

# Portuguese history storyboard

---

**Cláudia Martins**

claudiam@ipb.pt

*Instituto Politécnico de Bragança  
Escola Superior de Educação*

## Abstract

This paper intends to present relevant facts about the Portuguese culture and history, so as to enable a better understanding of who the Portuguese are and provide an overall perspective of the course of history in this westernmost part of Europe. Although the choice of historical facts was subjective by nature, it is believed it achieves the aim of presenting information in a critical but blithesome way, with a view to also deconstructing national stereotypes, such as that Portuguese people are always late or are crazy about football. Finally, it focuses on some information about the Portuguese language mainly to serve as a term of comparison with other European languages.

**Keywords:** *Portuguese culture, Portuguese language, historical facts, national symbols and icons.*

## Introduction

This paper starts with providing a brief introduction to Portugal, by focusing on general information about aspects such as our governmental system and suffrage, national languages, territory and climate, literacy and education, and national

holidays. Then five historical events of the utmost importance for the history of Portugal will be referred to, namely the independence of the kingdom in the 12th century, the two main struggles to regain independence towards Spain due to the succession crises (in the 14th century and then in the 17th century), the liberal revolution of the 19th century, the birth of the Republic at the beginning of the 20th century and the right-wing dictatorship which was overthrown by the Carnation Revolution of 1974.

Thirdly, it shall focus on a group of national symbols and icons that enhance the characterisation of the Portuguese people and their cultural and historical contexts. This choice of symbols and icons follows a European Union publication (López-Menchero & Milano 2011) intended to describe each of its nations.

Finally, the last part will cover some basic aspects about the Portuguese language, namely where Portuguese is spoken and its varieties, the origins of the language and its Indo-European family, the alphabet it uses and some features of its phonological system in terms of consonants, vowels and diphthongs.

As a final note, it should be emphasised that this paper is not a research paper based on Portuguese culture and language, but rather a very personal selection of historical and cultural issues that intends to provide an in-depth perspective of Portugal's history throughout 6 centuries, without neglecting the modern times. Despite the conversational tone, academic concerns have been followed and information is to be considered trustworthy and reliable in historical terms.

## 1. Brief Introduction to the Country

As a Portuguese citizen, it is quite a thorny issue to introduce one's own country. Therefore, for the first image of Portugal, CIA Factbook (2012: online) was selected, which will aid us throughout this first introduction part:

*Following its heyday as a global maritime power during the 15th and 16th centuries, Portugal lost much of its wealth and status with the destruction of Lisbon in a 1755 earthquake, occupation during the Napoleonic Wars, and the independence of its wealthiest colony of Brazil in 1822. A 1910 revolution deposed the monarchy; for most of the next six decades, repressive governments ran the country. In 1974, a left-wing military coup installed broad democratic reforms. The following year, Portugal granted independence to all of its African colonies. Portugal is a founding member of NATO and entered the EC (now the EU) in 1986. (CIA 2012: online)*

Portugal consists of a Republic, i.e. a government based on representatives and a president elected by the people, and comprehends mainland Portugal and the archipelagos of Madeira and Azores. It also included the African colonies and East Timor or Timor Lorosae until 1975 (though they were unlawfully occupied by Indonesia until they became a sovereign country in 2002) and Macau, which was finally ceded to China in 1999. Her well-known capital is Lisbon, as it always

was during the period of the Portuguese empire, though there were times when the capital shifted to other cities, such as Coimbra.

In administrative terms, it is divided into 18 districts: Aveiro, Açores, Beja, Braga, Bragança, Castelo Branco, Coimbra, Évora, Faro, Guarda, Leiria, Lisboa, Madeira, Portalegre, Porto, Santarém, Setúbal, Viana do Castelo, Vila Real and Viseu, covering an area of 92,090 sq km and a coastline of 1,793 km.

As far as the official languages are concerned, Portuguese and Mirandese must be mentioned. An interesting fact about our national language is that Portugal has always presented herself as a monolingual country, the oldest in Europe to have one common language for the whole of her population. However, when Mirandese came to be recognised as the second official language in 1999, there was no legal document to be found stating that Portuguese was the first official language of the country, perhaps explained by the fact that everyone took it for granted. It was only in 2004 in the *Lei constitucional* no. 1/2004 of 24th July, within the context of the 6th constitutional revision (article 11), that Portuguese was enshrined as the first official language of the country. However, the Portuguese sign language spoken by about 30,000 people has not yet been acknowledged as an official language, despite the fact that the Portuguese constitution states the following in the law referred to above: “Proteger e valorizar a língua gestual portuguesa, enquanto expressão cultural e instrumento de acesso à educação e da igualdade de oportunidades” (DR I-A 2004: 4662) [to protect and appreciate the value of Portuguese sign language as a cultural manifestation and a tool to access education and equality of opportunities].

As for her climate, it is described as maritime temperate, usually cool and rainy in the north, and much warmer and drier in the south. For instance, while the north might bear 15°C during the day, several places in the south will have splendid 20°C. Nonetheless, there is also a difference between inland and coastal areas: Bragança often has 5 or 6°C during winter days, whereas Porto will have 14°C or 15°C. This 10-degree difference can be understood in light of the mountain range of Marão that separates the region of Vila Real and the remaining of Trás-os-Montes (literally ‘behind the hills’), which also led to the widespread use of a proverb: “para além do Marão mandam os que lá estão”, that is ‘beyond Marão, those who are there are in charge’, as if they were unreachable, and maybe untamed, due to geological features.

There are not many cases of natural hazards in Portugal, apart from volcanism in Azores, though sporadic occurrences of earthquakes can be accounted for, particularly in the south, such as the 1755 earthquake in Lisbon, preceded by a tidal wave.

Portugal’s terrain is generally described as mountainous at the north of the Tagus River (rio Tejo) and rolling plains in the south. The main resources the country has to offer are fish, forests (i.e. cork), iron ore, copper, zinc, tin, tungsten, silver, gold, uranium, marble, clay, gypsum, salt, arable land and hydropower (CIA 2012: online). Unfortunately, many of these resources, though still abundant, are

limited either because of European laws and restrictions, but also due to lack of national investment for the exploration of, for example, our fertile land or metals.

The National Census conducted by Statistics Portugal (*Instituto Nacional de Estatística*) in 2011 states that our population is 10,561,614, of which 246,746 live in Azores and 267,785 in Madeira; 15% of the 10.5m people are between 0 and 14 years, 66% between the age of 15 and 64 and 19% 65 years or over (INE 2011: 11). In 2009, the Portuguese's life expectancy was situated at the age of 79.2, though for males it was 76.1 years and for females 82.1, concurrent with the European average and tendency (PORDATA 2011: online).

The ethnic groups are classified as Mediterranean stock, black-African descent immigrants, especially from the former colonies, since 1990, East Europeans and lately Chinese. In terms of religion, Portuguese are said to be mainly Roman Catholic, an impressive 94% of people, which is highly doubtful, and the remaining 6% for other religious beliefs. (CIA 2012: online)

The literacy in Portugal, that is those who are aged 15 and over that can read and write, is of 93.3% – 95.5% males and 91.3% females (CIA 2012: online). This concept of literacy can be greatly criticised, since it does not cover the extent of the ability to read: is it to be able to interpret a text and be critical about it? Not to mention the ability to grapple with official documents.

The Portuguese government is based on a Parliamentary Democracy, a system that nevertheless is turning out to be flawed and leading to a great deal of dissatisfaction, expressed in the high (and frightening) numbers of abstention at the several most recent elections. People are demanding a more participatory system, where they can actually see their governors fulfil their election promises and care for their interests and needs, which is not happening at present. Suffrage is universal and comprehends those over 18 years of age, a situation that only changed after the 1974 coup. In the 1934 “elections”, all autonomous citizens over 21 could vote and be elected; however, the illiterate could vote only if they had paid their taxes – the astounding amount of 100 escudos (the old currency) – and women could also if they possessed secondary education, a technical or higher education degree; this curtailment in clear violation of the law no. 19894 from 1931, which had granted women the right to vote (AR 2008: online).

The functioning of our parliament and government is based on our constitution, which has a long history, having started with the Constitutional Charter of 1822, but the current Portuguese Constitution dates from 25th April 1976 and it has been revised many times.

Finally, our main national holidays are the Day of Portugal or Camões' Day on 10th June, chose because it is the day on which Camões is said to have died in 1580, and the Restoration of Independence on 1st December to celebrate the 1640 coup which dethroned the Philippine dynasty. National days are also thorny

issues for any nation, since it is hard to choose a date which will not overlook part of the population.

## 2. Historical Milestones

The birth of the Kingdom of Portugal is usually identified in 1096, when Portus Cale was offered to a French count, Henry, as a reward for the defence provided against the Almoravids, a Muslim sect from North Africa. Henry's son, Afonso Henriques, who reigned between 1139 and 1185, achieved Portugal's independence in 1143. After the battle of Ourique, in 1139, Afonso Henriques began to call himself Afonso I, King of Portugal, and was acknowledged as such in 1143 by the Spanish King Alfonso VII. King Afonso I conquered Lisbon from the Moors in 1147 and the final battle against the Moors took place in 1249 under King Afonso III (1248-1279), when the Algarve was finally conquered.

The first succession crisis is situated between 1383 and 1385, leading to conflicts with Spain. Castile claimed the Portuguese crown when King Fernando's (1367-1383) only heir to the throne, his daughter Beatriz, married the Spanish King Juan I. The Portuguese *cortes* (consulting meetings between the monarchy and representatives of the nobility and the clergy, and later of the councils as well) asked João of Avis, the illegitimate son of former King Pedro I, to take over the Portuguese throne to avoid Spanish dominion. The Spanish invaded Portugal in 1385 and the Portuguese won the Battle of Aljubarrota led by Nuno Álvares Pereira and a small force of English archers, by using an Anglo-Saxon strategy, which was based on a balance between offence, in which the Portuguese army advanced towards the opponent, and defence, by looking for natural obstacles to hide them from the Spanish.

There is also a legend related to this infamous battle: the Baker of Ajubarrota. It is said that Brites de Almeida was an ugly tall sturdy woman who became an orphan at the age of 20 and decided to travel around the country, meeting people from all walks of life, until she got tired of this life, accepting a job as a baker in Aljubarrota and getting married to an honest farmer. When the battle broke, she decided to join the Portuguese army and fight the Spanish. Coming home from the battle, she discovered she had seven Spanish hiding in her oven, whom she immediately killed with her baking paddle. She also led a group of women who chased the lost Spanish left behind from the battle. (Infopédia 2012: online)

The history of Portugal and Spain is intertwined, often for purposes of unlawful overtaking: another of these examples is the Philippine dynasty between 1580 and 1640, during which Portugal was ruled by the Spanish. D. Sebastião had died in the Battle at Alcacér-Quibir in 1578, and the Cardinal D. Henrique, D. Sebastião's great-uncle, became king until his death in 1580. Since there was no legitimate heir, King Felipe II of Spain, a nephew of Portugal's former King João III, invaded Portugal and claimed the throne for himself.

The situation did not please anyone. On the one hand, the bourgeois felt disappointed and impoverished due to the attacks made to Portuguese territory and ships; on the other, the noblemen were also discontented because of the loss of privileges and posts, and the obligation to fight for the Spanish and to pay taxes. Then a nobleman gathered the necessary conditions to be acknowledged and accepted as the rightful owner of the Portuguese throne – D. João, Duke of Bragança (later King João IV). Added to this, in Spain, King Filipe IV also faced serious problems not only of warfare with other countries, but also of popular dissatisfaction which led to several rebellions, the most serious of which the Catalonia rebellion.

Therefore, on 1st December 1640, the noblemen who conspired against Spain invaded the Royal Palace, arrested the Duchess of Mantua and proclaimed the independence of the country. After 28 years of unsuccessful attempts to regain control of Portugal, both countries signed the Treaty of Lisbon in 1668, in which Portugal was once again acknowledged by Spain as an independent nation.

Almost 100 years afterwards came the Liberal Revolution, a political revolution that erupted in 1820 and lasted until 1826, unchained by a military insurrection in Porto that spread to the rest of the country. This event was preceded by the French invasions between 1807 and 1811, when Napoleonic forces invaded Portugal three times and the Portuguese royal family had to be transferred to the Portuguese colony of Brazil, from where King João VI ruled his trans-Atlantic empire for 13 years: Portugal found itself virtually as a colony of Brazil or a British protectorate (Oliveira Marques 1984: 408-409). Although the British came to help with the French invasions and the liberal wars, they always wanted something in return: Portugal was forced to accept commercial treaties that opened the vast and wealthy Brazilian territory to the British in the shape of free commerce and navigation (Sá 1988: 245).

The revolutionaries demanded the immediate return of the royal *cortes* to restore the metropolitan dignity and organised the election of a constitutional assembly to debate the nature of the future government. King João VI returned to Portugal in 1821 and his heir-apparent D. Pedro became regent of the Kingdom of Brazil. The constitution was approved in 1822, the same year in which Brazil declared its independence from Portugal. Its independence was only recognised in 1825 and King Pedro was acclaimed the first Emperor of Brazil.

The dawn of another century brought along the Republic and the end of monarchy. A coup d'état organised by the Portuguese Republican Party (*Partido Republicano Português*) dethroned the constitutional monarchy and established the first Republic in Portugal on 5th December 1910. There were a myriad of reasons that led to this and also to the fairly violent end of our last monarch: the subjugation of the country to British interests, the expenses with the royal family, the power still held by the Church, social and political unrest, the rotation of the political parties and the incapacity of following modern times.

The National dictatorship started in 1928 with the election of President Carmona and lasted until the adoption of the new constitution in 1933, when the regime changed its name to *Estado Novo* (New State) or the Second Republic. It was a totalitarian regime, inspired by conservative and authoritarian ideologies developed by António de Oliveira Salazar, who ruled Portugal from 1932 to 1968, when he fell ill.

Salazar's programme was strongly opposed to communism, socialism and liberalism, thus being pro-Catholic, conservative and nationalistic. Its policy envisaged the perpetuation of Portugal as an empire spread throughout many continents, financially autonomous and politically independent from the dominating superpowers, as well as a source of civilisation and stability to overseas possessions. One of its pillars was PIDE, the secret police, which established severe censorship and imprisoned political dissidents. The regime was known for its propaganda, reflected in many mottos, such as “Deus, Pátria e Família” (God, Fatherland and Family); “Tudo pela Nação, nada contra a Nação” (All for the nation, nothing against the nation); “Persistentemente, teimosamente, não somos demais para continuar Portugal” (Persistently, stubbornly, we are not too many to continue Portugal); “Enquanto houver um Português sem trabalho e sem pão a Revolução continua” (As long as there is a Portuguese without work and bread, the Revolution will endure); “Temos uma Doutrina. Somos uma Força.” (We have an ideology. We are a Force); “Orgulhosamente sós.” (Proudly alone).

### 3. National Symbols and Icons

In order to discuss Portuguese culture in more depth, we chose to make use of a booklet published by the European Union (López-Menchero & Milano 2011), in which each country is presented by means of a set of national symbols and icons.

It is worth mentioning the difference between icon and symbol. Every sign consists of a stimulus pattern that bears a meaning and relates to its referent by means of a convention. There are different types of signs according to the way the meaning is associated with the pattern: icons, indexes and symbols. We shall focus only on icons and symbols: an icon is the simplest form of sign, since it physically resembles the pattern it stands for, whereas a symbol is an arbitrary, non-logical pattern (usually a sound pattern in a language) that gets its meaning primarily from its mental association with other symbols and only secondarily from its correlation with environmentally relevant properties. (Cobley & Jansz 1997: 33)

Therefore, we shall analyse the icons and symbols presented by this EU publication from a personal perspective, since it is impossible to have access to the underlying knowledge of the publishers, or the origin of such knowledge: were these icons and symbols provided by research of the authors or were they part of a survey conducted to Portuguese people?





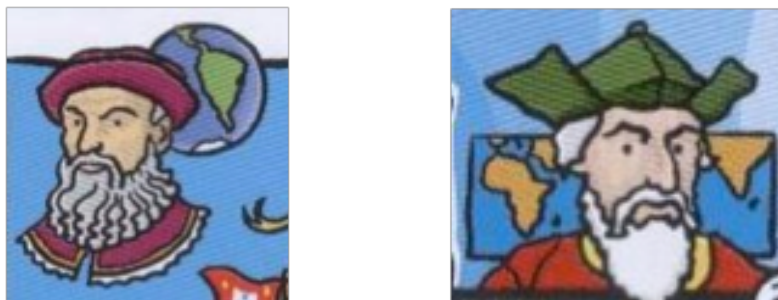
The flags presented in figure 2 are examples of the evolution of the national flag, which went through a great deal of change before reaching the current layout. The widespread interpretation of the Portuguese flag states that the green stripe symbolises hope, the red the blood shed by the Portuguese and the golden globe the Discoveries. Within the coat of arms, the blue shields represent the 5 Moorish kings defeated and the 7 castles in the 7 fortified hills conquered by Afonso Henriques.

Infante D. Henriques was the junior prince of the Kingdom of Portugal and an important figure in the early days of the Discoveries. He was the third child of King João I, the founder of the Avis dynasty and he himself encouraged his father to conquer Ceuta in 1415 and other lands down to Cabo Bojador. According to Gomes Eanes de Zurara, in his *Chronicles about the deeds in Guinea* (“*Crónicas dos feitos da Guiné*”), Henry is described as having no luxuries, speaking with soft words and calm gestures, a man of many virtues that never allowed any poor person to leave his presence empty-handed.



Figure 3 – Diogo Cão (*idem*).

Diogo Cão is the first European known to sight and enter the Congo River and to explore the West African coast between Cape St. Catherine and Cape Cross. He made 2 voyages in 1480s: to Congo and Angola, and then to Cape Cross. Related to the trips to and around Africa, it is also noteworthy the mention to Bartolomeu Dias and the Cape of Good Hope (*Cabo das Tormentas*), originally named the Cape of Storms, where a monster, Adamastor, was said to live. It was later renamed Cape of Good Hope, because it represented the opening of a route by sea to the east, especially to India.



*Figure 4 – Two possible representations of Vasco da Gama (idem).*

These two representations of Vasco da Gama match the paintings in which he was portrayed in the 15th century and onwards, with these two different types of hats, bearing the world behind him. Vasco da Gama was the commander of the first ships to sail directly from Europe to India, through the Cape, Mombasa, Malindi and then Calicut, and he was also responsible for Portugal's success as an early colonising power.



*Figure 5 – Pedro Álvares Cabral (idem).*

Pedro Álvares Cabral was a Portuguese nobleman, a military commander, a navigator and an explorer, who is well known for the discovery of Brazil. He was appointed to head an expedition to India in 1500, following the newly-opened route around Africa. His fleet consisting of 13 ships sailed far into the western Atlantic Ocean. He anchored in Monte Pascoal and Porto Seguro, which he claimed for the Portuguese crown.



Figure 6 – Spanish caravels (*idem*).

The fact that there are Spanish items amidst Portugal's symbols and icons can be interpreted in two different ways: the intertwining of the history of Portugal and Spain throughout the centuries, as mentioned above, namely when concerned with the Discoveries, as well as some blurred misconceptions from the authors towards what is specifically Portuguese and Spanish.

Nonetheless, the story states that Cristóvão Colombo came to offer his services to the king of Portugal, who refused them and ultimately led him to head for Spain, where his services were accepted. 1494 is a milestone of the Discoveries, because the *Tratado de Tordesilhas* was signed, which divided the newly-discovered lands outside Europe between Spain and Portugal along a meridian 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde islands.



Figure 7 – Luiz de Camões (*idem*).

Luís de Camões was probably born in Lisbon approximately in 1524 and died in 1580. He wrote the first Portuguese epic poem – “Os Lusíadas” (The Lusiads) – about the Portuguese Discoveries dedicated to D. Sebastião. It is composed of about 1102 stanzas or strophes and organised in 10 *cantos* or thematic groups of stanzas and some relevant historical episodes, such as the council of the Olympic Gods, the Adamastor or the machine of the world. There is a proverb about this great Portuguese writer: “Camões que vendeu um olho por dois tostões” [‘Camões who sold one of his eyes for two cents’, though in Portuguese it rhymes], which

is supposed to be based on the fact that when he was coming back from India, where he was sent in exile for having injured a member of the Royal Stables, he was shipwrecked. Because he had already written *Os Lusíadas*, it is said that he sold one of his eyes to the devil in exchange of saving his masterpiece, and not his Indian lover. Regardless of managing to reach shore without any harm and publish his epic poem, he died in penury.



Figure 8 – Fernando Pessoa (*idem*).

Another literary symbol, Fernando Pessoa was born in 1888 in Lisbon and died in 1935. He was a Portuguese poet, writer, literary critic and translator, one of the most significant literary figures of the 20th century and one of the greatest poets of all times. He was brought up in Durban, becoming fluent at English, and started writing under the name of Charles Robert Anon, a tendency he maintained with his many heteronyms (almost 80!), such as Alberto Caeiro, Ricardo Reis and Álvaro de Campos. One of his most famous works, “Mensagem” (Message), is a symbolist epic made up of 44 short poems organised in three parts: *Brasão* (Coat-of-Arms) relates Portuguese historical figures to the coat of arms; *Mar Português* (Portuguese Sea) covers the Portuguese Discoveries and the construction of the Empire that ended with the death of King Sebastião; *Encoberto* (The Hidden One) refers to Pessoa's vision of a future world of peace and the Fifth Empire, the fulfilment of the destiny of mankind, designed by God since before Time, and the accomplishment of Portugal (cf. “O Nevoeiro” by Chamaste mó?, a traditional music group, see References and its translation in Annexes).

Pessoa's name is also ubiquitous, owing to the fact that some of his verses turned into popular sayings, such as “Tudo vale a pena quando a alma não é pequena” (All is worthwhile if our soul is big enough) or “Deus quer, o homem sonha, a obra nasce” (God wants it, man dreams it, it is born).

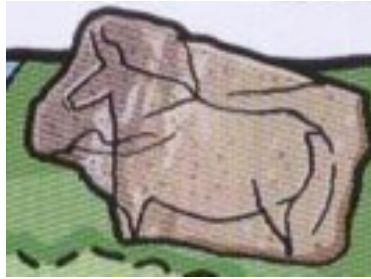


Figure 9 – Foz Côa Rock Art Sites (*idem*).

These rock art sites comprehend hundreds of carvings from the Upper Paleolithic period to the Magdalenian/ Epipalaeolithic (22,000-8,000 BCE), representing animal figures, namely horses and oxen, whose size range from 15cm to 1.80m. They were found in 1995, at the time of the construction of an EDP (National Electricity Company) dam and was inscribed as UNESCO's WH in 1998.



Figure 10 – The rooster of Barcelos and D. Luís Bridge in Porto (*idem*).

Barcelos was originally a Roman settlement, in Braga, and the rooster became well-known because of a legend that goes like this: a rich man threw a big party. When the party was over, the rich man noticed that his sterling cutlery was stolen by a guest. He accused a pilgrim and let him go to court. He protested his innocence, but the judge didn't believe him. The judge was about to eat a roasted rooster when the pilgrim said: "If I am innocent, this rooster will crow three times." When the pilgrim was about to be lynched, the rooster crowed. The judge released the pilgrim. The story ends a few years later when the pilgrim returned and made a statue over the event. (Wikipedia 2011: online)

Below the rooster, the Bridge D. Luís I can be seen, one of the symbols of Porto, the city that gave its name to Portugal, probably evolving from its first name *Portus Cale*. It meant the ancient town and port at the mouth of the Douro River and also a county of Portugal, predecessor of the kingdom of Portugal. *Cale* came either from Greek, meaning beautiful, or from Latin, standing for warm, both of which match the description of Porto. The city was of paramount importance in

the commerce of Port Wine and also known for its liberal way of thinking and will to fight against injustices; honesty is its rule of thumb. It was the cradle of many local and national rebellions and revolutions, e.g. 1820 liberal revolution, the 31st January popular rebellion, the end of monarchy and the birth of the Republic.

The Bridge was designed by Gustave Eiffel's pupil, Théophile Seyrig, and started being built in 1881, opening in 1886. It has a span of 172m and was then the longest in the world. At the left side of the bridge, it is noticeable the hills of Vila Nova de Gaia, leading to the Monastery of Serra do Pilar, also an architectural landmark of Gaia and UNESCO WH since 1996. The monastery was built in 16th century and it belonged to the Order of Saint Augustine. In 1832, during the Siege to Porto, it was used as an improvised fort; at the beginning of 20th century, it was also used for military barracks and remains.

Port Wine is obviously of inescapable mention, since it is 1st protected designation of origin in Portugal, provided by Marquês de Pombal in 1756 and either 1st or 2nd in the world. The Roman invasions, first in 1st century BC and then in 3rd century AC, introduced the culture of vines. In 1211, King Afonso II forbade the cutting of vineyards because they were considered possessions of the kingdom; in 14th century, wine was already the largest piece of Portuguese exportations, assessed in about 1£m. In 17th century, a privileged relationship with the British was born: Sandeman, Offley, Hunt, Newman, Roope, Campbell, Bowden & Taylor, Croft became well-know because of producing and trading in Port Wine. The micro-climate of the region characterised as hilly and the long and dry autumns and short winters also allowed the fields to become fertile places for experiments and the development of vineyards, the so-called 'generous wine'. Later, in 1756, the *Companhia Geral da Agricultura das Vinhas do Alto Douro* (the General Company of the Agriculture of Vineyards of Douro Alto) was created. Now the *Região Vinhateira do Alto Douro* or *Alto Douro Vinhateiro* (Alto Douro Wine Region) includes 26,000 acres and was classified as UNESCO's WH in 2001 within the category of cultural landscape.



Figure 11 – Warriors castrejos (idem).

The Castro culture developed during the first millennium AC and is related to the appearance of the first populations in Portugal; one of its features was the new set of symbolic representations, mainly masculine figures, intended to glorify heroic ancestors.



Figure 12 – Ria de Aveiro (*idem*).

Ria de Aveiro is known as the Portuguese Venice. It's an inland lagoon, parallel to the sea, that is 45-km long and can reach up to 11km in width, but rather shallow (up to 1.5m), though artificially maintained between 4 and 7m for navigation purposes. It resulted from a retreat of the sea which occurred in 16th century, in which 6,000 acres of land became permanently inside water, creating canals. It's rich in fish and water birds (that migrate here, such as storks) and famous for its salt. Instead of gondolas, the lagoon has its *moliceiros*, also roughly represented in figure 12. Above there is an icon of conservas, that is fish “preserves”, such as canned sardines, mackerels, tuna, octopus or squid, whose development was related to the long-time activity of fishing, since we are fishermen by nature, tradition and history. Some of the most famous ones are exported worldwide, and Ramirez can be found in Harrods, in London.



Figure 13 – Fado de Coimbra (*idem*).

*Fado* means ‘destiny’, ‘doom’ or ‘fortune’, but it also came to designate the type of song that deals with *saudade* (missing someone and longing or yearning to be with them), love and betrayal. *Fado* developed in several places and has been used for centuries by university students for their serenades, usually twice a year, at the beginning of the academic year, dedicated to the freshmen, and, at the end, during the *Queima das Fitas* (the burning of the ribbons, symbolising the end of higher studies).

Fado from Coimbra is different from Lisbon’s: it has to do with students’ lives, the fight against injustices and later against the dictatorship; women could not sing it and its melancholic sound comes from the Portuguese guitar and the voices of men. It was Coimbra the first to develop the *monumentais serenatas* performed in their See (see “Balada da Despedida” in References and its translation in Annexes).

The University of Coimbra is the oldest university in Portugal; it was established in 1290 by King Dinis, offering Arts, Canonical Law, Civil Law and Medicine. The hill where the university lies is also famous for its 34-metre-high *Torre da Cabra* (Goat Tower), because of its clock tower and the bells which used to oversee students’ life at the university. The tower was built between 1728 and 1733 by António Canevari in Baroque style of Italian inspiration. Its three bells are called *cabra*, *cabrão e balão* (goat, bitch and balloon, the two last ones rhyming in Portuguese), each jingling in a different direction.





Figure 14 – Amália Rodrigues (*idem*).

Although, from our viewpoint, *fado* from Coimbra is the most beautiful one, it is undeniable that Amália Rodrigues must be mentioned. She was born in 1920 and died on 6th October 1999, a day of national mourning, being buried at *Panteão Nacional*. She is one of the most renowned Portuguese singers, said to be the Queen of Fado and an ambassador of Portugal; she performed everywhere in the world: Chez Carrère (Paris), Ritz (London), Lincoln Centre (New York), Rome, Trieste, Dublin, and the like. It is interesting that she launched her first LP in the USA in 1954 by Angel Records, at a time when women were forbidden to travel without their husbands, let alone if they were single. Listen to one of her most beautiful *fados* “Com que voz” (see References and its translation in Annexes). One of the most pungent criticisms was that she embodied the 3 Fs of the dictatorship: *fado*, Fátima (the sanctuary) and football. Nevertheless, we believe that one cannot be held responsible for being turned into a symbol and incorporated into the regime’s propaganda.



Figure 15 – Padrão dos Descobrimentos (*idem*).

Salazar ordered the original monument dedicated to the Discoveries to be built for the 1940 Exhibition of the Portuguese World and was later taken down. In

1960, it was put up again to celebrate the 500th anniversary of Infante D. Henriques, the Navigator, the sponsor of the Discoveries. It consists of a 50-metre replica of the old one, carved into the shape of the prow of a caravel; on both sides, there are 33 Portuguese personalities, among which explorers, cartographers, artists, scientists and missionaries, with the Infante leading ahead into the unknown (there is a brochure online explaining the entire monument: see EGEAC in the References). The pavement in front of the monument features a mosaic decoration showing a world map with the routes of various Portuguese explorers and a wind rose, offered by South Africa in 1960.

On the right of the *Padrão*, we can see the *Torre de Belém* (Belém Tower or Tower of St. Vincent). It was built in the early 16th century from limestone and is a prominent example of the Portuguese Manueline style or late Portuguese Gothic. The tower was commissioned by King João I as a defence system at the mouth of the river and a ceremonial gateway to Lisbon. It is composed of a bastion and a 30-metre four-storey fortified tower located in Belém. This district in Lisbon, Belém, played a significant role in the era of the Discoveries, and it is currently the presidency headquarters. It became UNESCO's WH since 1983, along with the *Mosteiro dos Jerónimos* (Hieronymites Monastery). This hermitage place was founded by Infante D. Henrique, the Navigator, in 1450, and this was where Vasco da Gama and his men spent the night in prayer before departing for India in 1497. Its construction started by order of King Manuel I (1502) to commemorate Vasco da Gama's successful return from India.



Figure 16 – Torre de Vasco da Gama at Expo'98 (*idem*).

Expo'98 was the official specialised World's Exhibition held in Lisbon, from May to September 1998, under the theme “The Oceans, a Heritage for the Future”, also chosen to commemorate 500 years of Portuguese Discoveries – it received around 11 million visitors in 132 days and 155 countries and organisations were represented. The ambitious project enabled to renovate a derelict area of Lisbon,

providing the city with a new bridge, a new subway line and a new multi-modal station. It became famous for its Aquarium, the Atlantic Pavilion, later turned into *Parque das Nações* (the park of the nations).

Torre de Vasco da Gama is a 145-m lattice tower, named after the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama, whose steel structure represents the sail of a caravel. At the height of 120m, there was an observation deck and a luxury panoramic restaurant. While it was still open, it was the tallest structure in Portugal open to the public. On the right of this tower, we have the Vasco da Gama Bridge, a cable-stayed bridge, flanked by viaducts and range views, that spans the River Tejo. It's the longest bridge in Europe, and the ninth longest in the world, with a total length of 17.2km. It was opened on 29th March 1998, in time of the opening of Expo'98 and the 500th anniversary of Infante D. Henriques.



*Figure 17 – Carnations and the Carnation Revolution (idem).*

The red carnation represents the Carnation Revolution, which occurred on the 25th April 1974, marking the end of the dictatorship and the recovery of the principles of the long-lost Republic installed in 1910. The use of carnations symbolically represents the bloodless revolution and the flower is said to have been used because a florist started handing out carnations to the people on the streets, who later gave them to the military.



**Figure 18** – The military wearing carnations on 24th April 1974  
([http://www.encyclopedia.com.pt/articles.php?article\\_id=1094](http://www.encyclopedia.com.pt/articles.php?article_id=1094)).

The coup was carried out by the armed forces, the military that mainly belonged to the intermediate hierarchy, called the captains, most of whom had participated in the colonial wars. Initially, it was related to corporative demands of the military, although later it comprehended political concerns as well. After the fall of the dictatorship, a *Junta de Salvação Nacional* (Council for National Salvation) was created and a period of intense turmoil followed: the so-called PREC (undergoing revolutionary process) was marked by demonstrations, occupations, provisional governments and nationalisations, which ended on 25th November 1975. This period of political and social unrest is also known as the hot summer of 1975. Our current constitution was approved in 1976, after a long way since the Constitutional Charter from 1822.



Figure 19 – Azulejos (*idem*).

*Azulejos* is a Portuguese word that comes from the Arabic word *zellige*, meaning ‘polished stone’, a form of Portuguese painted, tin-glazed, ceramic tilework that became a typical aspect of our culture and has been produced continuously for 5 centuries. The art of tiling can be found in churches, palaces, ordinary houses, train or subway stations; they are applied on walls, floors and even ceilings as ornamental art, but also for specific functions, such as temperature control.



Figure 20 – Bullfights and taking the face (*idem*).

Many people in Portugal stand up to the defence of bullfights and the work of *forcados* as a vitally important manifestation of cultural heritage that must be upheld. This is highly debatable and we do believe bullfights are ultimately an issue of animal rights. *Forcados* are groups of amateurs who perform the *pega de cara* (taking the face), the final event in a typical bullfight, who use a 1.7-metre-long pole to assist them in such action: this pole is called a *forcado*. The *pega* involves 8 *forcados* who challenge the bull with their bare hands. They appear in traditional clothing of damask or velvet for this event, including a green, long, knit hat, worn only by the one who’s going to ‘take the face’. To obtain a clearer view of what the *pega de cara* consists of, have a look at the trailer of a Portuguese documentary called “Taking the face” (see References).



Figure 21 – Olive trees and the montes alentejanos (*idem*).

The *montes alentejanos* (or hillocks in Alentejo) are a typical image of Alentejo, south of the Tagus River, which represent a fairly extensive rural estate and its facilities, usually situated at the highest point of a hill or hillock. However, in the last decades, they have gradually been abandoned and purchased by foreigners. Related to these hillocks and Alentejo (though not exclusive of this region), we also have olive trees and their much appreciated product, olive oil. *Olea europaea* is a species of a small tree native to the coastal areas of the eastern Mediterranean Basin, as well as northern Iran. Its fruit is of major agricultural importance in the Mediterranean region as the source of olive oil. Olive trees are very hardy, drought-disease- and fire-resistant, and can live for a very long time – an olive tree in Algarve is said to be 2,000 years old.



Figure 22 – The island of Azores (*idem*).

As far as the islands are concerned, the Archipelago of Azores is composed of nine volcanic islands situated in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean: Flores, Corvo, Graciosa, Terceira, São Jorge, Pico, Faial, São Miguel, Santa Maria and the Formigas Reef. The first islands were “discovered” in 1431 by Gonçalo Velho Cabral, but credit is also given to the explorer Diogo de Silves, in 1427. Its main activities are

agriculture, dairy farming (cheese and butter products), minor livestock ranching, fishing and tourism.



Figure 23 – Bird of Paradise (*idem*).

Finally, as for Madeira (meaning ‘wood’), the archipelago comprises Madeira, Porto Santo, the Desertas and the Savage Islands. It was discovered by Infante D. Henrique in 1419 and settled after 1420. Madeira is famous for its wine, flowers, landscapes, embroidery artisans and its annual New Year’s celebrations featuring spectacular fireworks. The *ave-do-paráiso* (*Strelitzia reginae* or Bird of Paradise) represented in figure 22 is typical of this island.

#### 4. A Bit About the Language

To conclude, a few facts about the Portuguese language will be offered to provide some insight into this highly complex language.

Portuguese is officially spoken in Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé e Príncipe, East Timor and Macau, by around 250 million people, 200 million of which in Brazil only.



Figure 24 – Representation of the countries which speak Portuguese (<http://www.mundodoscuriosos.com.br>).

As mentioned above, Portugal has 2 official languages, Portuguese and Mirandese (not to mention Portuguese sign language) and many dialects or regional varieties, such as *transmontano* (from Trás-os-Montes), *portuense* (Porto), *lisboeta* (considered to be the standard), *alentejano* (Alentejo), *madeirense* (the island of Madeira), *açoreano* (the archipelago of Azores), among others. Their main differences are found in the pronunciation and intonation, as well as in the lexicon.

Portuguese is a language which belongs to the Indo-European family, specifically the branch of the Italic family, descendant of Latin and Galician-Portuguese with influences of Celtic, Arabic and Germanic tribes, and later Latin. It came to lose Latin inflection and it now depends on word order to convey the syntactic function within phrases and sentences. It makes use of the Roman alphabet.

Its phonological system is composed of 19 consonants (since the Medieval affricates merged with the fricatives around 18th century, though they still occur in special contexts and in specific regions around the country, e.g. *chuva, os olhos*); 9 vowels (both oral and nasal), such as *maçã, sento, sinto, sondo*; 10 oral diphthongs, decreasing and increasing, for instance, *pai, rei, dois, fui, mau, seu, céu, viu, ouro, quase*; and 5 nasal diphthongs (all decreasing), for example in the words *nação, limões, alemães, muita, tens*.

## References

- AR – Assembleia da República. (2008). *O Estado Novo (1926-1974)*. Available at: <http://www.parlamento.pt/Parlamento/Paginas/OEstadoNovo.aspx> (accessed on 01.02.2012)
- Balada da despedida*. Available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3WGttZdksg> (accessed on 01.02.2012)
- Chamaste mó?. (2002). *Nevoeiro* In *A Inocência da Noite*. Available at: <http://www.myspace.com/chamastemo/music/songs/nevoeiro-wma-76738723> (accessed on 01.02.2012)
- CIA. (2012). *The World Factbook – Portugal*. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/po.html> (accessed on 31.01.2012)
- Cobley, Paul and Linda Jansz. (1997). *Introducing Semiotics*. Icon Books: London.
- Com que voz*. Available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yWUBuwn33QY> (accessed on 01.02.2012)
- DR I-A. (2004). *Lei constitucional 1/2004 de 24 de Julho*. Available at: <dre.pt/pdf1s/dip/2004/07/173A00/46424693.pdf> (accessed on 1.02.2012)
- EGEAC. (no date). *Folheto Padrão dos Descobrimentos*. Available at: [http://www.padraodosdescobrimentos.egeac.pt/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=97&Itemid=63](http://www.padraodosdescobrimentos.egeac.pt/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=97&Itemid=63) (accessed on 06.02.2012)



- INE. (2011). *Censos 2011 – Resultados Provisórios*. Lisboa: INE. Available at: [http://censos.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=CENSOS&xpgid=ine\\_censos\\_publicacao\\_det&contexto=pu&PUBLICACOESpub\\_boui=122073978&PUBLICACOESmodo=2&selTab=tab1&pcensos=61969554](http://censos.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=CENSOS&xpgid=ine_censos_publicacao_det&contexto=pu&PUBLICACOESpub_boui=122073978&PUBLICACOESmodo=2&selTab=tab1&pcensos=61969554) (accessed on 1.02.2012)
- Infopédia. (2012). “Padeira de Aljubarrota” In *Infopédia*. Porto: Porto Editora. Available at: [http://www.infopedia.pt/\\$padeira-de-aljubarrota](http://www.infopedia.pt/$padeira-de-aljubarrota) (accessed on 01.02.2012)
- Ley, C.D. (ed.). (2000). *Portuguese Voyages 1498-1663 – Tales from the Great Age of Discovery*. London: Phoenix Press.
- López-Menchero, Gonzalo and Andrea Milano. (2011). *União Europeia: Unida na Diversidade*. EU: Freeform communication.
- Martins, Oliveira. (2004). *História de Portugal*. Lisboa: Guimaraes Editores.
- Oliveira Marques, A.H. (1984). *História de Portugal*. Vol I, II, III. Lisboa: Palas Editores.
- PORDATA. (2011). *Esperança de vida à nascença: total e por sexo – Portugal*. Available at: <http://www.pordata.pt/Portugal/Esperanca+de+vida+a+nascenca+total+e+por+sexo-418> (accessed on 01.02.2012)
- Sá, Victor de. (1998). “A subida ao poder da burguesia em Portugal – dificuldades e condicionalismos” In *Revista da Faculdade de Letras: História: II série*, vol. V. Porto: FLUP. 245-252.
- Taking the face – Pega de Cara Trailer*. Available at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJq\\_2PaJakk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJq_2PaJakk). (accessed on 31.01.2012)
- Zurara, Gomes Eanes de. (1989). *Crónicas dos feitos da Guiné*. no place: Alfa.
- Wikipedia. (2011). *Barcelos, Portugal*. Available at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barcelos,\\_Portugal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barcelos,_Portugal) (accessed on 31.01.2012)