

THE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY: THE PROCLAMATION OF THE REPUBLIC IN PORTUGAL

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Abstract

We have enjoyed the pleasure of discussing the proclamation of the Republic in Portugal in a variety of ways. The most profound work impressing us through the multiplicity of perspectives was that of the researcher Alice Samara (2010). It raises several explanatory hypotheses for different understandings of the Republic, according to the perspectives and the moments by which the regime and the republican idea are looked at.

Also recently, an excellent article by Jorge Pais de Sousa on Afonso Costa has been published, which gives us the possibility of understanding the Republic from a point of view almost unidentified so far (Sousa, [s.d.]).

Our perspective does not seek to make a critical, piecemeal judgment of legislation and political and party behaviour during the sixteen-year regime between 1910 and 1926. It concludes with the victory or defeat of republican thought; we are interested in focusing attention throughout the period perceiving and explaining the Republic - before and after the proclamation - as a result of the confrontation between the social group's leaps to modernity, to the new, to the different, and to the group that maintains the existing reality of tradition and conservatism.

Keywords

The 1st Republic, Modernity, Conservatism, Portugal, Revolution.

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THE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY: THE PROCLAMATION OF THE REPUBLIC IN PORTUGAL¹

Luís Alves de Fraga²

Introduction

In the past there have been studies that seek to understand the First Republic (Wheeler, 1978) or explain some of its failures (Lúcio, Marques, 2010) - or that go a little deeper into certain specificities such as education, demonstrating the little effectiveness of republican policies (Candeias, 2003). Others wanted to relate the religious question to the social question, demonstrating republican anticlericalism (Catroga, 1988).

Here we have to explain, in order to make it operational, the concept of modernity on the one hand, and on the other, tradition.

According to Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, quoted by João Feres Júnior (Feres Júnior, 2010: 31), modernity can have the meaning:

"of 'new' in opposition to the 'old': in this case one already has the embryo of an epochal consciousness where modern defines a space of present experience that is wanted from the past. This use is usually linked to a more or less explicit time frame of the hierarchy of eras, that is it is strongly evaluative."

It is from this perspective that we use the term *modernity*, which is, as the sociologist affirms, in opposition to the old and tradition. This notion of modernity and tradition is also evident in Cultural Anthropology (Titiev, 1969: 176-183).

We will use another idea, which will serve as a support and that has its origin in strategy: conflict (Fiéviet, 1993: 51; 57; 81-82) - as in the engine of change, that is the dialectical opposition, affirmed or latent, between social groups in confrontation.

It may seem almost to underestimate our objective, however, because we are certain about the slowness of collective and deeper behavioural changes in human societies, we argue that conductive wires of cultural and sociological changes are transmitted almost without change from generation to generation, defining collective behaviours that are

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conditioning political choices and changes that they themselves carry. It is not a question of determinism, but of the imbalance or, if one prefers, of the permanent confrontation between Apollo and Dionysius (Benedict, [s.d.]), between order and disorder, between the conventional and unconventional. It's that staying and leaving is permanent, varying only in function of the force of each of opposing and confronting element. The choice of the change from a monarchical regime to a republic allows us the ideal observatory that leads us to an understanding of the dynamics of forces in a constant pre-conflict dialectical dialogue or even in declared conflict.

We will dismantle the idea of the Republic to realise the extent to which it was fulfilled in Portugal both in the period immediately preceding and after the change of regime in 1910. There will be many lapses, many aspects to be addressed, but we will make a thesis, which we hope will not be understood as commonplace.

Our work is divided into two parts. In the first one, we intend to contemplate what as revolutionary contained the republican idea and reality in Portugal; in the second, shorter in detail, we will try to understand how the Republic defrauded Republicans or, if you prefer, how republicans were not able to accomplish the Republic and what it brought in itself - if anything different - besides appearances that did not exist in during monarchy.

1. The Republic: A Revolutionary Perspective

In Europe, the conception of a republic was, since modern times, revolutionary. The reason for this is understood: monarchy is associated with divine power as the legitimating process of the monarch. Medieval theocentrism had to be reflected by the throne in order to justify it and give it superiority alongside all the seigniorial powers of that time. But in the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, the necessity of the leap forward was perceived, thus transferring the power of governing from the aristocracy to the studious and working bourgeoisie. The French Revolution, being drunk on theorists, who discerned governmental principles over the popular will learn, in practice with the American Revolution that the peoples did not lack monarchs for sovereignty. It has been learned that the new aristocracy came not from the cradle, but from the use of opportunities. This was the lesson that came from the New to the Old World.

In the nineteenth century, the successes and failures of republics in Europe resulted from the articulation between the Industrial Revolution and the Liberal Revolution, because the first one generated the cultural broth necessary for the consciousness of the power to reside in the people, although not always the holders of capital accepted their political decision-making capacity (Obsbawm, 2001). It was in France that the first definitive turn for the Republic took place, full of revolutionary traditions, social contrasts and chasms between groups of the population. However, alongside this turn, France had learned from Napoleon Bonaparte that the export of the revolution should not be imposed outside the borders, because this would generate wars and the loss could be greater than the gain (Kissinger, 2015: 62). In turn, the monarchies in Europe, accepting the Republic in France, realised that they were preserved through a peaceful and tolerant coexistence. However, after France, it was in the most unlikely state that the Republic settled and to stay forever. Unlikely because, being essentially agricultural, without significant industry, it did not seem to have the political and sociological conditions needed to dump the monarchy and implant a republic. This state was Portugal.



It is in this perspective that one has to try to perceive the reason for a republic in an old state, monarchical by tradition for eight hundred years. In this respect, we judge, one must choose several points of observation to arrive at an intelligible result.

1.1. A country of illiterates

According to the census carried out in 1911, 75% of the Portuguese population were illiterate (Marques, 1980: 83), but from the report of events on 5 October 1910 - the date of the republican victory - it is possible to observe that those who struggled the most against the monarchy were the street men and the soldiers of some of Lisbon's military units, and certainly neither of them were learned people. Illiterates would prevail in large numbers. But they made the revolution.

How do you explain this apparent nonsense? It would be worth trying to understand that illiteracy was transversal to the whole of society and had a higher prevalence in the agricultural rural population. On the other hand, it is in this social segment that Catholic clerical influence was more deeply rooted, which was then affirmed to be truly obscurantist and politically conservative. Thus, in the same group - that of the illiterate - there are two diametrically opposed political positions: one, rural and agricultural, conservative and alienated, and another, urban, radical and, at the most, anticlerical.

The rural illiterate population endured, almost without complaint, all the burden of demands made by an exaggerated and bewildered monarchy. It was from it and from its work that middle and large landowners lived in the city, spending enough to enjoy the pleasures of doing nothing or combining incomes with the meagre income of a job dependent on the ever-deficient budget of the state. These poor illiterates kept within themselves the infinite ability to endure everything in return for the promise of eternal salvation after death. And the parish priest of the village was in charge of this, a visit to the houses of leaders, where he was received with honours that swelled his ego. But in the cities, especially the larger ones - Lisbon, Porto and Coimbra - illiterates lived with those who knew how to read, write and count. They listened to what was said in the streets, in the taverns - a place to drink a glass of wine with calorific effects, enough to supply an almost always deficient food - and in the neighbourhoods of narrow streets, unhealthy and miserable. And these illiterates, although believers in the religion of their fathers, had a much more critical view of clerical action than of rural ones. Living in the city enabled them to perceive differences and, above all, injustice. Thus, they were pushed into the lands of the revolt, being easy prey to Sebastianist, Messianic, thaumaturgical hope.

1.2. A messianic country

The crossing of cultures before Portugal existed (Portugal was born at the end of the first half of the twelfth century), particularly the Islamic with the Jewish and the Christian, gave specific characteristics to the behaviour of the Portuguese people regarding the divine and, especially, the hope of divine solutions. Messianism - whose origin is common to the three religions in Portuguese space - assumed, at the end of the sixteenth century, a tonality specific after the battle of Alcacer-Quibir, when King D. Sebastião disappeared, swallowed by the fury of individual combats. The divine messiah was transfigured, to the



people's eyes, into the political messiah who would take the figure of D. Sebastião to reclaim the throne that was his and was occupied by his uncle, Philip II of Spain. From a true fact - the disappearance of the young king - the wonderful legend of the saviour was able to rescue his people from all the misfortunes and bad management of Portugal. Sebastianism became Portuguese national religion, hope in moments of a lack of hope. And it has been repeating over time, pushing into the realm of the miraculous that only work, will and determination can solve (Quadros, 1982).

In the last twenty years of monarchy - from 1890 to 1910 - the accentuation of misrule in Portugal was notorious. There was a lot of borrowing, because public revenues were not enough to cover expenses. Customs revenues were considered a guarantee of payment, and more and more government employees were being poorly paid in a country where everyone received poor salaries, but did all they could to hide this endemic misery by taking refuge behind titles - of nobility or not, almost always having no value, concerning either the merit of those who possessed them or the merit of those who granted them - or of honorary sinecure without any importance or statute. In urban society at that time the middle classes were living, as Gervasio Lobato shows us, in a novel that was provoked by the caustic irony of the situations described (Lobato, 1898). The Portuguese Republican Party (PRP), which began to gain strength and credit around 1880, during the celebrations of the third centenary of the death of Luís de Camões, was still, at that time, an incipient opposition to the monarchy and a political grouping without popular foundations, interesting only some young bourgeois intellectuals, students in Coimbra or those already employed in Lisbon. However, some of the names in 1910 were to stand as figures of the Republic.

It is only a decade later, in 1890, that the PRP reaches prominence and begins to mobilise adherents to the new regime following the traumatic British ultimatum to Portugal. And it is convenient that here we stop to perceive the sociological transmutations, consequence of the political practices of the monarchy operated at the time.

Although it was not entirely true, the Portuguese with some illustration - and here we exclude the agricultural, illiterate and ignorant rural population of the villages and villages lost in the interior of the country - believed that the African territories, where few colonists had hoisted the national flag, were a heritage of the past - glorious and glorified - somewhere in the time of the Discoveries. They painfully believed in this quasi legend, just like the recent loss of the immense colony of Brazil. And in order to compensate for the independence of the great American colony, it was first of all designed among a few idealists and then, in a significant mass of people lacking a great and respected Portugal, the desire to achieve in Africa another Brazil limited to the west by the Atlantic coast of Angola and, to the east, by the coast of Mozambique by the Indian Ocean. This one dream found practical explanation in the decisions of the Berlin Conference of 1884-85, which stipulated that the effective occupation of the territories be carried out by the colonial ambitious powers. But the Portuguese dream contended with the British reality of connecting Cape Town in southern Africa to Cairo. Although Lisbon had adopted as its diplomatic policy silence over London's repeated calls for attention, it was awakened by the abrupt threat posed by England, which did not fear to intimidate, by the use of force, a state whose military capacity was almost nil. The people in Portugal did not expect such a powerful manifestation of power, even from the old ally, because, more than a political and diplomatic problem, what was felt in Portugal was the weight of the slap without the



capacity to respond. It was the trauma of the disabled brutalised by the unscrupulous individual, without morality and without principles of cordiality. The Portuguese felt themselves shaken in the dusty scrolls of a past greatness. It was as if they were all almost crippled elders and forced to stall until they reached exhaustion. The Portugal of dream woke up abruptly to an unknown reality: the overwhelming interest of the powerful unable to spare the manly rags dragged by a worn out and impotent old man. In this awakening, Portugal finally blamed the monarchy and its governments, not realising that governance was the result of their choices and was itself to blame. Thus, although contradicted by republican positivist study (Andrade, 2014, 120-128), the submerged messianic idea came to light, and all that was left was to find the messiah capable of facing with greatness, honour and power the hand that had wielded the scourge and humiliated the old motherland who give birth to worlds given to the world. The messiah, in our opinion, was raised in a popular perspective and not conscientised by the republican politicians, in the figure of the PRP. The Republic was the salvation and the saviour (Marques, 1978: 544-545). It was only necessary to feed the fire capable of this thaumaturgical epic. And he repudiated the *perfidious Albion*, his products, his language, which stopped being taught in the country's schools, his friendship, his coldness, his hypocritical punctuality. A hymn was composed, and it was sung as a patriotic march. And the Portuguese were left to the cradle by the theorists of republicanism.

Some people look and explain messianism (Anes, s.d.: 14-16), associating it with the practice of the Catholic religion and the rebirth of the splendour, national or even nationalist, although it also connected with a certain political practice. We believe that it is not a reprehensible thing to do a different reading, putting Sebastianism as the driving salvation of Portugal through the redemption of calamitous situations. To this end, when we associate it with the proclamation of the Republic and republicanism, we have Teixeira de Pascoaes, Jaime Cortesão, Augusto Casimiro, all of whom are republican and Sebastianist, mentors of the Portuguese Renaissance society and the journal *Águia*.

1.3. A country of republicans

If it is true that the PRP was the result of the will of learned people, knowing the ideals and aims of a republic, it is also true that the strongest adherence to the new political ideology was made between the urban population of both the middle bourgeoisie and weak working groups that existed then. The PRP, after 1890, knew how to make an ambivalent discourse pleasing both the average bourgeoisie, desirous of getting out of the economic and social impasse for which the monarchy had no way out, and to the working class, since socialist and socialising ingredients were used. And it was here that the ideas defended by Afonso Costa, expressed in his doctoral thesis (Costa, 1895), became relevant, as they already revealed the revolution that gained body in the legislation of 1911 (Sousa, [s.d.]: 7-19). The wave of supporters grew and the PRP was able to elect three deputies in 1890, after crawling along with an only one for several decades. But it should be said, in order not to have a false idea, the republicans were few. The monarchist parties, fearing the ever-increasing antipathy of the PRP militants, did everything to alter the geography of the electoral circles and the results seemed ridiculous.

If, in the villages and towns of the provinces, the monarchist caciques dominated



elections, generating an illusion of full sympathy for the crown, a large number of voters were republican in the cities - even in some distant from Lisbon and embedded in the strongholds of the monarchy.

We can only perceive this urban disparity if we take into account the drowning experienced by the middle classes of meagre financial resources, dependent on the state budget or small commerce. A republic constituted the possibility of altering, it was thought, elements which later proved to be structural. Being agricultural, Portugal was little profitable. The biggest industry in the cities was construction. There were no large factories, but there was a proliferation of family workshops where a little bit of everything was done. Trade was, internally, the way to raise sustenance. Exports of wine, olive oil and little else were for Brazil, then to the colonies, and then to Great Britain. It was from this country that almost everything that was consumed in Portugal came. The dependence on British commerce was total. But the great source of income, which still managed to make the economy and national finances feasible, was the remittances of money from emigrants, who, in those days, sought first Brazil and then Argentina and the United States of America.

In the context described it is natural that the Republic should be felt, by the group that believed in it, as the magic formula that would solve everything. It was more a mirage than an effective project of change. And the truth is that republican propaganda was based essentially on the critique of monarchical governance rather than on the definition of a concrete project of change (Catroga, 1991, I vol.), which made the PRP a political front rather than a party. And yet, among the most prominent members of the PRP, there were those who knew how to begin a process of modernisation in Portugal. But it was convenient not to give him much publicity, because only radical measures could result in the future. Do not give him publicity stated Jorge Pais de Sousa, because Afonso Costa - defender of integral socialism, later dubbed as radical - understood that the different sensitivities should be kept together until the possibility of a political change separating them and making them autonomous.

1.4. A country waiting for revolution

In the aftermath of the English ultimatum, and in the aftermath, a year later, in Porto 31 January 1891, a military revolution led essentially by army sergeants and encouraged by civilian republicans ensued. From the porch of the town hall the Republic was proclaimed, applauded by the population that awaited the event. But it was an unsuccessful attempt as, within hours, the guard was suppressed by cannon fire. There followed arrests, judgments and deportations. The Bragança throne trembled but did not fall. Don Carlos, still a young monarch, could live for over seventeen years imagining hard and illiberal political solutions that came to fruition at the end of his life. From the episode was a lesson for the PRP: regime change had to involve more than a few revolting regiments and had to be supported and executed by the people in conjunction with the troop. This was the understanding of the revolutionary wing of the PRP, because, along with it, another took shape: that of the change through the electoral route. Thus, the years passed and gave opportunity to the successive degradation of monarchical governments that, instead of solving the Portuguese crisis, made it worse. Danger lurked in 1898 when, in Lisbon, suspicions were almost certain that Britain and



Germany had come to an understanding, giving a large loan to Portugal and sharing the colonies among themselves due to a lack of debtor payment. The old Lusitanian homeland was spared thanks to the intervention of republican France, which with excellent conditions granted a loan, avoiding the colonial enrichment of the rival states. The turn of the century gave republicans strength. But propaganda continued to be made against the monarchy without clearly outlining a program beyond the overthrow of the king and the ruling house. It was not by chance that this happened; it was important, above all else, to guarantee adherence to the PRP even though it was done by mere opposition to the throne; afterwards, it was known that two fundamental pillars for the existence of Portugal could not be changed: the almost total dependence on Great Britain and productive incapacities (Marques, 2010). Thus, at the international level, republicans had to hide two dangers: on the one hand, the English antipathy with the republican cause and, on the other hand, to ensure that London did not give carte blanche, after the proclamation of the Republic, to Madrid to proceed to the old dream of Iberian union. Let us agree that to maintain the revolutionary spirit at such a juncture was to be able to balance, with great skill, dangerous antagonisms. This was perhaps the reason why the PRP program was diffuse about the future; this was the reason for the PRP, a group that hoped to reach the Republic through electoral routes.

Now, as monarchic politics degenerated, republican voices against the monarchy rose. In order to satisfy the internal front, the revolution had to be prepared and this was done in 1908 with a less clear manoeuvre at the PRP congress in Setúbal: a group with a strong revolutionary lean was elected, and civil and military revolutionary committees were created.

But to go further in understanding this change of attitude, one has to realise how the revolutionary force was already structuring itself.

1.5. A city of Carbonarians

Lisbon has long been the centre of all political action and also the seat of the PRP. The change of regime, when it operated, only very exceptionally should not occur in this city. Everything was being prepared, since before 1908, so that Lisbon was the scene of the fall of the throne.

In Freemasonry, in the shops where members were assigned to republicanism, the desired revolution was discussed, but it was not there that the forces moved to do so. Carbonaria was responsible for this role, this action of arms in hand (Ventura, 2004). Recruitment was being made among less well-off people, living in some of Lisbon's poorest neighbourhoods. The organisation was cellular, avoiding the arrest and denunciation of the ringleaders. The initiation was carried out by rituals of terror and death threats for the traitors and, to give more realism to the act, places of darkness in dark nights were chosen. The men wore hoods that covered their faces, so they would not be recognised, and daggers and pistols were displayed as revenge elements against anyone who faltered at the time of arrest and torture.

Carbonaria grew in a short time and became radicalised in hatred of the monarchy. The last end was the overthrow of Bragança and not the construction of a republic marked by a program, however radical it might be.



The regicide, in February 1908, was, as far as is known in historical uncertainty, an isolated act of Carbonaria. It was not a murder in the purest and simplest sense of the term; it was, rather, the execution of a sentence long dictated by the political behaviour of D. Carlos. Hence, just for being, the funerals of the regicides had the applause of a population enraged against the monarchy. The death of the executioners was the last ruckus of a reigning house unable to raise the dream of a people, to raise its morale, to give it the courage to face modernity. Carbonaria had already occupied all the space where political tolerance could be moved. Shortly before the proclamation of the Republic, it was thought, perhaps with some exaggeration, that some twenty thousand men were operating in the ranks of that secret and revolutionary association, all of them possessing at least one firearm.

Thus, in Lisbon, the bulk of the revolutionary force was gathered, which manufactured handcrafted bombs to be used at the proper time. These men knew what to do and when to do it, and their action ranged from attacking the rear of the forces loyal to the throne, when they were ready to crush the revolt, to entrenchment in the places of resistance to liquidate the monarchy once and for all, also going through the coup service between attack nuclei or the assault on army and navy barracks to obtain war weapons and munition (Fraga, 2010).

Carbonaria, with the support of the army and navy, won the republican victory on the morning of 5 October 1910, but there is a question that must be asked: "But what Republic has proclaimed itself?"

As we have pointed out, we judge from what we have said before that the sociological reality of the Republic proclaimed in 1910 is a crumbling of ideas with no other guiding line that goes beyond the desire to overthrow the monarchy in order to achieve changes capable of projecting Portugal in the realms of modernity. Thus, in order to understand what was and what the proclamation of the Republic represented, it will be necessary to go further, entering into the Republic itself and disassemble the forces and the dynamics in its present from the day of the overthrow of the monarchy.

2. An Ambiguously Liberating Republic

With the Republic proclaimed, it can be said that the process of fracture between republicans began in the same day as the hero of Rotunda, Machado Santos, an officer of the navy and one of the highest officials in charge of Carbonaria, considered himself betrayed since the PRP politicians, who had not contributed to the victory, took over the process. And, without giving him the explanations he thought he deserved, they advanced to the formation of a Provisional Government (Santos, 2007). This fracture, besides explaining the temperament of Machado Santos, gives us a magnificent indication of how the change of regime was envisaged: the Republic had to be tutored by the man of arms who had commanded the revolt; the regime was not of concern, but rather who changed it; the people were not in the foreground, but rather the individualities engaged in the change that had just happened. Individualism began to scream even though the Republic had just been born in Portugal.

The Provisional Government had the task of approving the change from monarchy to republic throughout the country, and it is not uncommon to have historians who, in an



air of laziness, claim that this proclamation was made by telegraph. It was, in fact, but it in no way belittles the republican victory. If the country accepted being a republic, proclaimed and implemented in this way, it is because it was neither republican nor saw any reason to defend the monarchy, which, we can therefore consider, was then rotten and only waiting for someone to overthrow it. But this conclusion is also wrong. The monarchists (some of them), almost the day after the republic's acclamation, began to conspire. It was not the anonymous monarchist citizen by habit or conviction that conspired. It was all those who knew how much it would represent for them to move to a republic. They began meetings to study how the throne was to be restored and put the king back in his place. A year later, after bad training in Galicia close to the Portuguese border, and with the knowledge and consent of the Spanish authorities, an ill-armed force, commanded by a monarchist faithful to the monarchy, but not very trustful of his king, invaded a settlement of the north and proclaimed the restoration of the old regime. But it lasted for only a little while – just a few hours. He had to run away. He believed that this unusual act would be enough to generate a wave of revulsion in the country, giving rise to the revolt against the republic. He was utterly deceived (Fraga, 2012: 367-401).

The conspiracy continued through the years (Samara, 2010: 381), weak but incapable of a return. Would the Portuguese be republicans? Or simply indifferent? That's what we'll try to figure out next.

2.1. The Provisional Government or the true revolution

After the proclamation of the republic, when it became normalised, the Provisional Government took office. Legislation began to emerge in cascades. In Portugal the bases of change were drawn and laid. This change was, after all, the revolution. Being provisional, the government did not limit itself to a day-to-day management. It was revolutionary. The revolution was not on 5 October 1910; the revolution lasted while the Provisional Government lasted (Ferrão, 1976), but it would not govern alone, as there were weekly meetings with the PRP and advisory board. The Republic was imposing itself. It is this dependence and this connection that make legislation a revolutionary body. It is true that Carbonaria also maintained pressures with the Ministry of War; it was against the strikes that are beginning a little everywhere. The claims grew louder than ever before in the monarchy. And the monarchy spoke of itself as liberal.

From the outset, within the government, political trends corresponding to different sensitivities in the PRP were verified. The most radical was the link between Bernardino Machado, Afonso Costa and some of the army officers who were most committed to the Republic. This alliance will subsist until after the end of the Great War and found resonance in much of the population. But it is in this that the different social divisions, which matter to us, are made; they occur at the level of the people, especially because of the publication of the law on separation of state and churches (20 April, 1911) and of all anticlerical legislation proposed and approved by Afonso Costa, Minister of Justice. He was, to us, the soul of the republican revolution at various times - in the 1933 provisional government, in his first government, the most stable of all the Republics; in the second, in 1915, when it received belligerence in the Great War; in the Sacred Union and subsequently in 1916 and 1917; and finally, when he stayed at the League of Nations to ensure that Portugal was able to benefit greatly, from a financial point of view, from the



Great War, gaining the possibility of maritime trade with competitive conditions. It was because of the Roman Catholic Church and the reactionary clergy that Portugal practically split almost in half. To the north, the great weight of the religion was decisive to move the rural populations away from the Republic, without, however, moving them closer to the defunct monarchy. The populations were divided between the perception of the intentions of the radical republicans and repudiation. In the rurality of the villages and small villages, the anger of the parish priest had strong repercussions on the families, but the same did not happen in the cities where there was a greater tolerance for perceiving or judging the extent of government measures. Because, in fact, the great republican struggle was against the influence of the clergy and not against religion, as some believed at the time.

The effect of more aggressive legislation in relation to tradition made itself felt in successive waves of less intense shock over time, until after the military and dictatorial coup of May 1926.

But, apart from the anti-clerical laws, what other laws did they have from the Provisional Government to give it revolutionary character?

In addition to the creation of the universities of Lisbon and Porto, which, once and for all, broke away from Coimbra's monopoly of university higher education, rejecting the hegemony of the old academy in Portugal (remember, in 1837, when creating the University of Lisbon, the scholars from Coimbra managed to make the government fall), the publication of the decree regulating strikes should be mentioned as an achievement for the workers, as it gave to the bosses rights that were never accepted by the working class. And it was in this particular aspect that the biggest challenge was in the first year of life, because, as we have already mentioned, the number of strikes increased exponentially compared with those of the time of the monarchy. Now, it was not only because there was more freedom that this happened. It was because, in fact, the Republic defrauded the expectations of the workers, making it very clear that it was a regime aimed at the bourgeoisie, that the revolution carried out by the Provisional Government defined the bourgeois as the goal of modernity.

But it was not only at previous levels that the Provisional Government left its indelibly revolutionary mark. In fact, another highly significant aspect was the reform of the army. Indeed, on 25 May 1911, a law was published which established new bases for military service, transforming the old permanent system into a militiaman with great inspiration in the Swiss model. It was an attempt to change, in a few years, the mentality of male citizens, generating within them a sense of belonging and total integration in the homeland (Fraga, Samara, 2014: 93-115). Curiously, this idea had its origin, not in the young turks as it is common to read and refer to, but in Afonso Costa, who expounded it in his doctoral thesis (Sousa, [s.d.]: 15-16).

As can be seen, there are deep contradictions in the social aspects of the positions assumed by the Provisional Government of the Republic in Portugal, as it sometimes draws abrupt and almost insurmountable ruptures and, in others, it seeks ferociously to amalgamate this fabric around a concept intended to retake the historical past with pride. But the republican revolution generated by the Provisional Government opened gaps between the republicans themselves. The first was created by the principle of facilitating the adhesion of the PRP to those who had recently been active in monarchic ranks. The



second was the result of some historic republicans wanting to have elections for a constituent assembly shortly after October, with the interim government legislating. The third, and more serious, was the election of the President of the Republic, which brought together, on the one hand, the moderate and more conservative wing of the republicans, and, on the other, the most radical headed by Afonso Costa. This was the beginning of the end of apparent republican unity.

By the end of its term, the Provisional Government had indeed laid the foundations of the republican revolution, and had failed to complete it on other fronts, but politically, the hopes of the Republic before it that had been proclaimed were lost. The dream, because that was it, was broken after the awakening, giving rise to a profusion of open and latent conflicts, which only a cold analysis before October 1910 would have been able to detect. If anyone detected it, nothing was said, so as not to disturb the overthrow of the monarchy. Did Portugal win anything with the Republic? Did the people benefit from regime change? Did the trend towards modernity win and put Portugal on the path of Europe? Has Portuguese sovereignty strengthened with the Republic?

2.2. The Great War and the crux of the true revolution

When the Republic was proclaimed, Portuguese national symbols were chosen with the traditional flag and national anthem being replaced. Both symbols have a foundation that carries history and a meaning not immediately visible or comprehensible. Turning to the republican national anthem, we find that, with the slight alteration of a single verse, the written and composed hymn was adopted during the English ultimatum of 1891. Is it necessary to add more in order to realise that, in foreign policy, the Republic was not - for mere convenience of moment - anti-British. Was it an advocate of the end of English tutelage to the extent that it was possible? This was the aspect that resumed the revolution in 1914, since, contrary to Britain's wishes, the most radical wing of all Republicans - Afonso Costa's political companions - did everything to bring Portugal to the war at the request of England, thus proving to the world that Portuguese national sovereignty was as valuable as British national sovereignty (Fraga, 2012). However, the intentions of a certain republican faction, which defended conservative behavioural ruptures in the last year of war and those that followed it until 28 May 1926 - the day of the military coup that established the long dictatorship until April 1974 - was challenged by successive political or military coups. Thus arising, in the masses who supported the Republic and to those for whom it was implemented (the small and middle bourgeois), was the desire for social peace, living tranquility, even if it sacrificed the path to a modern way of living. In this way, conservatism overcame innovation. Tradition prevailed over the revolution, as, on the one hand, ruptures ran too deep in Portuguese social fabric, generating a series of conflicts in antagonistic, minority sectors, desirous of achieving governance and, on the other, the Republic's supportive population grew tired of the exhausting political crises. To these two grounds more elements were added: the economic disorganisation of Europe, Portuguese industrial backwardness, the poor profitability of agriculture and, above all, the very low rate of investment in new productive sectors. In short, everything in Portugal tended to the ultra-conservative tradition. But behind this tendency, or to justify it, there was, for a long time, a concept that gained space among some catholic, monarchical and even republican elites. This concept entered the Portuguese political lexicon in the post-Great War period, in the early



1920s, when the Nationalist Republican Party (Leal, [s.d.]: 35) was founded in 1923. Tradition gained a form of designation: nationalism (LEAL, 1999).

The political ascension of António de Oliveira Salazar and Portuguese fascism from 1928 resulted from a game that he knew to play between opposing interests that was always carefully managed regarding the peasant, village and rural tradition (Curto, 2016). The Republic ceased to be revolutionary, almost ceased to be a republic, being a political regime of a man who could be king without sitting on a throne - or without nominal regime change.

The Republic of 1910 did not die with the entry of the political constitution of 1933 but with the inauguration of Salazar as Ministry President in 1932. It was tradition, conservatism, dubbed nationalism, that took the reins of governance. Portugal receded for thirty years, returning to the mental behaviour of the early twentieth century. The hand of pre-censorship, of the political police, and the exaltation of a catholicism close to creed put the population of the city and the country out of any movement of modernity that could come from Europe, contours of fascist and nazi dictatorships.

The political regime that ruled Portugal until 1974 only in name had some connection with the previous. Of course, the Republic that was reborn on 25 April 1974 was the heir of what had been proclaimed in 1910 in a completely different time and context, and also wanted to be revolutionary, yet seeking other paths and aiming at other objectives, it was only in freedom and in practice where slight points of contact were encountered.

Conclusion

Throughout the previous pages we have tried to describe the process of change from monarchy to republic in Portugal.

We highlighted several aspects of Portuguese social fabric from the late nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century, and we also highlighted how the change of monarchy to republic took place in the context of the ruptures provoked by the revolutionary decisions of the Provisional Government - the most revolutionary of all republican governments in the post-republic. We have left, we think, quite clear the idea that the PRP did not have a program that went much further than the mere repudiation of the monarchy. Nevertheless, one element - Afonso Costa - whose primary objective was to break with traditions and ancillaries, lead Portugal to the European modernity of the time.

We tried to connect social realities with legislative dispositions where the fracture of continuity prevailed. We showed that the conservative element in Portuguese society was more resistant to change, annulling innovative efforts represented by a wing of the republicans. We paid some attention to the return to social peace and consequent return to the limits of conservatism after the end of the Great War. We were able to finish this ambulation through the years of the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, when, in Portugal, lived republicanism and the proclamation of the Republic.

In way of conclusion, we can affirm that the confrontation, in Portugal, between tradition, acting dialectically on innovation hindered, from the beginning, the process of opening up to modernity in the early 20th century. But even more so, it led to the degeneration



of the Republic that, being democratic, liberal and petty-bourgeois, but with remarkably socialising affirmations, ended up transforming itself into a fascist dictatorial Republic with a long duration of forty-eight years.

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