

# History of Portugal

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## History of Portugal



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The **history of Portugal** dates back to the Early [Middle Ages](#). In the 15th and 16th centuries, it ascended to the status of a [world power](#) during Europe's "[Age of Discovery](#)" as it [built up a vast empire](#), including possessions in South America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania. Over the following two centuries, Portugal kept most of its colonies, but gradually lost much of its wealth and status as the Dutch, English, and French took an increasing share of the [spice](#) and [slave trades](#) by surrounding or conquering the widely-scattered Portuguese trading posts and territories.

Signs of military decline began with two disastrous battles: the [Battle of Alcácer Quibir](#) in Morocco in 1578 and Spain's abortive attempt to conquer England in 1588 by means of the [Spanish Armada](#) – Portugal was then in a [dynastic union with Spain](#) and contributed ships to the Spanish invasion fleet. The country was further weakened by the destruction of much of its capital city in an [earthquake in 1755](#), occupation during the [Napoleonic Wars](#) and the loss of its largest colony, [Brazil](#), in 1822. From the middle of the 19th century to the late 1950s, nearly two million [Portuguese](#) left Portugal to live in Brazil and the United States.<sup>[1]</sup>

In 1910, there was a revolution that deposed the monarchy. Amid corruption, repression of the church, and the near bankruptcy of the state, a military coup in 1926 installed a dictatorship that remained until another coup in 1974. The new government instituted sweeping [democratic](#) reforms and granted independence to all of Portugal's African colonies in 1975.

Portugal is a founding member of the [North Atlantic Treaty Organization](#) (NATO), the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](#) (OECD), and the [European Free Trade Association](#) (EFTA). It entered the [European Community](#) (now the [European Union](#)) in 1986.

## Etymology[[edit](#)]

The word Portugal derives from the [Roman-Celtic](#) place name [Portus Cale](#). Cale was the name of an early settlement located at the mouth of the [Douro River](#), which flows into the Atlantic Ocean in the north of what is now Portugal. Around 200 BC, the Romans took the [Iberian Peninsula](#) from the [Carthaginians](#) during the [Second Punic War](#), and in the process conquered Cale and renamed it *Portus Cale* (*Port of Cale*). During the [Dark Ages](#), the region around *Portus Cale* became known by the [Suevi](#) and [Visigoths](#) as *Portucale*.

The name *Portucale* evolved into *Portugale* during the 7th and 8th centuries, and by the 9th century, that term was used extensively to refer to the region between the rivers Douro and [Minho](#), the Minho flowing along what would become the northern [Portugal-Spain border](#). By the 11th and 12th century, *Portugale* was already referred to as **Portugal**.

The etymology of the name *Cale* is somewhat mysterious, as is the identity of the town's founders. The most plausible origin points to Cale<sup>[2]</sup> is a [Celtic](#) name, like many others found in the region. The word *cale* or *cala* meant "port," an "inlet" or "harbour," and implied the existence of an older Celtic harbour.<sup>[3]</sup> This sounds like a plausible origin as for instance the Gaelic word for harbour is indeed "Cala".<sup>[4]</sup> Others argue it is the stem of Gallaecia. Another theory claims it derives from the word *Caladunum*.<sup>[5]</sup>

In any case, the particle *Portu* in the word *Portucale* was used as the basis of [Porto](#), the modern name for the city located on the site of the ancient city of Cale at the mouth of the Douro River. And [port](#) became the name in English of the wine from the Douro Valley region around Porto. The name *Cale* is today reflected in *Gaia* ([Vila Nova de Gaia](#)), a city on the left bank of the river.

## Early history[\[edit\]](#)

### Prehistory[\[edit\]](#)

*Main article: [Prehistoric Iberia](#)*

The region of present-day Portugal was inhabited by [Neanderthals](#), and then by [Homo sapiens](#), who roamed the northern Iberian peninsula.<sup>[6]</sup> Neanderthals probably arrived 100,000 years [BP](#). A Neanderthal tooth found at Nova da Columbiera cave in Estremadura is one of the oldest human fossils so far discovered. [Homo sapiens sapiens](#) arrived in Portugal in around 35,000 years ago and spread rapidly throughout the country.<sup>[7]</sup>

Pre-celtic tribes inhabited Portugal leaving a remarkable cultural footprint. The [Cynetes](#) developed a written language leaving stelae mainly found in the south of Portugal.

Early in the first millennium BC, several waves of [Celts](#) invaded Portugal from Central Europe and intermarried with the local populations to form several different ethnic groups, with many tribes. The Celtic presence in Portugal is traceable in broad outline, through archaeological and linguistic evidence. They dominated much of northern and central Portugal; but in the south they were unable to establish their stronghold, which retained its non-Indo-European character until the Roman conquest.<sup>[8]</sup> In southern Portugal, some small, semi-permanent commercial coastal settlements were also founded by Phoenician-Carthaginians.

### Ancient history[\[edit\]](#)

*Main article: [Ancient Portugal](#)*



The main language areas in Iberia, circa 300 BC.



Archaeological artifact from the work developed in the area of [Citânia de Briteiros](#)



Cross or *cruzado* in Citânia de Briteiros



Informative plaque of the proto-historic settlement of Citânia de Briteiros



Another artifact from Citânia de Briteiros



### *A pedra formosa*

Numerous [pre-Roman peoples of the Iberian Peninsula](#) inhabited the territory when a [Roman](#) invasion occurred in the 3rd century BC. The [Romanization of Hispania](#) took several centuries. The Roman provinces that covered present-day Portugal were [Lusitania](#) in the south and [Gallaecia](#) in the north.

Numerous Roman sites are scattered around present-day Portugal. Some of the urban remains are quite large, such as [Conímbriga](#) and [Miróbriga](#). Several works of engineering, such as baths, temples, bridges, roads, circuses, theatres, and layman's homes are preserved throughout the country. Coins, sarcophagi, and ceramics are also numerous.

Following the fall of Rome, the [Kingdom of the Suebi](#) and the [Visigothic Kingdom](#) controlled the territory between the 5th and 7th centuries.

## Romanization[[edit](#)]

*Further information:* [Roman conquest of Hispania](#) and [Romanization of Hispania](#)



The Roman Provinces [Lusitania](#) and [Gallaecia](#), after the reorganization of [Diocletian A.D. 298](#)

Romanization began with the arrival of the [Roman](#) army in the [Iberian Peninsula](#) in 218 BC during the [Second Punic War](#) against [Carthage](#). The Romans sought to conquer [Lusitania](#), a territory south of the [Douro](#) river and Spanish [Estremadura](#), with its capital at [Emerita Augusta](#) (now [Mérida, Spain](#)).<sup>[9]</sup>

Mining was the primary factor that made the Romans interested in conquering the region: one of Rome's strategic objectives was to cut off Carthaginian access to the Iberian copper, tin, gold, and silver mines. The Romans intensely exploited the [Aljustrel](#) (Vipasca) and [Santo Domingo](#) mines in the [Iberian Pyrite Belt](#) which extends to [Seville](#).<sup>[10]</sup>

While the south of what is now Portugal was relatively easily occupied by the Romans, the conquest of the north was achieved only with difficulty due to resistance from [Serra da Estrela](#) by [Celts](#) and [Lusitanians](#) led by [Viriatius](#), who managed to resist [Roman expansion](#) for years.<sup>[9]</sup> [Viriatius](#), a shepherd from [Lobriga](#) ([Lorica](#) was the Roman name), now [Loriga](#), Serra da Estrela who was expert in [guerrilla tactics](#), waged relentless war against the Romans, defeating several successive Roman generals, until he was assassinated in 140 BC by traitors bought by the Romans. [Viriatius](#) has long been hailed as the first truly heroic figure in proto-Portuguese history. However those living in more settled Romanized parts of Southern Portugal and Lusitania would have begged to differ as he would often raid these regions victimizing the inhabitants.<sup>[9][11]</sup>

The conquest of the Iberian Peninsula was complete two centuries after the Romans' arrival, when they defeated the remaining Cantabri, Astures and Gallaeci in the [Cantabrian Wars](#) in the time of Emperor [Augustus](#) (19 BC). In 74 CE [Vespasian](#) granted [Latin Rights](#) to most municipalities of Lusitania. In 212 CE, the [Constitutio Antoniniana](#) gave [Roman citizenship](#) to all free subjects of the empire and, at the end of the century, the emperor [Diocletian](#) founded the province of [Gallaecia](#), which included modern-day northern Portugal.<sup>[9]</sup>

As well as mining, the Romans also developed agriculture, on some of the best agricultural land in the empire. In what is now [Alentejo](#), vines and cereals were cultivated, and fishing was intensively pursued in the coastal belt of the [Algarve](#), [Póvoa de Varzim](#), [Matosinhos](#), Troia and the coast of Lisbon, for the manufacture of [garum](#) that was exported by Roman trade routes to the entire empire. Business transactions were facilitated by coinage and the construction of an extensive road network, bridges and aqueducts, such as Trajan's bridge in [Aquaе Flaviae](#) (now [Chaves](#)).<sup>[12]</sup>

Roman rule brought geographical mobility to the inhabitants of Portugal and increased their interaction with the rest of the world as well as internally. Soldiers often served in different regions and eventually settled far from their birthplace, while the development of mining attracted migration into the mining areas.<sup>[11]</sup>

The Romans founded numerous cities, such as [Olisipo](#) (Lisbon), [Bracara Augusta](#) (Braga), [Aeminium](#) (Coimbra) and [Pax Julia](#) (Beja),<sup>[13]</sup> and left important cultural legacies in what is now Portugal. [Vulgar Latin](#) (the basis of the Portuguese language) became the dominant language of the region, and Christianity spread throughout [Lusitania](#) from the third century.

## Germanic invasions[[edit](#)]



Península Ibérica c.560 d.C. [Suebi](#) territory with its capital in [Braga](#) (Blue); [Visigothic](#) territory with its capital in [Toledo](#) (Ocher)



Visigothic Hispania and its regional divisions in 700, prior to the Muslim conquest.

In 409, with the decline of the [Roman Empire](#), the [Iberian Peninsula](#) was occupied by [Germanic tribes](#) that the Romans referred to as [Barbarians](#).<sup>[14]</sup> In 411, with a federation contract with [Emperor Honorius](#), many of these people settled in [Hispania](#). An important group was made up of the [Suebi](#) and [Vandals](#) in [Gallaecia](#), who founded a [Suebi Kingdom](#) with its capital in [Braga](#). They came to dominate [Aeminium](#) ([Coimbra](#)) as well, and there were [Visigoths](#) to the south.<sup>[15]</sup> The Suebi and the Visigoths were the Germanic tribes who had the most lasting presence in the territories corresponding to modern Portugal. As elsewhere in Western Europe, there was a sharp decline in urban life during the [Dark Ages](#).<sup>[16]</sup>

Roman institutions disappeared in the wake of the [Germanic](#) invasions with the exception of [ecclesiastical](#) organizations, which were fostered by the Suebi in the fifth century and adopted by the Visigoths afterwards. Although the Suebi and Visigoths were initially followers of [Arianism](#) and [Priscillianism](#), they adopted [Catholicism](#) from the local inhabitants. St. [Martin of Braga](#) was a particularly influential evangelist at this time.<sup>[15]</sup>

In 429, the Visigoths moved south to expel the [Alans](#) and [Vandals](#) and founded a kingdom with its capital in [Toledo](#). From 470, conflict between the Suebi and Visigoths increased. In 585 the Visigothic King [Liuvigild](#) conquered Braga and annexed Gallaecia. From that time, the [Iberian Peninsula](#) was unified under a [Visigothic Kingdom](#).<sup>[15]</sup>

With the Visigoths settled in the newly formed kingdom, a new class emerged that had been unknown in Roman times: a [nobility](#), which played a tremendous social and political role during the [Middle Ages](#). It was also under the [Visigoths](#) that the Church began to play a very important part within the state. Since the Visigoths did not learn Latin from the local people, they had to rely on Catholic bishops to continue the Roman system of governance. The laws established during the Visigothic monarchy were thus made by councils of bishops, and the [clergy](#) started to emerge as a high-ranking class.

## Islamic rule and the Reconquista (711–1249)[[edit](#)]





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*Main articles:* [Al-Andalus](#), [Reconquista](#) and [History of Portugal \(1139–1279\)](#)



[Mértola](#)'s mosque was transformed into a church in 1238.

## [Umayyad conquest of Hispania](#)[\[edit\]](#)

During the caliphate of the Umayyad Caliph [Al-Walid I](#), the Berber commander [Tariq ibn-Ziyad](#) led a small force that landed at [Gibraltar](#) on April 30, 711, ostensibly to intervene in a [Visigothic](#) civil war. After a decisive victory over King [Roderic](#) at the [Battle of Guadalete](#) on July 19, 711, Tariq ibn-Ziyad, joined by Arab governor [Musa ibn Nusayr](#) of [Ifriqiya](#), brought most of the Visigothic Kingdom under Muslim occupation in a seven-year campaign. The Visigothic resistance to this invasion was ineffective, though it needed siege to sack a couple of cities. The main reason the cities were overwhelmed so easily is not easily explained since the only surviving sources were Muslims whose accounts were anecdotal.<sup>[17]</sup> The Visigothic territories included what is today Spain, Portugal, Andorra, Gibraltar, and the southwestern part of France anciently known as [Septimania](#). The invading Moors wanted to conquer and convert Europe to Islam, so they crossed the [Pyrenees](#) to use Visigothic [Septimania](#) as a base of operations. The advance into [Western Europe](#) was only stopped in what is now north-central France by the [West Germanic Franks](#) under [Charles Martel](#) at the [Battle of Tours](#) in 732.

It is an astonishing fact that the Muslims needed only about five years to establish their authority, which had a vast impact on Iberian history. In Portugal they went on to rule up to four centuries. Muslims called their conquests in Iberia '[al-Andalus](#)' and in what was to become Portugal, they mainly consisted of the old Roman province of [Lusitania](#) (Central and Southern regions) while [Gallaecia](#) (northern regions) was more or less abandoned to the remaining unsubdued Christians. Until the Berber revolt in the 730s al-Andalus was treated as a dependency of Umayyad North Africa. Subsequently, links were strained until the Caliphate was overthrown in the late 740s.<sup>[18]</sup>

The invading [Medieval Muslim Moors](#) who conquered and destroyed the Christian Visigothic Kingdom in the [Iberian Peninsula](#) were mainly [Berbers](#) from [North Africa](#), but they were joined by [Arabs](#) from the [Middle East](#). The North African Berbers had been conquered and converted to Islam by Arabs from the Middle East in the 7th century during the [Muslim conquest of the Maghreb](#), the area of [North Africa](#) west of [Egypt](#) and north of the [Sahara desert](#) mainly inhabited by [Berber](#) peoples.



## Beginning of the Reconquista[\[edit\]](#)



Monument of Pelagius at Covadonga where he won the [Battle of Covadonga](#) and initiates the Christian [Reconquista](#) of [Iberia](#) from the Islamic [Moors](#).

In 718 AD, a Visigothic noble named [Pelagius](#) was elected leader by many of the ousted [Visigoth](#) nobles. Pelagius called for the remnant of the Christian Visigothic armies to rebel against the Moors and re-group in the unconquered northern Asturian highlands, better known today as the [Cantabrian Mountains](#), a small mountain region in modern northwestern [Spain](#) adjacent to the [Bay of Biscay](#). He planned to use the Cantabrian Mountain range as a place of refuge and protection from the invaders and as a springboard to reconquer lands from the Moors. After defeating the Moors in the [Battle of Covadonga](#) in 722 AD, Pelagius was proclaimed king, founding the Christian [Kingdom of Asturias](#) and starting the war of reconquest known in [Portuguese](#) (and [Spanish](#)) as the [Reconquista](#).<sup>[19]</sup>

## Creation of the County of Portugal[\[edit\]](#)

Vímara Peres



Equestrian statue of Vímara Peres in <a href="#">Porto</a>	
<b><a href="#">First Count of Portucale</a></b>	
<b>Reign</b>	868–873
<b>Successor</b>	<a href="#">Lucídio Vimaranes</a>
<b>Born</b>	820 <a href="#">A Coruña</a> , <a href="#">Kingdom of Galicia</a>
<b>Died</b>	873 <a href="#">Guimarães</a> , <a href="#">County of Portugal</a>

At the end of the ninth century, the region of Portugal between the Minho river and Douro river was re-conquered from the Moors by [Vímara Peres](#) on the orders of King [Alfonso III of Asturias](#). Finding that the region had two major cities, [Portus Cale](#) on the coast and [Braga](#) in the interior, with many towns deserted due to the Moorish invasion, he decided to re-populate them with Christians that resisted conversion as [Mozarabs](#). Vímara Peres did not experience great difficulty in re-organizing the region and elevating it to the status of a [county](#). He named the region he freed from the Moors the [County of Portugal](#), after the major port city in the region, *Portus Cale*, equivalent to modern [Porto](#). One of the first cities Vímara Peres founded was Vimaranes, known today as [Guimarães](#) – the "birthplace of the Portuguese nationality" or "the cradle city" (Cidade Berço in Portuguese). After annexing the County of Portugal into one of the several counties that made up the [Kingdom of Asturias](#), King Alfonso III named Vímara Peres as the first Count. The region became known simultaneously as *Portucale*, *Portugale*, and *Portugalia* — the [County of Portugal](#).<sup>[20]</sup> The Kingdom of Asturias was later divided as a result of dynastic disputes; the northern region of Portugal became part of the [Kingdom of Galicia](#) and later part of the [Kingdom of León](#).

Suebi-Visigothic arts and architecture, in particular sculpture, had shown a natural continuity with the Roman period. With the Reconquista, new artistic trends took hold, with Galician-Asturian influences more visible than the Leonese. The Portuguese group was characterized by a general return to classicism. The county courts of [Viseu](#) and [Coimbra](#) played a very important role in this process. Mozarabic architecture was found in the south, in Lisbon and beyond, while in the Christian realms Galician-Portuguese and Asturian architecture prevailed.<sup>[21]</sup>

As a vassal of the Kingdom of León, Portugal occasionally gained *de facto* independence during weak Leonese reigns. Portugal appeared as a kingdom (as the [Kingdom of Galicia and Portugal](#)) in 1065 under the rule of [Garcia II of Galicia](#). Because of feudal power struggles, Portuguese and Galician nobles rebelled. Garcia's forces defeated those under [Nuno II Mendes](#), the last count of Portugal of the House of

[Vímara Peres](#), at the [Battle of Pedroso](#) on 18 February 1071. The battle resulted in Nuno Mendes' death and the declaration of Garcia II as [King of Portugal](#), the first person to claim this title.<sup>[22]</sup> In 1072, the country rejoined [León](#) under Garcia II's brother [Alfonso VI of León](#). In 1095, Portugal broke away from the [Kingdom of Galicia](#). Its territories, consisting largely of mountains, moorland and forests, were bounded on the north by the [Minho](#), and on the south by the [Mondego River](#).

## Foundation of the Kingdom of Portugal<sup>[[edit](#)]</sup>

### Afonso I



### [King of Portugal](#)

**Reign** 26 July 1139 – 6 December 1185

**[Coronation](#)** 26 July 1139

**Successor** [Sancho I](#)

### [Count of Portugal](#)

<b>Reign</b>	1112–1139
<b>Predecessor</b>	<a href="#">Henry, Count of Portugal</a>
<b>Born</b>	25 June 1109 <a href="#">Coimbra</a> , <a href="#">Guimarães</a> or <a href="#">Viseu</a> , <a href="#">County of Portugal</a> <sup>[a]</sup>
<b>Died</b>	6 December 1185 (aged 76) <a href="#">Coimbra</a> , <a href="#">Kingdom of Portugal</a>
<b>Burial</b>	<a href="#">Santa Cruz Monastery</a> , <a href="#">Coimbra</a> , <a href="#">District of Coimbra</a> , <a href="#">Portugal</a>
<b>Consort</b>	<a href="#">Mafalda of Savoy</a>
<b>Issue</b>	<a href="#">Urraca, Queen of León</a> <a href="#">Sancho I of Portugal</a> <i>among others ...</i> <a href="#">Theresa, Countess of Flanders</a>
<b><u>House</u></b>	<a href="#">House of Burgundy</a>
<b>Father</b>	<a href="#">Henry, Count of Portugal</a>
<b>Mother</b>	<a href="#">Theresa, Countess of Portugal</a>
<b>Religion</b>	<a href="#">Roman Catholicism</a>

At the end of the 11th century, the [Burgundian](#) knight [Henry](#) became count of Portugal and defended its independence by merging the [County of Portugal](#) and the [County of Coimbra](#). His efforts were assisted by a civil war that raged between [León](#) and [Castile](#) and distracted his enemies.

Henry's son [Afonso Henriques](#) took control of the county upon his death. The city of Braga, the unofficial Catholic centre of the Iberian Peninsula, faced new competition from other regions. Lords of the cities of [Coimbra](#) and [Porto](#) fought with [Braga](#)'s clergy and demanded the independence of the reconstituted county.

Portugal traces its national origin to 24 June 1128 with the [Battle of São Mamede](#). Afonso proclaimed himself *Prince of Portugal*, and in 1139 *King of Portugal*. In 1143,

the Kingdom of León recognises him as King of Portugal by the [Treaty of Zamora](#). In 1179, the papal bull [Manifestis Probatum](#) of [Pope Alexander III](#) officially recognised Afonso I as King. After the [Battle of São Mamede](#), the first capital of Portugal was [Guimarães](#), from which the first king ruled. Later, when Portugal was already officially independent, he ruled from Coimbra.

## Affirmation of Portugal<sup>[edit]</sup>

Main article: [History of Portugal \(1279–1415\)](#)

The [Algarve](#), the southernmost region of Portugal, was finally conquered from the [Moors](#) in 1249, and in 1255 the capital shifted to [Lisbon](#).<sup>[23]</sup> Neighboring Spain would not complete its *Reconquista* until 1492, almost 250 years later.<sup>[24]</sup>

Portugal's land boundaries have been notably stable for the rest of the country's history. The border with Spain has remained almost unchanged since the 13th century. The [Treaty of Windsor \(1386\)](#) created an alliance between Portugal and [England](#) that remains in effect to this day. Since early times, fishing and overseas commerce have been the main economic activities. [Henry the Navigator](#)'s interest in exploration, together with some technological developments in navigation, made Portugal's overseas expansion possible and led to great advances in geographic, mathematical, scientific knowledge and naval technology.

## Naval exploration and Portuguese Empire (15th–16th centuries)<sup>[edit]</sup>

Main articles: [History of Portugal \(1415–1578\)](#) and [Portuguese Empire](#)



Portuguese discoveries and explorations: first arrival places and dates; main Portuguese [spice trade](#) routes in the [Indian Ocean](#) (blue); territories of the [Portuguese Empire](#) under [King John III](#) rule (1521–1557) (green). The [disputed discovery of Australia](#) is not shown.

During the 15th and 16th centuries, Portugal became a leading European power that ranked with [England](#), [France](#) and [Spain](#) in terms of economic, political and cultural influence. Though not dominant in European affairs, Portugal did have an extensive colonial trading empire throughout the world backed by a powerful [thalassocracy](#).

The beginnings of the [Portuguese Empire](#) can be traced to July 25, 1415, when the Portuguese Armada set sail for the rich [Islamic](#) trading center of [Ceuta](#) in [North Africa](#). The Armada was accompanied by King [John I](#), his sons Prince [Duarte](#) (a future king), Prince [Pedro](#), and Prince [Henry the Navigator](#), and the legendary Portuguese hero [Nuno Álvares Pereira](#).<sup>[25]</sup> On August 21, 1415, Ceuta was conquered by Portugal, and the long-lived Portuguese Empire was founded.<sup>[26]</sup>

The conquest of Ceuta was facilitated by a major civil war that had been engaging the Muslims of the Magrib (North Africa) since 1411.<sup>[26]</sup> This civil war prevented a re-capture of Ceuta from the Portuguese, when the king of [Granada](#) [Muhammed IX](#), the Left-Handed, laid siege to Ceuta and attempted to coordinate forces in Morocco and attract aid and assistance for the effort from Tunis.<sup>[27]</sup> The Muslim attempt to retake Ceuta was ultimately unsuccessful and Ceuta remained the first part of the new Portuguese Empire.<sup>[27]</sup> Further steps were taken that would soon expand the Portuguese Empire much further.

In 1418 two of Prince [Henry the Navigator](#)'s captains, [João Gonçalves Zarco](#) and [Tristão Vaz Teixeira](#), were driven by a storm to an island that they called [Porto Santo](#) ("Holy Port") in gratitude for their rescue from the shipwreck. In 1419, [João Gonçalves Zarco](#) disembarked on the [Island of Madeira](#). Uninhabited Madeira was colonized by the Portuguese in 1420.<sup>[27]</sup>

Between 1427 and 1431, most of the [Azores](#) were discovered and these uninhabited islands were colonized by the Portuguese in 1445. A Portuguese expedition may have attempted to colonize the [Canary Islands](#) as early as 1336, but the [Kingdom of Castile](#) objected to any Portuguese claim to them. Castile began its own conquest of the Canaries in 1402. Castile expelled the last Portuguese from the Canary islands in 1459, and they would eventually become part of the Spanish Empire.<sup>[28]</sup>

In 1434, [Gil Eanes](#) passed [Cape Bojador](#), south of [Morocco](#). The trip marked the beginning of the Portuguese exploration of [Africa](#). Before this event, very little was known in Europe about what lay beyond the cape. At the end of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th, those who tried to venture there became lost, which gave birth to legends of [sea monsters](#). Some setbacks occurred: in 1436 the [Canaries](#) were officially recognized as Castilian by the Pope – earlier they had been recognized as Portuguese; in 1438, the Portuguese were defeated in a military expedition to [Tangier](#).

These setbacks did not deter the Portuguese from pursuing their exploratory efforts. In 1448, on the small island of [Arguim](#) off the coast of [Mauritania](#), an important castle was built to function as a [feitoria](#), or trading post, for commerce with inland Africa. Some years before, the first African [gold](#) was brought to Portugal, circumventing the Arab caravans that crossed the Sahara. Some time later, the [caravels](#) explored the Gulf of Guinea, which led to the discovery of several uninhabited islands: [Cape Verde](#), [Fernão Póo](#), [São Tomé](#), [Príncipe](#) and [Annobón](#).<sup>[29]</sup>

On November 13, 1460, Prince Henry the Navigator died.<sup>[30]</sup> He had been the leading patron of maritime exploration by Portugal and immediately following his death, exploration lapsed. Henry's patronage had shown that profits could be made from the trade that followed the discovery of new lands. Accordingly, when exploration



commenced again, private merchants led the way in attempting to stretch trade routes further down the African coast.<sup>[30]</sup>

In the 1470s, Portuguese trading ships reached the [Gold Coast](#).<sup>[30]</sup> In 1471, the Portuguese captured Tangier, after years of attempts. Eleven years later the fortress of [São Jorge da Mina](#) in the town of [Elmina](#) on the Gold Coast in the [Gulf of Guinea](#) was built. [Christopher Columbus](#) set sail aboard the fleet of ships taking materials and building crews to Elmina in December 1481. In 1483, [Diogo Cão](#) reached and explored the [Congo River](#).

## The New World<sup>[edit]</sup>

In 1484, Portugal officially rejected Columbus' idea of reaching [India](#) from the west, because it was seen as unfeasible. Some historians have claimed that the Portuguese had already performed fairly accurate calculations concerning the size of the world and therefore knew that sailing west to reach the Indies would require a far longer journey than navigating to the east. However, this continues to be debated. Thus began a long-lasting dispute that eventually resulted in the signing of the [Treaty of Tordesillas](#) with Spain in 1494. The treaty divided the (largely undiscovered) world equally between the Spanish and the Portuguese, along a north-south [meridian line](#) 370 leagues (1770 km/1100 miles) west of the [Cape Verde](#) islands, with all lands to the east belonging to Portugal and all lands to the west to Spain.



Map of Brazil issued by the [Portuguese explorers](#) in 1519.

With the turning of the [Cape of Good Hope](#) by [Bartolomeu Dias](#) in 1487<sup>[31]</sup> the richness of [India](#) was now accessible. Indeed, the cape takes its name from the promise of rich trade with the east. Between 1498 and 1501, [Pêro de Barcelos](#) and [João Fernandes Lavrador](#) explored [North America](#). At the same time, [Pêro da Covilhã](#) reached [Ethiopia](#) by land. [Vasco da Gama](#) sailed for India, and arrived at [Calicut](#) on 20 May 1498, returning in glory to Portugal the next year.<sup>[30]</sup> The [Monastery of Jerónimos](#) was built, dedicated to the discovery of the route to India.

In the spring of 1500, [Pedro Álvares Cabral](#) set sail from Cape Verde with 13 ships and crews and a list of nobles that included [Nicolau Coelho](#), [Bartolomeu Dias](#) and his brother Diogo, [Duarte Pacheco Pereira](#) (author of the *Esmeraldo*) along with various other nobles, nine chaplains and some 1,200 men.<sup>[32]</sup> From Cape Verde they sailed



southwest across the Atlantic. On April 22, 1500, they caught sight of land in the distance.<sup>[32]</sup> They disembarked and claimed this new land for Portugal. This was the coast of what would later become the Portuguese colony of [Brazil](#).<sup>[32]</sup>

However, the real goal of the expedition was to open sea trade to the empires of the east. Trade with the east had effectively been cut off since the [Conquest of Constantinople](#) in 1453. Accordingly, Cabral turned away from exploring the coast of the new land of Brazil and sailed southeast, back across the Atlantic and around the Cape of Good Hope. Cabral reached [Sofala](#) on the east coast of Africa in July 1500.<sup>[32]</sup> In 1505, a Portuguese fort was established here and the land around the fort would later become the Portuguese colony of Mozambique.<sup>[33]</sup>

Cabral's fleet then sailed east and landed in Calicut in India in September 1500.<sup>[34]</sup> Here they traded for pepper and, more significantly, opened European sea trade with the empires of the east. No longer would the Muslim [Ottoman](#) occupation of [Constantinople](#) form a barrier between Europe and the east. Ten years later in 1510, [Afonso de Albuquerque](#), after attempting and failing to capture and occupy [Zamorin's](#) Calicut militarily, conquered [Goa](#) on the west coast of India.<sup>[35]</sup>

[João da Nova](#) discovered [Ascension Island](#) in 1501 and [Saint Helena](#) in 1502; [Tristão da Cunha](#) was the first to sight the archipelago still known by his name in 1506. In 1505, [Francisco de Almeida](#) was engaged to improve Portuguese trade with the far east. Accordingly, he sailed to East Africa. Several small Islamic states along the coast of [Mozambique](#) – [Kilwa](#), [Brava](#) and [Mombasa](#) – were destroyed or became subjects or allies of Portugal.<sup>[36]</sup> Almeida then sailed on to [Cochin](#), made peace with the ruler and built a stone fort there.<sup>[36]</sup>



The arrival of the Portuguese in [Japan](#), the first Europeans who managed to reach it, initiating the [Nanban](#) ("southern barbarian") period of active commercial and cultural exchange between Japan and the West.

## Portuguese Empire<sup>[edit]</sup>

*Further information:* [Portuguese Empire](#)

By the 16th century, the two million people who lived in the original Portuguese lands ruled a vast empire with many millions of inhabitants in the Americas, Africa, the Middle East and Asia. From 1514, the Portuguese had reached [China](#) and [Japan](#). In the [Indian Ocean](#) and [Arabian Sea](#), one of Cabral's ships discovered [Madagascar](#) (1501), which was partly explored by [Tristão da Cunha](#) (1507); [Mauritius](#) was discovered in 1507, [Socotra](#) occupied in 1506, and in the same year [Lourenço de Almeida](#) visited [Ceylon](#).

In the [Red Sea](#), [Massawa](#) was the most northerly point frequented by the Portuguese until 1541, when a fleet under [Estevão da Gama](#) penetrated as far as [Suez](#). [Hormuz](#), in the [Persian Gulf](#), was seized by [Afonso de Albuquerque](#) in 1515, who also entered into diplomatic relations with [Persia](#). In 1521, a force under [Antonio Correia](#) conquered [Bahrain](#) and ushered in a period of almost 80 years of Portuguese rule of the Persian Gulf archipelago<sup>[37]</sup>

On the Asiatic mainland, the first trading stations were established by [Pedro Álvares Cabral](#) at Cochin and Calicut (1501); more important were the conquests of [Goa](#) (1510) and [Malacca](#) (1511) by [Afonso de Albuquerque](#), and the acquisition of [Diu](#) (1535) by [Martim Afonso de Sousa](#). East of Malacca, Albuquerque sent [Duarte Fernandes](#) as envoy to Siam (now [Thailand](#)) in 1511, and dispatched to the Moluccas two expeditions (1512, 1514), which founded the Portuguese dominion in [Maritime Southeast Asia](#).<sup>[38]</sup>

The Portuguese established their base in the [Spice Islands](#) on the island of [Ambon](#).<sup>[39]</sup> [Fernão Pires de Andrade](#) visited [Canton](#) in 1517 and opened up trade with China, where in 1557 the Portuguese were permitted to occupy [Macau](#). [Japan](#), accidentally reached by three Portuguese traders in 1542, soon attracted large numbers of merchants and missionaries. In 1522 one of the ships in the expedition that [Ferdinand Magellan](#) organized in the Spanish service completed the first [circumnavigation](#) of the globe.

At the end of the 15th century, Portugal expelled some local [Sephardic Jews](#), along with those refugees who had come from [Castile](#) and [Aragon](#) after 1492. In addition, many Jews were forcibly converted to Catholicism and remained as [Conversos](#). Many Jews remained [secretly Jewish](#), in danger of persecution by the [Portuguese Inquisition](#). In 1506, 3,000 "New Christians" were massacred in Lisbon.<sup>[40]</sup>

## 1580 crisis - The Spanish Invasion of Portugal which Led to the Iberian Union[[edit](#)]

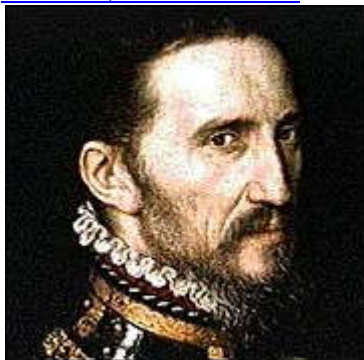
*Main articles: [Portuguese succession crisis of 1580](#), [Iberian Union](#) and [Dutch–Portuguese War](#)*

On August 4, 1578, while fighting in Morocco, young King [Sebastian](#) died in the [Battle of Alcácer Quibir](#) without an heir, and his body was not found.<sup>[41]</sup> The late king's elderly great-uncle, Cardinal [Henry](#), became king.<sup>[42]</sup> Henry I died a mere two years later on January 31, 1580.<sup>[43]</sup> <sup>[44]</sup> The death of the latter, without any appointed heirs, led to the [Portuguese succession crisis of 1580](#).<sup>[45]</sup> Portugal was worried about the maintenance of its independence and sought help to find a new king.

One of the claimants to the throne, [António, Prior of Crato](#), a bastard son of [Infante Louis, Duke of Beja](#) and only grandson through the male line of king [Manuel I of Portugal](#), was proclaimed King in June 1580.<sup>[46]</sup><sup>[47]</sup>



[António, Prior of Crato](#)



[Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, Duke of Alba](#)

[Philip II of Spain](#), through his mother [Isabella of Portugal](#) also a grandson of Manuel I, did not recognize Antonio as king of Portugal. The king appointed [Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, 3rd Duke of Alba](#), as captain general of his army.<sup>[48]</sup> The duke was 73 years old and ill at the time.<sup>[49]</sup> Fernando mustered his forces, estimated at 20,000 men,<sup>[50]</sup> in Badajoz, and in June of 1580 crossed the Spanish-Portuguese border and moving toward [Lisbon](#). The Duke of Alba met little resistance and in July set up his forces at [Cascais](#), west of Lisbon. By mid-August, the Duke was only 10 kilometers from the city. West of the small brook [Alcântara](#), the Spanish encountered a Portuguese force on the eastern side of it, commanded by António, Prior of Crato (a grandson of King Manuel I of Portugal who had proclaimed himself King as António I) and his lieutenant [Francisco de Portugal, 3rd Count of Vimioso](#). In late August the Duke of Alba defeated a Portuguese army at the [Battle of Alcântara](#). This battle ended in a decisive victory for the Spanish army, both on land and sea. Two days later, the Duke of Alba captured Lisbon, and on March 25, 1581, Philip II of Spain was crowned [King of Portugal](#) as Philip I. This cleared the way for Philip II of Spain as Philip I of Portugal, to create an [Iberian Union](#) spanning all of Iberia under the Spanish crown.<sup>[51]</sup>

The King of Spain, Philip II, rewarded Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, 3rd Duke of Alba with the titles of 1st [Viceroy of Portugal](#) and [Constable of Portugal](#) on July 18, 1580. With these titles Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, 3rd Duke of Alba, represented the Spanish monarch in Portugal and was second in hierarchy only after King Philip II of Spain, in Portugal. Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, 3rd Duke of Alba, held both titles until his death in 1582.<sup>[52]</sup>

The Portuguese and [Spanish Empires](#) came under a single rule, but resistance to Spanish rule in Portugal did not come to an end. The Prior of Crato held out in the [Azores](#) until 1583, and he continued to seek to recover the throne actively until his death in 1595.

Impostors claimed to be King Sebastian in 1584, 1585, 1595 and 1598. "[Sebastianism](#)", the myth that the young king will return to Portugal on a foggy day, has prevailed until modern times.

## Decline of the Portuguese Empire under Spanish Rule<sup>[[edit](#)]</sup>

After the 16th century, Portugal gradually saw its wealth and influence decrease. Portugal was officially an autonomous state, but, in actuality, the country was under the rule of the Spanish crown from [1580 to 1640](#).<sup>[[53\]](#)</sup> The *Consejo de Portugal* was independent inasmuch as it was one of the key administrative units used by the Castilian monarchy, legally on equal terms with the [Consejo de Indias](#).<sup>[[54\]](#)</sup>

The joining of the two crowns deprived Portugal of a separate foreign policy, and Spain's enemies became Portugal's. England had been an ally of Portugal since the [Treaty of Windsor](#) in 1386, but war between Spain and England led to a deterioration of the relations with Portugal's oldest ally and the loss of [Hormuz](#). From 1595 to 1663, the [Dutch–Portuguese War](#) led to invasions of many countries in Asia and competition for commercial interests in Japan, Africa and South America. In 1624, the Dutch seized [Salvador](#), the capital of Brazil;<sup>[[55\]](#)</sup> in 1630, they seized Pernambuco in northern Brazil.<sup>[[55\]](#)</sup> The Treaty of 1654 returned Pernambuco to Portuguese control.<sup>[[56\]](#)</sup> Both the English and the Dutch continued to aspire to dominate both the Atlantic slave trade and the spice trade with the Far East.

The Dutch intrusion into Brazil was long-lasting and troublesome to Portugal. The Dutch captured the entire coast except that of Bahia and much of the interior of the [contemporary Northeastern Brazilian states](#) of [Bahia](#), [Sergipe](#), [Alagoas](#), [Pernambuco](#), [Paraíba](#), [Rio Grande do Norte](#) and [Ceará](#), while Dutch privateers sacked Portuguese ships in both the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

Beginning with a major Spanish–Portuguese military operation in 1625, this trend was reversed, and it laid the foundations for the recovery of remaining Dutch-controlled areas. The other smaller, less developed areas were recovered in stages and relieved of Dutch piracy in the next two decades by local resistance and Portuguese expeditions. After the dissolution of the Iberian Union in 1640, Portugal would re-establish its authority over some lost territories of the [Portuguese Empire](#).

## Portuguese Restoration War (1640–1668)<sup>[[edit](#)]</sup>

*Main article:* [Portuguese Restoration War](#)

At home, life was calm and serene under the first two Spanish kings, [Philip II](#) and [Philip III](#); they maintained Portugal's status, gave excellent positions to Portuguese nobles in the Spanish [courts](#), and Portugal maintained an independent law, currency and government. It was even proposed to move the Spanish capital to [Lisbon](#). Later, [Philip IV](#) tried to make Portugal a Spanish province, and Portuguese nobles lost power.

Because of this, as well as the general strain on the finances of the Spanish throne as a result of the [Thirty Years' War](#), the [Duke of Braganza](#), one of the great native noblemen

and a descendant of King Manuel I, was proclaimed King of Portugal as [John IV](#) on 1 December 1640, and a war of independence against Spain was launched. The governors of [Ceuta](#) did not accept the new king; rather, they maintained their allegiance to Spain. Although Portugal had substantially attained its independence in 1640, the Spanish continued to try to re-assert their control for the next twenty-eight years, only accepting Portuguese independence in 1668.

In the 17th century, many Portuguese emigrated to Brazil. From 1709, [John V](#) prohibited emigration, since Portugal had lost a sizable proportion of its population. Brazil was elevated to a vice-kingdom.

## Pombaline era[\[edit\]](#)

*Main articles: [History of Portugal \(1640–1777\)](#) and [Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, 1st Marquis of Pombal](#)*



[Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, Marquis of Pombal, Count of Oeiras](#)

In 1738, Sebastião de Melo, the talented son of a Lisbon squire, began a diplomatic career as the Portuguese [Ambassador](#) in London and later in [Vienna](#). The [Queen consort](#) of Portugal, [Archduchess Maria Anne Josefa of Austria](#), was fond of Melo; and after his first wife died, she arranged the widowed de Melo's second marriage to the daughter of the Austrian Field Marshal [Leopold Josef, Count von Daun](#). King [John V of Portugal](#), however, was not pleased and recalled Melo to Portugal in 1749. John V died the following year and his son, Joseph I of Portugal was crowned. In contrast to his father, Joseph I was fond of de Melo, and with the Maria Anna's approval, he appointed Melo as [Minister of Foreign Affairs](#). As the King's confidence in de Melo increased, the King entrusted him with more control of the state.

By 1755, Sebastião de Melo was made Prime Minister. Impressed by British economic success he had witnessed while Ambassador, he successfully implemented similar economic policies in Portugal. He abolished slavery in Portugal and in the Portuguese colonies in India; reorganized the army and the navy; restructured the [University of Coimbra](#), and ended discrimination against different Christian sects in Portugal.





This 1755 copper engraving shows the ruins of [Lisbon](#) in flames and a [tsunami](#) overwhelming the ships in the harbor.

But Sebastião de Melo's greatest reforms were economic and financial, with the creation of several companies and guilds to regulate every commercial activity. He demarcated the region for production of [port](#) to ensure the wine's quality, and this was the first attempt to control wine quality and production in Europe. He ruled with a strong hand by imposing strict law upon all classes of Portuguese society from the high nobility to the poorest working class, along with a widespread review of the country's tax system. These reforms gained him enemies in the upper classes, especially among the high nobility, who despised him as a social upstart.

Disaster fell upon Portugal in the morning of 1 November 1755, when [Lisbon was struck by a violent earthquake](#) with an estimated [Richter scale](#) magnitude of 9. The city was razed to the ground by the earthquake and the subsequent tsunami and ensuing fires. Sebastião de Melo survived by a stroke of luck and then immediately embarked on rebuilding the city, with his famous quote: "What now? We bury the dead and feed the living."

Despite the calamity, Lisbon suffered no epidemics and within less than one year was already being rebuilt. The new downtown of Lisbon was designed to resist subsequent earthquakes. Architectural models were built for tests, and the effects of an earthquake were simulated by marching troops around the models. The buildings and big squares of the Pombaline Downtown of Lisbon still remain as one of Lisbon's tourist attractions: They represent the world's first quake-proof buildings. <sup>[[citation needed](#)]</sup> Sebastião de Melo also made an important contribution to the study of [seismology](#) by designing an inquiry that was sent to every parish in the country.

Following the earthquake, [Joseph I](#) gave his Prime Minister even more power, and Sebastião de Melo became a powerful, progressive dictator. As his power grew, his enemies increased in number, and bitter disputes with the high nobility became frequent. In 1758 [Joseph I](#) was wounded in an attempted assassination. The [Távora family](#) and the Duke of [Aveiro](#) were implicated and executed after a quick trial. The [Jesuits](#) were expelled from the country and their assets confiscated by the crown. Sebastião de Melo showed no mercy and prosecuted every person involved, even women and children. This was the final stroke that broke the power of the aristocracy and ensured the victory of the Minister against his enemies. Based upon his swift resolve, Joseph I made his loyal minister Count of [Oeiras](#) in 1759.

Following the Távora affair, the new Count of Oeiras knew no opposition. Made "Marquis of Pombal" in 1770, he effectively ruled Portugal until Joseph I's death in 1779. However, historians also argue that Pombal's "enlightenment," while far-

reaching, was primarily a mechanism for enhancing autocracy at the expense of individual liberty and especially an apparatus for crushing opposition, suppressing criticism, and furthering colonial economic exploitation as well as intensifying book censorship and consolidating personal control and profit.<sup>[57]</sup>

The new ruler, Queen [Maria I of Portugal](#), disliked the Marquis (See [Távora affair](#)), and forbade him from coming within 20 miles of her, thus curtailing his influence.

## Portuguese-led Invasion of Spain of 1707[[edit](#)]

*Main articles:* [War of the Spanish Succession](#) and [Battle of Almansa](#)

In 1707, as part of the War of the Spanish Succession, a joint Portuguese, Dutch, and British army, led by the Marquis of Minas, D. António Luis de Sousa, conquered Madrid and acclaimed the [Archduke Charles of Austria](#) as King Charles III of Spain. Along the route to Madrid, the army led by the Marquis of Minas was successful in conquering Ciudad Rodrigo and Salamanca. Later in the following year, Madrid was reconquered by Spanish troops loyal to the Bourbons.<sup>[58]</sup>

## The Ghost War[[edit](#)]

*Main article:* [Spanish invasion of Portugal \(1762\)](#)

In 1762 France and Spain tried to urge Portugal to join the [Bourbon Family Compact](#) by claiming that Great Britain had become too powerful due to its successes in the [Seven Years' War](#). Joseph refused to accept this and protested that his 1704 alliance with Britain was no threat.

In spring 1762 Spanish and French troops invaded Portugal from the north as far as the [Douro](#), while a second column sponsored the [Siege of Almeida](#), captured the city, and threatened to advance on Lisbon. The arrival of a force of British troops helped the Portuguese army commanded by the [Count of Lippe](#) by blocking the Franco-Spanish advance and driving them back across the border following the [Battle of Valencia de Alcántara](#). At the [Treaty of Paris](#) in 1763, Spain agreed to hand Almeida back to Portugal.

## Crises of the nineteenth century[[edit](#)]

*Main articles:* [History of Portugal \(1777–1834\)](#) and [History of Portugal \(1834–1910\)](#)

In 1807 Portugal refused [Napoleon Bonaparte](#)'s demand to accede to the [Continental System](#) of embargo against the United Kingdom; a French invasion under [General Junot](#) followed, and Lisbon was captured on 8 December 1807. British intervention in the [Peninsular War](#) restored Portuguese independence; the last French troops were expelled in 1812. The war cost Portugal the province of [Oliveira](#),<sup>[59]</sup> now governed by Spain. [Rio de Janeiro](#) in Brazil was the Portuguese capital between 1808 and 1821. In 1820 [constitutionalist](#) insurrections took place at [Oporto](#) (24 August) and Lisbon (15 September). Lisbon regained its status as the capital of Portugal when Brazil declared its independence from Portugal in 1822.



The death of [John VI](#) in 1826 led to a crisis of royal succession. His eldest son, [Pedro I of Brazil](#), briefly became [Pedro IV of Portugal](#), but neither the Portuguese nor the Brazilians wanted a unified monarchy; consequently, Pedro abdicated the Portuguese crown in favor of his 7-year-old daughter, [Maria da Glória](#), on the condition that when she came of age she would marry his brother, [Miguel](#). Dissatisfaction at Pedro's constitutional reforms led the "absolutist" faction of landowners and the church to proclaim Miguel king in February 1828. This led to the [Liberal Wars](#) in which Pedro eventually forced Miguel to abdicate and go into exile in 1834 and place his daughter on throne as Queen [Maria II](#).

The [1890 British Ultimatum](#) was delivered to Portugal on 11 January of that year, an attempt to force the retreat of Portuguese military forces in the land between the Portuguese colonies of [Mozambique](#) and [Angola](#) (most of present-day [Zimbabwe](#) and [Zambia](#)). The area had been claimed by Portugal, which included it in its "[Pink Map](#)", but this clashed with British aspirations to create a railroad link between [Cairo](#) and [Cape Town](#), thereby linking its colonies from the north of Africa to the very south. This diplomatic clash led to several waves of protest and prompted the downfall of the Portuguese government. The 1890 British Ultimatum was considered by Portuguese historians and politicians at that time to be the most outrageous and infamous action of the British against her oldest ally.<sup>[60]</sup>

After 1815, the Portuguese expanded their trading ports along the African coast, moving inland to take control of [Angola](#) and [Portuguese East Africa \(Mozambique\)](#). The slave trade was abolished in 1836, in part because many foreign slave ships were flying the Portuguese flag. In India, trade flourished in the colony of [Goa](#), with its subsidiary colonies of [Macau](#), near Hong Kong on the China coast, and [Timor](#), north of Australia. The Portuguese successfully introduced Catholicism and the Portuguese language into their colonies, while most settlers continued to head to Brazil.<sup>[61][62]</sup>

## The First Republic (1910–1926)[\[edit\]](#)

*Main article:* [First Portuguese Republic](#)

The First Republic has, over the course of the recent past, lost many historians to the [Estado Novo](#). As a result, it is difficult to attempt a global synthesis of the republican period in view of the important gaps that still persist in our knowledge of its political history. As far as the October 1910 Revolution is concerned, a number of valuable studies have been made,<sup>[63]</sup> first among which ranks Vasco Pulido Valente's polemical thesis. This historian posited the [Jacobin](#) and urban nature of the revolution carried out by the [Portuguese Republican Party](#) (PRP) and claimed that the PRP had turned the republican regime into a de facto dictatorship.<sup>[64]</sup> This vision clashes with an older interpretation of the First Republic as a progressive and increasingly democratic regime that presented a clear contrast to [António de Oliveira Salazar](#)'s ensuing dictatorship.<sup>[65]</sup>

## Religion[\[edit\]](#)

The First Republic was intensely anti-clerical. They were secularists and indeed were following liberal tradition of disestablishing the powerful role the Catholic Church once held. Historian Stanley Payne points out, "The majority of Republicans took the position that Catholicism was the number one enemy of individual list middle-class

radicalism and must be completely broken as a source of influence in Portugal."<sup>[66]</sup> Under the leadership of [Afonso Costa](#), the justice minister, the revolution immediately targeted the Catholic Church: churches were plundered, convents were attacked and clergy were harassed. Scarcely had the provisional government been installed when it began devoting its entire attention to an anti-religious policy, in spite of the disastrous economic situation. On 10 October – five days after the inauguration of the Republic – the new government decreed that all convents, monasteries and religious orders were to be suppressed. All residents of religious institutions were expelled and their goods confiscated. The Jesuits were forced to forfeit their Portuguese citizenship.

A series of anti-Catholic laws and decrees followed each other in rapid succession. On 3 November, a law legalizing divorce was passed and then there were laws to recognize the legitimacy of children born outside wedlock, authorize cremation, secularize cemeteries, suppress religious teaching in the schools and prohibit the wearing of the cassock. In addition, the ringing of church bells to signal times of worship was subjected to certain restraints, and the public celebration of religious feasts was suppressed. The government also interfered in the running of seminaries, reserving the right to appoint professors and determine curricula. This whole series of laws authored by [Afonso Costa](#) culminated in the law of Separation of Church and State, which was passed on 20 April 1911.

## Constitution[[edit](#)]

A republican constitution was approved in 1911, inaugurating a parliamentary regime with reduced presidential powers and two chambers of parliament.<sup>[67]</sup> The Republic provoked important fractures within Portuguese society, notably among the essentially monarchist rural population, in the trade unions, and in the Church. Even the PRP had to endure the secession of its more moderate elements, who formed conservative republican parties like the [Evolutionist Party](#) and the [Republican Union](#). In spite of these splits, the PRP, led by [Afonso Costa](#), preserved its dominance, largely due to a brand of clientelist politics inherited from the monarchy.<sup>[68]</sup> In view of these tactics, a number of opposition forces were forced to resort to violence in order to enjoy the fruits of power. There are few recent studies of this period of the Republic's existence, known as the 'old' Republic. Nevertheless, an essay by Vasco Pulido Valente should be consulted (1997a), as should the attempt to establish the political, social, and economic context made by M. Villaverde Cabral (1988).

The PRP viewed the outbreak of the First World War as a unique opportunity to achieve a number of goals: putting an end to the twin threats of a Spanish invasion of Portugal and of foreign occupation of the African colonies and, at the internal level, creating a national consensus around the regime and even around the party.<sup>[69]</sup> These domestic objectives were not met, since participation in the conflict was not the subject of a national consensus and since it did not therefore serve to mobilise the population. Quite the opposite occurred: existing lines of political and ideological fracture were deepened by [Portugal's intervention in the First World War](#).<sup>[70]</sup> The lack of consensus around Portugal's intervention in turn made possible the appearance of two dictatorships, led by General [Pimenta de Castro](#) (January–May 1915) and [Sidónio Pais](#) (December 1917 – December 1918).

[Sidonismo](#), also known as *Dezembrismo* ("Decemberism"), aroused a strong interest among historians, largely as a result of the elements of modernity that it contained.<sup>[71][72][73][74][75][76]</sup> António José Telo has made clear the way in which this regime predated some of the political solutions invented by the [totalitarian](#) and [fascist](#) dictatorships of the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>[77]</sup> Sidónio Pais undertook the rescue of traditional values, notably the *Pátria* ("Homeland"), and attempted to rule in a charismatic fashion.

A move was made to abolish traditional political parties and to alter the existing mode of national representation in parliament (which, it was claimed, exacerbated divisions within the *Pátria*) through the creation of a [corporative Senate](#), the founding of a single-party (the [National Republican Party](#)), and the attribution of a mobilising function to the leader. The state carved out an economically interventionist role for itself while, at the same time, repressing [working-class movements](#) and leftist republicans. Sidónio Pais also attempted to restore public order and to overcome some of the rifts of the recent past, making the republic more acceptable to [monarchists](#) and [Catholics](#).

### Political instability<sup>[edit]</sup>

The vacuum of power created by Sidónio Pais's murder<sup>[78]</sup> on 14 December 1918, led the country to a brief [civil war](#). The monarchy's restoration was proclaimed in the north of Portugal (known as the [Monarchy of the North](#)) on 19 January 1919, and four days later a monarchist insurrection broke out in [Lisbon](#). A republican coalition government, led by [José Relvas](#), coordinated the struggle against the monarchists by loyal army units and armed civilians. After a series of clashes the monarchists were definitively chased from [Oporto](#) on 13 February 1919. This military victory allowed the PRP to return to government and to emerge triumphant from the elections held later that year, having won the usual absolute majority.



Official portrait of President [António José de Almeida](#), by [Henrique Medina](#).

It was during this restoration of the 'old' republic that an attempted reform was carried out in order to provide the regime with greater stability. In August 1919 a conservative president was elected – [António José de Almeida](#) (whose Evolutionist party had come together in wartime with the PRP to form a flawed, because incomplete, Sacred Union) – and his office was given the power to dissolve parliament. Relations with the [Holy See](#), restored by Sidónio Pais, were preserved. The president used his new power to resolve a crisis of government in May 1921, naming a [Liberal](#) government (the

Liberal party being the result of the postwar fusion of Evolutionists and Unionists) to prepare the forthcoming elections.

These were held on 10 July 1921, with victory going, as was usually the case, to the party in power. However, Liberal government did not last long. On 19 October a military *pronunciamento* was carried out during which – and apparently against the wishes of the coup’s leaders – a number of prominent conservative figures, including [Prime Minister António Granjo](#), were assassinated. This event, known as the ‘night of blood’<sup>[79]</sup> left a deep wound among political elites and public opinion. There could be no greater demonstration of the essential fragility of the Republic’s institutions and proof that the regime was democratic in name only, since it did not even admit the possibility of the rotation in power characteristic of the elitist regimes of the nineteenth century.

A new round of elections on 29 January 1922 inaugurated a fresh period of stability: the PRP once again emerged from the contest with an absolute majority. Discontent with this situation had not, however, disappeared. Numerous accusations of corruption, and the manifest failure to resolve pressing social concerns wore down the more visible PRP leaders while making the opposition’s attacks more deadly. At the same time, moreover, all political parties suffered from growing internal factionalism, especially the PRP itself. The party system was fractured and discredited.<sup>[68][80]</sup>

This is clearly shown by the fact that regular PRP victories at the ballot box did not lead to stable government. Between 1910 and 1926 there were forty-five governments. The opposition of [presidents](#) to single-party governments, internal dissent within the PRP, the party’s almost non-existent internal discipline, and its desire to group together and lead all republican forces made any government’s task practically impossible. Many different formulas were attempted, including single-party governments, coalitions, and presidential executives, but none succeeded. Force was clearly the sole means open to the opposition if the PRP wanted to enjoy the fruits of power.<sup>[81][82]</sup>

## Evaluation of the republican experiment[\[edit\]](#)

Historians have emphasized the failure and collapse of the republican dream by the 1920s. Sardica summarizes the consensus of historians:

within a few years, large parts of the key economic forces, intellectuals, opinion-makers and middle classes changed from left to right, trading the unfulfilled utopia of a developing and civic republicanism for notions of "order," "stability" and "security." For many who had helped, supported or simply cheered the Republic in 1910, hoping that the new political situation would repair the monarchy’s flaws (government instability, financial crisis, economic backwardness and civic anomie), the conclusion to be drawn, in the 1920s, was that the remedy for national maladies called for much more than the simple removal of the king....The First Republic collapsed and died as a result of the confrontation between raised hopes and meager deeds.<sup>[83]</sup>

Sardica, however, also points up the permanent impact of the republican experiment:

Despite its overall failure, the First Republic endowed twentieth-century Portugal with an insurpassable and enduring legacy—a renewed civil law, the

basis for an educational revolution, the principle of separation between State and Church, the overseas empire (only brought to an end in 1975), and a strong symbolic culture whose materializations (the national flag, the national anthem and the naming of streets) nobody has dared to alter and which still define the present-day collective identity of the Portuguese. The Republic's prime legacy was indeed that of memory.<sup>[84]</sup>

## 28 May 1926 coup d'état[[edit](#)]

Main article: [28 May 1926 coup d'état](#)



[Gomes da Costa](#) and his troops march victorious into Lisbon on 6 June 1926.

By the mid-1920s the domestic and international scenes began to favour another authoritarian solution, wherein a strengthened executive might restore political and social order. Since the opposition's constitutional route to power was blocked by the various means deployed by the PRP to protect itself, it turned to the army for support. The political awareness of the armed forces had grown during the war, and many of their leaders had not forgiven the PRP for sending them to a war they did not want to fight.<sup>[85]</sup>

They seemed to represent, to conservative forces, the last bastion of 'order' against the 'chaos' that was taking over the country. Links were established between conservative figures and military officers, who added their own political and corporative demands to the already complex equation. The [pronunciamento of 28 May 1926](#) enjoyed the support of most army units and even of most political parties. As had been the case in December 1917, the population of Lisbon did not rise to defend the Republic, leaving it at the mercy of the army.<sup>[85]</sup>

There are few global and up-to-date studies of this turbulent third phase of the Republic's existence.<sup>[86][87][88]</sup> Nevertheless, much has been written about the crisis and fall of the regime and the 28 May movement.<sup>[82][89][90][91][92][93]</sup> The First Republic continues to be the subject of an intense debate. A historiographical balance sheet by Armando Malheiro da Silva (2000) identifies three main interpretations. For some historians the First Republic was a progressive and increasingly democratic regime. For others it was essentially a prolongation of the liberal and elitist regimes of the 19th century. A third group chooses to highlight the regime's revolutionary, Jacobin and dictatorial nature.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

## Estado Novo (1933–1974)[[edit](#)]

Main article: [Estado Novo \(Portugal\)](#)





Portuguese colonies in Africa by the time of the Colonial War.

## Salazar dictatorship[[edit](#)]

Political chaos, several strikes, harsh relations with the Church, and considerable economic problems aggravated by a disastrous [military intervention in the First World War](#) led to the military [28 May 1926 coup d'état](#). This coup installed the "Second Republic" that would become the [Estado Novo](#) ('New State') in 1933, led by economist [António de Oliveira Salazar](#). He transformed Portugal into a sort of Fascist regime that evolved into a single-party [corporative](#) regime. Portugal, although neutral, informally aided the Nationalists in the [Spanish Civil War](#) (1936–39).

Salazar's policy after the war was to provide a certain level of liberalization in politics, in terms of organized opposition with more freedom of the press. Opposition parties were tolerated to an extent, but they were also controlled, limited, and manipulated, with the result that they split into factions and never formed a united opposition.<sup>[94]</sup>

## World War II[[edit](#)]

Portugal was [officially neutral in World War II](#), but in practice Salazar collaborated with the British and sold them rubber and tungsten.<sup>[95]</sup> In late 1943 he allowed the Allies to establish air bases in the Azores to fight German U-boats. He helped Spain avoid German control. Tungsten was a major product, and he sold to Germany until June 1944, when the threat of a German attack on Portugal was minimal.<sup>[96]</sup> He worked to regain control of East Timor after the Japanese seized it.<sup>[97]</sup> He admitted several thousand Jewish refugees. Lisbon maintained air connections with Britain and the U.S. Lisbon was a hotbed of spies and served as the base for the International Red Cross in its distribution of relief supplies to POWs.

## Colonies[[edit](#)]

In 1961 the Portuguese army was involved in armed action in its colony in Goa against an Indian invasion (see [Operation Vijay](#)). The operations resulted in a humiliating Portuguese defeat and the loss of the colonies in India. Independence movements also became active in [Portuguese Angola](#), [Portuguese Mozambique](#) and [Portuguese Guinea](#); the [Portuguese Colonial War](#) started. Portugal, during this period, was never an outcast, and was a founding member of the [North Atlantic Treaty Organization](#) (NATO), the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](#) (OECD) and the [European Free Trade Association](#) (EFTA).

After the death of Salazar in 1970, his replacement by [Marcelo Caetano](#) offered a certain hope that the regime would open up, the *primavera marcelista* (Marcelist spring). However the colonial wars in Africa continued, [political prisoners](#) remained incarcerated, freedom of association was not restored, [censorship](#) was only slightly eased and the [elections](#) remained tightly controlled.

The regime retained its characteristic traits: censorship, corporativeness, with a market economy dominated by a handful of economical groups, continuous surveillance and intimidation of several sectors of society through the use of a political police and techniques instilling fear (such as arbitrary imprisonment, systematic political persecution and even assassination of anti-regime insurgents).

## The Third Republic (1974–)[\[edit\]](#)

Main articles: [Processo Revolucionário Em Curso](#) and [Third Portuguese Republic](#)

The "[Carnation Revolution](#)" of 1974, an effectively bloodless left-wing military coup, installed the "Third Republic". Broad democratic reforms were implemented. In 1975, Portugal granted independence to its [Overseas Provinces](#) (*Províncias Ultramarinas* in Portuguese) in Africa ([Portuguese Mozambique](#), [Portuguese Angola](#), [Portuguese Guinea](#), [Portuguese Cape Verde](#) and [Portuguese São Tomé and Príncipe](#)). Nearly 1 million Portuguese or persons of Portuguese descent left these former colonies as refugees.<sup>[98]</sup>

In that same year, [Indonesia](#) invaded and annexed the Portuguese province of [Portuguese Timor](#) (East Timor) in Asia before independence could be granted. The massive exodus of the Portuguese military and citizens from Angola and Mozambique, would prompt an era of chaos and severe destruction in those territories after independence from Portugal in 1975. From May 1974 to the end of the 1970s, over a million Portuguese citizens from Portugal's African territories (mostly from Portuguese Angola and Mozambique) left those territories as destitute refugees – the *retornados*.<sup>[99][100]</sup>

The newly independent countries were ravaged by brutal civil wars in the following decades – the [Angolan Civil War](#) (1975–2002) and [Mozambican Civil War](#) (1977–1992) – responsible for millions of deaths and refugees. The Asian dependency of [Macau](#), after an agreement in 1986, was returned to Chinese sovereignty in 1999. Portugal applied international pressure to secure East Timor's independence from Indonesia, as East Timor was still legally a Portuguese dependency, and recognized as such by the [United Nations](#). After a referendum in 1999, East Timor voted for independence, which Portugal recognized in 2002.

With the 1975–76 independence of its colonies (apart from Macau), the 560-year-old [Portuguese Empire](#) effectively ended. Simultaneously 15 years of war effort also came to an end; many Portuguese returned from the colonies (the *retornados*) and came to comprise a [sizeable proportion of the population](#): approximately 580,000 of Portugal's 9.8 million citizens in 1981.<sup>[101]</sup> This opened new paths for the country's future just as others closed. In 1986, Portugal entered the [European Economic Community](#) and left the [European Free Trade Association](#) which had been founded by Portugal and its partners in 1960. The country joined the euro in 1999. The Portuguese Empire ended *de*



*facto* in 1999 when Macau was returned to China, and *de jure* in 2002 when [East Timor](#) became independent.

From 1974 through 2014, Portugal experienced 25 governments. The Portuguese economy once again declined, exacerbated by external debt, as well as financial and budgetary problems. Portugal has since resorted to three economic programmes seeking international financial aid from the [IMF](#). In 1977-78, Portugal requested assistance to mitigate deficits and sharp increases in unemployment. In 1983, Portugal again requested IMF support to cope with a recession, high interest rates abroad, trade imbalances, and high deficits. In 2009 Portugal's budget deficit hit a record 9.3 per cent of GDP. In 2011, the Portuguese economy collapsed sparking a sharp rise in borrowing costs, forcing Lisbon to seek a bailout. Portugal then agreed a three-year, 78-billion-euro (\$116 billion) bailout with the European Union and IMF. In 2013, Portugal recorded all-time high debt levels, 129 per cent of the country's GDP.

See also[[edit](#)]



[Portugal portal](#)

- [Economic history of Portugal](#)
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- [History of the land of Viriatus](#)
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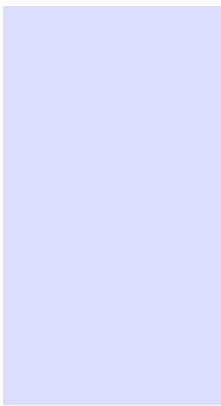
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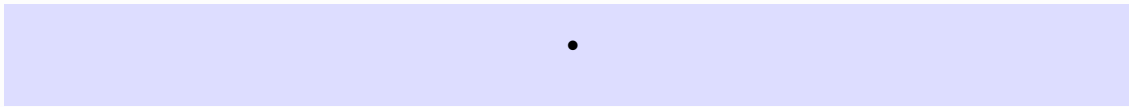
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