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978-1-107-64076-4 - Imperial Portugal in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions: The Luso-Brazilian World, c. 1770–1850

Gabriel Paquette

Excerpt

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## Introduction

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This book traces the history of Portugal and its overseas dominions from approximately 1770 until just before 1850. Historians generally refer to this period as the “Age of Revolution(s),” when the imperial institutions, non-state networks, and commercial circuits knitting the early modern Atlantic World together became unraveled and new polities and connections, formal and informal, emerged from the ruins. In its Luso-Atlantic variant, the principal thrust of scholarly research has concerned the processes – long-term preconditions, medium-term precipitants, and short-term triggers – which culminated in Brazil’s formal, political independence in the early 1820s. Historians have noted and analyzed how the timing, nature, and extent of Brazil’s separation from Portugal differed from the processes by which British North America, French Saint-Domingue, and Spanish America wrested sovereignty from their respective metropolises. Yet there have been surprisingly few attempts to de-center the process of imperial breakdown, challenge its inevitability and completeness, explore the repercussions of decolonization in Portugal, trace empire’s lingering political impact in Brazil, or challenge the appropriateness of the “Age of Revolution(s)” as an interpretive framework. These gaps, and the historiographical silence concerning these absences, are curious and provocative. After all, Brazil’s independence was a rather anti-climactic coda to a sixty-year, strenuous, Crown-directed effort to reform, revive, and reconfigure the Portuguese empire, a non sequitur after approximately three hundred years of unceasing interaction – bonds forged in the crucible of maritime discovery, conquest, settlement, slavery, war, and commerce – between Portugal and the continents bordering and archipelagos dotting the Atlantic Ocean. It would be astounding if a political edifice buttressed by culture, religion, coercive power, capital, and personnel collapsed vertiginously, its debris vanished without leaving a trace, and its centuries-old connections were eviscerated, all by the time formal declarations of independence were made, recognized, and enshrined in international law. But that impression is precisely the one that a reader

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## 2 Imperial Portugal in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions

might come away with after surveying the bulk of the historical writing on the subject.

Such an impression would be inaccurate and distorting. After all, “empires do not always plot themselves so neatly along curvaceous inclines and declines.”<sup>1</sup> As the following chapters demonstrate, Brazil’s independence was a highly contingent, generally unsought, and somewhat undesirable break from the previous half-century’s trajectory. When it finally was achieved, the Portuguese empire was severely diminished, whether measured by territorial control, economic resources, or international prestige. Yet many of the connections linking the component parts of the Luso-Atlantic World – intellectual, political, commercial (including the slave trade) – remained unsevered, undisturbed, or impervious to the actions, plots, and schemes of the statesmen who inherited the politics emerging from the carcass of empire. In fact, as in the Spanish empire, many of the connections paradoxically intensified as the two shores of the Luso-Atlantic world veered toward a final reckoning.<sup>2</sup> Contemporaries rejected the prognosis that imperial contraction was irreversible or that the reconciliation and reunification of the former empire’s parts in some mutually satisfactory arrangement was a fantasy. Nor was this sentiment confined to elites: throughout the Americas, popular appropriation of royalist symbols and other markers of Old Regime hierarchies was widespread.<sup>3</sup> Interestingly, nineteenth-century Brazilian historians were cognizant of the contingent, ambivalent, and incomplete nature of independence. But their conception of an “amicable divorce,” or peaceful exchange of power between members of the Braganza dynasty, as well as the mid-twentieth-century scholarly conception of Brazil’s independence as an “agreement among elites,” became anathema to later generations of historians, who discarded these insights in what was otherwise a salutary exercise in revisionism.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adelman 2006, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Fernández Sebastián 2009, pp. 28–31.

<sup>3</sup> For example, Méndez 2005; and Echeverri 2011; as Landers 2010 argued, “even as monarchical systems broke down, however, for many Atlantic creoles, they still seemed their best hope ... [they] pinned their hopes for freedom on a personal relationship with a distant monarch and on centuries-old legal, religious and social constructs,” p. 233; Blanchard 2008 contended that “in the first years of the independence wars, the majority of slaves in Venezuela and New Granada had found the opportunities and rewards offered by the Crown more attractive than anything offered by the patriots,” p. 36; on counter-revolutionary and royalist doctrines in general, see Hamnett 1978.

<sup>4</sup> Much of the first view was articulated by Varnhagen in the decades immediately following independence, particularly with regard to the agency he attributed to Dom Pedro. See Varnhagen 1957; the second view, and phrase, is from Prado 1963, pp. 49–50. As Kraay and Reis 2009 explained, these older views have been discredited:

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Of course, such fantasies of re-integration went unrealized in the decades after 1825. By the late nineteenth century, besides cultural-linguistic-religious ties, Brazil and Portugal had undergone divergent historical evolution. There were few links between them, except for the thousands of impoverished Portuguese immigrants who flocked to Brazil.<sup>5</sup> This later paucity justified treating the earlier imperial crisis teleologically. Conflicts were depicted as leading inexorably to separation, economic structures were presumed to produce readily discernible political consequences, and the formal recognition of Brazil's status as an independent state in 1825 was assumed to have definitively brought down the curtain on the drama of the Atlantic World.<sup>6</sup> Such conclusions were fortified further by the priorities of nation-focused (and nationalist) historiography.<sup>7</sup> In Brazil, the histories of colony and nation were treated as separate entities, independence and the coalescence of post-colonial polity were celebrated, and endogenous historical evolution was emphasized.<sup>8</sup> In Portugal, the decades following the transfer of the Court to Brazil (1807–8) were studied almost without reference to Brazil and the surviving remnants of Portugal's empire until quite recently.<sup>9</sup>

Portuguese and Brazilian historians, however, are not uniquely culpable. The study of the breakdown of the Atlantic empires *c.* 1760–1830,

the new emphasis is on changes to political culture, popular mobilization, serious threats to the social order, and intense debates concerning the type of reform to be adopted, p. 400; this critique has been extended to regional bias, challenging the notion that exclusively *Carioca* and *Paulista* elites drew up plans for Brazil's future and imposed it on the rest of Portuguese America. See, for example, Machado 2010; recently, however, the study of political and economic elites, and their decisive influence on historical outcomes, has come back into vogue. See, among others, Malerba 2000; and Fragozo and Florentino 2001.

<sup>5</sup> On early nineteenth-century immigration, see Barbosa 2009; for the late nineteenth century, see E. Viotti da Costa 1985.

<sup>6</sup> Though Buarque de Holanda 1962, who stressed a prolonged transition between colony and nation, lasting until 1831, was an influential exception.

<sup>7</sup> What Chiamonte 2010a said of Spanish America holds true for Brazil: “neither the present-day Latin American nations nor their relevant nationalities existed at the time of independence. Nations were not the foundation but the (frequently late) outcome of these movements,” p. 25.

<sup>8</sup> Important exceptions must be noted. Many of these are discussed in the essays contained in Jancsó 2005.

<sup>9</sup> In nineteenth-century Portuguese historiography and popular culture, there was more of an erasure than an “invention” of decolonization, in the sense conveyed for twentieth-century France by Shepard 2006, pp. 4–5, 272; Interest in colonial Brazil (and its independence) was shown by Portuguese intellectuals, and the Salazar regime, in the mid twentieth century as Portugal intensified its imperial efforts in Southern Africa. On “Luso-tropicalismo” and related phenomena, see, most recently, Dávila 2010; this instrumental curiosity flowed from a wider, mutual Luso-Brazilian rediscovery in the early twentieth century, as analyzed by Muller 2011.

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## 4 Imperial Portugal in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions

particularly in Anglophone scholarship, has been dominated by the paradigm of the “Age of Revolution(s),” most often associated with R. R. Palmer.<sup>10</sup> While salutary in many respects, particularly in facilitating comparative study and promoting awareness of global and transnational processes, it has compounded the distortions spawned by nation-centric historiography of the Luso-Atlantic World.<sup>11</sup> In place of a panoply of “exceptional” or “unique” national paths toward imperial breakdown and post-colonial state formation, a single route was proposed: that of the US and France during the pre-Napoleonic phase of the Revolution. It was a

single movement, revolutionary in character, for which the word “democratic” is appropriate and enlightening; a movement which, however different in different countries, was everywhere aimed against closed elites, self-selecting power groups, hereditary castes, and forms of special advantage or discrimination that no longer served any useful purpose. These were summed up in such terms as feudalism, aristocracy, and privilege.<sup>12</sup>

Palmer devoted only a few pages to the breakdown of the Iberian empires, but he left little doubt that these were largely derivative phenomena: “All revolutions since 1800 ... have learned from the 18th-century Revolution of Western Civilization. They have been inspired by its success, echoed its ideals, used its methods.”<sup>13</sup> Undoubtedly, to a degree, this statement is accurate: connections between revolutions and revolutionaries in the Atlantic world abounded and deliberate emulation was rampant. But Palmer’s claim, like the assumption underpinning “modernization” theory gaining adherents at the time of the

<sup>10</sup> Palmer 1954; Palmer 1959–1964; criticized and updated in Armitage and Subrahmanyam 2010, and in Paquette and Brown 2013, which provides a fuller summary and criticism of the historiographical tradition than is possible here. On the connection between Palmer (and Godechot) and other genealogies of Atlantic History, see O’Reilly 2004 and Tortarola 2008. Of course, there is a second “Age of Revolution(s)” tradition, associated with Hobsbawm 1962, whose emphasis on economic disruptions and transformations is beyond the scope of the present book.

<sup>11</sup> Compare to Elliott’s critique of the misleading and anachronistic focus on “revolution” during the seventeenth-century “General Crisis.” See Elliott 1969, esp. pp. 44, 55.

<sup>12</sup> Palmer 1964, vol. II, p. 572; Another progenitor of the concept of the “Age of Revolution(s),” Godechot, argued that, many local contexts and multiple causes notwithstanding, “these revolutions had a similar objective: to establish a new regime in which citizens would enjoy greater equality and liberty and participate more fully in central government and administration.” See Godechot 1965, p. 27.

<sup>13</sup> Palmer 1964, vol. II, p. 574. Godechot was even more explicit about the French origins, and therefore derivative quality, of all subsequent revolutions: “The soldiers of the Consulate and Empire carried revolutionary doctrines to regions where they had as yet hardly penetrated ... From Iberia they were carried to Spanish and Portuguese America.” See Godechot 1965, pp. 6–7.

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publication of *The Age of Democratic Revolution*, is based upon various assumptions – of a single model of and pathway to political modernity, of the diffusion of “enlightenment” from core to periphery, of the imitative character of political thought in the non-European world – which have been challenged and debunked recently.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, the “Age of Revolutions” should be recast on the basis of these new insights and realizations.

For the study of the Luso-Brazilian World c. 1770–1850, the existing “Age of Revolution(s)” paradigm poses two special difficulties. The first problem with the paradigm is that it encourages scholars to downplay the largely successful efforts of late eighteenth-century reformers who preserved and transformed imperial structures and fortified connections between far-flung territories. If one of the most prominent contemporary interpreters of the late eighteenth century is to be believed, the efforts of such exponents of “moderate” enlightenment were “simply inadequate” and may be judged a “comprehensive failure” across Europe and the Americas.<sup>15</sup> But this verdict fits awkwardly when applied to the Luso-Brazilian case, where the end of empire proved to be a rude, unanticipated shock, an event which legions of Crown officials, nobles, clerics, and merchants tried to forestall, if not prevent entirely, as they watched the crumbling of imperial structures across the Atlantic World.<sup>16</sup> With the benefit of hindsight, they sought to divert the river of History and believed that they had engineered this feat, forcing it to flow away from revolution and toward regeneration and reform. A focus on circuits of revolutionary activity and long-term processes culminating in imperial dissolution, therefore, tends anachronistically to foreground agents of radical change at the expense of partisans of stasis, rejuvenated tradition, or moderate reshuffling. As an historian recently noted, “Revolution did not begin as secessionist episodes ... much more common in the complex breakdown was the exploration of models of re-accommodating colonies into imperial formations, a groping for an arrangement that would stabilize, not dissolve empires.”<sup>17</sup> Monarchs, Crown officials, colonial administrators, “conservative” political writers, and Brazilian “collaborators” or “loyalists,” among others, have been relegated to the periphery of a

<sup>14</sup> Eisenstadt 2005; Roninger and Waisman 2002; J. Robertson 2005; Roldán Vera and Caruso 2007; Fernández Sebastián 2009; and Paquette 2009b.

<sup>15</sup> Israel 2010, pp. 121–23 *passim*.

<sup>16</sup> Nor were the Portuguese alone in this endeavor: on the surprisingly flexible and collaborative aspects of Spanish imperial institutions in the same period, see Grafe and Irigoien 2008.

<sup>17</sup> Adelman 2008, pp. 320, 332; Adelman 2006, p. 8.

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## 6 Imperial Portugal in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions

historiographical tradition oriented toward dramatic and irreversible change.<sup>18</sup> This book seeks to recover these historical actors and to demonstrate that they, too, played key roles in the “Age of Revolution(s),” an era which encompassed experiences and phenomena besides revolution and rupture. Many participants considered the uprisings, which scholars now understand to have ushered in a new historical epoch, as little more than ephemeral disturbances. They remained confident that the rebels would soon return to the fold.

Even where the new political experiments flourished, sovereignty did not preclude intensive interactions between new states and old metropolises. This observation suggests a second problem with the “Age of Revolution(s)” paradigm. Its trope of disjuncture and discontinuity precludes adequate appreciation of the connections persisting well after formal dominion was declared extinct. Declarations of independence, and the international recognition of the nascent states brought into existence by political speech acts and armed struggle, were as much normative aspirations as faithful descriptions of actual conditions.<sup>19</sup> International trade, diplomatic treaties, socio-economic and legal structures and institutions, dynastic arrangements, religion and culture, ideological solidarity, friendships, kinship ties, and much else survived the “Age of Revolution(s)” and complicated the coalescence and consolidation of national-states.<sup>20</sup> Particularly in Chapters 3, 4, and 5, this book emphasizes the way that ruptures did not always lead to disruption and discontinuity. Though independence and sovereignty, at the conceptual level, may appear incompatible with the persistence of connections, in practice they coexisted. It is this book’s aim to revise the understanding of the “Age of Revolution(s)” to incorporate such phenomena, in the hope that the Luso-Brazilian case will come to be

<sup>18</sup> Though L. Souza 2006, which focuses primarily on the first half of eighteenth century, is a notable exception.

<sup>19</sup> On diplomatic recognition in international law in historical perspective, see Fabry 2010; on the significance of recognition in the US context, see Golove and Hulsebosch 2010. As Armitage 2007 explains, “declarations of independence were primarily assertions of sovereignty within an expanding universe of such sovereigns,” p. 141. The definition provided in Swiss jurist Emmerich de Vattel’s *Law of Nations* (1758), which became the standard guide to norms on the subject of independence, suggests why historians have tended to conflate independence with the evisceration of connections: “Every nation which governs itself, under any formula whatsoever, without dependency on any foreign country, is a sovereign state,” quoted in Armitage 2007, pp. 38–39.

<sup>20</sup> In his global survey of this period, C. Bayly has described the uneven nature of change as “unstable pluralism,” in which “a small industrial economy and limited representative government in Western Europe flourished alongside a patchwork of dynastic states, shored up imperial thrones, and dubiously legitimate European colonial provinces.” See Bayly 2004, p. 127.

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understood as “un-exceptional” and instead worthy of integration into a revamped paradigm.

Many historians, from a range of perspectives, studying Brazil and Spanish America in the nineteenth century have noted and analyzed the colonial “legacies,” “heritage,” and “detritus” with which former Ibero-American dominions were encumbered, and which they could not expunge, after independence.<sup>21</sup> Some of this new scholarship, especially on Spanish America, has prompted a reconsideration of “independence” and a shift away from viewing the post-colonial era as a clean break from the past.<sup>22</sup> In Brazil, throughout the late 1820s and 1830s, groups frustrated with the conservative political settlement hoped for a “second revolution of independence” to salvage the first.<sup>23</sup> While most of the heirlooms of the overthrown colonial regimes are maligned in Latin American historiography (e.g. fiscal apparatus, slavery, Indian policy, export-oriented economies, military orientation of civil administration),<sup>24</sup> a few receive tepid approbation (e.g. robust municipal institutions, constitutional culture, educational and scientific ethos, legal apparatus).<sup>25</sup> As the “black legend” of Iberian colonialism’s monolithically malicious influence wanes, further rehabilitation may be anticipated. Moreover, many historians have shown, in nuanced ways, how post-colonial Latin America’s independence was threatened (and its sovereignty compromised) by unequal relations with more powerful states and regions as well as its disadvantageous place in the networks, structures, and processes through which capital, credit (and debt), and forced labor flowed. Concepts and theories such as “informal empire,” “dependency,” “gunboat diplomacy,” and “neo-colonialism,” while heavily criticized, have illumined the severe geopolitical limits within which new polities stumbling out of empire’s wreckage operated.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Buarque de Holanda 1962; Stein and Stein 1970; Silva Dias 1972; Adelman 1999; Lewin 2003; Paquette and Brown 2011 and 2013; interestingly, historians of North America have begun to recognize the persistence of connections with Europe. As Onuf observed, “American independence did not initiate an era of isolation ... to the contrary, commercial, cultural, and political connections multiplied and intensified, and independent Americans were increasingly drawn into an interdependent Atlantic system ... only in the narrowest political sense had provincial patriots escaped metropolitan domination.” See Onuf 2010, pp. 3, 5.

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, Thurner 1997; and Larson 2004.

<sup>23</sup> Souza 1987, p. 177.

<sup>24</sup> J. H. Rodrigues 1975; Viotti da Costa 1985; Centeno 2002; and Larson 2004. As an historian noted recently, “viewed from the prism of nationalism, the vestiges of ecclesiastical and noble privilege embodying the Portuguese *ancien régime* underscored for liberals how Brazil’s fragile identity amounted to little more than that of an imperfectly emancipated colony.” See Lewin 2003, vol. II, p. 42.

<sup>25</sup> Dym 2006; Chiaramonte 2010b; and Zahler 2010.

<sup>26</sup> Robinson and Gallagher 1953; Stein and Stein 1970; and Brown 2008.

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## 8 Imperial Portugal in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions

New scholarship on nineteenth-century slavery and the slave trade, and coerced migration in general, for example, which rightly emphasizes its scale and brutality, sheds further light on the non-linearity of historical change and the discrepancy between “liberal” doctrines, ideologies, and legislation, on the one hand, and barbarous practices on the other.<sup>27</sup> In a more positive light, recent historians have identified an array of less coercive (though sometimes still perniciously destructive) “exchanges” between Europe and Latin America during and after independence, from direct contact characterized by large-scale voluntary migration and adventurers who fought for (and settled in) the new states to more passive forms of solidarity with constitutionalism and federalism animating the post-Napoleonic “Liberal International,” the transatlantic book trade, and the diffusion of political and social thought from Europe to Ibero-America.<sup>28</sup>

While operating outside of an imperial framework, historians of Europe have long recognized that the institutions, attitudes, structures, and intellectual horizons of the pre-revolutionary “Old Regime,” or at least their vestiges, survived and flourished well into the nineteenth century.<sup>29</sup> More recently, scholars have become interested in the long aftermath and repercussions of colonial dismemberment on the ex-metropole. This interest has propelled research into its economic, political, and ideological impact: the fate of former royalists, loyalists, and imperial agents and soldiers; the transformation of administration in the remaining colonies; and the incorporation of the colonial past into debates concerning constitutionalism and national identity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>30</sup> There has been scarcely any research of this type for Portugal.<sup>31</sup> As two historians observed, “beginning in the 1830s, Brazil undoubtedly loses its importance to Portuguese history, but even to a greater extent in Portuguese historiography.”<sup>32</sup> This

<sup>27</sup> Viotti da Costa 1985; Schmidt-Nowara 1999; Fradera 2005; Blackburn 1988 and 2011.

<sup>28</sup> Hale 1968; Brown 2006; Blaufarb 2007; Isabella 2009; Racine 2010; Paquette and Brown 2011 and 2013.

<sup>29</sup> Above all, Mayer 1981.

<sup>30</sup> Costeloe 1986; Gould 2000; Fradera 2005; Schmidt-Nowara 2006; Todd 2011; Jasanoff 2011; and Hamnett 2011; on intellectual continuities in British imperialism in the same period, see Bayly 1989; and Drayton 2000; on the economic impact (or purported lack thereof) on Spain, see Prados de la Escosura 1988.

<sup>31</sup> The notable exception is Alexandre 1993. One feature of Portuguese cultural history, however, has been discussed as, in part, a legacy of the political turmoil of the first decades of the nineteenth century: the musical genre of Fado. But the debate over the Brazilian contribution to its evolution remains fierce. See Sucena 2002, pp. 19–20.

<sup>32</sup> Cervo and Magalhães 2000, p. 128; the converse is equally true: as Bethencourt 2003 explained, “Brazilian independence brought with it, as is natural, the necessity of creating a new collective memory and a new historiography,” p. 172.



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absence, though, is curious. For example, many of the leading political figures in Portugal between 1825 and 1850 had significant experience in Brazil: António José Severim de Noronha, future Duque da Terceira, served as governor of Grão-Pará, while João Oliveira e Daun, future Duque de Saldanha, fought in the Banda Oriental and subsequently was governor of Rio Grande do Sul. The men, therefore, who shaped Portuguese politics “after Brazil” were full-fledged servants of empire, and their early experiences in Brazil marked their later trajectories in underappreciated ways.<sup>33</sup> More generally, recognition of the numerous continuities and persistent linkages with the imperial past not only permits the writing of national history in a broader context, salutary in itself, but also encourages a reframing of late colonial history in a way that de-emphasizes breakdown and crisis, thus drawing attention to the forces favoring and fostering the survival, not demise, of imperial institutions, mentalities, and relationships.

This book is indelibly informed by the insights of the scholarship referenced above, to say nothing of the enormous debt incurred by reading hundreds of excellent Portuguese-language books which the next five chapters attempt to synthesize. It is an analytically informed narrative of selected episodes of Portuguese imperial history which illustrate the argument that the rupture which reconfigured the Luso-Atlantic World in the early nineteenth century must be understood with reference to the countervailing, conciliatory, conservative forces which outnumbered and overwhelmed more radical forces seeking or tending toward imperial disaggregation. The break-up of the Portuguese empire occurred against the backdrop of a reform-oriented ultramarine administration, an increasingly integrated Luso-Atlantic economy (held together by commerce, personnel, and ideology) and, in its final moments, a shared, transatlantic constitutional process. Revolution, war, and independence shook and frayed, but did not completely shatter and tear, all of the bonds in the Luso-Atlantic World. The impact of Brazil’s independence in Portugal was immense. Furthermore, the partial, incomplete nature of the break introduced ambiguities that would shape, and entwine, the histories of Portugal and Brazil for decades. The most obvious examples, discussed at length in Chapters 2, 4, and 5, are, respectively, the survival of the Braganza dynasty in each country, Portuguese liberals’ dependence on the vagaries of Brazilian

<sup>33</sup> These Portuguese figures might be compared with the “Ayacuchos,” defeated Spanish royalists who returned to the Peninsula after Spanish-American independence and deeply influenced Spanish politics in the 1830s and 1840s. See Sobrevilla Perea 2011.

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politics, and Brazil's reliance on Portuguese Africa for its supply of slaves precisely at the moment in which the overhaul and development of those territories was contemplated in Lisbon.

Lesser-known episodes also produced underappreciated, long-term impact. The 1826 Portuguese Constitution, for example, examined in Chapter 3, better known as the *Carta Constitucional*, remained in force, except for brief periods (1828–34, 1836–42) and with only slight modification through revisions and “additional acts” (1852, 1865, 1896, 1907), until the fall of the monarchy in 1910.<sup>34</sup> The *Carta* was drawn up by Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, in Rio de Janeiro in late April 1826, almost a year after the treaty by which Portugal recognized Brazil's independence was signed. The death of his father, Dom João VI, in March 1826 left Dom Pedro undisputed heir to the Portuguese throne. The *Carta* embodied the spirit of an anti-popular, revived monarchy. It was designed largely to mollify the Holy Alliance and appease Brazilians wary of their emperor's continued connection to the ex-metropole Portugal.

In Europe, however, it came to be viewed both as a threat to royal legitimacy and the rallying cry of Portuguese liberals and their sympathizers abroad.<sup>35</sup> The 1826 *Carta* sits at the center of the story told in this book. Many of the themes running through this study intersect in the *Carta*'s composition, promulgation, and reception. In Portugal, the *Carta* emblemized the assumptions, aspirations, and fears of those who had not fully absorbed, or accepted, the break represented by Brazilian independence. In the 1820s and 1830s, Portuguese men and women did not operate in a world of political absolutes and static conditions. Instead, their turbulent age was marked by fluidity and interrupted continuities. Undoubtedly, older forms of government had been deprived of their timelessness and unquestioned legitimacy, but so too had the incarnate figments of feverish political imaginations which had spawned unprecedented horror, bloodshed, and economic dislocation. The likelihood of compromise, therefore, was great, even if, paradoxically, the men and women who entered politics were ardent, belligerent,

<sup>34</sup> These modifications did not significantly curtail crown authority: not only did the royal person remain inviolable and sacred, but the monarch could dismiss ministers without providing a justification, dissolve the assembly, and veto laws emanating from the legislative branch while retaining the leading role in public life. See Magalhães 1927, p. 23; Perhaps the only limitations on Crown authority as a result of 1852 amendments were the requirement that all foreign treaties would have to appear before the Cortes for ratification and the abolition of the death penalty for political crimes. See Miranda 2001, p. 37.

<sup>35</sup> Discussed in Paquette 2011b.