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Portugal and European integration- An introduction

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Conference
EU and Democracy in Southern Europe: Portugal, Spain and
Greece*

Institute of European Studies
University of California-Berkeley
November 1-2, 2002

* This paper is part of a research project on “Portugal and the Integration of Europe” co-directed by the present author and Nuno Severiano Teixeira, Nova University, Lisbon.

Two political factors conditioned Portugal's integration into the process of European unification between 1945 and 1974: the dictatorial nature of Salazar's regime and its tenacious resistance to decolonization.ⁱ It was only following the institutionalization of democracy and the process of decolonization during 1974-75 that the first serious steps were taken to follow a strategy of integrating Portugal into what was then the European Economic Community (EEC): a policy that was to become the touchstone for political consensus among the moderate political parties of the nascent democracy.

Portugal did not experience the same levels of international isolation as its Spanish neighbour following the Second World War. Its status as a founder member of NATO and participant within other international organizations, such as the European Organization for Economic Co-operation (EOEC) and the European Payments Union (EPU), and its receipt of Marshall Plan funds – albeit on a relatively small scale – are all examples of the country's international acceptance.

Being excluded from, and remaining mistrustful of, the Treaty of Rome which marked the foundation of the EEC, and following positions adopted by the United Kingdom (its major trading partner), membership of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) was to be an important economic aim for the dictatorship throughout the 1960s.ⁱⁱ Negotiated on terms that were favourable to Portugal, which saw the majority of its economic activities largely protected, the EFTA agreement was one of the roots of 1960s economic growth and for the significant increase in commercial relations with Europe. It was also behind the emergence of interest groups with fewer associations with the colonies. The development of a pro-European outlook was essentially a consequence of decolonization and the institutionalization of democracy, however.

Following a complex transition process, the integration of Portugal into the EEC became a strategic objective, with simultaneous political and economic overtones. Democratic consolidation and Portugal's insertion into the European economic space were to become inseparable.

The New State and European Unification

Salazar remained resistant to the post-War world, and revealed himself to be incapable of adapting to the new international order. He did not understand, or rather, he did not accept the basic organizational principles of the international post-War system. He could not accede to the emergence of the bipolar system of two non-European superpowers. He was especially troubled by Britain's decline and the rise of the United States, which he regarded with ideological skepticism and political mistrust, as the main maritime power. He also rejected the importance of multilateral diplomacy in the international system, and the United Nations in particular. He also had problems accepting the principle of self-rule and, consequently, the resulting process of decolonization. Finally, he watched in reticent silence as the process of European economic reconstruction was conducted through the criteria of international cooperation rather than under the inter-war principles of nationalist autarchy.

Salazar's skepticism in relation to the United States, and his rejection of decolonisation were not new: they had always conditioned his vision of Europe and its relationship with Africa. He saw the relationship between Europe and Africa from a perspective of complementarity and viewed this Europe-Africa binomial as a unity in terms of economic, political and military plans. This was the strategic conception at the heart of all Salazar's beliefs and it was this that was to emerge during the formulation of his foreign policy; not only in relation to Europe and European construction, but also to the entire system of Western security and NATO.

In Portugal's foreign policy from the very beginning of the Cold War, two events highlighted the duality of the country's strategic direction. Portugal's hesitations over the Marshall Plan in 1947 illustrated its reservations regarding the reconstruction process while the signing of the Lajes Agreement in 1948 – a bilateral defence agreement between Portugal and the United States – heralded Portugal's incorporation into the Atlantic security system, later confirmed with its entry into NATO in 1949.ⁱⁱⁱ

Portugal stood alongside the United Kingdom at the margins of all European integrationist movements during the 1950s, remaining out of the Schuman Plan and the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) as well as on the margins of the proposed European Defence Community (EDC) and its associated European Political Community (EPC).

During the 1950s, the Atlantic front and the position of the United States were to become increasingly important factors in Portuguese foreign policy. However, from its entry into the UN in 1955 and from the beginning of the 1960s in particular, the colonial question was to become Portugal's main concern. The United Kingdom continued to be Portugal's main reference in all matters European. Consequently, Portugal closely followed the positions adopted by the United Kingdom in European affairs, at least until it became a founding member of EFTA.^{iv}

In the spring of 1959, when the idea of a free trade zone was transformed into a more limited regional agreement restricted to the six non-members, these six were, in fact seven, with Portugal being part of the process. As a result, Portugal was a signatory of the Stockholm Convention and a rightful member of EFTA.

Why did Portugal decide to join EFTA? An explanatory thesis that is based on the voluntarism of the political and diplomatic actors has developed in Portuguese historiography out of the testimonies of the main protagonists in the process.^v This explanation is particularly valid at the point of the crucial negotiations that took place following De Gaulle's veto that led to the transition of the free trade zone into EFTA. However, it is clear that the political and diplomatic voluntarism was seriously conditioned by both the domestic and international factors that enabled them and which, in the final analysis, favoured Portugal's objective to join.

Internationally, Portugal's economic and financial position obtained some comparative advantages in relation to the other peripheral countries, just as the moderation of Portugal's stance did not affect the economic interests of the more developed countries. However it was in the political sphere, where there was a coincidence of Portuguese and British positions with regards the colonies and the Commonwealth, that Portuguese diplomacy could use British pretensions to its advantage.

Domestically there were several economic and political factors conditioning Portugal's position. The increasingly close economic relations with European states imposed a choice of one of three alternatives for the Portuguese economy. The first of these was economic autarchy, which, in the context of economic openness and external dependence in relation to Europe, as well as the European interests of some Portuguese economic groups, would be difficult.^{vi} The second alternative was to seek a bilateral solution, which, given the lack of partners, would be equally difficult. The final alternative was to seek a multilateral

solution which, theoretically speaking, could only be realizable within either the EEC or EFTA. Of these two, the EEC was a non starter given the country's economic development, the political nature of the regime, and Salazar's opposition to any form of integration or supranationalism. EFTA, however, was a possibility.

In a situation in which conditioning factors weighed heavily and the margin for maneuvering Portuguese foreign policy was limited, EFTA provided the only alternative with economic advantages and without political costs. Politically, therefore, EFTA represented the optimum solution for Salazar as it enabled him to reconcile Portugal's economic integration into a European free trade zone with the regime's political and diplomatic positions. The strictly intergovernmental character of the organisation eliminated any supranational or integrationist pretensions, and, while it incorporated some continental countries, Britain's involvement allowed Portugal to maintain its essentially Atlanticist orientation and to maintain one of the country's traditional foreign policy strategies: continuation of the British Alliance. Most importantly, the fact that EFTA was a free trade zone rather than a customs union, allowed Portugal to remain within the organisation whilst maintaining its privileged relationship with its colonies.

Caetano and the Commercial Accord with the EEC

Marcello Caetano's ideas on European integration and the Europe-Africa relationship did not differ substantially from those of Salazar. What was different, however, was the domestic and international political situation.

If, as we have seen, the conception at the beginning of the process was one of African and European reconciliation and complementarity, by the beginning of the 1970s the dominant idea was one of competitiveness and incompatibility. The economic effects of EFTA membership and the resulting approximation to Europe, were translated domestically into two antagonistic concepts of developmental strategy that affected the country's external orientation. These two antagonisms came to the fore through the political debate between the 'Europeanists' and the 'Africanists' that dominated the regime's final years.^{vii}

Caetano's hesitations enabled a small liberal and technocratic pro-European group to consolidate itself within the dictatorship, which was to part company from the regime on the eve of its collapse.^{viii} The spokespeople of this tendency that emerged out of the limited pluralism that was permitted during the regime's final years, such as those associated with

SEDES, attempted to give a political expression to the alliance between Europe, economic modernisation and the liberalization of the regime.

With the United Kingdom's renewed request for EEC membership and its resignation from EFTA, this organization's future was irredeemably compromised. Once again the unilateral nature of Britain's application ruled out any opportunity for multilateral EFTA-EEC negotiations capable of dealing with the Portuguese case. Portugal had to form some type of relationship with the EEC, and it would have to negotiate it directly and bilaterally.

Following Britain, in May 1970 Portugal requested talks with the EEC and formed an *ad hoc* commission, the Inter-Ministerial Commission for External Economic Co-operation that was charged with analyzing the situation and proposing possible alternatives.^{ix} This Commission's report was clear in its diagnosis: the existing nature of economic relations between Portugal and Europe, and the United Kingdom's resignation from EFTA meant that it was imperative that Lisbon establish 'any kind of relationship with the EEC'. The Commission's report suggested three alternative ways forward for Portugal: accession to the EEC, association with it, or the establishment of trade agreements with it. Accession was out of the question for reasons mentioned above. Association would be difficult given that Article 238 of the Treaty of Rome effectively prevented the EEC from compromising to such an extent for the convenience of a country such as Portugal. Establishing trade agreements with the EEC thus emerged as the only politically possible alternative. The Commission recommended that Portugal adopt a moderate and flexible negotiating position: moderate in order to avoid raising the colonies in such a way as could undermine any agreement, and flexible in the formulation of the agreements so as not to undermine any future membership application.

The trade agreement with the EEC was signed in July 1972 and was ratified, without polemics, shortly after. The scope for manoeuvre in Portugal's foreign policy was too narrow to allow the flexibility required to step beyond the limits of a trade agreement, and its approximation to Europe and the weakening of EFTA required it to establish new multilateral economic relations. This being the case, an agreement with the EEC was an imperative, and a trade agreement was the formula that involved the minimum degree of political compromise.

Portugal's approach to the construction of Europe between 1945 and 1974 was determined by several factors. Firstly, it accepted the economic aspects of

intergovernmental co-operation whilst rejecting the political facets and any supranational or integrationist model. Secondly, it was dependent upon the narrow scope of the regime's foreign policy – that is to say, it was determined by economic and social factors (e.g. foreign trade, emigration, and tourism) and not as a result of any strategic choices – Europe was a necessity, not a project. Thirdly, if during the 1940s and 1950s Portugal's attitude towards the construction of Europe seemed compatible with its idea of the complementarity of Africa and Europe, then during the 1960s and 1970s its economic approximation to Europe and the ongoing colonial wars put an end to this illusion, a conception that was now seen to be politically antagonistic. The maintenance of the African colonial empire required the continuation of authoritarianism, while Portugal's integration into Europe required decolonisation and democratization.

Democracy and European integration

The 25 April 1974 military coup paved the way for the institutionalization of Portuguese democracy. Portugal's transition occurred at the height of the Cold War, at a time when there were few international pressures for democratization. The rupture provoked by the Portuguese military resulted in an accentuated crisis of the state, fuelled by the concurrence of democratization with the decolonisation of the final European colonial empire.^x Powerful tensions, which incorporated revolutionary elements, were concentrated into the first two years of Portugal's democracy. During 1974-75 Portugal also experienced a high level of foreign intervention, ranging from diplomatic pressure to the creation of political parties and social organisations (such as the unions and interest groups), as well as within the anti-left strategies of the 'Hot Summer' of 1975. Portugal was a constant topic of discussion at international forums, from NATO and the EEC to the institutions of the Soviet Bloc.

The military coup took the international community, and the United States in particular, by surprise.^{xi} Faced with intense social and political mobilization from the left, and concerned with the flight of the country's economic elite and their capital, the moderate parties obtained only limited success in implanting themselves and were able to function during the crisis only with financial and technical support from important figures within the US administration and the European 'political families organisations,' with these latter often serving as guarantors ensuring the support of the former.

Transition to democracy and decolonization

The EEC observed Portugal's transition with discretion, although it gave unambiguous signals that, politically, it favoured the emergence of a pluralist democratic system, whilst simultaneously granting limited economic assistance. Soon after the first democratic elections, which took place in 1975, the European Council announced that it was prepared to begin economic and financial negotiations with Portugal, although it stressed that, 'in accordance with its historical and political traditions, the European Community can only support a pluralist democracy.'^{xii}

The first significant international challenge for the nascent Portuguese democracy was to divest itself of its colonial empire. The second was to open Portugal to the world and reestablish diplomatic relations with all countries, bringing an end to the international isolation brought about by the deposed regime.^{xiii} Decolonisation and the reestablishment of diplomatic relations did not in themselves constitute a new strategic direction for Portugal's foreign policy; rather, in the midst of the strenuous conflicts during the process of democratization, there was another more silent battle taking place, one that was concerned with the international strategic choices for the new democracy.

The transitional period was characterised by conflict concerning the country's foreign policy options, through the practice of parallel diplomacy and, consequently, by the absence of any clear foreign policy goals. Despite the conflicts, hesitations and indecision, the Provisional Governments, and in particular those with a preponderance of military ministers, tended to favour adopting a Third Worldist foreign policy and promoted the formation of privileged relations with the country's former colonies. This was the final manifestation, albeit in a pro-socialist form, of the thesis that was so close to Salazar's heart – of Portugal's 'African vocation'.

The consolidation of democracy, which began in 1976 with the election of the first constitutional government, can be characterised by the clarification of Portugal's foreign policy choices, and by the unequivocal positioning of Portugal in the world as a Western country, albeit one that was simultaneously Atlanticist and European. It was these two visions that were to become the basic strategic foreign policy vectors for the nascent democracy. The Atlanticist outlook was predicated on the permanence Portuguese foreign policy's historical characteristics, and played an important role in directing Portugal

externally, and in stabilizing it domestically. The establishment of good bilateral relations with the United States, and the strengthening of its multilateral participation within NATO, were the clearest expressions of the new democracy's international position.

Having overcome the Third Worldist temptations of the revolutionary period, Portugal adopted the 'European option' unreservedly from 1976. Now, however, this choice was a strategic decision and a political project, rather than the merely pragmatic and economic stance it had been under the authoritarian regime.

Democratic consolidation, the European option and accession to the EEC

Contacts between Lisbon and the European institutions were initiated as early as 1974. The European Commission granted Portugal economic assistance while the European Council made its political position clear: it was ready to begin negotiations, but only on the condition that a pluralist democracy was established. Nevertheless, the country's economic condition, the political instability and continuing uncertainty regarding the destiny of the democratic regime during the transitional period ruled out any advance from the European front.

It was the first constitutional government, led by Mário Soares that adopted the 'European option'. The first step in this process occurred in August 1976 when the Portuguese government successfully applied for membership of the Council of Europe. Once a member of this organisation, which also consolidated the international community's recognition of the new democratic regime, Lisbon began to outline its next and decisive step: application for accession to the EEC.

Following a series of successful negotiations in a number of European capitals between September 1976 and February 1977, the government made its formal application for EEC membership in March 1977. One month later, the European Council accepted Portugal's request and initiated the formal process laid out in the various treaties, including the mandatory consultation of the European Commission. In May 1978, the Commission presented a favourable report, clearing the way for the formal negotiations to begin in Luxembourg the following October.^{xiv} With the formal application made, and accession negotiations under way, the hesitations and polemics over the nature of Portugal's integration had finally been superseded, placing Portugal firmly on the European path.

The government was motivated by, and based its decision to follow this strategic option on, two main objectives. First, EEC membership would consolidate Portuguese democracy, and second, EEC assistance would guarantee the country's modernisation and economic development. Several Portuguese economists remained fearful, with the majority expressing grave reservations regarding the impact EEC membership would have on some sectors of the Portuguese economy.^{xv}

A complex series of negotiations, lasting seven years, followed Portugal's membership application. An earlier step had been taken in September 1976, prior to the country's formal application, with the revision of the 1972 EEC trade agreement through the conclusion of the Additional and Financial Protocols, which Portugal interpreted as representing a form of pre-membership agreement.^{xvi} Despite these prior agreements, formal negotiations on Portugal's membership lasted from October 1978 until June 1985.^{xvii}

There were two important domestic factors that can help explain just why the accession negotiations for such a small country with a relatively weak economy were so complex and drawn out. Firstly, Portugal's economic situation immediately prior to the transition and, more importantly, the economic measures that had been taken during the revolutionary period – in particular the nationalization of important economic sectors. Secondly, continuing governmental instability and the political and constitutional nature of the Portuguese regime. Following 1976, the democratic regime was undeniably pluralist, and was generally considered as such; however, the 1976 constitution was a product of the revolutionary period, and consecrated within it the Council of the Revolution. It was a democracy, but it was a democracy under the tutelage of an undemocratic military institution. These factors weighed heavily in the negotiations, and delayed their conclusion.

During the early-1980s, Portugal's democratic regime overcame all of these objections. The constitution was revised in 1982 to abolish the Council of the Revolution and the National Defence Law, and the armed forces finally accepted their subordination to the civilian political authorities. By 1983 Portugal's democracy had been consolidated, thereby eliminating all of the domestic obstacles that were preventing the successful conclusion of the entry negotiations.

One external hurdle remained, however. During Europe's southern enlargement, the EEC was also conducting accession negotiations with Spain, a country that had a much larger economy than Portugal's, and which did not share its smaller neighbour's history of

close relations with European economic institutions. Portugal's diplomatic strategy was keep its entry negotiations separate from those of Spain, in the hope of securing EEC accession more rapidly, thus giving it the important status of member state prior to Spain's entry. This tactic was not successful, however, as the Community's policy was to negotiate with both Iberian nations simultaneously, with the result that Portugal's accession was delayed a further two years, after all the dossiers on Spain had been concluded.

The culmination of the accession process finally arrived in June 1985, when the new government, led by Mário Soares, signed the Treaty of Accession. On 1 January 1986 Portugal became a full member of the EEC.

State, civil society and attitudes towards European integration

As an international actor, the EEC did not play a decisive role in the consolidation of Portugal's democracy.^{xviii} Although several authors have suggested 'that the European Community played an important role' in the promotion of democracy in southern Europe, the confirmation of this is not so apparent in the case of Portugal.^{xix} While the economic support offered by Europe was important, the overall impact of the 'prospect of membership' on the consolidation of Portuguese democracy merits much deeper investigation. For one section of the Portuguese political elite of that era, accession was viewed as a guarantor of domestic democratic consolidation, and as a lever for the country's modernisation.

Whilst present in the programmes of several of the new political parties from the earliest days of the April 1974 coup, it was primarily in the context of the political cleavages of 1975, when they were faced with socialist and Third Worldist alternatives, that the parties of the right and the centre-left emphasized 'Europe' and the EEC as a reference for Portugal's future. In the context of a polarized transition, in which some of the divisions had been solidified into a conflict that was more one 'between democrats and revolutionaries than between democrats and involutionsaries', the European option was an important factor in the break from a dictatorial, isolationist and colonialist past, whilst simultaneously assuming an anti-Communist and anti-revolutionary dimension.^{xx}

The Portuguese case provides a good illustration of the thesis that regards the European Community as an reference for Europe's development and acts as a 'ready symbol' that the democratic elites could utilize to legitimate the new domestic order after the

contested transition and the end of the colonial empire that had been so dear to the New State. On the other hand, and as it had in Spain, it led to the successful consolidation of a 'democratic tradition' that was based on the 'synchronization and homogenization of [national] cultures and institutions, with those of Europe', whose social and economic components had been changing since the 1960s.^{xxi}

When Mário Soares, as leader of a socialist government, made Portugal's formal request for EEC accession in May 1977, the country was living with the legacy of a contested transition, and had a constitution that protected the revolutionary nationalizations and agrarian reform, and which maintained a strong military presence in political life.

The theme of the Socialist Party's (PS – *Partido Socialista*) 1976 electoral campaign was *A Europa Connosco* (Europe With Us), with the party receiving support from many of Europe's most important social democratic leaders. By adopting this rather vague theme, the PS was seeking to distinguish itself from the Third Worldist and neutralist tendencies that had characterised Portuguese politics during 1974-75, and which yet retained some support within the moderate left and the Armed Forces Movement (MFA – *Movimento das Forças Armadas*). Soares incorporated the proposal for EEC accession into his party's programme as a foreign policy priority for Portugal.

By 1974, EEC membership had also become a theme in the programmes of the right and centre-right parties, with the Social Democratic Centre Party (CDS – *Partido do Centro Democrático Social*) proclaiming itself to be convinced pro-Europeans and the Social Democratic Party (PSD – *Partido Social Democrata*) adopting a more cautious approach.^{xxii} Beginning with the PS's initiative, the three parties advanced rival proposals for promoting the accession negotiations, although the PSD was at times less consistent. During the latter half of the 1970s, arguments in favour of the Community were actively promoted as the means through which the necessary political and constitutional reforms, particularly those relating to the military presence within the Council of the Revolution and the nationalizations, could be effected.

Only the Communist Party (PCP – *Partido Comunista Português*) remained consistently opposed to EEC membership, and rejected the prospect of accession. This opposition was an important element in its political campaigns between 1977 and 1986. After 1986, the PCP stopped calling for Portugal to withdraw from the EEC, and adopted a more moderate position whilst continuing to argue for revision of the accession treaties.

Civil society and the interests groups representing those who would be most affected by EEC membership had practically no role to play during any stage of the accession negotiations. European integration was a decision made by the political elite alone, rather than ‘a response to popular demand’.^{xxiii} The governing elites dominated the negotiating process, with only limited involvement by the business associations or agricultural interests.

Semi-paralyzed as a consequence of the transition to democracy’s most radical phase, the employers’ organisations were slow to establish international contacts and participate within European structures. Following the wave of nationalizations and agrarian reform of 1975, these organisations welcomed Portugal’s application from the perspective of their domestic battle for a reduction of the public sector, the liberalization of employment laws and the initiation of a privatization programme.

Both the Confederation of Portuguese Industry (CIP – *Confederação da Industria Portuguesa*) and the Portuguese Industrial Association (AIP – *Associação Industrial Portuguesa*) supported accession, although to differing extents. The CIP wavered between domestic liberalization and protectionism before the EEC, and demanded more pre-entry economic aid before later demonstrating its opposition to the final agreements. The AIP adopted a more pragmatic ‘join and see’ position.^{xxiv} Nevertheless, despite the CIP’s occasional attacks, the hypothesis that the attitudes of these two organisations reflect an attempt to make the government adopt an aggressive negotiating stance rather than a reflection of any principled opposition by these organisations appears plausible, especially since these attitudes did not enjoy much support amongst their affiliates.^{xxv} Several surveys of the employers’ organisations’ attitudes towards accession have confirmed the dominance of political considerations, with the EEC being presented as the ‘guarantor for greater political security that will encourage investment in and modernisation of the productive structures in the country.’^{xxvi}

The party political and ideological cleavages were much more obvious within the trade union movement, with the Communist *Intersindical* standing opposed to accession, and the social democratic General Workers’ Union (UGT – *União Geral de Trabalhadores*) being firmly pro-European.

Formed out of the struggle against communist domination of the trade union movement, and supported by foundations that were associated with social democratic, liberal and conservative political parties, the UGT was rapidly integrated into the European

labour movement's international institutions. It was only after accession that *Intersindical* moved away from its original opposition to adopt a more pragmatic position.

It is important to note that these organized interest groups did not play an important role in the formation of opinions or in generating proposals for the political decision makers from within these groups they represented during the accession negotiations. Despite the economic dimensions of accession, the political and ideological debate continued to dominate proceedings.

During the 1980s, Portuguese society finally broke free of the double legacy of the authoritarianism and the 1975 revolutionary process. Democratic consolidation, EEC accession and economic development all coincided to create a virtuous circle that could not have been foreseen at the moment of application. To the surprise of many sectors of public opinion, in 1990 Portugal lost its status as an 'under-developed country', a label that had been used to characterize the country ever since the concept had been devised. Following the conclusion of two complex agreements with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a flood of Community funds began arriving in Portugal with tangible effects. The statistics reveal that there was an observable improvement in living conditions which was combined with a relatively low unemployment rate.

In the 1980s, Portugal underwent a second cycle of growth and social change. The movement of population toward the coastal areas, as well as urbanization, increased, although rates remained below the European average. More noteworthy, however, was the acute drop (to 12 percent by 1992) in the numbers of workers actively engaged in the agricultural sector, a process that continued to break up traditional rural society in the northern and central areas of the country. Emigration was being replaced by a movement from the countryside to the cities. The growth of the middle class and the tertiary sectors was also prominent in this period, and school attendance rates increased substantially.

Rather than the catastrophic prospect that seemed to loom large for Portugal during the 1970s, the country managed to consolidate its democracy and to take important strides forward in its social and economic modernisation as a member of the European Union. As an EU member, Portugal was also forced to accelerate the liberalization of its domestic market as a direct consequence of deepening economic and monetary union.^{xxvii}

Portugal's route to EU membership was promoted by the political elite, with a great degree of political consensus, without any attempt to measure public opinion through

referenda. It was not until after accession had been secured that popular opinion began to exert pressure for more public participation in the reforms that were taking place within the EU.

Both the process of decolonisation and the adoption of a pro-European political policy led to the production of a significant ideological output by some sections of the intellectual elite, although the often heralded ‘identity crisis’ never appeared in any tangible form.^{xxviii} Following a period of recriminations criticizing the decolonisation process that emanated mainly from conservative groups in the late-1970s, and which largely fell on deaf ears, smaller extreme right wing parties sought to capitalize on the discontent felt in the small groups that had been most affected by Portugal’s new found Europeanism: their target audience were those who had fled the colonies to settle in Portugal, the *retornados*.^{xxix} The conversion of this conservative ideology to a discourse proclaiming the need to defend a ‘national identity’ that was threatened by incorporation into the European Community also met with little popular success – even within the conservative milieu, as is evidenced by the fact that EU membership was supported by the two main conservative parties, the CDS and the PSD.

On the one hand, nationalist discourses emerged during the 1970s as a reaction against the country’s incorporation into Europe, promoted by a conservatism that utilized, instrumentally, the country’s exclusively Atlantic vocation. On the other hand, the Communist Party promoted the more economic defence of the ‘interests of the national productive forces’ in the face of European capitalism. However, with the myth of the empire ended, the democratic elites managed to consolidate the belief within public opinion that Europe was the only means through which Portugal could reconstruct any important relationships with the new Portuguese speaking African states, particularly since almost all economic links had disappeared and political relations had deteriorated following the granting of independence in 1975.

With the prospect of accession, and in the wake of it, new identity problems were to arise, the most important of which was the nature of Portugal’s relationship with its neighbour, Spain. During, and particularly after, Portugal’s attempts to negotiate accession separately, Spain regularly appeared in the public’s mind as the powerful neighbour that had ‘invaded’ Portugal’s economy. Having swiftly transformed itself into Portugal’s major

trading partner, Spain and the 'Spanish menace' stood as a threat to the liberalization of the Portuguese market.

In 1978, three years after decolonisation, almost 70 per cent of Portuguese believed that 'Portugal had a duty to grant these countries their independence', although they also thought that 'the rights of the Portuguese had to be protected.' Only 2.2 per cent of those questioned were in favour of continuing the fight against the liberation movements.^{xxx} Nevertheless, a significant minority of 20 per cent thought, in 1978, that Portugal could not survive economically without the former colonies. The gradual diminution of this belief seems to be linked directly to the prospect of EEC accession: 'the accession process and membership itself, besides providing a substitute for the lost colonies, also represents an incentive for a change in the nature of the country's economic, social and cultural activities.'^{xxxi}

Nevertheless, the emergence of EEC membership as a positive goal within Portuguese society was a lengthy process that was initially restricted to the political elite. In 1978, shortly after the formal membership application had been submitted, most Portuguese had no opinion with respect to Europe, with over 60 per cent of the population stating that they did not know if EEC membership was essential for the future of Portugal's economy. It was not until the early-1980s that the population became better informed and was able to express a clearer opinion on the subject.

The *Eurobarometer* survey has regularly recorded Portuguese public opinion since 1980, and its reports have revealed a clear upward trend in support of EEC membership, with a large increase occurring in 1986, the year Portugal finally joined. The proportion of the population believing EEC membership to be a good thing rose from 24.4 per cent (1980-82) to 64.5 per cent (1986-90), rising to above 70 per cent during the 1990s.^{xxxii}

In 1993, 65 per cent believed that Portuguese economic development had been boosted greatly as a result of EU membership. As appears to be the case in other southern European countries, there seems to be a strong suggestion that the urban middle classes generally tend to Europeanism with only a weak sense of 'national pride', while the less educated and the rural lower classes generally have a weak pro-European sentiments and a strong sense of 'national pride'.^{xxxiii}

In relation to the process of political unification and the objectives of the Maastricht Treaty, the large majority of Portuguese were strongly in favour a common security policy,

and only slightly less supportive of political and monetary union. This support declines further when they are specifically asked about their views on the creation of a European political federation (with a single federal government), with the majority expressing themselves opposed to this objective.

By reaffirming their country's European identity, and remaining optimistic regarding the European Union following accession and the process of adhesion of the 1980s, the Portuguese do not seem to have experienced any serious identity problems, either through the loss of the colonial empire in 1975, or as a consequence of Portugal's new international position within Europe since 1986.

Notes

ⁱ Teixeira, N.S., 'Between Africa and Europe: Portuguese foreign policy, 1890-1986,' in Pinto, A.C. (ed.), *Modern Portugal*. Palo Alto: SPOSS, 1998, pp. 60-87; Pinto, A.C., *O fim do Império português: a cena internacional, a guerra colonial e a descolonização, 1961-1975*. Lisbon: Horizonte, 2000.

ⁱⁱ Andresen-Leitão, N., 'Portugal's European integration policy, 1947-1972,' *Journal of European Integration History*, 7, (1), 2001, pp.25-35.

ⁱⁱⁱ The most important work on Portugal's position regarding the Marshall Plan, and on which much of this section is based, is by Rollo, M.F., *Portugal e o Plano Marshall*. Lisbon: Estampa, 1994. See also Rollo, M.F., 'Salazar e a construção europeia,' in Pinto, A.C. and Teixeira, N. S. (eds), *Penélope: Portugal e a unificação europeia*, 18, 1997, pp.51-76.

^{iv} Alípio, E.S., *O processo negocial de adesão de Portugal à EFTA, 1956-1960*, Unpublished Masters' dissertation, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Lisbon, 2001. For more on Portugal's negotiations with EFTA see Griffiths, R.T. and Lie, B., 'Portugal e a EFTA, 1959-1973,' in *Portugal e Europa: 50 anos de integração*, Lisbon: Centro de Informação Jacques Delors, 1996, pp.185-206. For more on economic relationships see Alvares, P. and Fernandes, C. R. (eds), *Portugal e o Mercado Comum, vol.1: da EFTA aos Acordos de 1972*. Lisbon: Pórtico, 1980.

^v See Magalhães, J.C., 'Os movimentos de integração europeia ...' in Guerra, R. T., et. al, *Os movimentos...* op. cit., pp.48ff.

^{vi} Santos, E., 'Portugal e a adesão à EFTA: primeiro passo para o fim da autarcia,' *História*, Julho-Agosto 1998, pp.62-74.

^{vii} The most important work on this debate is Castilho, J. T., *A ideia da Europa no Marcelismo 1968-1974*. Oporto: Afrontamento, 2000. See also Magalhães, J. C., *Portugal na Europa o caminho certo*. Lisbon: Bertrand, 1997.

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