

The Bragancians in Brazil and Portugal, the reign of D. Maria II, and the War of the Two Brothers (1831-1834)

Four short articles kindly provided by the Author for the Society's visits in the autumn of 2019 to Evoramonte, where the Concession was signed in 1834 between the Liberals and Absolutists, and to the Palácio Nacional de Ajuda, home to the son of D. Maria II and site of the Acclamation of D. Miguel (1828).

By Ron B. Thomson

The Bragancians in Brazil and Portugal

The Portuguese royal family, led by the regent, D. João (later João VI), escaped to Brazil from Lisbon in 1807, just before Napoleon's troops reached the capital. With him was his mother, the insane D. Maria I; his wife, D. Carlota Joaquina; and his children including D. Pedro and D. Miguel. They established themselves in Rio de Janeiro, although D. João and D. Carlota Joaquina kept separate residences.

D. Pedro generally lived with his father and D. Miguel with his mother. The two boys led a somewhat undisciplined life, roaming the city and countryside on horseback with their friends and generally disrupting the lives of the other residents. Their education was neglected; D. Pedro was only partially literate and D. Miguel was essentially illiterate.

At the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the royal family stayed in Brazil. Upon the death of his mother in 1816, D. João was acclaimed to the throne. The fact that the king showed no sign of returning to Europe was one of the reasons for the revolt in Porto and Lisbon in 1820. This rebellion eventually forced the return of D. João, of his wife and of D. Miguel to Lisbon (along with the body of D. Maria I) in 1821.

As Brazil had been raised to the status of a joint kingdom with Portugal (in order that during the Congress of Vienna in 1814-1815 D. João could claim to be living in his "own kingdom", just like all the

other monarchs of Europe), D. Pedro remained behind in Rio de Janeiro to head the government.

Attempts by the revolutionary government in Lisbon to return Brazil to the status of a colony led D. Pedro to declare independence for that country in 1822, with himself as Emperor D. Pedro I. (His father was nominally co-emperor until his death in 1826.) When D. João died, D. Pedro automatically became king of Portugal. But he was committed to Brazil, and its constitution forbade the emperor from also being the crowned head of another country. So D. Pedro, in late April 1826, actively assumed the throne for only 8 days as D. Pedro IV, during which he wrote the Constitutional Charter for Portugal, appointed peers to the upper chamber, and abdicated in favour of his eldest daughter, Maria da Glória.

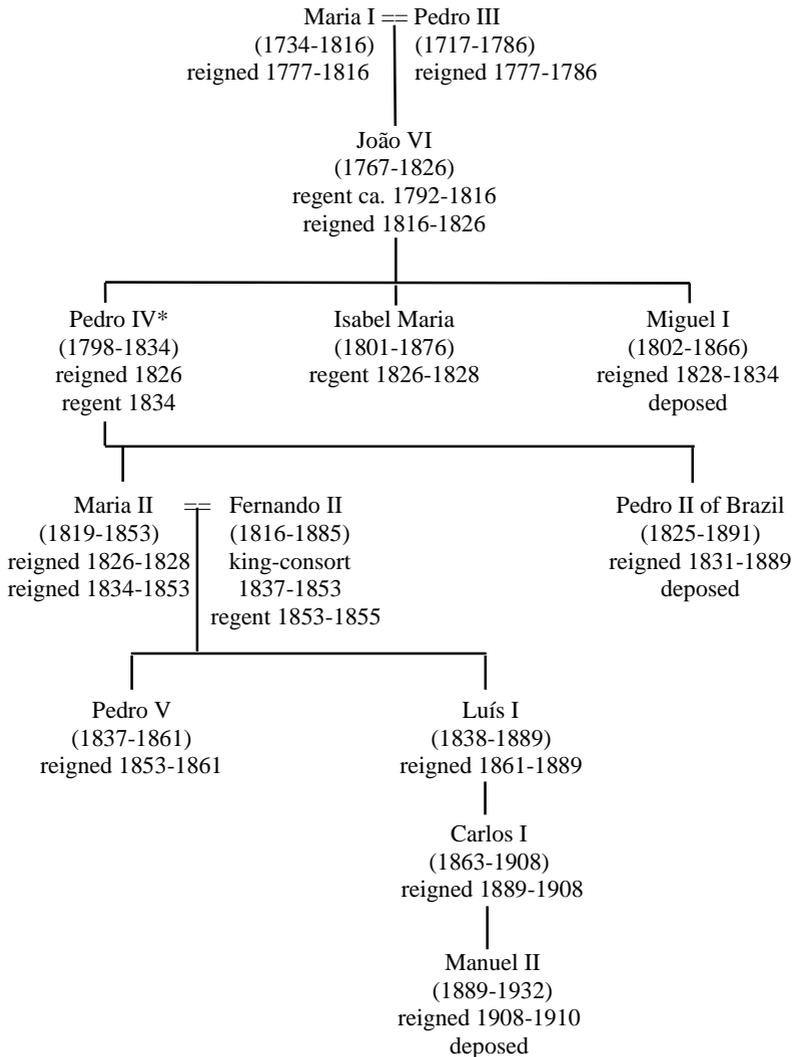
These arrangements were conditional on his brother (then 23 and in exile in Vienna) agreeing to marry Maria da Glória (his niece) when she was of age, and of accepting the regency in her name when he turned 25. When married, they would rule jointly and their children would inherit the throne. But D. Miguel, when he returned to Portugal in 1828, usurped the throne from his niece and acclaimed himself king.

Meanwhile, differences between D. Pedro and the Brazilian ruling class led the emperor to abdicate in 1831 in favour of his son (then 5) who became Emperor D. Pedro II. D. Pedro, as Duke of Bragança, sailed to England and then to France from whence he began his campaign to wrest Portugal back from D. Miguel on behalf of his daughter. Thus began the War of the Two Brothers, which ended with the Concession of Évora Monte in 1834.

D. Pedro was so ill by the autumn of 1834 that he had to resign the regency for his daughter, who was immediately acclaimed as queen, D. Maria II; D. Pedro died shortly afterwards. D. Miguel, meanwhile, went into exile in Italy, then England, then finally Bavaria and the Grand Duchy of Baden where he married (in 1851) a German princess with whom he had 1 son and 6 daughters.

The Houses of Bragança and Bragança-Saxe-Coburg

(Monarchs and Regents)



* Pedro I of Brazil, reigned 1822-1831



The Portuguese Constitution of 1822

After the end of the Napoleonic Wars, D. João VI and his family remained in Brazil and showed no signs of returning to Europe. The situation in Portugal was deteriorating: war damage had crippled agriculture, inflation was rampant, royal revenues went to Brazil and did not return, decisions appealed to Rio de Janeiro took months, the army (75% of the annual budget) was controlled by British officers, and the commercial classes were suffering from the loss of the monopoly of the Brazilian trade. In 1820 matters came to a head with a revolt in Porto which spread to Lisbon and elsewhere. Various groups were involved with a variety of aims. The army wanted to be free of British control; the commercial classes wanted to restore Brazil to the status of a colony and reacquire the lucrative Brazilian trade. Everyone wanted the king to return. And liberals wished to establish a constitution to allow the people to participate in the government.

A military junta pushed the Regency Council aside and called for the election of a Cortes (the first since 1697-1698) based on the Spanish 1812 Cadiz constitution. The Extraordinary and Constituent General Cortes of the Portuguese Nation, which opened in January 1821, was indirectly elected and included delegates from the overseas territories. It also functioned as an interim government. D. João VI agreed to return with his family to Lisbon and agreed in advance to accept whatever constitution the Cortes created. The final constitution of 240 articles was divided into six main sections or titles: (I) individual rights of citizens; (II) the nation (definition, religion, government, monarchy); (III) the legislative power; (IV) the executive; (V) the judiciary; and (VI) regional and local power and the organization of various governmental functions. The legislative power resided in a unicameral cortes elected directly by eligible male heads of households. It had the power to make laws and treaties, and to oversee finances and the army. The executive power resided in the monarch, who could appoint and dismiss ministers of state. The monarch could also approve proposed laws or exercise a suspending veto. Judicial power was exclusively in the hands of the judges, for the most part elected by the people, and

headed by two supreme courts, one for Portugal, the Atlantic Islands, and overseas territories, and also one for Brazil.

On the whole the principles and practices of the 1822 constitution were advanced for the age. Liberty, security and property were protected. There was free communication of non-religious thought and equality before the law. An indivisible and inalienable sovereignty was vested in the nation. It included an absolute separation of powers, and direct and almost universal male suffrage. It enshrined the citizens' right to complain, accuse, and petition the government. And it suppressed privilege in any form as well as the last vestiges of feudalism, of the Inquisition, of offices not constitutionally approved. Although the position of monarch was retained, the constitution was as much republican as monarchical; with sovereignty residing in the nation, the monarch now played a secondary role in Portuguese politics.

The new constitution had obvious weaknesses. The fundamental question of power versus responsibility was left unresolved. The crown and the ministers had no representation in the Cortes, and no power to dissolve it. The unicameral elected Cortes had no representation from the nobility nor from the clergy. The Cortes approved the new final form of the constitution on 23 September 1822, which was sworn in by the deputies on 30 September, and by the king on 1 October, with effect from 4 October. Acceptance of the new constitution varied. Many resented the treatment of the king and many held the constitutionalists responsible for the breakaway of Brazil. The queen, D. Carlota Joaquina, would not accept it and actively supported counter-revolutionary activities. In effect, the Constitution of 1822 only lasted eight months, until 4 June 1823. In May the general indiscipline of the army led to a rebellion at Vila Franca de Xira by an infantry regiment, led by D. Miguel and some of his friends (the "Vilafrancada"). The Absolutist banner was raised. After some delay, D. João arrived and took leadership of the rebellion, dissolved the Cortes and abolished the 1822 Constitution. He then took other steps to re-establish the old order, including annulling the reforms of the Constitutional Cortes.



D. Maria II (1819-1853)

Born in Brazil, the first child of D. Pedro IV and Maria Leopoldina of Austria, Infanta Maria da Glória came to the forefront of Portuguese political affairs at the age of 7 when her father abdicated the throne of Portugal in May 1826 in her favour. One of the conditions of his abdication (in order that he could remain Emperor of Brazil) was that D. Maria would be affianced to her uncle D. Miguel (who was D. Pedro's younger brother). D. Miguel would become regent when he reached the age of 25 in 1827, then marry D. Maria when she became of age in 1833. At this point they would reign jointly as king-husband/queen-wife, and their children would inherit the throne.

These plans went awry when in 1828 D. Miguel returned to Portugal and usurped the throne. In the ensuing War of the Two Brothers (1831-1834), D. Miguel was defeated and forced into exile under the terms of the Concession of Évora Monte (May 1834). D. Pedro became regent for D. Maria, but because of ill health he had to resign this position on 18 September 1834 (he died 6 days later), and his daughter, age 15, was acclaimed queen that same day, D. Maria II.

The queen's earlier betrothal to D. Miguel was annulled by the Patriarch of Lisbon. The Cortes had already given its permission for her to marry a non-Portuguese, and on 1 December 1834 she was married by proxy to Prince Auguste Charles of Leuchtenberg (D. Augusto). Her new husband arrived in Lisbon in January 1835 but died suddenly of a severe throat infection in March. D. Maria was then married by proxy on 1 January 1836 to Ferdinand August de Saxe-Coburg-Gotha who reached Lisbon in April. After the birth of their first child in 1837, her husband, D. Fernando II, ruled jointly with her.

D. Maria had 11 children, of whom 7 survived (5 boys and 2 girls) but passed away in 1853 during the birth of the last (still-born) baby. During her married life she was pregnant approximately fifty percent of the time. D. Fernando acted as regent for 2 years for their son, D. Pedro V. Later he would be involved in a variety of cultural activities but he is

probably best known for the construction of Pena Palace outside Sintra, and of the Bragança mausoleum at São Vicente de Fora in Lisbon. In 1859 he married again, to a Swiss-American actress.

Throughout her reign (and co-reign with D. Fernando) D. Maria was active in the political affairs of Portugal. She proved herself a capable politician in her own right, changing ministries as necessitated by events. Some of her moves - e.g., the “Belenzada” of 1836 - failed and some - e.g., the “ambush of 6 October” (1846) in which she replaced Palmela with Saldanha - were successful. Her ideology was conservative, but faithful to the Charter written by her father, and she was neither absolutist nor inflexible. While active in choosing her ministers, she left most of the governing up to them; however, she was not above interfering, and has been criticised, especially when contrasted with British monarchs, for being too involved in the politics of the country. But her actions were well within the Portuguese constitutional system: the Constitutional Charter gave an active role to the monarch and D. Maria played that role. The fault, if any, was with the constitution, not with her. Between her and her husband, D. Fernando, they were able to build a role for the monarchy which was both active and also respectful of the people’s wishes as represented by their leaders. Certainly she had more power than later constitutional monarchs elsewhere, and perhaps even more than her husband’s cousin, Victoria of England, at the time.



**D. Maria II (1819-1853)
Queen, 1826-1828, 1834-1853**

portrait by L de Bernard, 1834

Miguelists and Liberals

The terms “Miguelists” and “Liberals” (or “Constitutionalists”) stem from the political divisions of the late 1820s and early 1830s when D. Pedro and D. Miguel were fighting their War of the Two Brothers over the throne of Portugal. However the terms also came to carry further meanings later in the nineteenth century.

The Miguelists were, of course, the followers of D. Miguel who usurped the throne in 1828 from his niece, Maria da Glória (D. Maria II). The political ideology behind the Miguelists was the concept of absolutism, of the monarch ruling the country (through various ministers and secretaries) by himself, making all the final decisions, without recourse to any assembly of the population, not even the old three-estate Cortes (nobles, church, and people or municipalities). D. Miguel himself also embodied the image of the traditional monarch – determined, decisive, an active military leader, displaying the ceremonial trappings of a true king. Most of his supporters lived in the countryside.

The Liberals saw themselves in the tradition of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century enlightenment, emphasizing freedom of expression and assembly (and worship), equality before the law, unencumbered by the old feudal relationships and dues. They also saw the nation as being the expression of the “people” (or the “people and the monarch”), with a representative assembly participating in the government, if not leading it. Such an assembly would be set up by a written constitution, which would define the structures and the powers of the various elements (Cortes, monarch, judiciary). The Liberals were, for the most part, concentrated in Porto and Lisbon and a few other smaller cities.

D. Pedro, after he had abdicated the emperorship of Brazil in 1831, assembled forces in Europe and moved to set up a new government in the Açores, and then to invade mainland Portugal. An avowed liberal, he introduced (by edict) reforms to the Portuguese government, and the

judiciary, church, and society, and thus was supported in his fight with his brother by the traditional Liberals, many of whom had gone into exile under D. Miguel.

With the victory of D. Pedro's forces in 1834, D. Miguel went into exile, and the Miguelist army was disbanded. But resentment by D. Miguel's supporters remained, and the governments of Dom Maria II were constantly worried about an insurrection, or a return by D. Miguel to take back the throne. But Miguelism came to mean not just the return of D. Miguel and an absolute monarchy, but the traditional conservatism of the countryside for whom the liberal reforms were irrelevant at best, or unnecessarily hindering their way of life at worst.

While there was no large scale uprising nor invasion by the Miguelists during D. Maria's reign, they were constantly agitating against the government. During the Mara da Fonte disturbances of 1846-47 the Miguelists took advantage of the situation to stage a small comeback. Forces under Ranald MacDonell (former commander-in-chief of D. Miguel's army in 1833) moved from Spain into the Upper Douro region. But the government forces defeated them in December 1846 and MacDonell himself was killed in a skirmish in January 1847. This was the last serious military threat by the supporters of D. Miguel who soon moved to Bavaria and the Duchy of Baden where he married and had children.

"Miguelism" continued as a conservative ideology, but in the end conservatism came to be expressed in a variety of other political groupings under the constitutional regime which lasted into the twentieth century. The last part of the nineteenth-century was more taken up with challenges to the crown by republicans, than by supporters of the D. Miguel line of the Bragancian family.



The Convention of Gramido (1847)

The Convention of Gramido ended a series of disturbances in Portugal in the mid-1840s. Many of the problems can be traced back to the work of Costa Cabral (later Conde de Tomar) as finance minister, who had introduced a wide variety of reforms and modernizations, in public administration, the military, and public health, as well as major improvements to the infrastructure of the country. While many of these benefitted the commercial activities of Portugal, others were seen as interfering with the traditional life of the countryside. Chief among these was the transfer of the costs of the road system to local *Câmaras* and local taxpayers, the restructuring of the tax system, and the new public health/burial laws. The new tax system required the re-registration of all land which resulted in both the loss of public or communal land to private hands and the more efficient collection of taxes from everyone; the new burial laws required not just burial in cemeteries outside the towns, but also the purchase of a death certificate, often delayed until the family had also settled outstanding dues to the local parish.

A variety of disturbances or rebellions occurred in 1846-47. One was the Maria da Fonte Rebellion against these liberal reforms affecting the countryside. The government was unable to suppress this dissent and a new, more conservative ministry came into power, first under the Duke of Palmela and then the Duke of Saldanha, which rescinded most of the unacceptable reforms.

At the same time the Miguelists took advantage of the situation to stage a small comeback. Forces under Ranald MacDonell (former commander-in-chief of D. Miguel's army in 1833) moved from Spain into the Upper Douro region. But the government forces defeated them in December 1846 and MacDonell himself was killed in a skirmish in January 1847. The government was also dealing with continued agitation from the "Setembrists", a radical group who had taken over the government in September 1836 and had introduced a new constitution in 1838. But they had also proved unsuccessful in dealing

with the economic problems and on-going factionalism of the political scene, and by 1842 had been pushed aside by a more conservative administration (which included Costa Cabral). The Constitutional Charter of 1826 was re-instated.

The Setembrists, however, were not gone, and by October 1846 the north was in open revolt. This rebellion – the “Patuleia” (a corruption of “pata-ao léu” or “barefoot”) – centred in Porto, continued until the early summer of 1847. The Miguelist troubles allowed the Lisbon government to call into play the 1834 Quadruple Alliance (Britain, France, liberal Spain, liberal Portugal) which tried to negotiate (unsuccessfully) with the rebels, but then exerted military pressure with an Anglo-Spanish blockade of Porto and incursions of Spanish troops along the eastern border. The forced surrender of the rebels led to an armistice entitled the Convention of Gramido (29 June 1847), which generally included amnesties and a return to the status quo ante.

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