



The Global History of Portugal

From Prehistory to the Modern World





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most famous satirical novels of the time, written in around 1916. In addition to King Charles' assassination – the assassination of the Crown Prince was omitted – the opening pages include references to the assassination of the Empress Sissi of Austria-Hungary ten years earlier. The memory of the political violence of this era was reproduced in numerous ways: the Portuguese case was no exception.

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1910

The Republican Revolution

The most important event in Portugal in 1910 was the downfall of a monarchy that had existed for over seven hundred years and its replacement by a regime – the Republic – of a kind that was still a rarity in the continent. At the time, Europe was composed of four empires, eleven monarchies and only two republics.

Despite material progress and the sociopolitical consolidation of liberalism under the nineteenth-century monarchy, when the Republican revolution triumphed in Lisbon on 5 October 1910 Portugal was largely a poor, rural and illiterate country. In the globalizing context of the *Belle Époque*, defined by the acceleration of industrialization, social massification and political pressure for democratization, the country was backward, lagging behind the Anglo-Germanic driving force in Europe and the French, Belgian, Dutch, Swiss and Nordic economies and societies; it was on a level with Spain or southern Italy, only ranking higher than the Slavic and Balkan autocracies of the East.

A small, peripheral country in the old continent, Portugal compensated for its inferior status by the fact that it possessed a vast colonial empire amounting to two million square kilometres, twenty times larger than the metropole, divided by three ocean coastlines that were very distant from each other. It was this empire – in the process of being restructured at the time, albeit hampered by a lack of resources and the territorial ambitions of its neighbours – together with the fact that its constitutional monarchy had European-style laws and institutions which ensured Lisbon remained aligned with the other major capitals, sharing their cosmopolitan fashions, values and expectations within an increasingly competitive international environment defined by new diplomatic alliances and tensions that would result in the Great War of 1914–1918.



Studying the establishment of the Republic in Portugal entails, from the outset, recognizing that it emerged within a European and world context which, in the early years of the twentieth century, witnessed a resurgence of revolutionary ideas and violence on an international level: there was an attempted revolution in Russia in 1905, the Persian Revolution in 1906, the rebellion of the “Young Turks” in 1908, the Greek military coup and the Tragic Week in Barcelona in 1909; insurrections in Mexico and the fall of the Chinese empire in 1910–1911 and, finally, the Balkan War of 1912–1913. Even in countries which did not experience such dramatic events, social and political upheavals intensified: urban uprisings and strikes, government instability, political radicalism and institutional challenges were evident in Berlin, London, Madrid, Paris and Vienna. The regicide of King Charles in 1908 may have given Portugal a bad reputation, but the wave of assassinations of high-ranking dignitaries was transnational, claiming the lives of the American president William McKinley in 1901, King Umberto of Italy and King Alexander of Serbia in 1900 and 1903 respectively, and the Empress Elizabeth of Austria in 1898. In 1906, King Alfonso XIII of Spain barely escaped an assassination attempt.

The most important event in Portugal in 1910 was the downfall of a monarchy that had existed for over seven hundred years and its replacement by a regime – the Republic – of a kind that was still a rarity in the continent. At the time, Europe was composed of four empires, eleven monarchies and only two republics, namely the French, which had been in existence since 1870, and the Swiss, based on a system of cantons that dated back to the Middle Ages. Republicanism was primarily an American model, which would triumph in China in 1911 but only arrive in force in Europe after 1918, extending from Germany to Russia and from Austria to Turkey and including the new states created when the European map was redrawn at the Versailles Peace Conference. The Portuguese Republic was therefore original in two aspects: it was the only major change of political regime in Western Europe that took place prior to the Great War and also the pioneer for the wave of Republicanization in the continent that defined the post-war era.

Even in an atmosphere conducive to change, acceleration and dizzying progress, the events in Lisbon were still viewed as highly irregular by many European governments. The Third French Republic and the short-lived Spanish Republic (1873–1874) had been the result of concrete events: the resignation of Napoleon III after the triumph of German unification in the case of the former, and the abdication of King Amadeu I, in the latter. The barricades in Lisbon, manned by civilians and Machado Santos’ *Carbonária*, the surrender, almost without a struggle, of the monarchists, and the exile of King Manuel II and the royal family recalled the Springtime of the Peoples in 1848 or the earlier outbreak of anti-monarchism and anti-conservatism in 1789 – an interpretation later reinforced when the Republican government began to resemble a sectarian and liberticidal repetition of the Jacobinism of the past, in the eyes of monarchist Europe. There was, in fact, an entrenched “Frenchism” in the Portuguese Republican movement and ideology, particularly during the propaganda phase and the assault on power, but also afterwards in much of the legislation produced by the new regime. From the 1870s to the final radicalization of the struggle against King Manuel II, the Portuguese Republican ideology – which intended to carry out a broad modernizing, emancipatory and messianic revolution destined to restore the glory of Portugal – was heavily influenced by the imaginary, achievements and heroes of the French Third Republic, also popularized by the Masonic networks and

social circles which united the leading figures in the anti-monarchist cause. In the European roll call of left-wing movements, other sources of inspiration may have been Spanish socialism or anarchism, the British trade unionist labour movement or German social democracy. Yet none of these alternatives had the force of ideological Francophilia as a model for Republicanism. The key elements in the Portuguese Republican world view came from Paris: the revolutionary methodology, the rhetoric of liberties and the secular programme for removing the Church from education and the state. With regard to this latter – defining – aspect, the 1911 law on the separation of church and state was modelled on the French law of 1905, just as the Portuguese legislation on divorce in 1910 and part of the Constitution in 1911 echoed the work of the French revolutionaries of 1791–1792, while the post-1910 education reforms closely followed the pedagogy of Jules Ferry.

Concerning the major options for foreign policy within the Republican doctrine, until the end of the nineteenth century a certain closeness to France coexisted with plans for Iberian federalism, envisaged as the future for the Iberian Peninsula, finally liberated from the “reactionary” rule of the Braganzas and the Bourbons, in Madrid. Due to the British Ultimatum and the Republicanization of nationalism and of the colonial cause, Francophilia and the Iberian dream were the reverse side of the Anglophobia of the revolutionary left and its desire for Portugal to escape the stranglehold of the English by diversifying international relations. However, in 1898, after Spain’s colonial losses to the United States of America and the weakness demonstrated by the Republicans in its neighbouring country, the Portuguese Republican movement became convinced that the Iberian project was a fantasy and that the viability of any future regime in a country in need of support from the major powers, both in Europe and Africa, would have to involve reconciliation with Great Britain. Despite the Ultimatum, or because of it, King Charles had never lost sight of this question. With King Manuel II already on the verge of assuming power, the Portuguese Republican Party embarked on a course of political realism, pledging to honour all the international commitments (political, financial and diplomatic) of the Portuguese state and reaffirming the old alliance with London.

Despite its Francophile sympathies, the Republican regime needed to be pragmatically Anglophile, adopting a system of dual affinities that would define the position of the Republic on the complex and changing international political chessboard of 1910 and which was, in fact, facilitated by the existing *Entente Cordiale* between Paris and London. In the summer of 1910, just a few weeks before seizing power in Lisbon, the leaders of the Portuguese Republican Party sent a delegation to France and to England to sound out European acceptance of the Republic. It was composed of José Relvas, Magalhães Lima (the Grand Master of the Freemasons) and Alves da Veiga (the civilian leader of the failed Republican revolt of 31 January 1891). In preparation for the trip, the three published a Republican manifesto in leading newspapers in London, Madrid, New York, Paris, Rio de Janeiro and Rome.

The main concern was England, the old ally of the Braganzas and head of the *Entente Cordiale*. The Portuguese delegation promised the Foreign Office that the Portuguese Republic would be a government of law and order at home and abroad, in order to convince London to treat the future regime change as a matter of domestic politics, and argued that the alliance, which still existed and always would, served to unite peoples, not dynasties. Rather than expressing active support, Great Britain declared its neutrality.

The English position encouraged French endorsement. France welcomed the Portuguese anticlerical programme and saw the future Republic as a “sister” in Europe that would help undermine any threats from the Spanish: the monarchy under Alfonso XIII, known to be hostile to the prospect of a Republic on its borders, would not intervene without British approval. Moreover, the English government had been making approaches to Madrid since 1906–1907, with certain voices (such as Winston Churchill) claiming that Spain was a more important partner than Portugal in the Iberian Peninsula and, by extension, the western Mediterranean, where the British had interests. Hence, it was vital for the Republican revolution to court London and obtain (some) recognition, not only as an international endorsement, but also to temper any political alignment between Edward VII (and later George V) and Alfonso XIII.

The Republican delegation returned satisfied and hastened preparations for the revolution, which triumphed in October. The new Republic, however, was received with some coldness and hostility by the more conservative countries (particularly Spain) and with a certain reserve, mistrust or caution by other governments. Hence, international recognition was somewhat delayed, instilling fears in Lisbon that a part of Europe might take advantage of the downfall of King Manuel II to destroy Portuguese independence and divide up the colonial assets of a small state with insufficient military resources, that was financially dependent on foreign support and was developing an (overly) radical political agenda. Initially, at the end of 1910, only the South American republics inspired by Brazil (a post-Braganza republic since 1889), recognized the Portuguese Republic. The United States of America did so in 1911, following the opening of the Constituent Assembly. French recognition came in August, shortly after the Constitution was approved and President Manuel de Arriaga was elected. London only acknowledged it at the beginning of September, eleven months after 5 October when it felt that the new institutional order had been established in Lisbon, thus paving the way for its recognition by other countries – Germany, Austria, Spain and Italy, the latter diverging from the Holy See which was in open opposition to Portuguese secularism. The First Republic of Portugal, which had finally broken with almost all aspects of the monarchy (except the Africanist mission), established itself as a regime that would continue to pursue the major foreign policy options, maintaining and relaunching the alliance with England and seeking acceptance and friendship among the nations closest to it in Europe and Africa. The leaders of the Portuguese Republican Party were aware that they had created a new regime which was revolutionary and radical in many aspects – and which would appear even more sectarian in the eyes of its many enemies and critics as a result of the practical politics involved in the everyday management of the country. They also knew that Portugal was sailing through troubled international waters. In Europe the position of the new Republic remained weak and Lisbon attempted to circumvent this by reviving the Africanist option, embracing the patriotic task of building up a “new Brazil” in Africa, planned to be much greater than the original Brazil. The Ministry of the Colonies was therefore created in 1911 and, following the new Constitution, a policy of decentralization and development was established for the overseas territories, destined to mitigate the policies of war and conquest of previous years.

As history would later record, in order to safeguard the colonial empire, remove the “Spanish threat” and enhance the reputation of the Republic within the European order of great democratic powers, the Republican government decided to become involved in the Great War of 1914–1918, sending troops to the African hinterlands in



Angola and Mozambique and a Portuguese Expeditionary Force to Flanders. However, this voluntary internationalist commitment – perhaps the most important and risky foreign policy option in the whole of the First Republic – had drastic consequences, chiefly the crisis and overthrow of the regime itself by the military in May 1926.

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1911

Resorts and Tourism: From Madeira to the Algarve

From the eighteenth century onwards, the grand tour was linked to the holiday resorts visited by European invalids. In spas, patients sought treatment for a variety of ailments and, in the winter, they looked for the mild climate of the Mediterranean to cure respiratory illnesses. Spas were an early part of tourism, and the search for a cure was one of the main reasons for visiting holiday resorts.

The year 1911 was decisive for tourism in Portugal. From 12 to 19 May, Lisbon welcomed around four hundred delegates at the 4th Tourism Conference, three hundred of whom took a cruise to the Portuguese islands. At the same time, on the mainland, the Republican government endorsed the sector by an official statement by the Ministry of Development and by the creation of the Madeira Agricultural Board (1911–1919), whose support of development was based on tourism. In 1914, a plan for Estoril included beaches, spas and gambling. Gradually, over the twentieth century, touristification and national awareness of tourism were gaining ground, partly as a result of writers from the previous and the current century, such as Almeida Garrett (1799–1854), with *Viagens na Minha Terra* [Travels in my Country] (1846), Ramalho Ortigão (1836–1915), with *As Praias de Portugal: Guia do Banhista e do Viajante* [Beaches of Portugal: a Guide for Bathers and Visitors] (1876), Raul Proença (1884–1941), with his excellent *Guia de Portugal* [Guide to Portugal] (1924), and José Saramago (1922–2010), with *Viagem a Portugal* [Trip to Portugal] (1981).

