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Edited by
Antonio Herrera and Francisco Acosta



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8 Republican political mobilisation of the working classes in southern Portugal

The district of Évora between 1908 and 1915

Jesús Ángel Redondo Cardenoso

For a long time, historiography has been dominated by a vision that basically identified (and thereby limited) political participation in liberal regimes of the ‘long’ nineteenth century,¹ with the freedom to exercise the right to vote. As a result, the political History of that period frequently marginalised the lower classes in studies because it was thought that they remained outside the political game, since they either had no right to vote (because of the persistence of census suffrage) or, if they enjoyed this right (because universal suffrage was passed early), they did not exercise it with full freedom, since their will was hijacked by the elites through various strategies of political and social control and electoral manipulation. Furthermore, this image was more closely associated with countries (southern Europe, Latin America) or geographical areas (rural regions) stereotyped in terms of their political (enduring authoritarianism and tendency towards military coups or ‘civil warring’), economic (scarce industrialisation) and cultural backwardness (illiteracy and religiosity or clericalism).

Fortunately, in more recent years, a large body of research has emerged to qualify this pejorative vision, highlighting that the absence, restriction or hindrance of the right to vote did not exhaust the channels of political participation open to the common people in the nineteenth-century liberal regimes.² In this regard, undoubtedly, one of the main forms of non-institutional political participation available to the popular classes in contemporary times – and, possibly, the most dramatic and spectacular – was collective mobilisation.³ In fact, since the end of the eighteenth century, there have been many examples of popular uprisings that were promoted and/or used by various political sectors – mainly opponents – to promote changes in government and/or political regime.⁴

In the specific case of the Iberian Peninsula, one of the main actors that promoted popular political mobilisation among the working classes during the ‘long’ nineteenth century was republicanism. In Spain, for example, recent research has shown that republicans promoted collective political events (rallies, demonstrations, etc.) with significant levels of participation from the poorer sectors of society,⁵ seeking to legitimise their action and political

discourse in the face of Restoration politics which, although this system of government passed universal suffrage in 1890, was characterised by favouring demobilisation, corruption and caciquism (boss rule) to neutralise political plurality and the free exercise of suffrage.

In Portugal, where universal suffrage was not passed either during the nineteenth century or during the early decades of the twentieth century,⁶ the Portuguese Republican Party (PRP) was also one of the main promoters of citizen mobilisation, organising and holding mass political events such as rallies and demonstrations.⁷ In doing so, it sought to attract (and platform) the support of the middle and lower classes in order: first, to confront the monarchist regime and the political system of *Rotativism*, which also used different mechanisms and strategies to try to neutralise any hint of pluralism and political freedom of citizens, and later, once the First Republic had been declared, to legitimise its government action against opposition sectors.⁸ This mobilising action of republicanism contributed decisively to ensure that the Portuguese policy of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to paraphrase Rui Ramos, was no longer a game reserved for the king and the political elites.⁹

However, despite the significant advances made, historiography specialising in the analysis of popular political mobilisation during the ‘long’ nineteenth century in both Iberian countries has focused mostly on the study of urban, cultural and social environments, and very little research has turned its attention to what happened further inland in the rural regions of the Peninsula. Therefore, to complement the main objective of this book, which seeks to shed light on processes of political socialisation and democratisation in the south of Spain by focusing on the local level,¹⁰ in this present text, we aim to show how, during the early 1900s, there was also a significant level of political mobilisation of the lower classes in the rural regions of southern Portugal.

Specifically, in order to define the scope of our work, we have focused on the district of Évora, in the region of Alentejo. The chronological time frame encompasses the period from 1908 to 1915, so as to span the crisis of the monarchy (1908–1910) and the promulgation and construction of the First Republic (1910–1915), a period of intense political activity.

The research has been based on tracing and analysing the expressions of collective popular mobilisation promoted by the PRP in the district of Évora between 1908 and 1915, by consulting the regional and local newspapers of the district.¹¹

However, before exploring this subject in further depth, we will first provide a brief socio-economic overview of the district of Évora and the region of Alentejo, so as to better contextualise the proposed research.

Socio-economic overview of the Évora district in the early twentieth century

The district of Évora, together with the districts of Beja, Portalegre and part of Setúbal, is part of the Alentejo region, which extends south of the River

Tagus occupying almost the entire southern half of Portugal.¹² Like the whole of the region, in the early twentieth century, the district of Évora was eminently rural and was defined by two major characteristics: it had an agricultural economy based on wheat crops, complemented by the cultivation of olive groves, vineyards and cork oak groves that dominated the arboreal landscape of the region, and land ownership was highly concentrated, meaning that Alentejo was (and is) dominated by large estates.¹³

As a result of this marked *latifundism*, the social structure of the district is highly polarised so that, together with a small group of large landowners, and a slightly larger group of farmers who farmed their own land, there was a very large mass of rural day labourers who obtained their economic livelihood almost exclusively from selling their labour by the day. The living conditions of these rural labourers bordered on subsistence since wages were very low and work was highly seasonal, conditioned by crop growing cycles and changes in the weather, which meant that their income would decline and/or be scarce not only in years of poor harvests but also at times of the year when there was little demand for labour in the fields, such as winter.¹⁴ Therefore, it was not surprising that, in these negative situations, many rural workers in Alentejo were forced to resort to begging or petty crime to support their family.¹⁵

As if that were not enough, the poor living conditions of Alentejo's lower classes were compounded by high illiteracy rates in the region,¹⁶ which stood at around 80 per cent, well above the average rate in Portugal which, in 1911, was around 70 per cent,¹⁷ and, of course, exacerbated by the scant opportunities for social promotion available to the poorest classes.

This context largely explains why Alentejo bore witness to many of the most important episodes of social conflict that occurred during the twentieth century in Portugal, shaping the collective memory of the country as a whole, as reflected in the acclaimed novel by José Saramago titled *Levantado do chao*.

The first and one of the most prominent social conflicts that took place in Alentejo in the 1900s was the wave of strikes led by rural workers in the region between 1911 and 1912, which had a special impact on the district of Évora, and caused a substantial reverberation in historiography of this period,¹⁸ among other reasons, because repression of the Alentejo strikers was the last straw, triggering the first general strike in the history of Portugal, called in January 1912.¹⁹

However, as we will see next, beyond this important socio-labour mobilisation, which has already been covered extensively by historiography, during those years in the district of Évora, there was also a remarkable popular mobilisation that was eminently political in nature, which manifested, according to the documentation, through three main forms of expression: public rallies, festive demonstrations and popular riots. Let us begin with the first.

Rallies: the first popular political mobilisations of republicanism in the district of Évora

After the failed republican revolt of 1891 (with the subsequent repression) and the poor electoral results achieved by republican candidates during

the early twentieth century, the PRP saw the need to extend its influence beyond the country's major cities, to which its political activity had largely been confined up until that point. So, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the PRP set up numerous republican centres in many different parts of the country. But these centres were not established as mere elitist political clubs, characteristic of nineteenth-century liberal politics. Instead, they sought to organise educational, cultural and philanthropic activities to involve and engage the lower classes, and, above all, they developed significant political activity through various tools of mass politics, such as the publication of newspapers (local and regional) and the organisation of rallies and propaganda demonstrations.²⁰ Evidently, the clear objective behind this was to expand the Republican political programme and discourse to the bulk of Portuguese society, including those who could not vote.

The creation of republican centres in the district of Évora dated back to the 1880s, when local republican candidates established temporary republican centres for the 1881, 1883 and 1887 elections. However, it was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that the PRP founded the first permanent republican centres in the region: in 1906, the Democratic Republican Centre 'Liberdade' in the city of Évora and, in 1907, the Republican Centre 'Heliodoro Salgado' in Vendas Novas. In 1910, on the eve of the revolution, other republican centres were set up in Extremoz, Borba and various localities within the *Concelho* (municipality) of Montemor-o-Novo. In addition, from the end of the nineteenth century onwards, republican newspapers were founded in the district, such as *Democracia do Sul*, published in Montemor-o-Novo from 1900 onwards, and *A Voz Pública*, founded in the city of Évora in 1904.²¹

As was the case elsewhere in the country, the republican centres established in Évora began to organise the first political events to mobilise the popular classes. These included electoral rallies, both in towns that were the capital of the surrounding *concelho* (which is where mainly these centres were located) and in small villages of the surrounding areas. In this regard, the PRP organised a particularly important rally campaign for the April 1908 elections, which ultimately marked a turning point for the Portuguese republican movement.²² In the district examined here, not only were meetings held in Évora and Vendas Novas (the two towns that then had a permanent republican centre) but also in some villages around the district capital (São Manços, Azaruja, São Miguel de Machede and Alcáçovas).²³ Undoubtedly, this propaganda tour enabled republican candidate Evaristo Cutileiro to win the most votes in the *concelho* of Évora (although not enough to make him the most voted for candidate in the whole district).²⁴

These electoral campaigns took place during the run-up to the municipal elections of October 1908, when the republican candidates held new rallies in Évora, São Manços and São Miguel de Machede²⁵ and, above all, for the legislative elections of August 1910, when the republican candidates redoubled their efforts and organised rallies throughout practically the entire

district, both in the city of Évora and various nearby villages (São Manços, São Miguel de Machede, Nossa Senhora de Machede and Azaruja), as well as in other localities within the district, from *concelho* administrative capitals (Montemor-o-Novo, Vendas Novas, Arraiolos, Estremoz, Borba) to small towns and villages (Santiago do Escoural, Cabrela, Vimieiro, Igrejinha, Alcáçocas, Pavia, Cabeção).²⁶

However, it should be noted that the republican centres of the district also organised rallies, or other similar political events (public meetings, conferences, etc.), outside of electoral periods. These included, for example, the meeting held on 26 July 1908 in Évora to discuss 'the famous liquidation of *adiantamentos*', at which famous leaders of Portuguese republicanism spoke (such as Afonso Costa and Bernardino Machado), and which was attended by republican delegations from almost all *concelhos* in the district, with an estimated attendance, according to the press, of 6,000 people.²⁷ Another notable event was the rally organised in Vendas Novas on 22 August 1909,²⁸ which was part of the anti-clerical campaign carried out by the PRP that year, which reached its peak at the huge anti-clerical demonstration held in Lisbon on 2 August.²⁹

At these rallies, republican leaders would typically launch into frenzied harangues, decrying the corruption and clericalism of the monarchist regime and making grandiose promises, clearly demagogic and populist in tone, which outlined an idyllic republic where the working classes would live free from material shortages:

stoking passions, exploiting the misery of the working classes, firing them up with promises of the imminent improvement of their situation under the republican regime, convincing them that soon we will all be equal in all things, even *in heart and mind*, speaking a great deal about freedom, a magic word that sparks great enthusiasm in every heart and is usually so misunderstood.

They were told a great deal about tax cuts or reductions, about the lowering of prices on basic items or even whetting their appetites with promises about taking from the rich to give to the poor and so on, as we can see in excerpts of their speeches and we can infer from way in which some poor wretches with whom we have spoken extol the regime, and from the promises made, intended to sooth them that they will soon reap a thousand fortunes that they do not currently have.³⁰

Moreover, not infrequently, to make such promises more credible, republicans invited workers' leaders to participate in their rallies.³¹ One such example was António Moura, president of the Class Association of *Corticeiros* (cork workers) of Évora, who played a prominent role in the electoral campaign run by the republicans of Évora in August 1910³² (and who, shortly after, went on to play a leading role in the social conflicts that spread throughout Alentejo during the first few months of the Republic). In his speeches, the

Corticeiro leader took the opportunity to spread his working-class ideology, as he did at the rally held on 20 August 1910 in Montemor-o-Novo, where António Moura:

addressed the workers present, and explained to them the reason why he wants a Republic, while at the same time urging them to free themselves from the *overlords* who enslave them, convincing them of the duties and rights that belong to them and of the *great* social force that they constitute. The working class, which produces everything, has the right to be free and independent, elevated and dignified, and must take action as swiftly as possible against the threats and revenge of electoral caciquism that, even while it pays so poorly for labour, still seeks to exploit the workers' conscience by forcing them to vote for the monarchical lists.³³

In summary, we see how, even before the proclamation of the Republic in October 1910, republicanism had incited remarkable political activity in the district of Évora, mobilising the common people both in the district capital and the *concelho* administrative capitals and in small villages.

This political activity of Portuguese republicanism intensified with the arrival of the new regime.³⁴ A good example of this is the new electoral campaign run by the PRP for the constituency elections of May 1911 (in which it faced little competition due to the lack of coordination among pro-monarchy parties), during which it organised almost 20 rallies in the district of Évora, both in the capital itself and in other localities throughout the district, including once again small villages.³⁵

However, once the Republic was proclaimed, the dominant republicanism took advantage of the recourses of power to use and promote other forms of popular political mobilisation, such as the aforementioned festive demonstrations and popular riots.

Festive demonstrations: state-backed popular political mobilisation

For many years now, French historiography has analysed the revolutionary festival as one of the most remarkable forms of collective mobilisation since the origins of Modernity, considering it a direct precursor to the public demonstration.³⁶ These studies have influenced different historiographical fields, such as Spain, where the existence of political festivities dates back to the nineteenth century³⁷ and continues well into the twentieth century. This is clearly illustrated by the 'revolutionary popular festival' that spread to different cities and towns in the country after the Second Republic was proclaimed in 1931.³⁸

Similarly, in Portugal, there have also been festive demonstrations since the nineteenth century,³⁹ as shown by the civic processions organised to commemorate the day of Camões's death (10 June), a celebration that at the end

of the nineteenth century was especially linked to the liberal and republican sectors.⁴⁰ Likewise, the country experienced its own 'revolutionary popular festival' after the First Republic was proclaimed on 5 October 1910⁴¹ (more than 20 years before the Spanish example).

One good example of this was the city of Évora itself, where, following news of the triumph of republican revolutionaries after their uprising in Lisbon, the shops closed and hundreds, even thousands, of individuals took to the streets to celebrate the arrival of the new regime. Among them were groups from the working classes, as shown by the 'large number of workers who, leaving work at noon, were prepared to lose the afternoon in order acclaim the republic'. Most of the protesters gathered in front of the municipal chamber, where the red and green (republican) flag was hoisted while the crowd cheered the fatherland and the republic and sang revolutionary anthems (such as *A Portuguesa* or *La Marseillaise*)⁴² to the accompaniment of music played by different bands. In the late afternoon, local Republican leaders who arrived from Lisbon were greeted by 'a huge crowd that stretched from Geraldo Square to the arch of the Carthusian Monastery'. The party continued into the early hours of the morning and ended with speeches by the new council leaders who were hailed by the crowd.⁴³ Similar scenes took place in Montemor-o-Novo, Vendas Novas, Reguengos and Alandroal, as well as in small villages such as Cabrela and Escoural.⁴⁴

All the crowds that gathered together to welcome the Republic, spreading throughout the country, from large cities to small villages, are clear evidence that the republican propaganda campaigns carried out during the last years of the monarchy had had a remarkable influence on the political culture of broad swathes of Portuguese society.⁴⁵

The obvious mobilising potential of these festive demonstrations did not go unnoticed by the republican authorities who, once in power, strongly promoted the celebration of public holidays on certain commemorative dates to renew and strengthen the republican spirit of society. These included: 31 January, in commemoration of the republican uprising of 1891; 1 December, turning the pro-monarchy celebration of the Restoration of Independence into Flag Day and, above all, 5 October, to celebrate the anniversary of the triumph of the 1910 revolution.

On the first anniversary of the Republic, on 5 October 1911, the authorities organised various parades in numerous localities around the district of Évora. In the district capital, a festive demonstration was held, involving the main authority figures and large groups of members and representatives of various institutions and associations of the city, including the Republican Volunteer Battalion and various class associations (including the recently created association of rural workers), to the accompaniment of music played by various bands and fireworks.⁴⁶ That same day, similar festive demonstrations were also held in Montemor-o-Novo, Estremoz, Mora and Reguengos.⁴⁷

However, despite the initial success, over time and, above all, with the progressive frustration felt among the working classes when they saw that

the Republic did not solve their immediate problems (as promised by republican speakers at their rallies), the popular following of these commemorative festivities declined significantly, and celebrations marking the anniversary of the Republic ended up becoming simply an institutional act with little press coverage.

Furthermore, republican authorities did not just organise festive demonstrations to commemorate important dates but also used this form of political mobilisation to show the popular support enjoyed by the Republic, especially when it was 'attacked' by opposition political sectors, as well as those of the Republic, such as the pro-monarchy attacks of 3 October 1911 and 3 July 1912.

In fact, after the first pro-monarchy attack occurred, the republican authorities of Évora published a manifesto calling 'the people of Évora, indistinctly, to a great demonstration in support of the Fatherland and the new democratic institutions that have happily consolidated in this beautiful and glorious country'. A few hours later, a crowd marched through the streets accompanied by music and cries of 'Long Live the Fatherland and the Republic, and down with traitors' until they reached the municipal chamber, where the authorities made various speeches from the balconies, cheered on by those present.⁴⁸ This popular mobilisation against the first pro-monarchy attack was completed two days later, on 5 October, when, as noted earlier, massive celebrations were held around the district to commemorate the first anniversary of the 1910 revolution.

Similarly, the following year, after learning of the defeat of the second pro-monarchy attack, the authorities of Évora organised a new demonstration that was supported 'by many people' and was accompanied by the military band, during which there were cries of 'Long Live the Republic, the Fatherland, and the Army', and speeches were made 'advocating the defence of the Fatherland and condemning the traitors' actions', which were 'warmly received'.⁴⁹ Again, on this occasion, similar demonstrations were organised in other locations around the district such as Vendas Novas, Estremoz, Vila Viçosa, Arraiolos and Redondo.⁵⁰

Another reason for festive demonstrations was the overthrow of authoritarian governments that, with the support of republican minority splinter groups (evolutionists and unionists), tried to topple Afonso Costa's 'democratic party', which had not only assumed both the official name and the political legacy of the PRP but also had an almost incontestable monopoly over the political, electoral and institutional power of the country.

This was the case of the government led by General Pimenta de Castro, in power between January and May 1915 with the support of evolutionists and unionists, which ruled on the basis of presidential decrees, without taking parliament into account. Faced with this 'dictatorship', the 'democrats' pursued an insurrectionist strategy that culminated in the military coup of 14 May 1915, overthrowing Pimenta de Castro and return the government of the country to them.⁵¹

News about the triumph of the revolution of May 1915 was received in Évora with the organisation of a festive demonstration that 'cheered on the Fatherland and the Republic' and moved through the main streets of the city.⁵² Two days later, on 16 May, similar scenes were repeated when another demonstration was organised 'with a huge turnout of people' to celebrate the swearing in of the 'democratic' councillors who had been dismissed during the government of Pimenta de Castro.⁵³ Such events were also held on these days in other parts of the district, both in administrative capitals, such as Montemor-o-Novo and Borba,⁵⁴ and in small towns such as Alcáçovas, where two demonstrations took place: the first was held on the 14th, when republican supporters gathered in the square to raise the red flag and cry 'Long Live the Fatherland, the Republic, the Navy, and the Portuguese Republican Party', and the second one took place on the 15th, 'which no republican, old or new, missed'.⁵⁵

Popular riots: tumultuous political mobilisation of the masses

However, when defending the new regime, the PRP (first) and the 'democratic party' (later) did not just mobilise the popular classes through peaceful festive demonstrations, such as those we have just seen, but they also used collective actions of a tumultuous and sometimes even violent nature.⁵⁶

A good example of this was the reaction that the first republican governments had against the unusual waves of strikes promoted by the Portuguese workers' movement towards the end of 1910 and throughout 1911 (and which, as pointed out earlier, had a remarkable impact on Alentejo, where there were numerous strikes by rural workers during the summer of 1911 and the winter of 1912). The social unrest of the first months of the Republic reached such an extent that even the new authorities feared that this strike agitation would irreparably destabilise the regime:

This past week has been particularly fertile in terms of strikes. Some happily are over; others continue.

Recording this fact, we cannot but regret it as it seems to us an unfavourable moment for movements that in some ways might hinder the consolidation of the new regime, an endeavour that surpasses all others in importance as it is in the greater interests of the Fatherland.⁵⁷

In the midst of this state of opinion, the first republican governments did not hesitate to put down the various strike movements that ensued with great force.⁵⁸ This repression was manifested in the district of Évora especially in the wake of the strike convened by workers of the *Companhia dos Caminhos de Ferro do Sul e Sueste* in January 1911, which republican heroes tried to defeat by mobilising grassroots support for the PRP. Indeed, when the railway strike broke out, in the city of Évora, for example, the railway and telegraph stations were taken 'by armed people'.⁵⁹ In Estremoz, for its part, a group of republican supporters occupied the station and premises of the *concelho* and, later, those of Borba and Vila Viçosa as well, where there were

demonstrations of republican exaltation in which local republican leaders made speeches 'against the strikes [and] exalting the people, for the magnanimous way they had proceeded to end the strike'.⁶⁰ In Montemor-o-Novo, the authorities of the *concelho* ('helped by many people from Escoural') took the stations of Escoural and Casa Branca and, later, formed a battalion of volunteers including around 50 'recognised republican citizens' to 'preserve and defend the Republic'.⁶¹

Likewise, republicanism also mobilised its grassroots support tumultuously in the face of attacks and conspiracies from pro-monarchy sectors. This was the case, for example, after the pro-monarchy attack of 1912, which was repelled by the army, the Republican National Guard (GNR) and, also, volunteer battalions formed in the northern provinces of the country.⁶² Over the course of the following days, along with the festive demonstrations explored in the previous section, popular harassment took place in the district of Évora against certain individuals who were arrested as suspected conspiratorial collaborators. One such individual was the Count of Ervideira, who was escorted to the prison of Évora 'by a force of the republican guard, a civic agent, and many people' who 'accompanied the retinue, protesting with violence', or that of Major Montez, considered the leader of the conspiracy in the south of the country, who was met by 'large numbers of people' at Évora railway station 'who made a raucous manifestation of displeasure', 'rebuking him harshly, while crying Long Live the Fatherland and the Republic'.⁶³ Other similar popular harassment took place in Vendas Novas and Estremoz.⁶⁴

Even more violent events occurred in Évora after the so-called Second *Outubrada*, a small pro-monarchy uprising that took place in October 1914 in Mafra and Torres Vedras, which was quashed by the authorities without any major setbacks. Again, as on previous occasions, when news of the conspiracy reached them, the republican sectors of Évora organised a demonstration on the evening of 8 October, which 'soon became very imposing, with elements from all parties, for the sole purpose of hailing the Republic'. However, during the course of the march, shots were (allegedly) fired at the protesters from a pharmacy belonging to the owner of the pro-monarchy newspaper *Notícias d'Évora*. Immediately, the demonstration turned into a riot. Protesters stoned the building and some also fired weapons into the building, fatally injuring one of the occupants. Later, after the GNR dissolved the riot in that part of the city, several groups of rioters regrouped in the square where the newsroom of *Notícias d'Évora* was located, stormed the building, destroyed the machinery and burned the furniture they took from inside on a large bonfire out in the street.⁶⁵ As a result of all this, the pro-monarchy newspaper had to suspend its publication for several months and did not go to press again until February 1915 (now with a new owner).

A third cause behind the tumultuous mobilisation of republican grassroots supporters was their reaction to authoritarian governments such as that of General Pimenta de Castro who, as stated previously, ruled between January and May 1915 based on presidential decrees that neglected the Parliament.⁶⁶

One of Pimenta de Castro's most controversial measures was the enactment of Decree No. 1488 that allowed the government to dissolve institutions and public administrations that did not obey the executive's orders. Based on this decree, 59 municipal chambers were dissolved throughout the country controlled by the 'democratic party', including Lisbon and Évora.⁶⁷

When news of this decision reached Évora, the 'democratic' corporation of the city convened a protest rally on 28 April 1915 in front of the municipal chamber building, where 'successive cries of Long live the Republic, the union of republicans, down with the dictatorship' and the like could be heard. The next day, the new council was due to be sworn in (made up of evolutionists and unionists), so from early in the morning, numerous groups of 'democratic' republicans gathered once more both inside and in front of the municipal chamber. When the new authorities arrived, they cried 'Long live the Republic and unleashed protests against the dictators' and, shortly after, when the civil governor appeared, they shouted out 'Down with the traitor to the Republic'. To quash the protest, the governor ordered law enforcement to evict the crowd from the municipal chamber and the adjacent square, resulting in violent clashes between guards and protesters, in which several were wounded.⁶⁸ Over the following days, there were new protests in Évora related to the dissolution of the chamber: on 1 May, a protest rally was held in the city's Democratic Centre, and on 6 May, a new rally was organised in front of the municipal chamber,⁶⁹ but in both cases events unfolded peacefully, and there were no incidents.

Finally, as we know, the military uprising of 14 May succeeded in overthrowing Pimenta de Castro and returning the power to the 'democratic' party,⁷⁰ which, as we saw earlier, was celebrated in Évora and other localities around the district with much rejoicing and jubilation.

Conclusion

The early twentieth century in Portugal was marked by great political turmoil and notable social conflict. Although during those years both the monarchical and republican regimes did not pass universal suffrage, this did not prevent Portugal's common people from actively participating in the political life of the country and continuously mobilising in streets and squares, not only in big cities like Lisbon and Porto but also in small towns and villages further inland. Much of this popular political mobilisation was driven by republicanism.

Indeed, through the specific example of the district of Évora, characterised by the pre-eminence of agrarian activity, large estates, poverty and illiteracy, we have seen how during the last years of the monarchical regime, Portuguese republicanism organised numerous mass political acts, such as public rallies. Such events had a major impact in the periods leading up to elections, when PRP candidates embarked on propaganda tours of cities and towns in the region, in which even leaders of the incipient regional labour movement

participated, and which were attended by numerous individuals from the working classes who became aware at such events of republican ideology and political culture.

Another form of collective popular mobilisation promoted by republicanism in the early twentieth century in the district of Évora was the festive demonstration, originating in the ‘revolutionary popular festivals’ that followed the triumph of the revolution of 5 October 1910, when thousands of citizens of Évora took to the streets of various localities in the district in the midst of cheers, speeches and music to celebrate the proclamation of the Republic. These same scenes were repeated on a recurring basis over the following years to celebrate commemorative dates, such as the anniversary of the 5 October revolution itself, or to publicly display popular support for the Republic (and the ‘democratic’ party), against pro-monarchy insurrections and conspiracies or attempted authoritarian coups supported by the evolutionary and unionist minorities to topple the PRP from power.

Finally, there was also significant popular mobilisation through tumultuous and even violent actions, especially against the ‘enemies’ of the Republic, such as pro-monarchy sectors or attempted authoritarian coups, but also the workers’ movement, as was the case in Évora when the railway strike broke out in January 1911.

In short, in contrast to the historiographical cliché that links a lack of mobilisation or even political apathy to the notion of ‘backward’ countries or geographical areas, in reality, in the agrarian regions of southern Portugal, there was also significant political mobilisation at the end of the ‘long’ nineteenth century, with the popular classes clearly playing an active role.

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Notes

- 1 Here we fully assume the celebrated term coined by Hobsbawm that identifies the existence of an ‘historic’ nineteenth century that extended from the crisis of the *Ancien Régime* at the end of the eighteenth century to the outbreak of World War I (Hobsbawm, 1987).
- 2 Numerous studies have shown the importance of collective popular mobilisation in the ‘long’ nineteenth century: from the classic work of Bermeo and Nord (2000) to the more recent works of Fradkin and Di Meglio (2013) on Latin America, or Palacios Cerezales and Luján (2022) on Europe. With regard to the

- specific case of Spain, beyond this book, this subject has also been addressed in studies conducted decades ago (Pérez Ledesma, 1990: 170–179), as well as very recently published studies (Sánchez León, 2022).
- 3 An aspect analysed extensively in Tilly, 2003.
 - 4 In this sense, we should recall the popular mobilisations that took place in France during the year 1789 (Rudé, 2018: 117–137).
 - 5 In this regard, for example, see Sánchez Collantes, 2019 or Anchorena Morales, 2022.
 - 6 In fact, the first fully democratic elections held in Portugal were those of 25 April 1975, after the Carnation Revolution.
 - 7 See, for example, Palacios Cerezales, 2011: 186–189.
 - 8 A history of Portuguese republicanism can be found in Catroga, 2000.
 - 9 Ramos, 1993: 226. On political mobilisation in liberal Portugal, see Pinto and Almeida, 2000.
 - 10 This was where, after all, the daily political experience of individuals took place (Confino, 2006; Carasa, 2007).
 - 11 The list of newspapers consulted is: *Notícias d'Évora*, *A Voz Pública*, *O Democrático*, *O Carbonário*, *A Formiga*, *O Meridional*, *A Folha do Sul*, *Democracia do Sul*, *O Jornal d'Estremoz* and *O Ecco de Reguengos*.
 - 12 See the map at: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Alentejo_region_of_Portugal.svg (viewed on 10 January 2023).
 - 13 Fonseca, 1996; Fonseca and Santos, 2001.
 - 14 On the social conditions of Alentejo: Cutileiro, 1977; Cabral, 1977; and do Carmo, 2007.
 - 15 Cutileiro, 1977: 89–105. In this sense, Pereira (1980: 135) characterised the crime and criminality that existed in the region as a 'latent social revolt'.
 - 16 Gameiro, 2006.
 - 17 Correia, 2013: 1191–1192.
 - 18 Pereira, 1983: 21–76; Brito Pereira, 1983; Redondo Cardeñoso, 2018.
 - 19 Pereira, 1983: 72–74; Palacios Cerezales, 2011: 226.
 - 20 Samara, 2009a: 66–68; Carvalho, 2013.
 - 21 Frota, 2010; Samara, 2010: 158–159; Fonseca, 2013: 181.
 - 22 Farinha, 2013: 718.
 - 23 *A Voz Pública*, 28–3–1908 and 04–04–1908.
 - 24 *A Voz Pública*, 11–04–1908.
 - 25 *A Voz Pública*, 24–10–1908.
 - 26 *A Voz Pública*, 07–08–1910, 11–08–1910, 18–08–1910, 21–08–1910, 25–08–1910 and 28–08–1910; *Democracia do Sul*, 13–08–1910, 20–08–1910 and 27–08–1910.
 - 27 *A Voz Pública*, 01–08–1908. *Adiantamentos* were payments made by the State, without parliamentary control, to satisfy the unbudgeted expenses of the Royal Household.
 - 28 *Democracia do Sul*, 28–08–1909. *Paço* refers to Ribeira Palace in Lisbon, which was the official residence of the Royal Household.
 - 29 Catroga, 1988: 236–239.
 - 30 *Notícias d'Évora*, 08–04–1908.
 - 31 Samara, 2009b: 154.
 - 32 *A Voz Pública*, 11–08–1910 and 28–08–1910; and *Democracia do Sul*, 20–08–1910 and 27–08–1910.
 - 33 *Democracia do Sul*, 27–08–1910.
 - 34 Carvalho, 2013: 767.
 - 35 *Notícias d'Évora*, 21–05–1911, 23–05–1911, 24–05–1911, 25–05–1911 and 26–05–1911; *O Meridional*, 23–05–1911, 14–05–1911 and 28–05–1911; *O Carbonário*, 27–05–1911; *Democracia do Sul*, 27–05–1911; and *O Jornal d'Estremoz*, 27–05–1911.

- 36 Ozouf, 1976.
- 37 For example, the studies of Fuentes Aragonés, 2014; and Roca Vernet, 2016, 2018 and 2021.
- 38 Juliá, 1999: 75–76.
- 39 Palacios Cerezales, 2011: 115–116.
- 40 João, 2011: 21.
- 41 Valente, 1982: 120; Farinha, 2013: 719.
- 42 In contrast to the monarchist flag, this was blue and white.
- 43 *A Voz Pública*, 06–10–1910.
- 44 *Democracia do Sul*, 08–10–1910 and 22–10–1910; *A Folha do Sul*, 08–10–1910; 12–10–1910 and *A Voz Pública*, 13–10–1910.
- 45 Samara, 2010: 282.
- 46 *Notícias d'Évora*, 07–10–1911 and *A Voz Pública*, 08–10–1911.
- 47 *Notícias d'Évora*, 05–10–1911; *O Jornal d'Estremoz*, 07–10–1911; *O Meridional*, 08–10–1911; and *Democracia do Sul*, 12–10–1911.
- 48 *Notícias d'Évora*, 04–10–1911.
- 49 *Notícias d'Évora*, 11–07–1912 and *A Voz Pública*, 11–07–1912.
- 50 *Democracia do Sul*, 13–07–1912 and *O Meridional*, 14–07–1912.
- 51 Serra, 2009: 116; Palacios Cerezales, 2011: 235–236; Navarro, 2013 y 2014.
- 52 *A Voz Pública*, 16–05–1915.
- 53 *Notícias d'Évora*, 18–05–1915; *A Voz Pública*, 21–05–1915; *O Democrático*, 23–05–1915.
- 54 *O Meridional*, 16–05–1915 and 23–05–1915; *Democracia do Sul*, 20–05–1915; *O Jornal d'Estremoz*, 22–05–1915.
- 55 *Democracia do Sul*, 20–05–1915.
- 56 Palacios Cerezales, 2011: 230–232, and 2012; Torre Gómez, 2014.
- 57 *A Voz Pública*, 20–11–1910.
- 58 Torre Gómez, 2014: 1132.
- 59 *O Carbonário*, 15–01–1911.
- 60 *O Jornal d'Estremoz*, 21–01–1911.
- 61 *A Folha do Sul*, 18–01–1911; *Democracia do Sul*, 21–01–1911 and 28–01–1911; *O Meridional*, 22–01–1911.
- 62 Santos, 2010: 150–162.
- 63 *Notícias d'Évora*, 19–07–1912 and *A Voz Pública*, 18–07–1912 and 21–07–1912.
- 64 *Democracia do Sul*, 13–07–1912 and 20–07–1912, *O Meridional*, 14–07–1912 and *A Folha do Sul*, 17–07–1912.
- 65 *A Voz Pública*, 25–10–1914.
- 66 Serra, 2009: 116; Navarro, 2013.
- 67 Navarro, 2011: 128–129.
- 68 *Notícias d'Évora*, 29–04–1915 and 30–04–1915; *A Voz Pública*, 01–05–1915; and *O Democrático*, 02–05–1915.
- 69 *A Formiga . . .*, 09–05–1915.
- 70 Navarro, 2013.

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