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politics, society and culture

2nd Edition

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Contents

List of Tables and Figures ix
Preface and acknowledgements xi

1 Twentieth Century Portugal: An Introduction
   António Costa Pinto 1

2 Cultural Myths and Portuguese National Identity
   Nuno G. Monteiro and António Costa Pinto 55

3 The Colonial Empire
   Valentin Alexandre 73

4 Between Africa and Europe: Portuguese Foreign Policy
   Nuno Severiano Teixeira 95

5 The Portuguese Economy in the Twentieth Century:
   Growth and Structural Change
   Pedro Lains 131

6 Engendering Portugal: Social Change, State Politics
   and Women's Social Mobilization
   Virginia Ferreira 153

7 Social Change in Portugal
   António Barreto 193
List of Tables and Figures

Tables

1.1 Ratio of Eligible to Actual Voters, 1911–1925 6
1.2 Distribution of Parties in Parliament, 1910–1917 7
1.3 Distribution of Parties in Parliament, 1919–1926 17
5.1 Growth of Real Income per capita in Portugal and Europe, 1910–1990 136
5.2 Growth of Real Income per capita in the European Periphery, 1913–1998 137
5.3 Convergence of Real Incomes per capita in the European Periphery, 1913–1998 138
5.4 Growth of Factors and GDP, 1910–1990 141
5.5 Growth Accounting for Portugal: Sources of Growth and Output Growth, 1910–1990 143
5.6 Sectoral Output and Productivity Growth, 1950–1990 148
6.1 Index of Differentiation of Sectoral and Professional Employment and Percentage of Female Employment in Selected Occupations (OECD Countries, 1990) 161
8.1 Total and Interbloc Volatility in Portuguese Elections 233
Portugal has undergone a significant process of change during the last 40 years. It has seen political transformation, marked by the end of 48 years of dictatorial rule and the consolidation of democracy. Economic and social change has taken place with Portugal, once a backward and socially underdeveloped country, becoming a developed nation. The aim of this book is to present an introduction to that process of change and to examine it as part of the evolution of Portuguese politics and society since the beginning of the twentieth century.

Written by historians, sociologists, political scientists and specialists in literature and art, this book seeks to provide specialists, students and general readers a global view of contemporary Portugal. Essays written by Portuguese academics explore a broad spectrum of topics: the colonial empire, international relations, economic development, social change, gender issues, democratic consolidation, Portugal and the European Union, issues of national identity and a review of Portuguese contemporary literature and art.

This edition has already its longue durée. It was during my stay as a Visiting Professor at Stanford University during 1992–1993, that I accepted the challenge of Peter Stansky, who was at that time a Professor in the Department of History, to produce the first book,
Modern Portugal (Palo Alto, 1998). This work was integrated into a series of books on recent developments in various European countries. Given the lack of books in English on contemporary Portugal, however, I felt it would be important to include an analysis of the twentieth century as a whole, rather than limiting the book to only the most recent developments in the country. I must confess that when I embarked on this project, I did not imagine the book would be so successful, having been adopted as required reading in various university courses from comparative politics through European history to literature, and having been translated into Spanish and Portuguese.

The second book, Contemporary Portugal (New York, 2003), was conceived and planned during my time at the Institute of European Studies, University of California-Berkeley, where I was a visiting fellow during the first semester of 2000-2001. Interestingly, it was again while I was in Berkeley, during the spring semester of 2010, when I returned to the Institute of European Studies, that I prepared this new edition.

This second edition incorporates some of the suggestions that were made in many of the reviews of previous versions, although limitations of space have prevented me from developing all of the themes I would have liked to, however. Nevertheless, I hope the topics covered in these chapters will provide a good basis for further study by a wider English-language readership in the various fields and disciplines of the social sciences and humanities. With the exception of Maria Baganha, a sociologist at the University of Coimbra who died suddenly, and to whom I would like to pay tribute, all of the authors have updated their previous contributions.

Publication of this second and revised edition would not have been possible had it not been for the support the Luso-American Foundation for Development (FLAD) and its former president, Rui Machete, provided for the previous editions. This new updated edition was the result of a suggestion by FLAD as part of the celebrations for its 25th anniversary.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of the Institute of Social Science, University of Lisbon and to thank Stewart Lloyd-Jones and Claudia Almeida for their invaluable assistance in editing the book to very tight deadlines.

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