather than [inhibit] successful adaptation." They thus "constitute assets, or advantages."³⁸

Perhaps the only partial exception is the complex case of the "Hispanic" communities. Though sharing with the other ethnic and racial groups in America the same feature mentioned above, or rather, that by the third generation the language of their grandparents is lost, thus having only some knowledge of their ancestral culture, Hispanics in the United States have the benefit of being constantly exposed to a variant of the Spanish language and some aspects of the Spanish-speaking culture(s), though not necessarily the one from which their ancestors originated. The role of Hispanic Media in the United States has been fundamental in maintaining the Spanish language and the cultures associated with Spanish-speaking countries.

Indeed, ever since the early 1980s, Spanish-language television channels have been a constant in Hispanic families, even if they did not master Spanish well. Additionally, and more importantly, the large number of immigrants hailing from quite a few Spanish-speaking countries, at a constant wave of (im)migration, also contributed to this regular exposure to the Spanish language and Hispanic traditions. In other words, immigrations were still on-going and there was constant contact between immigrants and their families back in their homeland(s).

The new generations of Hispanics born in the United States are thus in a better position vis-à-vis their counterparts whose ancestors hailed from other parts of the world and who do not have the assistance from the Media in the United States of reinforcing their presence through language and cultural references or who did not have contact with their original homeland(s). Portuguese immigration stopped in the early 1920s, only to resume in the 1950s and then die out in the 1970s:

³⁵ (Zhou, and Li, 2008): p. 164.

³⁶ (Zhou, and Li, 2008): p. 163.

³⁷ I owe this expression to my former student, Ms. Dulcília Benrós. (Benrós, 2012).

³⁸ (Zhou, and LI, 2008): p. 164.

With the enactment of new immigration legislation in 1921, new arrivals dropped tremendously, picking up again in the 1950s after earthquakes devastated the Azorean island of Faial. The immigrants came largely from the Azores, but also from Cape Verde and Madeira, later from mainland Portugal and occasionally from other parts of the Portuguese empire, including Macau.³⁹

Though the local Media in Portuguese is available twenty-four seven—as in the case of local radio and television stations broadcasting in Portuguese, as well as Portuguese television stations broadcasted via cable television (i.e., *RTP Internacional*, *SIC Notícias*, *SIC*, and *TVI Internacional*)—it never had a unifying impact on the generations of Luso-Americans born in the United States. The only exception is soccer, since knowing the Portuguese language is not a requirement for following a game and routing for one's favorite team.⁴⁰

Not speaking Portuguese was and is the main obstacle then. Hence, being psychologically alienated from their ancestral homeland, just because they are not able to comprehend the language, Portuguese-Americans are thus left with the option of joining local Portuguese groups that do not require the use of the Portuguese language.

In fact, sports, religious groups (Catholic as well as Protestant), and associations tied to a specific city or area back in Portugal (like the *Casa dos Açores*, the *Associação Amigos da Terceira*, and the *Casa do Minho*) are frequently attended by second-, third-, or fourth-generation Portuguese-Americans who do not speak Portuguese; yet, they feel a strong tie to the culture and traditions of their ancestors. Gastronomic and social events, soccer, and religion (primarily Catholicism), are among the main reasons why Luso-Americans maintain their ties to Portugal and Portuguese culture:

Immigrants and their communities often consciously work to maintain their ethnic languages in the second generation as the basis for carrying on their cultural heritages. [...] neighborhoods and schools [and] the immediate social environment [...]. For many immigrants, this environment is ethnically specific, manifested in observable neighborhood-based ethnic institutions and interpersonal relations among those who interact in them.⁴¹

The *Ranchos Folclóricos* (Group of Folk Dances) are a great way for Luso-Americans who do not speak Portuguese to explore their roots and learn some Portuguese as they try to psychologically negotiate their ties with all that is Portuguese, their ethnic identities, and reconnect to their lost or never-transmitted and learned past.

Religion played and still plays a great part for most Portuguese immigrants in the United States, as well as elsewhere in the Portuguese Diaspora. Though there are Portuguese immigrants who are Protestant, most of these immigrants, and their descendants, are Catholic.⁴² As one can imagine, there are hundreds of religious

³⁹ "The Portuguese in the United States." (July 15, 2010). Hispanic Division. Library of Congress. <<https://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/portam/>>. [last accessed: June 22, 2016].

⁴⁰ There are many sports clubs dispersed throughout the Portuguese-speaking Diaspora, as the *Sporting Clube de Portugal*, the *Clube Sport Lisboa e Benfica*, and the *Futebol Clube do Porto*, after the most popular Portuguese soccer teams.

⁴¹ (Zhou, and Li, 2008): p. 164. These authors drew their views from: (Fishman, 1980): pp. 629-638.

⁴² For information on Lusophone Protestant communities, and their descendants, in New England, please see: (Levi, (2007a); (Levi, 2007b) (Levi, 2007c); (Levi, 2007d); (Levi, 2007e); (Levi, 2007e).

associations, (mostly Catholic, with the occasional Protestant houses of worship and associations), divided by place of origin in Portugal, to which many Luso-Americans proudly participate.

Even though assimilation has been a constant in the loss of their Portuguese identity—for lack of interest, shame, intermarriage with other religious, ethnic, and/or racial groups, or perhaps for fear of being rejected by mainstream Americans (especially among first-generation Portuguese-Americans)—a Luso-American cultural "conscience" is now a coefficient in the life of many Portuguese-Americans, one that is encouraging them to discover their roots and negotiate some, if not all, of the cultural aspects that make them proud of being Americans of Portuguese descent.

Luso-Americans define this well-succeeded psychological and physical adjustment to their adopted country as a moral victory, particularly in light of the many opportunities available to the new generations born in the Diaspora. There is a well-deserved sense of personal and ethnic pride, as well as an overall sentiment of communal and community accomplishment. It is, after all, their Portuguese-American legacy. In the words of a famous Macanese author of the Diaspora in the United States, Felipe B. Nery (1920-2011): "[...] in our settlements we have gained a moral victory for we are giving our children a better chance to succeed with a higher standard of living and a better education."⁴³

Like all ethnic literatures in Anglophone United States and Canada, Luso-American literature falls within the parameters of hyphenated literature, whereby its authors, in this case the works of Portuguese-American writers, portray more and better American society than the Portuguese culture of their ancestors. Nevertheless, Luso-American literature embraces many worlds, many realities, and many mentalities. As first-, second-, or even third-generation Portuguese-Americans, authors who claim even partial Portuguese ancestry can contribute with valuable information on the Portuguese culture. These are precious details because they are exclusive and only known to those who have lived them in the first person or experienced them through family recollections.

Conclusions

[...] ethnicity is viewed as a primordial 'given', assigned by birth or ancestry and therefore immutable. This concept of ethnicity fails to convey either the dynamic nature of identity or migration as an ongoing and creative process. Moreover, the manner in which migrants are received within the host society has a direct influence on their ethnic identity [...].⁴⁴

Luso-American ethnic identity, like any other hyphenated ethnicity in the United States, was not transmitted to the next generation automatically or consciously. Instead, it developed on its own as a conscious, psychological, and collective response in the new country, in this case, the United States. In other words, one's ancestry does not automatically give the new generation automatic access to, acceptance, and/or refusal of their ethnic identity. Luso-Americans have to negotiate their ethnic identity. They have to leverage its meaning and sense of belonging, even if they do not any longer speak Portuguese.

The Luso-American communities, though never forsaking their roots, soon adapted themselves well to the new environment in which they were placed or raised, as in the case of the new generations born in the United States, thus contributing to the overall welfare of their new adopted country.

⁴³ (Nery, 2003, i, private translation of: José Pedro Castanheira, 2000).

⁴⁴ (Carvalho, 2003, xvii).

Things were not always that perfect, though. There was a time in which the Portuguese immigrants, because of their place of birth, "ethnicity," and "race" (sic!), had to endure many obstacles prior to finally entering, upon entering, and/or while in the United States.

Prejudice and outright discrimination against their "ethnic" and perceived "racial" background (sic!), then, were the cause of many Portuguese suffering once in the United States, thus their determination in seeing that their children, or rather, the new generation born in the United States, did not endure the same hardships. This would explain the choice of not teaching their offspring Portuguese and some Portuguese traditions, so that they could be one hundred percent assimilated to the new culture.

Insults, derogatory ethnic/racial epithets, and stereotypes⁴⁵ were very damaging to the psychological identity and self-esteem of many vibrant communities of Portuguese immigrants and their descendants living in the New England area, the New York/New Jersey region, California, and Hawaii. Unfortunately, the same can be said of other ethnic, racial, and/or religious communities in the United States.

Bigotry, a feeling of racial superiority, and pure ignorance are at the base of this immoral behavior towards other human beings living in their midst. How can one heal psychologically from these scars? The damages are deep and everlasting. The feelings of insecurity, inferiority, and low self-esteem will linger forever. Though the new generations have overcome most, if not all, of these handicaps, there is always something that lingers in the bank of the minds of Luso-Americans. It is the feeling of making it, of having a successful life, and proving to White Anglo-Saxon Protestants that they too have a right to be in the United States. They too contribute to making America great.

Like other ethnic groups in the United States, Portuguese-Americans have come to grips with their past and redefined their status and place in their new homeland (after all, it is the only country they know fully and that they can truly call "home"): they are simply Americans, proud Americans, contributing with their skills to the overall welfare of their country; yet, like any other racial and/or ethnic group, they are also proud of their Portuguese roots, their ancestors, and of their language, even if Portuguese is not their native tongue any longer.

Portuguese-American communities in the United States have found a way to use their distinct heritage in order to assert themselves as a unique and valuable component of American society. In other words, there is a distinct sense of becoming, one that has survived two, three, and four generations of adversities and outright discrimination.

Despite the psychological warfare that wanted and still wants to annihilate or at least blur into the oblivion their Portuguese "ethnic garden," thus forcing them into a more "generic" and "official Hispanic label," first-, second-, and third-generation Luso-Americans have successfully demonstrated their desire to maintain their distinct racial, ethnic, and linguistic uniqueness in a country that, in theory, and ironically, welcomes diversity and individual contributions to the "salad bowl." Luso-Americans have thus proven that no one has the right to impose an identity, if the latter is not historically accurate as well as, and more importantly, is not accepted by those who will be affected by it.

⁴⁵ E.g.: "Pork and Cheese," "Pork Chop," "Portugoose," "Portuguee," "Greenhorn," "Fish," "Manny," "Portawop," and "Tuna." The racial slurs "Portuguee" and "Greenhorn" usually refer to Azorean immigrants and their descendants. These slurs are very offensive, since they connote the idea of someone being stupid and backward. The word "Fish," instead, is a reference to *bacalhau* (codfish), a major staple food of Portuguese cuisine. "Manny," on the other hand, is short for Manuel, a typical Portuguese name. "Portawop" is a very offensive term denoting a person of mixed ethnicity (Portuguese and Italian), particularly in the New England area and the New York/New Jersey region. "Tuna" is mainly used in the San Diego area since, in the past, most Portuguese men worked as fishermen.

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