

Relations Between Portugal and Brazil (1930-1945)  
*The Relationship Between the Two National  
Experiences of the Estado Novo*

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**Abstract**

The years from 1930 to 1945 marked both a regional and world period of great political and economic instability. Because of the passive and permissive stance of most national governments, society experienced a deep crisis, from which no immediate positive change could be expected without a much-needed reformulation of the social, economic and political structure of each public and state entity. In their attempts to solve these problems, Portuguese-Brazilian relations were influenced by the internal reorganization processes of the *Estado Novo* and also by the changes taking place in the world system itself. These two influences led to a strengthening of the transatlantic link in some areas, but also to a decline in other areas.

**Keywords**

*Estado Novo, Portugal, Brazil, World War II, diplomatic and political relations*

**Resumo**

*Os anos que decorrem entre 1930 e 1945 caracterizam-se por uma conjuntura regional e mundial de forte desconforto político e económico. Perante a permissividade e passividade da maioria dos Governos nacionais, vive-se uma era de profunda crise, onde não se gorava qualquer expectativa de retoma imediata, que não fosse precedida obrigatoriamente pela reformulação de todo o edifício social, económico e político de cada uma das entidades estatais. Perante tal situação, as relações Portugal – Brasil são conformadas, por um lado, pelos processos de reorganização e reestruturação interna estado-novista, e, por outro, pela mutação do próprio sistema internacional. Estes dois parâmetros conduzem ao reforço do elo transatlântico em determinadas áreas, mas também à decadência e menoridade de outros sectores.*

**Palavras-chave**

*Estado Novo, Portugal, Brasil, II Guerra Mundial, relações político-diplomáticas.*

## Introduction

The widespread instability that characterized international relations after the New York stock market crash (which, in turn, had deepened the crisis situation existing since World War I) had an enormous effect on the political, economic and social options that each state adopted in response to this crisis, after noting the inability of the former regimes to extricate their national social and economic structures from this downward spiral. In fact, “*before the new postwar world could be constructed, this had already begun to disintegrate*”<sup>1</sup>, once more proving the inadequacy of existing models.

The bilateral relationship between Portugal and Brazil was characterized by an ambiguous period of increasing incomprehension during the republican period at the beginning of the 20th century (even though there were some important events that kept alive the ties between the two countries, such as the Portuguese president’s official visit to Brazil and the renewal of bilateral diplomatic relations). After this, fresh and more vigorous attempts were made to bring the two countries closer together, as they embarked upon similar political and ideological processes, through the centralized and dictatorial governments of Oliveira Salazar and Getúlio Vargas, whose central goal, in each case, was to establish a new *project of national regeneration* and to form a new conception of the country in light of the existing international order and its main actors.

In fact, during these fifteen years, relations between Portugal and Brazil will be seen here as forming an unbreakable bond, which no one wanted to deny as a part of each nation’s regenerating process, for it symbolized a guarantee of national originality and individuality and, at the same time, constituted one of the main factors for Portugal and Brazil’s reaffirmation as sovereign nations that were unique in the international scene.

“*Only a cosmic cataclysm can interrupt or change the natural course – natural and unavoidable rather than traditional – of Portuguese-Brazilian friendship. It is not based only on past knowledge, but also on aspirations, impositions and future advisability.*”<sup>2</sup>

The above statement implies that beyond cementing the historical links that had brought Portugal and Brazil together in the past, *lusobrasiliidade* (lusobrazilianness) was also seen as a political, cultural and social movement in both countries and a factor affecting the relations that the two countries maintained *inter pares*. Closer Portuguese-Brazilian relations were not only seen as desirable by the authoritarian leaders of the respective *Estados Novos*, but were also regarded as a necessary and advisable part of their internal reconstruction processes and a guarantee of their affirmation as individualized and unified actors in the world’s *status quo*.

Thus, in this period both governments sought to deepen these bilateral ties, even though this meant limiting their connections to other actors who were not prepared to accept the central role played by this particular link in every area, due to geographical and/or political and economic considerations. Nonetheless, Brazil granted fundamental importance to the principle of pan-Americanism in its external relations (continental solidarity and tacit “submission” to US interests and orientations), whereas Portugal became gradually and exaggeratedly closed in on itself and its colonial empire, allowing this to take precedence over the importance attached by Salazar to the other

<sup>1</sup> NOGUEIRA, Franco – *Salazar. Os Tempos Áureos (1928-1936)*. Vol. II. Coimbra: Atlântida Editora, 1977, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> BARROS, João de – *Brasil*. Lisbon: Edições Europa, 1938, p. 11.

three relational elements of its foreign policy – the UK, Spain and the Catholic Church. Even so, Portuguese-Brazilian relations between 1930 and 1945 became a crucial issue for both countries, in terms of their processes of national regeneration and cohesion and for their actions and reaffirmation as countries at the external level.

### **The national experiences of the *Estado Novo* and their influences on bilateral relations**

When we read about Portuguese-Brazilian relations during the 20th century (mostly until the 1970s), they are seen as reflecting a completely unproductive period at both a political and economic level: “*The ‘failed political meetings’ of this century, characterized by long periods of dictatorship on either side, thwarted all attempts to improve relations between the two countries. [...] It was assumed that Portuguese-Brazilian convergence was so natural that it was immune to the avatars of politics. It wasn’t. Most importantly, the cultural community was maintained. The community of affection was also obviously maintained. But political and economic relations did not assume a compatible dimension.*”<sup>3</sup>

Generally speaking, it is accepted that Portuguese-Brazilian relations passed through a “*rhetorical period*” (Amado Cervo), as final results in several areas were not as successful as had been expected (during the period of the negotiation and signing of protocols). However, this conceptual generalization cannot be applied to this period, because the rapprochement between both countries, explicitly observable in many areas, increased after the efforts promoted by both dictatorial regimes, and especially by the Portuguese leader. Oliveira Salazar saw the reinforcement of the transatlantic bilateral bond as crucial, in order to protect existing cultural and historic links, as well as other influences in Brazilian territory. His aim was also to ensure that Portuguese-speaking countries could enjoy greater bargaining power *inter pares* in the world system, because Brazil represented an international partner with a geopolitical and geostrategic position that was clearly privileged in terms of transatlantic and world contacts.

All of this meant that “*Portugal, at the western corner of the European continent was continued in Brazil, at the eastern end of America*”<sup>4</sup> and, for this reason, political leaders understood the crucial importance of maintaining this relationship, due to “*the importance of Portugal’s unique position in Europe: it is a European country, with a lot of Africa and with a great geo-historical and cultural link to Brazil.*”<sup>5</sup> In this way, both countries could benefit from their reciprocal extensions, and derive several important advantages from these. Portuguese and Brazilian Atlanticism and the particular conjuncture to be found at that time, between the financial crash of 1929 and World War II, amounted to a unique moment in the history of international relations that both countries had to take advantage of for the welfare of their nation and its citizens, as well as for their chances to deepen common principles and values.

Although there was no positive or significant short-term economic development capable of elevating this bilateral exchange to a level of major prominence, Portuguese-Brazilian cooperation

<sup>3</sup> MAGALHÃES, José Calvet de – *Relance Histórico das Relações Diplomáticas Luso-Brasileiras*. Lisbon: Quetzal Editores, 1997, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with the Brazilian Ambassador, Dr. Dário de Castro Alves, in Lisbon (in 1983). *Apud* GASTÃO, Marques – *Relações Culturais luso-brasileiras: entrevistas e comentários*. Lisbon: Centro do Livro Brasileiro, 1983, pp. 118-119.

<sup>5</sup> MAGALHÃES, José Augusto de – *Por uma unidade económica e geográfica em duas nações distintas*. *Boletim Semanal do Rotary Club de São Paulo*. N.º 596, de 28/05/1943. A.H.-D. do M.N.E.; 2P A48 M208, p. 2.

resulted in extremely important events for both parties, allowing not only for the preservation of a cultural community and continued affective exchange between the two nations, but also ensuring a permanent linguistic unity and obtaining dividends that highlighted the cooperation between the two *Estado Novo* regimes at a pragmatic and political level through their reciprocal, ideological, official and operational supports.

That is why, while the 1950s have been referred to as the “decade of the synthesis in the specificity”<sup>6</sup> of Portuguese-Brazilian relations, the 1930s and 1940s are to be seen as the *period of the reconstruction and preservation* of these bilateral bonds and the time when the idea of the shared “Portugueseness” of both societies and States was developed. In fact, the cooperation between both states during the two national experiences of the *Estado Novo* regimes prevented the space of *lusobrasilidade* from being condemned to total oblivion, and avoided the fragmentation of the transatlantic Portuguese-Brazilian community. This resulted in several positive displays of bilateral cooperation, as well as highlighted potential paths for future collaboration.

The first real display of this reciprocal influence is found in the inherent similarity between the political regimes during this period, which they developed through relatively revolutionary processes and with greater or lesser military support during the process of breaking away from previous republican institutions and legal norms. The *Estado Novo* phenomenon in both cases is, in fact, the final result of an ongoing disbelief in republican regimes and of a social discontent that began searching for new models in order to raise the morale of the nation. Portugal and Brazil found this in the project of one man, despite this model’s centralized and authoritarian structure.

The *national project* is then defined by a charismatic leader, according to its central goal of *regenerating and redeeming the motherland*, seen as an indivisible whole (the supreme national collective interest was always placed above individual interests). For that reason, the regime’s leader becomes the central figure in the whole project and its pragmatic application, focusing all national energies on the achievement of that goal. The success of Salazar’s model was so clear in terms of rebalancing national finances and reorganizing the country that it inspired the homonymous model adopted by Getúlio Vargas, as a possible answer to the economic stagnation and social fragmentation that was undermining Brazilian society. New regimes were constructed, based on principles such as *nationalism*, *authoritarianism* and the *complete control and centralization* of public affairs, supported by the *cult of the leader* and *mechanisms of repression and control*, and the establishment of a system of *interventionism* and *public guidance* of the economy and finance, as well as the launching of a struggle against any international ideology. These were seen as the central requirements for the real application of a national project of regeneration.

One of the main gaps between these two national experiences (the limited leadership skills of Vargas and the greater political ability of Salazar) is shown by the different life spans of the two regimes. Despite the increasingly fierce opposition to the Portuguese prime minister (not only from citizens and national opposition groups, but also from the international community), essentially after World War II, Salazar remained intransigent and inflexible with regard to the principles that governed his project, choosing the path of standing “*proudly alone*” instead of trying to reformulate his regime’s political and economic directives. This means that the strength of each regime was directly related to its leader’s strength and his ability to force his directives and guidelines upon all internal forces, submitting them to these rules if necessary, although attempts were made to soften

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<sup>6</sup> MENEZES, Pedro Ribeiro de – “As relações entre Portugal e o Brasil – uma perspectiva pessoal”. *Negócios Estrangeiros*. Lisbon. 2 (September 2001), p. 105.

the impact of this dictatorial centralization of power in one person, through clever games played with the rest of the political representatives and other forces (political, economic and military).

Thus, it is in the formative but nonetheless divergent components of those two experiences and the different paths that they followed towards the implementation and constitutionalization of their regimes that we find the keys for understanding the fate of each one. Whereas Salazar's regime chose a path of *autarchy* and *total national independence, political and economic nationalism*, and *total control* and *public interventionism* in matters relating to the nation's economic, financial and social life, the Brazilian experience instead led to a state of permanent external dependence, with continuous pressure being exerted by certain social and economic classes and other external partners on the development of the authoritarian project, so that it proved impossible in Brazil to completely the model designed and adopted by the professor of finance<sup>7</sup>.

The second component that corroborates the idea of the importance of the bilateral relationship derives from the *reciprocal awareness of the importance of the Portuguese-Brazilian community and space in the world* and the permanent efforts of both governments (but mainly from the Portuguese side) to do everything possible to achieve this unity. Among all the external relationships deemed to be central to the foreign policy of both countries, the transatlantic Portuguese-Brazilian relationship was not forgotten or overlooked.

With the approach of the Second World War, both leaders were forced to attach even greater importance to Portuguese-Brazilian contacts. While in the 1930s these transatlantic ties had been important for both regimes, providing valuable political and ideological support at a time when there were few authoritarian regimes and when democratic models had become generalized, the 1940s afforded a new geopolitical and geostrategic centrality to the Atlantic Ocean, so that the Portuguese and Brazilian territories were once again placed at the center of the world's political decisions. In this new period, the importance of maintaining these relations was clearly understood by the Brazilian government, which, although remaining faithful to the principles of American solidarity, certainly believed in preserving its own identity both worldwide and within the regional system, so that cooperation with Portugal brought it every possible advantage.

Between 1940 and 1945, there were many favorable results for the Portuguese-Brazilian community in the world, due both to international developments and essentially to the action of both governments, which really began to cooperate more effectively in a variety of areas and to solve several strategic problems. And this process was reinforced as the regimes consolidated their position and leadership at both the internal and external levels. Thus the governments' performance helps us to understand several relational areas and makes it possible to explain their deep impact on the life of the two national communities as well as the bilateral relationship between them, most particularly at the economic, political, diplomatic and cultural level.

### **Economic relations**

Despite the many bilateral negotiations undertaken between Portugal and Brazil concerning economic issues, there was no major increase in the value of reciprocal trade, and there were even some periods when this declined because of the world depression and the fact that the two national markets were unable to become competitive partners at a financial and logistical level. Most of the

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<sup>7</sup> As regards the nation's *recourse to foreign finance*, Salazar always defended the principle of total autonomy and self-sufficiency, seeking to develop the nation only through the use of available national means, whereas Vargas accepted the participation of foreign capital in his definition of the national regeneration project, so as to be able to finance and accelerate the nation's growth and development.

measures outlined in the first agreement, the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation (1933)<sup>8</sup>, produced no results whatsoever, and all the attempts made to make economic bilateral cooperation more effective proved fruitless. Both parties agreed on the need to develop trade, but it proved impossible to translate theory into action, despite continuous public efforts to identify the main problems and to find efficient alternatives for their resolution.

With measures ranging from the Portuguese Special Mission of 1938<sup>9</sup> to the Additional Protocol<sup>10</sup>, signed in 1941, and the subsequent meeting of the Bilateral Commission, serious efforts were made by the two governments to encourage trade and promote a relationship that was more in keeping with the political statements of unity between the two nations. However, these political events were unable to stimulate the economic forces necessary for the development of reciprocal contacts (there was a widespread reluctance to make contact with the other side of the ocean), which remained in a passive state, for various reasons:

- the scenario of *crisis and depression* that marked the world economy and international economic relations in general<sup>11</sup>;
- the *political and military convulsions* that took place in both countries after 1929, helping to worsen the negative effects felt because of the world's economic and financial crisis, and to spread mistrust and suspicion among economic agents;
- the *characteristics of both authoritarian regimes of the Estado Novo type* – protectionism/nationalism, low production capacity, a lack of infrastructure and directives in

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<sup>8</sup> The Treaty of Commerce was signed on 26 August 1933. The plenipotentiary representatives were the Portuguese Ambassador in Rio de Janeiro – Martinho Nobre de Mello – and the Brazilian Foreign Minister – Afrânio de Mello Franco Cf. Treaty of Commerce between Portugal and Brazil, signed on 26 August 1933, in R. J.. A.H.-D. do M.N.E.; 3P A12 M312, § 2.º e 3.º do Preâmbulo.

<sup>9</sup> This Special Mission took place at a time when Nazi *realpolitik* was beginning to achieve some of its goals in view of the passivity of the international community, which was more intent on preserving the *status quo* by maintaining an idealistic policy and using diplomacy to fight the pragmatic results achieved by Hitler's totalitarianism. Such measures proved to be ineffective in combating Nazi aggression. In fact, by March of that year, Germany had completed the *Anschluss* and, at the same time as the Portuguese Special Mission was in Brazil, the European situation grew worse with the crisis in Czechoslovakia. Moreover, the European situation was also marked by continuing civil war in Spain, in which Portugal had direct interests (the Portuguese government sought to influence the course of events to its advantage). In the American context, with the hegemony of the United States and its attempt to spread the principles of pan-Americanism, there were rapid changes taking place in the American continent with the Brazilian government providing greater facilities and displaying increasing permissiveness (the Foreign Minister at this time was Oswaldo Aranha).

<sup>10</sup> ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL to the Treaty of Commerce between Portugal and Brazil, signed on 21 July 1941, in Lisbon. In *Diário do Governo* No. 175 of 30 July, 1941, pp. 685-986. Library of the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>11</sup> The *domino effect* that affected the entire world, essentially after the North American stock market crash in October 1929, can be understood to have resulted from the position of hegemony that the USA had acquired after World War I. With Europe completely destroyed, the USA was to become, through its liberalist policies, the main financier of the reconstruction of the *old continent* and thus dominated international trade. Most of the world's states were heavily dependent on North American economic policy, either because of their minority position, in some cases, or because of their decline/weakness in other cases. With the 1929 crisis, the measures adopted by the USA (such as the repatriation of American capital, the drastic reduction of imports, etc.) became even more stringent because of the spread of the depression to other countries, where both unemployment and the number of bankruptcies rose, causing the financial, foreign exchange, political and economic crises to worsen.

terms of economy and finance imposed by centralized State supervision and interventionism;

- the prior existence for both governments of *privileged economic and financial relationships with other stronger external partners*, which did not make it possible to concede regimes of privilege to this bilateral exchange;
- the *insufficiency of the Portuguese metropolitan market* (and the preference given to imperial trade with the colonial territories), as well as the *development of the Brazilian economy* in several new sectors, neglecting the products previously imported from Portugal;
- the incompatibility between the basic principles of the Portuguese-Brazilian relationship and the new competitive requirements of the world market.

All the economic formulas devised by the two governments, although important as means of keeping the channels of negotiation open during this fifteen-year period, never succeeded in freeing Portugal and Brazil from the nationalist and protectionist position underlying the intrinsic characteristics of the regimes, limiting any possibilities for bilateral economic expansion. In the postwar period, Portuguese-Brazilian economic relations could not remain at the same level, with the two countries merely preserving their traditional trade shares: to be successful in the new world economic order, they would have to evolve in the same direction as the great world economies, through the adoption of modern production mechanisms, assisted by efficient policies of communication and distribution, and the gradual elimination of all trade barriers.

Unfortunately, the economic and political guidelines changed in Brazil after 1945 (following the political “disagreement” between the Portuguese and Brazilian regimes) leading to a lack of coordination in the bilateral dialog. Despite economic agreements signed in 1949, Portugal’s maintenance of its extremely simple, individualistic and nationalistic view of trade and foreign relations did not allow the country to adapt to the more complex world economy, based on greater interdependence and worldwide competition<sup>12</sup>. Only with the political changes introduced in 1974 did the Portuguese economy definitively enter into this climate of interdependence, at both a regional and a world level, with support being given to investment and national and foreign private initiatives<sup>13</sup>.

### **The main political and diplomatic results**

The second great area covered by Portuguese-Brazilian relations was the political and diplomatic sphere. This entailed not only the bilateral treatment given by the two countries’ political and diplomatic representatives to all those issues related to the direct and prompt defense of the interests of their citizens in foreign territory, but also the two governments’ efforts to establish important new channels through which the bilateral relationship could be strengthened. Three main issues are considered to have been crucial in this period, with much more visible and positive results being achieved in these areas than in the economic area, and affording a new central

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<sup>12</sup> Despite the continuation of many protectionist and nationalist economic policies, by the last period of the Portuguese dictatorship there was already some concern shown about not remaining totally isolated at an economic level, as for example through the country’s membership in EFTA or through the introduction of measures designed to boost private investment, at both an internal and an external levels.

<sup>13</sup> As an example, one can mention the great importance that Portuguese private investment achieved in Brazil, ranking 6<sup>th</sup> in 2004 amongst foreign investors in that territory. This shows that Portuguese investors were fully aware of all the advantages that could accrue from the Portuguese-Brazilian relationship.

importance to this bilateral relationship. These three issues were: the *treatment given to Portuguese immigrants in Brazil* and several questions related to nationality (and dual nationality); the *negotiation and implementation of bilateral agreements* in an attempt to obtain greater and more efficient benefits; and the *effective cooperation between Portugal and Brazil during World War II*.

The main goal of bilateral political and diplomatic cooperation was to reinforce the mutual *feeling of belonging to the same community of shared values*, which ran parallel to the regeneration and internal homogenization of both nations *against all other influences and internal and/or external pressures that were felt especially in the Brazilian landscape* (e.g. the nativist pressures from inside or the Italian, Japanese or North American influences from the outside). Faced with all these threats, Portuguese-Brazilian collaboration sought to center its attention on all those mechanisms that made *luso-brasilidade* a privileged and advantaged condition for Brazilian and Portuguese nationals in both countries, while also contributing to each country's consolidation of its own national unity and their joint emergence in the world system as actors of great geopolitical and geostrategic importance. In this way, we can understand the concessions that the Brazilian government made to Portuguese citizens, affording them a regime of exclusivity in its legislation regarding the entry, permanence and access to work of immigrants:

- the preference shown for Portuguese immigration and the progressive reduction of the limits to their entry and stay in Brazilian territory<sup>14</sup>;
- the concession of privileges to Portuguese citizens regarding general access to work and some specific professions (e.g. so-called liberal professions or those connected with ports and navigation);
- the exceptions granted to the formation of social and cultural associations by the Portuguese community in Brazil – allowing them to maintain these associations without being forced to have Brazilian citizens controlling and directing them, and;
- the special treatment afforded by Brazilian public authorities to Portuguese diplomatic representatives and consuls.

Despite the initial restraints, the situation started to be attenuated for Portuguese citizens, allowing them almost completely equivalent rights to those enjoyed by Brazilian-born citizens in several areas of social life (with the obvious exception of political rights and duties), which shows the importance that was attached to Portuguese-Brazilian relations between 1930 and 1945, promoted by the reciprocal policies in both states, with government representatives in each country agreeing that it was Portuguese citizens who best served Brazil's interests, namely its internal reconstruction and its growth and development as a united and modern nation.

Along the same lines, in addition to the various measures that immediately favored the citizens of each country in their everyday life, we can also observe the formalization of Portuguese-Brazilian cooperation in countless areas, such as the postal service<sup>15</sup> and telegraphic communications<sup>16</sup>, as well as at the level of air transport. Pragmatically, these agreements specifically

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<sup>14</sup> Regarding the most important Brazilian legislation of this period concerning immigration, see PAULO, Heloísa – *Aqui também é Portugal. A Colónia portuguesa do Brasil e o Salazarismo*. Coimbra: Quarteto Editora, 2000, pp. 604-605.

<sup>15</sup> Postal Agreement of 30 April 1942. In *Diário do Governo*, I série, No. 100, de 02/05/1942, p. 362 – Diplomatic Library of the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lisbon.

<sup>16</sup> Telegraphic Agreement of 9 June 1943. In *Diário do Governo*, I série, No. 119, de 09/06/1943, pp. 359-360 – Diplomatic Library of the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lisbon.



covered all Portuguese overseas territories in many of their provisions and directly so, in all clauses, in the case of the Air Transport Agreement 17. Further, the *centralization of telegraphic communications services* between the two capital cities allowed for both the development of infrastructures and the control of all bilateral traffic. And finally, the *use of the national resources* of both countries was guaranteed to effectively support these communications and services, such as ships and national enterprises.

Agreements were signed about strategically important transatlantic matters, such as the above-mentioned, becoming crucially important in the 1940s at the bilateral and international levels, and for different reasons:

- the *immediate advantages for national citizens* who had emigrated to each of these countries – with the simple reduction in postal and telegraphic charges;
- the *structural advantages* for each country – the cooperation made in these areas allowed for the development and modernization of economic and national infrastructures;
- the *cultural and social advantages* – with the development of the means of transport and communications, there was, at first, a greater exchange and dissemination in terms of cultural and intellectual production, leading to greater empathy between the two communities about the policy options of the authoritarian regimes;
- the *international advantages* – the greater projection and prestige enjoyed at the technological, political and diplomatic levels made it easier to face the “competition” of other international actors, and;
- the *political advantages* – the agreements provided evidence of a good Portuguese-Brazilian relationship, with the tacit recognition of internal political options and joint stances being adopted in relation to the world conflict.

### Cooperation in terms of culture and propaganda

At the same time as cooperation was taking place in the political and diplomatic spheres, further evidence was provided of the fact that this was an auspicious period in terms of Portuguese-Brazilian dialog by the cooperation also taking place in the field of culture and propaganda, promoting a true communion of social, political and ideological positions, as well as the sharing of spiritual and cultural experiences between the two communities. Such cooperation sought to reinvigorate the sense of belonging to one and the same community and culture, which could be found on both sides of the Atlantic (the *mare nostrum* of *luso-brasilidade*), through the permanent exchange of intellectuals, artists, qualified experts and technicians, etc.<sup>18</sup>.

Different in their continental identity, but convergent in their *Atlanticism*, Portugal and Brazil thus found themselves united by a complex group of factors, consisting in particular during this period of the language component and the similarity of their governmental processes. They were also joined together by the efforts made in each country to promote the presence of reciprocal

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<sup>17</sup> Air Transport Agreement between the United States of Brazil and Portugal – Secretariado de Aeronáutica Civil. In Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa; S.C. 13497/7 V.

<sup>18</sup> During these years, besides the several visits and the special missions being sent between the two countries, there was also a continuous exchange of specialists in different areas, who worked as consultants and participated in universities, enterprises, etc. This exchange can be also noted in the annual reports of official organizations, such as the Foreign Ministries of both countries.

representatives, as well as the contributions made by both countries towards ensuring united dealings with other foreign representations.

In the first of these two contexts, mention should be made of the exchanges occurring in all formal dialectical, institutional and/or specific events that promoted the *defense of the culture and language* common to both territories – exhibitions, congresses, conferences, exchanges of teachers and specialists, the formation of organizations for the promotion of Portuguese-Brazilian culture, etc. These events promoted the cultural and spiritual links between the two communities, and simultaneously publicized the spiritual development of both nations around the world.

The *defense of linguistic unity*<sup>19</sup> (although receptive to the differences in vocabulary and spelling between the two national communities) acquired a new importance during this period, because of the threats being expressed by some factions who called for a separation at this level between the two countries. The defense of linguistic autonomy derived during this period not only from Brazilian nationalist supporters in the 1930s, but also from the most evident pragmatic causes, such as the large numbers of immigrants in Brazil and the direct consequences that this had in terms of work and the employment capacity of those people. Fortunately, such ways of thinking did not become ingrained, which meant that Portuguese was maintained as the official language. Nonetheless, the warning had been given that the maintenance of the language and its uniformity required a continuous effort and bilateral agreement, through permanent collaboration between the two National Academies (The Lisbon Academy of Sciences and the Brazilian Academy of Letters).

The second area of cultural cooperation between the two regimes – the area of propaganda<sup>20</sup> – arose from the specific needs and features of the two authoritarian and dictatorial governments, namely the *requirement for an extremely well-organized propaganda system*, both internally and internationally, which would be favorable to the regime and sing the praises of the spiritual output of the *Estado Novo*, making this another matter for bilateral agreement. Examples of the most significant events during the period in this bilateral cooperation over propaganda include the cooperation between the two organizations created by each regime with this same goal in mind – the *SPN* and *DIP* – resulting not only in a deep understanding between the two chairmen, but also in the signing of the bilateral *Cultural Agreement* of 1941; the *Centenary Commemorations* in Portugal in 1940<sup>21</sup>, in which Brazilian diplomats and citizens were always to be seen in prominent positions, alongside the Portuguese authorities at every event; and also the sending of the Portuguese *Special Mission* to Brazil in 1941, in recognition of the Brazilian participation at the Centenary Commemorations (this mission included prominent Portuguese intellectuals and specialists from several areas).

These three events were the most significant examples of cooperation in terms of Portuguese-Brazilian propaganda and summarize all the efforts toward rapprochement and solidarity between two governments that were determined to join forces to fight against any foreign infiltration that

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Portuguese-Brazilian Orthographic Agreement of 29/12/1943. A.H.-D. do M.N.E.; 3P A12 M312. This question of linguistic unity did in fact give rise to many problems between Portugal and Brazil that were to lead to the signing and formalized introduction of various laws and documents. Of all those documents, the Convention of 1943 was the most important and complete, because it established the fundamental parameters of understanding, as well as the bodies that were to uphold its provisions between both nations – the Lisbon Academy of Sciences and the Brazilian Academy of Letters.

<sup>20</sup> HENRIQUES, Raquel P. – *António Ferro. Estudo e antologia*. Lisbon: Edições Alfa, 1990, p. 49.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. MEMÓRIAS E COMUNICAÇÕES APRESENTADAS AO CONGRESSO LUSO-BRASILEIRO DE HISTÓRIA (VII Congresso). Comissão Executiva dos Centenários. Vols. 9, 10 and 11. Lisbon: Editora Bertrand. 1940.

might be adverse to their political regimes, to work together in promoting their own regimes and the basic principles thereof among the international community, and also to publicize the positive results of their governments' actions in order to gain the support of their respective communities for the right-wing dictatorships they had implemented.

### Effective cooperation during World War II

Finally, the last issue of great importance in bilateral cooperation between Portugal and Brazil is related to the *effective cooperation between the two governments during World War II*. Such cooperation was designed not only to gain mutual respect for the political decisions taken by each country in relation to their strategic and political position in the world conflict and to obtain external support for those decisions, but also to guarantee the defense of both the nation's interests and the individual interests of Brazilian citizens by the official Portuguese delegations in several countries and continents, directly or indirectly involved in world hostilities (e.g. Germany, France, Italy and Japan)<sup>22</sup>, while also seeking to reinforce the bond existing between the two countries with regard to this matter.

In fact, the period between 1939 and 1945, in which the armed conflict took place, was a time of great cooperation between Portugal and Brazil in terms of defending their respective national interests within the international community. Both countries started from similar positions with regard to the world conflict (they both proclaimed total neutrality in 1939), although they each evolved from these original positions, taking different roads (Brazil decided upon an effective policy of *belligerence* while the Portuguese government chose to engage in *cooperative neutrality*, such options being imposed by the continental and regional contexts to which the two countries belonged). Nonetheless, Portuguese-Brazilian cooperation in this matter displayed a theoretical and pragmatic confirmation of a close relationship at both the political and diplomatic levels, expressed through the defense by official Portuguese representations of Brazilian interests in several countries and territories and through the respect shown internally and externally for the political choices taken by each government.

To fully understand this political and diplomatic process, we must, however, draw a distinction between two moments. The first relates to the period *from 1939 to 1942*, in which both countries officially and unambiguously proclaimed their complete *neutrality* in the world conflict. In this first period, the most important goal was to support the bilateral Portuguese-Brazilian relationship as a guarantee for preserving their common status in the world system and as a way of looking for more favorable benefits for both nations.

During the second period, *between 1942 and 1945*, Brazil broke off its official and diplomatic relations with Germany, Italy and Japan and became actively involved in the conflict. The *defense of Brazilian interests by Portugal* occupied an important position in the political and diplomatic relations between the two countries, giving a central world role to Portugal's official diplomatic and consular representatives in several foreign territories and countries, not only for the resolution of concrete and/or individual cases involving Brazilian citizens or the public interests of the Brazilian state, but also for the obvious and consequent defense and reaffirmation of *lusobrasilidade* worldwide.

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<sup>22</sup> With regard to the specific measures taken in each of these countries by Portuguese diplomatic representatives, see SANTOS, Paula Marques dos – *As Relações Luso-Brasileiras (1930-1945)*. Doctoral thesis, defended at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Porto. June 2005, pp. 439-473.

The evolution of the war between 1941 and 1942 did not allow either country to maintain a position of pure neutrality, because they inevitably became central pieces in the conflict between the Allies and the totalitarian countries, gaining a privileged and central position with regard to its final outcome. The spread of the war to the Pacific Ocean, Africa and the Atlantic Ocean created a new context in which both political regimes had to react and interact, once more choosing alternative positions in their attempt to most efficiently preserve and protect their national interests.

Thus, the Brazilian and Portuguese positions evolved toward greater external commitment and therefore determined that the political future of both nations would also become more closely bound up with the evolution of international affairs. In the Brazilian case, its extreme external and economic dependence on the USA was to lead it to a *de facto* state of belligerence (war was officially declared on 31 August 1942, after an attack on its national merchant navy)<sup>23</sup>; in the Portuguese case, however, while its formal and official neutrality was maintained, the country's stance evolved at a pragmatic level to a position that was favorable to the Allies' cause, resulting in the concession of several advantages within its national territory.

In the first phase (1939-1942), certain isolated minor issues allowed for effective cooperation between the two governments, such as, for example, those cases that by endangering the neutrality of one of the two countries meant that the government of the other country was called upon for its support<sup>24</sup> in order to ensure its preservation and international respect. Despite this, however, most Portuguese-Brazilian bilateral cooperation directly related to the world conflict took place after Brazil had been forced to sever official relations with the Axis countries and needed to ensure the defense of its interests, as well as those of its citizens who were living in those territories (either in those territories that were occupied by Axis forces, such as France, or those which for geographical reasons were within an area of German influence, being forced to submit to Nazi rule, as was the case with Romania).

Thus, when Brazil's declaration of war became certain and imminent, and after Portugal had shown itself to be available to cooperate with Brazil at a world level, the Brazilian Foreign Relations Ministry (MRE), on the orders of President Vargas, officially asked the "Portuguese government to send urgent instructions to its diplomatic representatives in Germany, Italy, Japan, Romania and Hungary that it will represent Brazil's interests in those countries"<sup>25</sup>. These were the first territories in which Portugal took over the defense of Brazilian interests because Salazar's response was rapid, unquestionable and unequivocal about the acceptance of such a role and function, immediately informing the heads of the diplomatic missions and consulates in all those countries that "*following the favorable answer given by the Portuguese government to the Brazilian government's request (...) you will be responsible for the protection of Brazil's interests in that country when the rupture becomes official.*

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<sup>23</sup> The declaration of war by the Brazilian Government was also supported by most of the country's population, who publicly showed their support for the Allies' cause against Nazi and fascist ideals. Cf. PELO BRASIL, pela América, pela democracia! *Jornal do Brasil*, de 05/07/1942. *Apud* O ESTADO NOVO. 1937-1945. In *Períodos – República online 1889-1961*. At site <http://www.republicaonline.org.br>.

<sup>24</sup> As an example, one can mention the case of the capture of Siqueira Campos's ship by British forces in Gibraltar. This ship had set sail from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro, carrying war material bought from German suppliers, and ordered before the beginning of the conflict. Another situation involved the incarceration by Great Britain of German sailors that worked on a Brazilian merchant ship. Cf. Ofício No. 710 of 16/12/1940 from the Portuguese Ambassador in London to the Portuguese Foreign Office. A.H.-D. do M.N.E.; Cota 2P A48 M208.

<sup>25</sup> Verbal Note of 28/01/1942 from the Brazilian Embassy in Lisbon to the Portuguese Foreign Ministry. A.H.-D. do M.N.E.; Cota 2P A49 M107.

*You will accept that incumbency when the official Brazilian representative asks you to do so, and after that you will inform the government of that country”<sup>26</sup>.*

Besides defending the interests of the state and citizens of Brazil, Portugal also guaranteed that throughout the conflict it would maintain communications between the Brazilian government and its several diplomats, until such time as they could be repatriated. In fact, it was through Lisbon that all communications between the MRE and its foreign representatives were exchanged, so that all important decisions could be transmitted and the Brazilian authorities could know exactly what treatment was being given by the authorities of each country to their own diplomatic representatives (in this way, Brazil could apply similar measures to the diplomatic representatives of those countries in its own territory, according to the principle of reciprocity).

On the other hand, while Portugal became the main diplomatic link for Brazil at an external and extra-American level, Spain also assumed an important political and diplomatic role in this situation, because it was its diplomatic representation in Brazil that was put in charge of safeguarding the interests of Japan, Germany and Italy<sup>27</sup> (and their citizens) throughout the Brazilian national territory. This meant that, from this moment on, it was Iberian neutrality that guaranteed the defense of interests between the different belligerent countries through Portugal and Spain, providing yet another benefit to be gained through the maintenance and safeguarding of the neutral status by Salazar and Franco.

Because of all these issues, Portuguese-Brazilian transatlantic cooperation and solidarity was made evident, ensuring the defense of the territorial and political integrity of both countries, at the same time as it opened up a space for a new geopolitical world importance to be attached to *lusitanidade* (Portugueseness). The geographical and political positions of Portugal and Brazil, especially in the Atlantic Ocean, had become crucial for both belligerent factions and for deciding the final outcome of the conflict. The joint efforts undertaken as part of international Portuguese-Brazilian cooperation resulted in a wider world recognition of both dictatorial governments, strengthening their international position and their ability to defend their interests.

## Conclusion

In brief, it can be stated that the years from 1930 to 1945 have some constituent components *sui generis*, representing a unique moment in the bilateral relationship between Portugal and Brazil after their political separation. Portugal was not yet the European platform for Brazil and, conversely, Brazil was not yet the Portugal’s American platform, to a large extent because of the weak economic interactivity between the two countries, but also because of the external political dependence (both military and economic) to which Brazil was subject. However, these fifteen years can be called the *years during which “lusitanidade” was preserved*. This had unique consequences in the international system, in a general sense, and in a narrow sense, in the western Judeo-Christian civilization, to which this movement belonged.

Subsequent decades were not very different from this period as far as final results were concerned, even though there were other more specific outcomes. This clearly demonstrated that the same problems and relational difficulties persisted after the fall of the *Estado Novo* in Brazil. It also explains why it is not possible to attribute the situation of stagnation to be found in the bilateral

<sup>26</sup> Confidential Telegram No. C-3 of 29/01/1942 from the Portuguese Foreign Ministry to its Delegations in Berlin, Rome, Tokyo, Bucharest and Budapest. A.H.-D. do M.N.E.; Cota 2P A49 M103.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Official Letter No. 90 of 28/03/1942 and No. 100 of 02/04/1942 from the Brazilian Ambassador in Lisbon to the Portuguese Foreign Ministry. A.H.-D. do M.N.E.; Cota 2P A49 M104.

relationships in some areas to the existence of *Estado Novo* regimes in both states. The supplanting of these regimes and the obstacles that were raised resulted from the intrinsic and extrinsic conditions of both countries, which were frequently unavoidable and, more often than not, beyond the control of national political leaders.

Only in very recent years have both sides of the Atlantic once again begun to understand what Salazar so clearly realized in the 1930s – *the strategic need to maintain close links between the two countries and national communities*. This means that, although Portugal and Brazil have found themselves increasingly engaged in homogenization processes at both a regional and a continental level, and increasingly affected by the universal elements created by globalization and simultaneously submitted to the more binding phenomena of national identities, they have nonetheless managed to preserve the unique legacy deriving from their shared specific identity in the world, the fact of their common language and culture as a result of their *lusitanidade*. The confirmation of all the potential and advantages resulting from this cooperation had already been clearly shown by the shared processes developed briefly over nearly fifteen years during the simultaneous existence of the *Estado Novo* regime in both countries.

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