



During the 15th century, Portuguese mariners were destined, as the poet Luis Vaz de Camoens wrote, to "track the oceans none had sailed before." But before long, the country's seamen had competition. This 17th-century print shows a Portuguese vessel being attacked by English and Dutch warships at the entrance to the Persian Gulf.

Portugal

One decade ago, little Portugal was front-page news in America. Would this NATO ally, in the aftermath of a surprise coup against Western Europe's oldest dictatorship, succumb to the Portuguese Communist Party's drive for power? Would it become "the Bulgaria of the West"? Washington feared the worst. Happily, Portuguese democrats prevailed. But the people whom dictator António de Oliveira Salazar had long isolated from change could not go back to old ways and old dreams. Since 1974, shedding the African remnants of what was Europe's last (and first) overseas empire, the Portuguese have had to adjust not only to political freedom but also to gritty economic realities. Entry into the Common Market and a presidential election lie ahead. Our contributors trace Portugal's long odyssey from imperial grandeur to the uncertainties of union with the rest of Europe.

PRISONERS OF GLORY

by Kenneth Maxwell

May 20, 1498. Ten and a half months out of Lisbon, two vessels commanded by Vasco da Gama, a Portuguese nobleman, anchor off Calicut, a port on India's Malabar Coast. When the seamen go ashore, history records, the first question asked of them is, "What the devil has brought you here?"

The reply: "We have come to seek Christians and spices."

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to follow the African coast around the Cape of Good Hope and then to cross the Indian Ocean. They paid a high price. As a result of scurvy and other hazards, when the *São Gabriel*, the only ship to complete the 24,000-mile round trip, sailed up the Tagus River to Lisbon in September 1499, just 44 of the 170 men who began the voyage remained aboard to celebrate. But Portugal's boldest voyage of discovery stirred Renaissance Europe.

King Manuel ("the Fortunate") eagerly advised the court of

Spain that da Gama had found not only “rubies and all kinds of precious stones” but also pepper and other spices, then prized in the European diet because they could make the salt beef from the cattle slaughtered each fall edible all year. In a letter to Lisbon’s Cardinal-Protector in Rome, he signed himself as the “Lord of Guinea and of the conquest of the navigation and commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, and India.”

Manuel’s pride was excusable. To 15th-century Europeans, da Gama’s feat meant far more than had the discovery of America six years earlier by Christopher Columbus, the Genoese captain who had sailed for Spain. What the New World offered was unclear; but da Gama had made the first direct modern contact between two old worlds, the East and the West.*

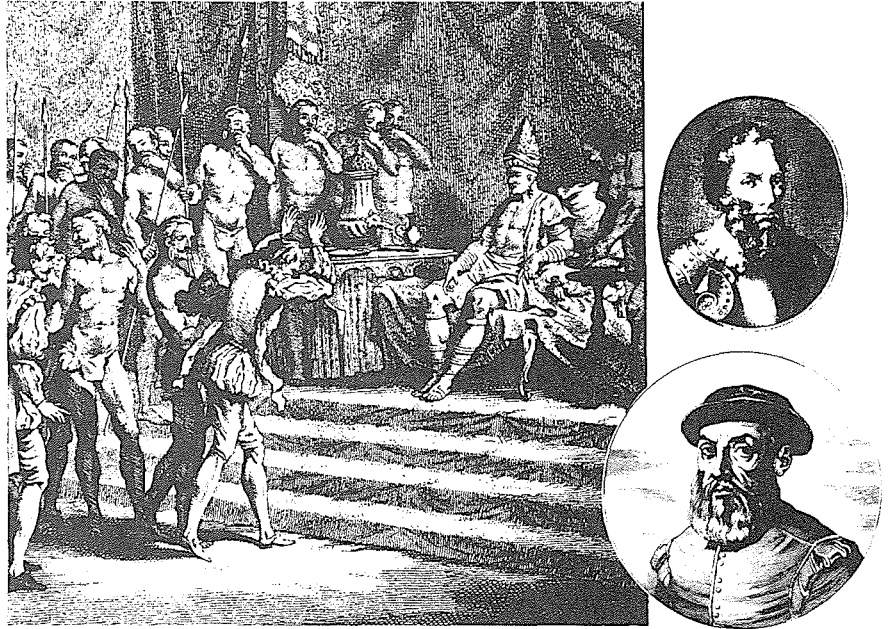
Other breakthroughs were to come. During Portugal’s brief golden age of discovery, which ran from the 1440s to about 1500, its mariners—da Gama, Bartolomeu Dias, Pedro Álvares Cabral, Ferdinand Magellan—vastly expanded the world known to Europeans. The Portuguese went on to establish colonies in Africa, the Far East, and South America. The places where they landed added scores of new names to Europe’s commercial lexicon—Luanda, Mombasa, the Maldives, Ormuz, Diu, Goa, Galle, Macao, Tsingtao, Malacca, Melinda, Timor, Rio de Janeiro.

The traders served God as well as Mammon. “The preachers take the gospel and the merchants take the preachers,” said the 16th-century Jesuit António Vieira. The Portuguese named the waters off Salvador, their first capital in Brazil, the Bay of All Saints (and nicknamed it the Bay of All the Sins). They also exported such European innovations as the movable-type printing press, which they introduced in the Middle East and possibly Japan. Portuguese words entered the languages of the Japanese (*tempura*), the Indians (*caste*), and other distant peoples.

In sum, as Lisbon would never forget, it was the Portuguese who first “linked up, for better and for worse, the widely sun-

*Marco Polo (circa 1254–1324) had journeyed overland to China some 200 years earlier—one of several travelers, most of them Italian, to bring back tales of Eastern silks and spices. By da Gama’s time, some of those commodities were reaching Europe, but only via the Middle East at the hands of traders from Venice.

Kenneth Maxwell, 43, is program director of the Tinker Foundation and Senior Fellow at Columbia University’s Research Institute on International Change. Born in Wellington, Somerset, England, he received his B.A. from Saint John’s College, Cambridge (1963) and Ph.D. from Princeton (1970). He is the author of Conflicts and Conspiracies: Brazil and Portugal 1750–1805 (1974) and editor of The Press and the Rebirth of Iberian Democracy (1983) and Portugal Ten Years after the Revolution (1984).



Portuguese mariners: Vasco da Gama saluted the ruler of Calicut in India two years before Pedro Álvares Cabral (top right) reached Brazil in 1500. Ferdinand Magellan led the Spanish fleet that sailed west around the globe during 1519–22.

dered branches of the great human family,” as historian Charles R. Boxer has noted. “It was they who first made Humanity conscious, however dimly, of its essential unity.”

But why the Portuguese?

During the 15th century, there were scarcely more than one million Portuguese, most of them illiterate peasants. Smaller than Scotland, just 130 miles wide at its broadest point, Portugal was short of every natural resource but shoreline. Between the mountainous north and the arid south, only one-third of the country could be cultivated. And when Portugal* came into being as a kingdom during the 12th century, other European mariners were already in business—the Basques, the Catalans, the Genoese, and the Venetians.

But the Portuguese, sharing a peninsula with a more powerful neighbor, Spain, had a genius for survival, for deftly exploiting the rival ambitions of bigger powers. It was what would keep their tiny country independent through most of 700 years

*The word *Portugal* was derived from *Portus Cale*, the old Roman name for Oporto, now the country's second largest city.

of turbulent European history. They would not be conquistadors, like the Spanish who followed them, but maneuverers—"opportunists of action," as the 20th-century dictator António de Oliveira Salazar once described himself.

Opportunity called early. Lisbon in the 12th century was on the sea route used by both Venetian and Genoese traders sailing to northern Europe, and European crusaders bound for the Mediterranean and the Holy Land to fight the Islamic legions they called "Moors." Afonso Henriques, the founder of Portugal's first monarchy, the House of Burgundy, got the help of one group of passing English and French crusaders in taking Lisbon from the Moors in 1147. The last Moors were expelled from Portugal in 1249, some 250 years before the Spanish conquered their remaining Muslim fiefdom, Granada, in 1492.

Foreign help was crucial again during the 14th century. John of Aviz, the bastard son of Portugal's last Burgundian monarch, defeated a larger force of Castilian invaders at Aljubarrota in 1385—with the aid of English archers provided by England's John of Gaunt, who had ambitions of taking over Castile.

Down to Africa

The Portuguese King John married John of Gaunt's daughter, affirming what was to be a lasting link with the British. The 1386 Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of Windsor—a classic treaty of alliance by a small country seeking big-power protection against a larger neighbor—remains Europe's oldest mutual defense pact. It was to bring Portugal into World War I and serve as "neutral" Portugal's excuse to allow the Allies to use antisubmarine bases in the Azores during World War II.

The Portuguese learned the limits of their own power early. In 1415, King John led a force that seized the Moorish port of Ceuta, on the Moroccan side of the Strait of Gibraltar. The aim was to strike a blow at the infidels for Christendom, but in the process, the Portuguese learned that the Moroccans were enriched by a steady procession of camel caravans coming north from Guinea, laden with gold and spices. Beyond control of Ceuta, the Portuguese had little military success in Morocco. So their leaders made a decision: If the Portuguese could not win glory and wealth on land, they would turn to the sea.

In 1419, King John's energetic third son, Prince Henry ("the Navigator"), then 25, moved to Sagres, a bleak outpost on southern Portugal's Algarve coast, to set up a center for maritime exploration. It was to earn Portugal its niche in history.

The timing was propitious. During the 15th century, Portu-

gal was largely at peace, while larger European powers were embroiled in various conflicts—the Hundred Years' War, the Wars of the Roses, the advances of the Ottoman Turks in the Levant and the Balkans. Portugal's Spanish rivals, Castile and Aragon, were immobilized by a state of near-anarchy that would last until their union in 1479 under Ferdinand V and Isabella I.

The great achievement of the captains, cartographers, and other specialists whom Prince Henry recruited was to determine the patterns of the prevailing ocean winds and currents—and to recognize that the sea could be used to link distant continents. That knowledge would give all of Europe access to what is now the Third World, and the Portuguese had it first.

Their mariners began sailing down the uncharted littoral of West Africa around 1420. The early returns were meager—the first Portuguese *feitoria* (trading post) was not set up until about 1445—but the captains of the small but fast caravels gradually took part of the traffic in Guinea gold away from the Arab caravans. Coins called “Portugaloisers” appeared in Antwerp and other northern European cities.

Soon, the Portuguese were bartering brassware and trinkets, as well as cloth, carpets, and silks from Granada and Tunis, for gold, slaves, and “grains of paradise,” or Guinea pepper. The trading posts became forts. A 15th-century chronicler told how an African chief bested a rival: He told “his men, who were Negroes, to whiten their faces, legs, and arms with clay . . . masquerading them in all other ways so that they might even more readily be taken for Christians.” The enemy fled “to the accompaniment of a great victory and much merriment.”

Sugar, Slaves, Gold

Portugal prospered. By 1457, the Lisbon mint was able to issue a gold coin, the *crusado*, for the first time in 74 years. Slaves—perhaps 150,000 were imported during the last half of the 15th century alone—were in demand in Portugal, Spain, and other European markets.

The Atlantic outposts of Madeira and the Azores, first colonized to supply the ships in the West African trade, produced sugar cane, another prized commodity. Plantations were started on the Cape Verde Islands and on other islands off Africa, using slave labor.

By that time, some 60 years after Prince Henry began launching his expeditions, Lisbon had replaced the Algarve as Portugal's maritime center. The port on the Tagus offered favorable winds and currents. Lisbon also had old trading ties with

PORTUGAL



A 1529 map. Under a 1494 treaty, Portugal's sphere of influence ran from Brazil east to Japan. Spain had the rest of the Western Hemisphere.

the Muslim world and a community of expatriate Genoese and other Italians skilled in the use of exchange and credit. They knew how to finance long-distance trade.

Italian merchants—Lomellini, Affaitati, Giraldi, and Marchione—were bankers to the Portuguese court and its envoys. They invested in sugar and the slave trade, and forged links with bankers from southern Germany: Through them, they traded Portuguese oil, wine, fruit, and salt, as well as African spices and gold, for German silver and copper.

As Dias was rounding the southern tip of Africa in 1488, and Cabral was discovering Brazil in 1500—and as the Spanish were still seeking a Western route to the Indies—a Portuguese Atlantic commercial system based on sugar, slaves, and gold was already thriving. The Portuguese provided the commodities; the foreign bankers saw to the capital and the markets.

Before long, Lisbon's interest turned to Asia. The landing at Calicut had launched what Indian historian K. M. Panikkar has called Asia's "Vasco da Gama epoch," a period of European intervention that would not ebb until after World War II. As in

Africa, the Portuguese did not initially seek to settle territory. They built a thalassocracy, a lucrative empire of sea routes and coastal trading cities. Europeans would pay well for the Indian and Indonesian pepper, nutmeg, and cloves, the Ceylonese cinnamon, and the Chinese silks and porcelain that the Portuguese could buy cheaply with German (and later American) silver.

By the 16th century, Portugal's thalassocracy had made it Europe's richest nation, and the kingdom enjoyed a period of commercial and cultural flowering. But that would soon change. King Manuel had ambitions of acquiring Aragon and Castile. To that end, he married Ferdinand and Isabella's daughter and matched their Christian zeal. Though in 1492 Portugal had accepted some 60,000 Jews who had been expelled from Spain, in 1496 Manuel turned around and (aping the Spaniards) compelled those Jews who would not leave the country to convert to Christianity. The so-called New Christians were treated harshly; in Lisbon alone, hundreds were slain in a 1506 pogrom.

Waiting for Sebastian

Manuel's Spanish ambitions faded, but Iberia's religious zealotry did not. Following the Protestant Reformation in northern Europe (which put the Anglo-Portuguese alliance in limbo), Lisbon took the Catholic Counter-Reformation to heart. As Spain had done nearly 60 years earlier, the Portuguese church in 1536 established a Holy Office of the Inquisition. With the king's brother as inquisitor-general, the Inquisition tightened book censorship and began an epoch of repression: Armed with royal statutes requiring "purity of blood" for holders of key posts, Inquisition officials hounded New Christians (many of them leading merchants) and anyone else who might be accused of "heretical" ideas. Besides a profusion of informers, the Inquisition fostered the *auto da fé* (act of faith)—the public burning of heretics at the stake. The first was held in Lisbon in 1541.*

Around the same time, the court also opened Portugal to the Society of Jesus, the self-appointed police of the Counter-Reformation. Both the Jesuits, who would dominate education and missionary activity, and the Inquisition would play large roles in shaping national life.

As the Inquisition proceeded, Portugal's overseas fortunes darkened. Within a century of the voyages of exploration, the Spanish, British, and Dutch were building their own empires,

*The Inquisition turned over people who would not renounce alleged heresies to the state for trial. Some 1,500 were garroted or burned in autos da fé before capital sentences were abolished in the 1760s; many more died in prison.

THE RIGHT STUFF, 15th-CENTURY STYLE

To 15th-century mariners, the distant seas held naught but terrors. When Prince Henry's captains first ventured south along the African coast around 1420, it was still widely believed that they might fall off the Earth's edge—or be poached in sun-boiled seas or seized by monsters. An Italian named Pietro D'Abano had written that mag-



Prince Henry

netic mountains in Africa pulled ships to shore. "Men laugh while being attracted," he claimed, "and at last are held fast."

The real hazards were bad enough: storms, shipwrecks, scurvy, and hostile natives. In 1446, Nuno Tristão, sailing a caravel 1,800 miles from Lagos, the base in southern Portugal for the early exploratory voyages, came upon the Gambia River. While exploring it in rowboats, Tristão and 21 others were killed by canoe-borne Africans armed with poisoned arrows. Five crewmen (three of them boys) escaped. When they brought the 50-ton caravel into Lagos two months later and reported to

Henry, he was moved to give pensions to the lost men's dependents—a rare gesture in those days.

The tall half-English prince never sailed with the captains he commissioned, but not for lack of grit. An ascetic who often fasted for months, Prince Henry long financed the voyages with income from his estates and royal monopolies of soap and fish sales, and by borrowing from the Order of Christ, an organization of soldier-missionaries of which he was governor. For the school of navigation he set up west of Lagos in Sagres, he recruited geographers, mapmakers, and other experts, among them Jews who had traveled in the Muslim world and knew where the Moors' African gold and spices came from.

Borrowing from the Arabs, his designers produced the caravel, a ship with lateen sails that could be steered close to the wind. The caravels could return home against the northwesterly Atlantic winds faster than Europe's standard square-sailed craft.

and Europe was flooded with the imported commodities on which Lisbon had prospered. The empire's golden era had already passed by 1580, when Portugal lost its independence to Spain—the result of a disastrous failure of leadership.

King Sebastian, an impetuous 22-year-old who admired his ancestors' overseas exploits and fancied himself "a captain of Christ," led an army of 23,000 to Morocco—and defeat. Sebastian was slain, but rumors that he was held captive somewhere refused to die. Ordinary folk cherished a persistent belief that he would return to fulfill a grand destiny for Portugal.

Various evidence, including Marco Polo's account of his 13th-century land journey to China, persuaded the prince that voyages down the African coast would both open the wealth of that land to Portugal and yield a sea route to the East. Besides riches, he hoped to find the kingdom of Prester John, a Christian monarch who, as a persistent European legend had it, ruled great stretches of Africa or, perhaps, Asia. With these aims in mind, Henry dispatched ship after ship to the south—30 of them in one three-year period. Each of his captains had the same order: to go farther than all predecessors and bring back a native for interrogation.

The captains returned with wondrous tales. The Venetian Alvise Cadamosto, who ventured as far as "the Kingdom of Gambia," told of "horse-fish" (hippopotamuses), of girls who bound their breasts "to make them grow so long they sometimes reached their navels," and of a monarch who kept at least 30 wives deployed in villages he planned to visit. The Africans, it was found, thought that the Portuguese used the eyes painted on their ships' bows to find their way. Voyage reports were kept secret to prevent the Spanish and others from learning what the Portuguese were finding.

Progress was slow. Not until about 1442 did the caravels start bringing back the slaves and gold (most of it from mines near the Upper Senegal, Upper Niger, and Volta rivers) that made the ventures profitable. After that, Henry and the Crown began licensing merchants and court nobles to finance voyages, some of which returned profits of up to 700 percent. At the Crown's request, the Vatican issued papal bulls (decrees) that authorized the Portuguese to convert pagans and generally served to charter an empire all the way "to the Indies."



A caravel

Prince Henry got a share (one-fifth or so) of the profits. But when he died in 1460, at age 66, he was deeply in debt. By that time, the islands of Madeira, Cape Verde, and the Azores had been colonized, but the Portuguese had advanced down the African coast only as far as Sierra Leone, roughly 2,200 miles from home. The greatest achievements, and great rewards, still lay ahead.

The reality was different. Sebastian left no heir, and his throne went to an uncle who was also childless. Seizing the opportunity, Spain's Habsburg king, Philip II, claimed Portugal by right of his Portuguese mother (Sebastian's aunt) and sent troops to occupy Lisbon. For six decades, Portugal languished under Spanish domination.

Not until 1640 did a successful rebellion, profiting from Spain's preoccupation with a war against France and a revolt in Catalonia, install a new Portuguese dynasty, the House of Bragança. By then, the empire was frayed. The Dutch had seized

Ceylon, Luanda (Portugal's chief West African slaving port), and part of Brazil, now a big sugar producer. Needing help against further Spanish incursions, the Portuguese sought new alliances and again found the British willing—for a price.

Under a 1661 treaty, England's King Charles II received a bride, the Portuguese princess Catherine of Bragança, and a dowry of two million crusadoes. Charles also got control of Tangier and of Bombay, Britain's first foothold in India.

Mad Dogs and Englishmen

Portugal's fortunes were increasingly tied to Brazil, and for a time this meant economic revival. The Dutch threat faded, and during the 1680s the first great gold rush of modern times began after a strike in the Brazilian interior.

During the 18th century, Portugal prospered, mainly on Brazilian sugar, tobacco, cacao, hides, cotton, and gold, as well as on silver smuggled from Spain's American colonies. Port became a valuable export as "the Englishman's wine" when Britain banned French claret in 1678. Not needing to raise taxes, the Bragança kings had no need to consult the Cortes (Parliament). Its 1698 meeting was to be its last for 122 years.

But prosperity brought change. Foreigners—Germans, Italians, and, above all, the English—came to deal in wine or Brazilian sugar and tobacco. Welcomed as sources of capital and marketing skills, they gained an extraterritorial legal status that gave them their own courts and commercial organizations. In Oporto, the port wine capital, English "shippers" built an opulent "Factory House" where they dined lavishly while managing a virtual monopoly on wine exports.

After returning to London in 1752 from a visit, the former British ambassador Lord Tyrawly reported that "a great body of His Majesty's subjects reside in Lisbon, rich, opulent, and everyday increasing their fortunes and enlarging their dealings." Another British traveler, William Costigan, noted in 1787 that "excepting the lowest conditions of life, you shall not meet anyone on foot some hours of the violent heat everyday but mad dogs and Englishmen."

At the same time, while northern Europe was caught up in that surge of interest in science, human freedom, and social progress known as the Enlightenment, Portugal's rulers insisted on church orthodoxy and absolute monarchy. The Inquisition was still pursuing heretics and censoring books. With 50,000 clerics on church rolls at a time when the population was less than three million, Portugal was, as Boxer put it,

“more priest-ridden than any other country in the world, with the possible exception of Tibet.”

As time went on, King John V, modeling himself on France’s “Sun King,” Louis XIV, emptied his country’s ample treasury on extravagances. Some 45,000 workers built a monastery-palace at Mafra; a Swiss who visited the site in 1726 marveled that “three-quarters of the king’s treasures and of the gold brought by the Brazil fleets were changed here into stones.” Voltaire said of King John in 1750: “When he wanted a festival, he ordered a religious parade. When he wanted a new building, he built a convent. When he wanted a mistress, he took a nun.”

Portugal’s isolation from the Enlightenment disturbed the nation’s intellectuals. Among them was the Marquês de Pombal (1699–1782), who became Portugal’s virtual dictator for 27 years, until the death in 1777 of his patron, Joseph I, John V’s successor. Pombal’s aims were furthered by a dramatic event: the 1755 Lisbon earthquake.

On November 1, All Saints’ Day, about one-third of the opulent city was destroyed. Voltaire described the quake in *Candide* (1758): “The sea was lashed into a froth, burst into the port, and smashed all the vessels lying at anchor there. Whirlwinds of fire and ash swirled through the streets and public squares; houses



Farmers, fishermen, and merchant seamen had roles to play in Portugal’s golden age, but in this 16th-century woodcut only clerics stood close to the Crown. Says the deferential inscription: “To God in Heaven but to you in the world.”

crumbled, roofs came crashing down on foundations." The Royal Opera House and Joseph's palace were wrecked. Of Lisbon's 40 parish churches, 35 collapsed. Only 3,000 of the 20,000 houses remained habitable. The death toll was at least 15,000.

Pombal acted swiftly. Amid Lisbon's ruins, engineers went to work on what stands today as a classic product of rational 18th-century urban planning. New buildings were constructed to a standard, economical design, hills were leveled, streets were laid out in a grid, and a large new riverfront square was built. Its name: Praça do Comercio (Place of Commerce).

Pain without Screaming

Portugal, Pombal had decided, would be an up-to-date state where both businessmen and aristocrats would have pride of place. He set up both a school of commerce and a college of nobles; there Portugal's future leaders were to be taught foreign languages, mathematics, and the sciences, free of the influence of the Jesuits, whom Pombal blamed for many of Portugal's ills. He closed the Jesuit college at Évora, purged the prestigious University of Coimbra of Jesuit influence, and turned over the Inquisition's censorship powers (as well as control of lower education) to a royal board.

Besides curbing church power (the entire Jesuit order was banished in 1759), Pombal also faced Portugal's old dilemma: how to limit foreign economic influence while retaining foreign (especially British) political and military support. To strengthen Portuguese business, he moved to bring "all the commerce of this kingdom" into monopoly firms and did so first in areas where the British traders were powerful: Brazil and the port wine region. The aim, as Pombal's representative in the port district said, "was to hurt them in such a way that they cannot scream."

All opposition was crushed. After 5,000 people in Oporto rioted over high wine prices, which they blamed on Pombal's company, 478 were tried for treason and 13 were hanged.

As was the case with the Enlightenment everywhere, Pombal's efforts had mixed results. He advanced industry and education, and ended antisemitism and slavery in Portugal (though slaves were still shipped to Brazil). Yet he was ruthless even by 18th-century standards. Police and spies were everywhere, and jails were full of people held without charge.

A contemporary, Canon António Ribeiro dos Santos, noted that Pombal "wanted to civilize the nation and at the same time to enslave it; he wanted to spread the light of the philosophical



Lagos was the starting point for the early exploratory voyages of the 15th century. Today, the port is known for herring fishing and tourism.

sciences and at the same time to elevate the royal power to despotism." The competing goals—modernity and firm rule—would surface repeatedly in Portugal over the years as its income from the overseas colonies slowly declined.

Authority, and much else, was shattered by the Napoleonic Wars. The 1807 invasion of Portugal by the French Army began a century of turmoil that would further erode the empire.

British troops, led by the future Duke of Wellington, finally expelled the French in 1814, but by then Portugal was ravaged: Factories and vineyards were destroyed; art treasures were ruined. The Portuguese court, which had fled to Brazil, showed no desire to come home. Instead, Brazil was raised to the status of a kingdom, co-equal with Portugal.

The trans-Atlantic arrangement was short-lived. In Portugal, a rebellion erupted that led to the convening of the first Cortes since 1698. King John VI had to return to Lisbon in 1821 and accept a liberal constitution providing for representative government and an end to the Inquisition. As Brazil declared its independence, its motherland fell into a series of struggles among constitutionalists, "absolutists," and other monarchists.

Eventually, the diminished Portuguese Crown was further weakened by another foreign humiliation—this one from its ancient ally Britain. The Portuguese mounted a claim, with Bel-

gian and German support, to a stretch of the African hinterland separating Angola and Mozambique. But Britain had its own plans for the territory (now Malawi) and in 1890 demanded that Portugal drop its plans. Lisbon complied.

By the 20th century, agitation from emerging trade unions and political paralysis in Lisbon set the stage for a rebellion by civilian republicans, most of them merchants. When it occurred in 1910, almost without a shot, Portugal's last king, Manuel II, sailed off on the royal yacht to exile in England.

Enter Salazar

The republican regime never enjoyed a popular consensus. Its legalization of the separation of church and state pleased urban Portuguese but angered rural northerners. Political feuding and government deficits mounted, and by 1926 Portugal's military leaders decided that the republican experiment should be replaced by a dictatorship. To run it, they turned in 1928 to an obscure economics professor named António de Oliveira Salazar.

An austere 39-year-old bachelor from central Portugal, Salazar took complete control, ruling first as finance minister, later as president of the Council of Ministers. The New State constitution that he drew up in 1932 created a "corporate" regime on the pattern of what Benito Mussolini had just established in Italy. But despite its fascist trappings—a Mussolini-inspired labor law that banned strikes, Gestapo-inspired secret police—the New State was essentially a Catholic authoritarian regime. A century and a half after the reign of Portugal's last strong man, Pombal, Salazar maintained stability not by Nazi-style repression but by deftly balancing competing interests—small farmers and merchants, large landowners and big (often family-controlled) businesses.

Salazar never traveled outside Portugal (save for meetings with General Franco in Spain) and eschewed ceremony. The only time he was ever seen in a tuxedo was at a 1957 dinner he gave for Queen Elizabeth II. His strength lay in a talent for political manipulation—combined with peasant stubbornness. Despite strong pressures from both Britain and the Axis powers, mindful of his country's fruitless sufferings as a belligerent in previous wars, he kept Portugal neutral in World War II.*

*Salazar sympathized with Hitler and Mussolini, and for a time Portugal supplied both Germany and the Allies with the critical metal tungsten. But in 1943, after the tide had clearly turned against the Axis, he allowed the Treaty of Windsor to be invoked to allow the British (and their U.S. allies) to use bases in the Azores. His reward was postwar membership in NATO and a Western guarantee that the integrity of Portugal's colonial territories in Africa and Asia would be respected.

He seemed to savor a romantic image of Portugal and its empire, a vision of a world lost in time, certain of verities long dismissed elsewhere, that appealed not just to tourists. Salazar, the U.S. diplomat George Ball noted after a 1963 Lisbon visit, appeared to live "in more than one century, as though Prince Henry the Navigator, Vasco da Gama, and Ferdinand Magellan were still active agents in the shaping of Portuguese policy."

Portugal had a lazily beautiful rural landscape of a kind visible nowhere else in Europe outside the Balkans. Tradition was strong. Local bigwigs ruled their bailiwicks as if the 19th century had never ended. But the social cost of backwardness was high. Portugal's rates of infectious disease, infant mortality, and illiteracy matched Turkey's. Lisbon sparkled; the working-class towns on the other side of the Tagus did not. In Barreiro, families on aptly named Sulphuric Acid Street often had to move across town to escape fumes from the nearby chemical works.

A Pox on Oil

Unlike Pombal, who had used the power of the state to ruthlessly force through a crash program of modernization, the New State froze Portugal's economic and social patterns. "We are antiparlamentarians, antidemocrats, antiliberals," Salazar said in 1936. "We are opposed to all forms of internationalism, communism, socialism, syndicalism." To govern, he said without apology, "is to protect the people from themselves."

Debt, which brought obligations, was to be avoided. Portugal accepted only \$64 million in U.S. Marshall Plan aid between 1949 and 1957, just six percent of Greece's total and 12 percent of Spain's. While other Western leaders were using deficits to spur growth, Salazar made a fetish of balanced budgets. To him, *no* news promising economic (and therefore social) change was good news. "Oil in Angola?" he said when told of a strike in his richest African colony. "That's all we need!"

He promoted the family as the source of "social harmony." Parental authority was emphasized: For years only heads of families were allowed the "civic responsibility" of voting for the rubber-stamp National Assembly (only one party, the National Union, was allowed). The New State had other enforcers of harmony, notably the International Police for the Defense of the State (PIDE); the dreaded PIDE maintained a network of informants and suffered no constraints on its power to harass and even torture suspected dissidents.

Yet Salazar enjoyed sizable support. The church and the small landholders of the heavily Catholic north backed him. So



António de Oliveira Salazar (1889–1970) exalted the traditional rural life exemplified by these northern peasants. "Men change little," he said, "and the Portuguese hardly at all."

did the *latifundiarios*, owners of big farming estates in the central and southern regions who feared a loss of their holdings if the Left took power. (The outlawed Portuguese Communist Party, formed in 1921, was especially strong in the south.) Other backing came from Portugal's interlocking financial and industrial conglomerates. The Melo family's Companhia União Fabril (CUF) dominated commerce in Guinea and controlled 70 percent of Portugal's tobacco market. The Champalimaud group had a near monopoly of cement production.

But Salazar could not freeze the world. In 1961, India seized Goa from a 3,500-man Portuguese garrison that had been ordered to "conquer or die." In Africa, as the French and British were freeing *their* colonies, black nationalist guerrillas rose up against the Portuguese in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea. Salazar refused to negotiate. By 1968, the Portuguese had 130,000 troops deployed in Africa. In that year, however, the dictator, then 79, suffered an odd mishap; his chair collapsed and he fell, suffering a stroke from which he never recovered.

His successor, named by the figurehead president, Rear

Adm. Américo Deus Thomáz, was law professor Marcello Caetano, a former New State official and Salazar protégé. Caetano hoped to shore up the war-strained economy and preserve the New State by promoting capitalism and foreign investment. Yet, the growing economic crisis that would cripple his regime began where it was least expected: in agriculture.

Troubles

Beginning in the late 1950s, Portuguese farm boys had left home by the thousands for jobs in Western Europe. Conscription for the African wars only increased the exodus. By 1975, some 1.5 million Portuguese—one-third of the labor force—were living abroad. About 700,000 resided in France, where, during the 1970s, the minimum wage was higher than what even skilled workers in Portugal could earn.

Due to emigration, much of the north appeared in the early 1970s as if it had been visited by the plague: Whole villages were dying, roads were deserted, fields abandoned. In a nation where crop yields are poor at best—half the European average in wheat, for example—farm output plunged. The cost of rising food imports added a new drain on Portugal's finances. When skilled hands joined the exodus—they made up one-third of the 120,000 who departed in 1973—industry suffered. Portugal had to import labor from the Cape Verde Islands, giving Lisbon its first large black minority since the 18th century.

The 1960s had brought much foreign investment. The United States, West Germany, and the World Bank financed the development of electric power and other projects. By the mid-1970s, such companies as International Telephone and Telegraph, Timex, and Britain's Plessey employed some 70,000 workers, mostly in assembling products to be sold elsewhere. Another 70,000 made garments; 15 of that industry's 25 major firms were Swedish owned.

But by the early 1970s, this growth began to seem precarious. The ban on independent trade unions assured foreign employers of high profits by assuring low pay—and Portugal's wages were one-seventh of Sweden's, one-fifth of Britain's. If pay rose, the jobs might go. If wages did not rise and labor unrest broke out, the foreign firms might leave anyway.

Meanwhile, Portugal's own big firms went international—and became less dependent on the fate of the colonies. The CUF became Iberia's largest business, a complex of more than 100 companies representing one-tenth of Portugal's industrial output. Besides having projects in Brazil, America, and Europe,

it brought Dutch and Swedish partners into the big Lisnave shipyard on the Tagus estuary. Such "well-managed" enterprises got generous government aid.

With "internationalization" came the erosion of the early New State alliances. The small businessmen who thrived under Salazar felt threatened by Caetano, whose ministers found them "unecomic." Mergers were encouraged. As the distribution of goods became constricted, hoarding appeared. Even codfish caught by the Portuguese on the Grand Banks off Newfoundland became scarce. Government planners also began to wrangle with both peasant farmers and the big landowners, most of whom failed to use their subsidies to modernize their operations. Meanwhile, the industrialists grew increasingly unhappy with the wars, and not just because of the labor strains and tax burdens they caused and the foreign capital they scared off. By poisoning Lisbon's foreign relations, the struggle in Africa clouded the nation's chances of joining the European Economic Community.

By 1973, nearly half of Portugal's trade was with the Common Market. The industrialists knew that Portugal's isolation was now more a state of mind—a hangover from Salazar's day—than a reality. To the very business interests that it had fostered, the New State had become a hindrance.

And the rulers of the New State had become captives of the overseas empire they sought to save. "Refusing any kind of a bargain, we do not sell or lease our colonies," Salazar said, and his successors dared not disagree.

In *Portugal: Fifty Years of Dictatorship* (1975), António de Figueiredo traced this intransigence to a "metaphysics" of empire supported by a popular thirst for national prestige dating back to the era of Henry the Navigator. Surely, it also reflected the back-against-the-wall psychology of a small power faced with outside pressure. Salazar had the old Portuguese talent for international maneuvering, as his deft management of Lisbon's World War II neutrality showed. He kept Portugal in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and he silenced critics among the Western allies by threatening to evict NATO forces from the Azores. But in the end, he had harnessed that talent to fantasies of imperial grandeur, and his successors could not sustain them.

In the spring of 1974, the fantasies were finally ended.



DISCOVERING DEMOCRACY

by Thomas C. Bruneau

Shortly after midnight on April 25, 1974, Lisbon's Radio Renascença played "Grandola vila morena," an old ballad that was an anthem of the Portuguese Left. For a few listeners, most of them middle-ranking Army officers waiting in barracks up and down the country, the spirited lyrics had special meaning. The end of 48 years of dictatorship was at hand.

The ballad was the signal for rebel units to take up positions in six cities. As people were going to work in Lisbon that Thursday morning, Army vehicles were rolling to the waterfront Praça do Comércio and other key points in the capital. Radio announcements by a group called the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) explained that a coup was under way "to put an end to the regime which had oppressed the country for so long."

The collapse of the late António de Oliveira Salazar's New State was swift. Almost no one would fight for the dictatorship. When a squadron of "loyalist" tanks entered Lisbon, its men declined to fire on the rebels: A young sublieutenant who clearly approved of the coup happily said to an MFA officer, "I am here to attack you, but all I want to do is laugh." Students took to the streets chanting "Down with fascism," and the censorship office on the Rua da Misericórdia was ransacked. When a joyous mob of 15,000 gathered at Caxias prison, near the capital, guards freed all 200-odd political prisoners.

Prime Minister Marcello Caetano surrendered to the MFA's representative, Gen. António de Spínola, a popular veteran of the long antiguerrilla campaigns in Africa. "You must maintain control," Salazar's successor told the general. "I am frightened by the idea of power loose in the streets."

Today, nearly 11 years after the beginning of the transformation of one of the world's oldest nations into Europe's newest democracy, the "Revolution of the Flowers" has noticeably wilted. Demonstrations for one group or another—about 50 political parties sprang to life within two months of the coup—are now infrequent, and the red carnations hawked by vendors are no longer worn as symbols of freedom. Like Lisbon's political graffiti, the excitement of liberation has faded.

According to a 1984 poll, while nearly all Portuguese believed that the revolution brought something new to their poverty-ridden nation, only 44 percent thought that their own

lives had changed. A good many reckoned that the change had been for the worse. Asked which government had run the country the best, more people (35 percent) chose the Salazar or the Caetano regimes than any of the 15 governments—six “provisional,” nine constitutional—that had appeared since 1974.

Though labor unrest, rumblings in the military, and other fissures in the war-strained New State had been visible for months, the April 1974 coup came as a surprise. Portuguese citizens, few of whom knew what the MFA was, rushed to stock up on food and gasoline. A different sort of shock reverberated among Portugal’s North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) partners, particularly the United States. The troubled Nixon administration, worried—amid its agonies over the Watergate scandal—about Communist violations of the fragile truce in Vietnam and concerned about Soviet expansion elsewhere, reacted quickly: It barred Portugal’s military men from access to NATO’s confidential nuclear strategy briefings.

Whatever the reaction abroad, Lisbon’s new rulers inherited a society that had gradually been falling apart. Viewed in retrospect, some sort of revolution seemed almost inevitable.

Grinding on for 13 years, the wars in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea had become extremely costly to Portugal. By 1971, 11.2 percent of all Portuguese men of military age were in uniform. Of the Army’s 179,000 troops, 142,000 were deployed in Africa, fighting a jungle war of attrition against Soviet Bloc–armed black guerrillas with tactics (including a “hearts and minds” campaign) much like those used by American forces in Vietnam.

Though casualties went unreported, they were worse, relative to population size, than U.S. losses in Vietnam. In *Portugal: Fifty Years of Dictatorship* (1975), António de Figueiredo cited an estimate of more than 6,000 dead and 12,000 wounded by 1970 alone.

One of the other casualties was Portugal’s economy. By the time of the coup, the country’s inflation rate had reached 30 percent (the highest in Western Europe), its trade deficit was the worst ever, and unemployment was rising—despite a steady exodus of emigrants seeking work or avoiding conscription.

With nearly half of government spending going to the mili-

Thomas C. Bruneau, 45, a former senior program associate in the Latin American Program at the Wilson Center, is professor of political science at McGill University in Montreal. Born in Los Angeles, Calif., he received a B.A. from California State University at San José (1962) and a Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley (1970). Among his books are The Church in Brazil: The Politics of Religion (1982) and Politics and Nationhood: Post-Revolutionary Portugal (1984); he is coeditor of Portugal in Development (1984).



After initial hesitation, civilians cheered the April 25, 1974, Army coup that ended Portugal's New State. Soon, red carnations were worn everywhere, giving post-coup turbulence a name: The Revolution of the Flowers.

tary, Portugal's rate of "fixed" investment—the kind that creates jobs and exports—was the lowest in Western Europe. To compensate, Lisbon had in the mid-1960s begun to lure foreign manufacturers to its low-wage economy. While this strategy brought growth for a while, by the mid-1970s it had soured.

Portugal, which imports 80 percent of its energy and more than half of its food, was hit especially hard by the global bout of recession and inflation that followed the 1973 Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil embargo. As Portugal's export markets went soft, the cost of everything from codfish to bullfight tickets raced ahead of wages. Though both unions and strikes were illegal in the New State, Communist-led workers staged some 40 major walkouts in 1973. Plants owned by International Telephone and Telegraph, Grundig, British Leyland, and other firms closed down; Britain's Plessey had to double its minimum wage, to \$200 per month. There was violence: Riot police broke up a rally of employees of the national airline TAP at Lisbon airport, and several were injured by gunfire.

In the spring of 1974, by one estimate, 400,000 workers in Lisbon and the nearby Setúbal industrial area went on strike, some for as long as three weeks. On the day of the coup, Prime

Minister Caetano planned to hold a Cabinet meeting to discuss an expected May strike by the New State's own civil service.

While all this was going on, unrest was spreading in the military. Formed in mid-1973, and first known as the Captains' Movement, the MFA was originally a group of some 200 middle-level officers with a professional complaint. Short on junior officers, the Caetano regime proposed awarding officer rank to draftees who had served abroad and re-enlisted after a one-year course at the national Military Academy. These *mali-cianos* would have the same status as career men with four years of education at the academy. Some of them might advance faster than the regulars, since their conscript time would count toward promotion.

The government soon dropped that proposal, but the MFA went on to other matters. Its battle-weary leaders—many of whom had served with General Spínola in Guinea—concluded that, although the African wars could not be won, the regime would fight on, and more Portuguese would die in a lost cause. Caetano himself had once said that “without Africa we would be a small nation; with Africa we are a big power.”

No Lebanon, No Chile

In March 1974, Caetano fired both Gen. Francisco de Costa Gomes, the armed forces' chief of staff, and Spínola, the deputy chief. Spínola had recently published *Portugal and the Future*, a call for peace and the creation of a colonial federation. He compared Portugal's struggles against the African guerrillas with the trouble a man trying to doze in a haystack might have with a flea: “The flea has carried out his mission, which was by feeding off you to keep you from sleeping. But you cannot carry out yours, which was to find the flea. Imagine this happening for a whole week; you would die of exhaustion.”

Caetano went before the National Assembly to defend his war policy and extracted a loyalty oath from more than 100 senior officers. MFA leaders saw no alternative to a coup.

Portugal's politicians suspected nothing. Indeed, when the young officers struck, several notables were traveling abroad: Socialist Party leader Mário Soares was in Bonn; Álvaro Cunhal, the exiled Communist Party chief, was in Prague. The coup quickly became a revolution, largely because the New State simply unraveled. Its bureaucrats and security forces simply quit working. So did much of the country.

Yet, the notably civil Portuguese gave the lie to Salazar's old maxim that “to govern is to protect the people from them-

Turning their backs on Spain, the Portuguese have stayed close to the sea. Most of the population of 9,794,100 lives on or near the stretch of coast from the northern border to just below Lisbon. Some 244,400 people inhabit the Azores, roughly 1,100 miles west of Lisbon; another 258,000 reside in the Madeira Islands, west of Morocco.



selves." Despite all the tumult of the first year of the revolution, fewer than a dozen citizens died in political violence. Portugal was not Lebanon, Chile, or Cuba.

But a revolution it was. With the end of government censorship, publishing exploded. *Avante*, a previously clandestine Communist Party weekly, suddenly appeared on newsstands, along with three dailies that had been taken over by the party. (Indeed, during the first two post-coup years most of the Portuguese press was Communist.) Students held "general assemblies" in the schools and purged libraries of works on the old regime. Contraceptives went on sale, and once-banned plays and movies appeared: Staid middle-aged couples trooped to movie theaters to see why *Emmanuelle* and *Last Tango in Paris* had caused a stir elsewhere in Europe.

Of all the parties that emerged, the only one with any history and organization was the 53-year-old Partido Comunista Português (PCP). It had money (from Moscow), and allies in the

bureaucracy, the unions, and the press. It also had an established network of cells in hundreds of Portuguese communities outside the Catholic, conservative north. While local Communists had sworn never to join "bourgeois" elements, the party accepted Spínola's invitation—during the month after the coup—to take part in the Provisional Government. The PCP chief, Cunhal, said that the party would be happy to help nurture the "fragile plant" of democracy.

Egged on by party cadres, peasants seized large farms in the south and set up some 600 Soviet-style communes. Three months after the coup, 200,000 workers were striking for more pay, shutting down much of Portugal's industry. Lisbon's bus drivers pressed their demands by refusing to collect fares. By late summer, Spínola, as head of the Provisional Government, was openly complaining of Portugal's leftward

THE PORTUGUESE-AMERICANS

During the late 17th and 18th centuries, Portuguese Jews who moved to America owned ships that helped build New England's whaling industry. When sizable Portuguese immigration began, during the 19th century, it was led by Azoreans and other islanders who had joined the crews of passing Yankee whalers. Settling chiefly in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, California, and Hawaii, the early arrivals worked in mills, on farms, and, most notably, in fishing.

A fresh influx began two decades ago, when the curbs that were imposed on all immigration in 1921 were eased. By the late 1960s, Portuguese immigration trailed only that from Britain, Italy, and Taiwan. Better educated than their predecessors, nearly 85 percent of the "new" immigrants have come from mainland Portugal. Today, one million U.S. residents claim Portuguese ancestry. California has the most (31 percent of the total), but the recent arrivals have chiefly headed for Rhode Island (where 9.5 percent of the population has Portuguese roots), Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New York.

The Portuguese remain clannish, especially in New England, but time and marriages to outsiders are bringing "Americanization." As of 1910-12, there were some 15 Portuguese-language newspapers in New England, California, and Hawaii; now there are about 10 small weeklies and one daily (in Providence, Rhode Island). On the other hand, the list of Portuguese-descended notables has grown beyond composer John Philip Sousa and writer John Roderigo Dos Passos (see p. 154). Azores-born Humberto Cardinal Medeiros was the Catholic archbishop of Boston for 13 years, before he died in 1983. And the chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee is Peter ("Tony") Coelho, 42, a three-term U.S. Representative from California—and the grandson of fishermen who came to America during the early 1900s.

drift: "The country," he said, "is sick."

The two years following the revolution brought not only six provisional governments but also two major attempted counter-coups—one from the right, one from the left. Spínola, acting as head of state but representing the center and right of the political spectrum, envisioned a democratic Portugal that would have ties with Western Europe and would shed its colonies gradually. But Vasco Gonçalves, Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, and other leftist officers who had gradually taken over the MFA—and made it a kind of parallel regime—began talking of authoritarian rule and instant freedom for the colonies.

The leftist captains found in the PCP both a sympathetic ideology and an organization that no other party could match. The Communists emerged from the revolution with 4,000 members, a roster that they increased to 100,000 within a year. They also had control of the largest of the newly legalized union federations and impressive financing. The Soviets funneled an estimated \$10 million a month to the party through the Moscow Narodny Bank in London.

A Rebuff to the Left

Spínola, lamenting the "general state of anarchy," was forced into exile in Brazil by the MFA radicals in March 1975. The colonies were turned loose,* and the radicals began talking of ruling indefinitely. MFA officers hinted that, if "the people" wished, the Army might upset plans for a national assembly to frame a new constitution.

Nonetheless, elections for a constituent assembly were held on schedule on April 25, 1975. Fully 92 percent of the six million eligible voters (everyone over 18) turned out for the first real election in Portugal in 49 years—and they rejected the Left.

A stunning 72 percent of the vote went to the prodemocracy parties: Soares's center-left Socialists (who led with 38 percent) and two parties on the right. The PCP got just 12 percent, and the total leftist vote was only 20 percent.

Earlier, following the captains' march to the left, several Western governments had tried to influence events in Portugal.

*Within a year of the coup, independence was handed to Guinea (now Guinea-Bissau), Mozambique, and the islands off Africa—the Cape Verde Islands, and São Tomé and Príncipe. Timor (later seized by Indonesia) simply declared its independence. China declined to take over Macao, the Portuguese enclave near Hong Kong, and it remains in Lisbon's hands. Washington had hoped that mineral-rich Angola would be turned over to one of the three principal rebel groups, Holden Roberto's pro-Western National Front for the Liberation of Angola, but Spínola was exiled before he could accomplish that. Lisbon simply withdrew from Angola in November 1975, and by early the next year the resulting civil war was won—with Soviet and Cuban help—by Augustinho Neto's Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola. Today, all that is left of the Portuguese empire, besides Macao, are the island provinces of Madeira and the Azores.

PORTUGAL



In this 1976 cartoon, Socialist Prime Minister Mário Soares and Portugal's bespectacled president, Gen. António Ramalho Eanes (right), rebuff would-be coalition partners, among them Communist Álvaro Cunhal (far left).

The Nixon administration was particularly aroused. Portugal's strategic importance was clear. It anchored the Atlantic end of NATO's southern flank, which already had its share of unstable governments (Turkey, Greece). And during the 1973 Mideast War, when other European nations refused to let U.S. transports flying supplies to Israel refuel at their airfields, the big C-141s and C-5As used the American base in the Azores, where Soviet submarine movements were also monitored.

Yet Washington felt unable to intervene in Lisbon, particularly in view of the congressional restraints that had been placed on the CIA after the 1973 overthrow of Salvador Allende's Marxist regime in Chile. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had a gloomy October 1974 meeting in the U.S. capital with Soares, then foreign minister. Kissinger told the Socialist chief that, in allowing PCP participation in the government, he may have become Portugal's Kerensky—a dupe who would be swept away (along with democracy) when the Communists took total power.

There was even a suggestion that Portugal's expulsion from NATO might be necessary—an idea that prompted Senator George McGovern to comment that Kissinger had concocted a "vaccination theory" by which the "loss" of Portugal "would at least have had the benign effect of frightening the rest of West-

ern Europe back to strong, anti-Communist unity.”

But, in the end, Portugal was not lost to the West. Simply put, the PCP did not have the votes to win power. The noncommunist parties had worked hard to establish democracy—with foreign help. Governments in West Germany, Norway, and other NATO countries, as well as West European Socialist parties and labor unions, countered the Eastern Bloc’s aid to the PCP. The Common Market advanced \$180 million in loans, on condition that Portugal establish a multiparty democracy.

Finally, the Ford administration (President Nixon had resigned in August 1974) perceived that a Communist takeover was not inevitable and joined the European efforts. Along with the NATO allies, Washington made it clear to Moscow that any Soviet attempt to pry Portugal out of the alliance would not be tolerated; by early 1976, the Red menace had faded.

Today, Portugal has enough problems of its own. The lengthy, 312-item constitution adopted in mid-1976 divides power between a president, who is elected every five years, and an Assembly of the Republic. In the 1976 presidential elections, Gen. António Ramalho Eanes, who had repelled a threat from the left in 1975, was elected with 61.5 percent of the popular vote. He won re-election in 1980 with 56.4 percent; he has provided an important stabilizing force in Lisbon.

The assembly is supposed to be chosen every four years, but if it cannot form a government—a too-frequent occurrence—the president can call early elections.

The Portuguese have gone to the polls four times to elect assemblies. All that this effort has brought them is a succession of nine different coalition governments.* Yet so far, Portugal is doing somewhat better, in terms of governmental stability, than it did in its previous attempt at democracy. Between 1910 and the military coup of 1926 (from the right, that time), Lisbon’s politicians produced 45 governments in 16 years.

All in all, polls show that the Portuguese value their new freedoms. They may even become inured to Lisbon’s fractious politics. In *Portugal: Birth of a Democracy* (1978), British journalist Robert Harvey suggested that “it is possible that instability is becoming institutionalized, Italian-style.” Though Rome has had 44 governments since 1945, the Italians survive; the mail gets delivered and the civil servants get paid.

*The current coalition, in power since 1983, joins Prime Minister Soares’s Socialists, still the top vote getters, and the center-right Social Democratic Party (PSD), generally second at the polls. No government since 1976 has included the rigidly pro-Moscow PCP. It now pulls about 18 percent of the vote, more than the Spanish Communists (close to four percent) but far less than the Italian Communist Party (30 percent), whose leaders have espoused a “Eurocommunism” that is supposedly independent of the Kremlin.

**PORTUGAL'S WINE-MAKERS:
COPING WITH COMPETITION**

António de Oliveira Salazar, prime minister from 1932 to 1968, once called himself Portugal's "housewife." Yet, while he kept things tidy, he never gave his old industries a good scrubbing. Indeed, the New State exalted traditional ways. But now that Portugal's economy depends heavily on exports, the old ways can be a liability.

Take the wine industry—particularly port, which has been Portugal's leading export since the 17th century.

Port comes from a region of 62,000 acres of terraced vineyards in northern Portugal's Douro River valley. The finished wine is "fortified" with brandy (to a level of 20 percent alcohol), bottled, and marketed by some 75 "shippers," most based in the city of Oporto. But the basic wine comes from the area's 25,000 farmers, most of whom have very small plots. Though they are often at odds with the shippers—and have lately been pressing for the right to blend and sell their own port—the farmers are deeply conservative and wary of change of any kind.

In 1975, for example, the military-dominated regime in Lisbon dispatched a young Army officer to head the farmers' association in the port region. When he sought to ingratiate himself by proposing to change the name of port wine to Douro wine—after the region's name—the farmers sent the officer back to the capital. Revolutions may be fine for Lisbon, they suggested, but not for the Douro wine-makers.

Portugal is the world's seventh biggest wine producer (the top six: Italy, France, the Soviet Union, Spain, Argentina, and the United States). Wine exports earned the country \$200 million in foreign exchange during 1983 (port's share: 60 percent). Directly or indirectly, wine employs 15 percent of the work force. Lisbon newspapers follow the September-October grape harvest as closely as the *Des Moines Register* tracks Iowa corn yields.

The average adult consumes 85 liters annually, a level exceeded only in Italy and France. (The U.S. average in 1983: nearly eight liters, or 2.1 gallons, up from about half that in 1970.) The Portuguese prefer their robust reds and whites. Port and the sweet, fizzy rosés launched in the 1960s under such labels as Mateus and Lancers are largely for export.

But the bloom is off the rosés: In their chief market, the United States, white wines are ascendant, and Mateus and its compatriots have been replaced as the top imports by inexpensive Italian brands. Port is under pressure too. Sales are off in its main markets, Britain and France, partly due to the competition of "port" from South Africa, Australia, and California.

Portugal's one rising star is *vinho verde*, or "green wine," best known as a slightly sparkling white. Its low alcohol content (about

eight percent, versus 13 percent for typical Portuguese table wines) suits current U.S. and European tastes.

The Portuguese launched green wine in Britain during the late 1970s with a rare astuteness. While the government trade office in London mounted a snappy ad campaign ("One swallow makes a summer"), the producers sweetened the wine to British tastes and let supermarkets sell the cheaper brands under their own labels. *Vinho verde* now has 25 percent of Portugal's British wine sales. There are hopes for similar success in America, where the wine sells under such names as Quinta da Aveleda and Casal Garcia.

Portugal needs more such winners, but officials fret about its ability to produce them. The industry needs "a complete overhaul," says Bento de Carvalho, vice-president of the National Wine Board. There is "no policy whatsoever for planting vines, replanting existing vines," and trying new ideas.

The government is moving cautiously to streamline the industry. About half of the 180,000 Portuguese who make wine (most turn out fewer than 150 cases a year) have been nudged into cooperatives—the better to meet the Common Market's exacting rules for everything from the size of bottles to the tonnage of grapes that can be grown on an acre of vineyard.

But only large organizations can experiment with new varieties that may turn into export triumphs. One example is the 150-year-old José Maria da Fonseca Company, which makes Lancers and is also known for high quality wines, such as the sturdy red Periquita. Under the leadership of António d'Avilas, director of J. M. da Fonseca International, and in partnership with America's Heublein, Fonseca has produced a subtle, flowery Muscatel, called João Pires, that can match any dry Muscat from Alsace and a fine Cabernet Sauvignon, named Quinta da Bacalhôa. Its grapes grow on vines that were imported from Bordeaux and grafted onto rootstocks brought from America; the winemaster is Australian. Though the Portuguese can find Quinta da Bacalhôa only in some Lisbon-area wine stores, in Britain it is sold (like green wine) in supermarkets.

Wine has long been a valuable Portuguese resource. During the 18th century, for example, the fortified wine that the Portuguese made on the island of Madeira became a favorite of the colonials in America (including George Washington) and enabled Lisbon, in return, to import grain from Virginia and the Carolinas. Yet today, Portugal does not even have a wine-making school. Its best young vintners study abroad—usually in France.

—By Alex Macleod

Alex Macleod, 44, is a professor of political science at the University of Quebec in Montreal.

Guidebooks for tourists note that a Portuguese characteristic is *saudade*, a melancholy yearning or nostalgia for past glory. Whatever the validity of that old cliché, visitors to the country since the revolution note a new exuberance. The old fear of authority has given way to a brisk self-confidence. Anthropologist Joyce Firstenberg Riegelhaupt tells an anecdote about a Lisbon lawyer meeting a foreign journalist in 1974:

"We have made a considerable anatomical discovery this April: The Portuguese have teeth," the lawyer proudly declared.

The journalist, confused, replied that surely it had been the mildest of revolutions. "No," the lawyer explained. "What I mean is that you can see us smile."

\$99 a Month

In many ways, Portugal during the mid-1980s seems like France and Italy during the early 1950s and Spain during the 1960s. Lisbon has its high-rise apartments, and glittery little bars such as the Procopio and the Snob are still filled past midnight with people talking politics, but the city is dominated by the kind of 18th-century façades—iron grillwork, balconies, and pastels—that were torn down long ago in Madrid. In Spain, new businesses, and a rising middle class, were blossoming in the 1960s. In today's Portugal, that phenomenon has barely begun.

Portugal's income per capita, \$2,092 in 1983, is barely half that of Spain and Greece. The country also trails Western Europe in literacy (70 percent in 1981), education, and infant mortality. Vacant housing is so scarce that squatters celebrated the revolution by moving into the homes of Portuguese emigrants.

Some 68 percent of the people are still dispersed in rural villages. Urbanization has advanced little since Salazar's day, when fewer than one-third of the Portuguese hailed from towns of more than 5,000, and most lived in hamlets of fewer than 100. Wood-wheeled carts are still common in the countryside.

By a 1978 reckoning (Portuguese statistics are often a bit musty), the country had just 118 cars for every 1,000 people, fewer even than Spain's 178 cars per 1,000. Portugal's high auto-fatality rate—the worst in Western Europe—reflects not heavy traffic but poor roads.

Portugal has only two TV channels, both state run and based in Lisbon (like the radio networks and all but one of the 22 national newspapers). The fare includes performances of concert music, drama, and opera, as well as sports (including hockey played on roller skates), Brazilian-made soap operas, called *telenovelas*, and foreign cartoons (many from the Soviet Union) dubbed in Portu-



The last Portuguese troops left Luanda on November 11, 1975, when Lisbon officially gave up Angola. Most of some 500,000 white settlers followed.

guese. There is little U.S. programming, a bit more from Britain. A recent offering: "The Jewel in the Crown," a series about the end of British rule in India.

In the New State, the right to vote was granted to only about 20 percent of the adult population—males who could read and write and had paid a certain minimum tax, and women who had at least a secondary education. Now adult suffrage is universal. The new constitution provides for separation of church and state (though 96 percent of the Portuguese are baptized Catholics) and for divorce. Abortion was legalized in 1984, but is permitted only in situations involving incest, rape, and deformed fetuses; nonetheless, the measure earned President António Ramalho Eanes, who signed it, a jab in the Catholic press as "the president who legalized the death penalty."

The constitution also specified a "socialist" society, with safety nets for all. Yet, thanks to its poverty, Portugal is still no Scandinavian welfare state. A National Health Service was created to provide free medical care for the needy, and the government is trying to persuade the country's numerous physicians—one for every 500 people—to do more in rural

areas. But the minimum wage that Lisbon established is now just \$99 per month, and the allowance granted for each child in a poor family is all of \$4 per month.

Moreover, many Lisbon politicians now argue that the early rush to establish a state-run economic system was a mistake. During the peak of revolutionary fervor in 1975, Portugal's big banks and insurance companies were nationalized, which also brought state ownership to the scores of other businesses that they owned or controlled. The shipping, railroad, urban transportation, oil, and electric power industries soon followed, and the government wound up running companies that represent 32 percent of Portugal's corporate investment.

Looking for Leadership

But here, as elsewhere, the state-run firms are awash in red ink. Grand projects—petrochemical complexes in Sines and Leixões, the Setenave shipbuilding complex near Lisbon in Setúbal—have been beset by sagging world markets or their own poor management. (Their directors change with each new government.) The companies owe half of Portugal's \$14.2 billion in foreign debt, but many cannot even pay their employees. As of autumn 1984, some 7,000 Setenave steelworkers were owed back pay.

Portugal's foreign debt piled up as a result of labor unrest, the chaos of the revolution, and the loss of the colonial markets. When Lisbon went to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and rich Western nations for help in 1978, it accepted austerity measures that caused "real" wages to plunge 20 percent below the 1975 level. To improve its 1980 election prospects, the government then in power subsequently let the value of the escudo rise (to make imports cheaper) and continued subsidizing food and other essentials. That led to more debt.

In 1983, Lisbon sold some of the large stock of gold—worth \$7.8 billion that year—left in the Bank of Portugal by the pinch-penny New State, but still had to seek new IMF aid. The price this time was new austerity measures that caused a recession and raised unemployment (now about 10 percent).

Prime Minister Soares, who aims to run for the presidency this year, has been cutting back on some of the post-1974 excesses. Many of the expropriated southern farms have been returned to their owners, for instance, and employers have won back the right to fire slack employees. Some politicians talk of moving toward a more laissez-faire economy, as Britain has done under Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government.

One issue on which all parties (except the PCP) have agreed

is Common Market membership. When Lisbon applied to the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1977, it cast its request in terms of a new mission: Replacing its colonial and Atlantic "vocation," Portugal would finally join Europe. After all, almost two million Portuguese now live in Common Market nations, and nearly half the country's trade is with these 10 states.

Portugal—and Spain, which applied after the death of Francisco Franco and his dictatorship's fall in 1975—seem likely to be admitted in 1986. The wait has been useful. If free trade with the EEC were to start now, Portugal's economy would suffer. The Portuguese are now competitive with other European producers only in wine, tomato paste, textiles, and shoes.

Now that this reality has sunk in, the idea of "joining Europe" has lost much of its appeal in Portugal. Its politicians, journalists, and industrialists realize that, once their country joins the Community, it will be the poorest member (behind Ireland), and may find itself stranded on the periphery of industrial Europe. Portugal might well remain a land of sunny beaches, inexpensive wine, and friendly people. While this may not sound too bad, assuming a profitable tourist trade, it would be a far cry from either industrial modernity or the much-celebrated past of great discoveries and overseas empire.

The Portuguese have a tradition of looking for a savior. It goes back at least to the 16th century, when the quixotic young King Sebastian sailed off to fight the Moors in Morocco. No matter that the king's army was crushed and that his death led to 60 years of Spanish rule; it was long hoped and believed that he would return. Democracy has not ended *Sebastianismo*, the popular hankering after a leader who, in times of trouble, will step in and solve Portugal's problems.

In many respects, Salazar served that purpose. He rescued the country from instability during the late 1920s. The Army captains played a similar role in 1974. Polls still show high esteem among Portuguese for strong leadership and a widespread public perception of its absence during the past few years. There is, indeed, a general perception among most Portuguese that stronger government in Lisbon is required for both democracy and economic development to flourish. The question for the Portuguese is how that strength and stability can be achieved, without resort to some new Sebastian—or Salazar.

BACKGROUND BOOKS

PORTUGAL

"Let us hear no more then of Ulysses and Aeneas and their long journeyings, no more of Alexander and Trajan and their famous victories. My theme is the daring and renown of the Portuguese, to whom Neptune and Mars alike give homage."

So declared the 16th-century poet Luis Vaz de Camoens in *The Lusiads*, Portugal's national epic. The *Lusiads* are the sons of the country's mythical first settler, the Roman god Lusus. The poem, modeled on Virgil's *Aeneid*, is a paean to monarchs, mariners, and missionaries, built on the story of Vasco da Gama's 1497-98 voyage to India—which led to Portugal's rise to great wealth.

But first, the nation itself had to arise. As Harold Victor Livermore recounts in *Portugal* (Edinburgh, 1973), cave art shows that western Iberia was visited as early as 18,000 B.C. by the same hunters who roamed France and northern Spain after the Ice Age. The first settlers appear to have come from Andalusia after 4000 B.C.

Sailing west out of the Mediterranean, Phoenician traders set foot on Portugal's shores after 1000 B.C. Later, Celtic farmers and herders moved south from France to the green northwest. They turned some of the hilltop *castros* (forts) they built, or found, into walled cities.

When the Romans, having bested the Carthaginians in Africa and Spain, entered what they called Lusitania after 200 B.C., the natives were ready to resist. Julius Caesar himself, writes Livermore, put down a Lusitanian revolt in A.D. 60. "He operated from Lisbon, whose fidelity he rewarded with the title of Felicitas Julia. It was the only city in the area to enjoy Roman rights."

By the third century, when Emperor Constantine had given it his imprimatur, Christianity had spread to Iberia. After the Fall of Rome, the division of the peninsula that the Romans had called Hispania began.

Germanic barbarians swept down from the north—the Goths into Spain, the Swabians into Lusitania. They adopted not only the Roman administrative structure but also the Roman faith.

Still, Portugal remained remote. In *The Individuality of Portugal* (Univ. of Tex., 1959; Greenwood, 1969), Dan Stanislawski quotes a letter to Saint Fructuosus, in the Portuguese city of Braga, from a Spaniard. The writer tells the priest not to feel "worthy of scorn because you are relegated to the extremity of the west in an ignorant country, as you say, where naught is heard but the sound of tempests."

Eventually, the Swabians came under the sway of the Gothic kings in Toledo. But by the seventh century, the northerners had been pushed aside in most of Iberia by new invaders: Muslim Arabs and Berber tribesmen from North Africa called Moors. Portugal regained its independence in the 12th century, when the Christian Dom Afonso Henriques dislodged the Moors. He named himself Portugal's king in 1139, more than 200 years before a Christian Spain was restored under Ferdinand V and Isabella I.

The Portuguese Seaborne Empire: 1415-1825 (Knopf, 1969), by Charles Ralph Boxer, is a lively narrative of the country's overseas expansion. Lay readers will find William C. Atkinson's translation of *The Lusiads* (Penguin, 1952, paper; reprinted 1981) valuable, not only for illuminating the chauvin-

ism of Camoens's salute to those who advanced "the boundaries of faith and empire" but also for Atkinson's essay on the poet's era.

When *The Lusiads* appeared in 1572, the driving spirit that it celebrated was dying. Atkinson writes that when Camoens returned to Lisbon in 1570 from a journey to Portugal's Asian colony Macau, the city was "just emerging from a devastating visitation of the plague. He had the impression that his country had altered much, and for the worse. The native virtues of the race appeared to him to have wilted under prosperity, people at home not realizing at what cost of blood, sweat and tears their empire had been built." The "heroic temper," Atkinson notes, "was ebbing."

By the early 20th century, the nation that had so vastly expanded the "known" world wanted to shut it out. Portraits of António de Oliveira Salazar, who sought to seal his New State against the social and economic currents that swept through the West before and after World War II, range from Hugh Kay's even-handed **Salazar and Modern Portugal** (Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1970) to the angry **Portugal: Fifty Years of Dictatorship** (Penguin, 1975, paper), by António de Figueiredo, a left-wing Salazar foe. What all chroniclers agree on is the dictator's long obsession with what Kay calls "the notion of the absolute." Said Salazar: "No one can rule in the name of doubt."

Among the useful journalistic accounts of Portugal's struggle to create a democracy after 1974 are **Insight on Portugal** (André Deutsch, 1975), a narrative of the revolution by a London *Sunday Times* team, and **Portugal: Birth of a Democracy**

(Macmillan, 1978), by Robert Harvey, an editor of the *Economist*. Thomas C. Bruneau's **Politics and Nationhood: Post-Revolutionary Portugal** (Praeger, 1984) is the most comprehensive of a short list of scholarly analyses.

With the passing of empire, the chief question raised by Portugal's history may not be how such a small nation did so much and has survived so long, but why its cultural legacy—beyond a language that is spoken by some 150 million people in Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, and other areas—has been so slight.

In **Iberia** (Random House, 1968, cloth; Fawcett, 1978, paper), author James A. Michener wonders that Portugal produced no "Velázquez, no Victoria, no García Lorca, no Santa Teresa, and of course no Seneca. The genius of the Iberian peninsula seemed to have resided in the [Spanish] regions."

Could Portugal's cultural poverty be linked with its tradition of recurrent and sometimes virulent insularity? From the mid-16th century into the 18th, for example, church-influenced censorship barred all books from abroad; the excitement stirred elsewhere in Europe before, during, and after the Protestant Reformation by the ideas and discoveries of Galileo, Bacon, Descartes, Newton, Hobbes, Leibnitz, and others never reached Portugal.

"No national culture," Boxer observes in his book, "can have a healthy and continuous growth, without being periodically fertilized by fresh inspiration and new ideas from abroad." For Portugal, it might be said, the real age of discovery may be only beginning.