

Portuguese emigration in the 1940s-1960s as a consequence of the dictatorship



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The dictatorship that was led by both Antonio de Oliveira Salazar and Marcelo Caetano was one of the main factors that led to the emigration of thousands of Portuguese's' between the 1940s and the 1960s, of course this wasn't the only reason. The Portuguese dictatorship began as a military dictatorship led by Marcelo Caetano and then was replaced with Antonio de Oliveira Salazar which was a more conservative and idealistic president. This was named the longest dictatorship of Europe.

In 1945 Portugal was one of the least developed countries in Europe. More than half of the population were working in the primary sector, where they exclusively worked in agriculture, where working conditions were terrible, where they didn't get paid enough to sustain themselves and their families, which inevitably led to the death of many people, including little children. People were also extremely uneducated due to the fact that they couldn't afford to go to school as they had to work to be able to earn money. (Ferrão, 2009). During the 1950s life expectancy was also really low. 64 was the life expectancy for a man, which is 10 years lower than it is today. (Bizarro, et al., 2006) As a consequence of all of these negative factors it provoked thousands of Portuguese to immigrate to other countries. It can be argued that this economic delay was as a result of the dictatorship led by Salazar because Salazar denied many opportunities which could have helped the country to develop and instead of that he allowed his country to continue in extreme poverty and allowed thousands of people to die. Therefore it can be said that the cause of so many deaths that occurred in Portugal was the 'great dictator' Salazar.

The Portuguese emigration began as early as 1942 as seen in the film ' The Courtyard of the Ballads', a film directed by Francisco Ribeiro. In this film we see that Dona Rosa's daughter immigrates to Brazil and after 10 years she is finally back this is seen in the scene when everyone in the courtyard tries to tell Dona Rosa by telephone, telegram, and even by using a pigeon that her daughter is finally back for her holidays of 2 months. Although it isn't shown to us that the real reason for why this emigration happened is due to the poor economic situation that Portugal was in during the 1940s. However we know that people in the early 1900 began immigrating to Brazil firstly because it was a Portuguese colony, which meant that it was quite easy for people to immigrate there. In 1940 the Portuguese community was formed of 358, 174 people. This number continued to grow throughout the years however it then got to a point where it began to decline which was around the 1980s and the 1990s where it dropped to 263, 610 people (Anon., n. d.). Until 1960, Brazil accounted with 80% of Portuguese migrants and 68% during the 1950s. (Baganha, 2003 , p. 6) This may be as a consequence of many factors. Firstly the dictatorship ended in 1974 which meant that people now had the right to do what they wanted without having to censor everything. Therefore people didn't feel forced to leave their country anymore. Secondly there was a wider range of countries for people to immigrate to which weren't as far away as Brazil was and which was also extremely expensive to fly there unlike countries like, France, Germany and Luxembourg which were cheaper to fly to but also families were able to drive there and take all of their belongings. In the 70s the Portuguese moved to Luxembourg in great masses and they were named the creators of the new Luxembourg. (Bizarro, et al., 2006).

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The Portuguese were also known by moving to Toronto, the largest city in Canada by population. The Portuguese began moving to the suburbs of Toronto during the 1960s and the 1970s. The Portuguese believed that they could live their lives in the Portuguese way but in Canada as they literally had a 'small Portugal'. This place is known as the 'Kensington Market' an area which was filled with Portuguese stores, Portuguese restaurants, Portuguese churches, and a place where lots of Portuguese families lived in. Making that the reason why it's called 'the little Portugal' because it's literally like a small Portugal in one road. One of the reasons for why they made the little Portugal could be due to the fact that Canada is quite far away from Portugal so people didn't have the facility to go back to their country. All as a result of it being quite far away ticket prices were very expensive and people that were newly arrived in Canada wouldn't be able to return any time soon. And lastly as Canada was far away families weren't able to travel by car with all of their belongings therefore by creating a place like home they wouldn't need to go back.

(Brettell & B, 2003). One of the reasons for why the Portuguese population in Canada grew was as a result of the Canadian government recruiting Portuguese labourers due to a shortage that they had, this began in 1952 (Brettell & B, 2003). During the 1950s, the annual immigration rate of Portuguese people to Canada ranged from 1300 to 4300 and by 1971 this number had exceeded to 97, 000 Portuguese immigrants in Canada (Brettell & B, 2003).

Another city that is known for the huge amount of Portuguese immigrants that they have is Paris. The Portuguese began moving there after the World <https://assignbuster.com/portuguese-emigration-in-the-1940s-1960s-as-a-consequence-of-the-dictatorship/>

War II, the ideal destination for these people was France due to proximity between Portugal and France. By the year of 1974, the year the dictatorship ended, there were approximately 578, 000 legal Portuguese immigrants (Brettell & B, 2003). The French even built public housing in the suburbs of the city so that Portuguese, along with other immigrants could move into there. Paris became the second Portuguese city but the Portuguese were still living in extremely bad conditions. That may be one of the reasons for why the Portuguese didn't feel integrated in Paris.

' Fado, a História de uma Cantadeira' a film directed by Perdigão Queiroga in 1948. Is a film that also shows the early emigration that occurred to Brazil from Portugal. The film tells the story of a simple girl that starts singing fado in her town and then follows on to sing in the theatre after an offer from Dr. Sousa Morais. She is in love with her boyfriend, which is also her guitarist, Julio. However their love bond begins to break when Ana Marias fame grows and she begins living a luxurious life. Ana Maria relationship with Julio soon ends and she receives an offer to go and be a great fado singer in Brazil, and of course she accepts this offer. Once again we don't know the true reason for why Ana Maria immigrates but we can see that she moves to Brazil to live a better life, with more opportunities which she wouldn't have received in Portugal due to the circumstances they were living in. Which was as a result of Salazar and the pressure he put on the country.

Another film that is hugely based on Portuguese emigration is the film ' 5 Dias, 5 Noites', a film by José Fonseca e Costa. A film that was adapted from the homonymous novel by Manuel Tiago. This film is based on a young man called André which is forced to run away from his country after running away <https://assignbuster.com/portuguese-emigration-in-the-1940s-1960s-as-a-consequence-of-the-dictatorship/>

from prison and is helped by a complete stranger ' Lambaça' which was a pro at getting himself around the frontier. This happens throughout 5 days and 5 nights, making that the title of the film. This film happens during the dictatorship of Salazar and shows how the country is dominated by a regime which then as a consequence forced many people to flee away. During the years of the dictatorship, both the military dictatorship led by Marcelo Caetano and also the dictatorship led by Salazar caused thousands of innocent people to prison.

As a result of the dictatorship and other factors between 1933 and 1974, approximately 1.98 million Portuguese people left the country and 32% of the departures took place illegally (Baganha, 2003, p. 6). Even though a huge number of people left the country I think that this was used to the advantage of Antonio de Oliveira Salazar and not only but also to the advantage of the whole country itself due to the fact that the emigrants were sending remittances back to their country and as Portugal wasn't doing well economically the remittances that were sent back helped to support the country financially. (Baganha, 2003, p. 3) Therefore I do think that the ' Estado Novo' used the emigration that was occurring to their advantage and maybe it was even done on purpose, putting people through such tough conditions so that they could benefit from them afterwards. This wouldn't be surprising as Salazar was known for penalizing the poor people.

Emigration has been constant throughout Portuguese culture, the reasons have always varied, the most known is always the economic pull factors however there are many more factors. For example forced migration.

Obviously the dictatorship Portugal were living in was one of the main <https://assignbuster.com/portuguese-emigration-in-the-1940s-1960s-as-a-consequence-of-the-dictatorship/>

reasons for why people were forced to leave but I have gone through that already. War was also a huge reason for why some people immigrated in this case it was mostly men as they were sent over to the Portuguese colonies to fight in the colonial wars in African countries like Angola, Guinea Bissau, Sao Tome and Principe, Mozambique and Cape Verde.

To conclude, I 100% believe that the dictatorship that Antonio de Oliveira Salazar led the country to was the dominant reason for people to immigrate to other countries during the 1940s to the 1960s. Firstly because Salazar led the country into an economic instability by neglecting lots of opportunities that Portugal had and that meant that industries weren't developed and people continued working in agriculture where there were extremely poor working conditions and people didn't get payed enough to have good living conditions. Another reason for why the dictatorship caused the emigration that happened from the 1940s to the 1960s was because Salazar sent the Portuguese men to the African colonies and if it wasn't for Salazar and his dictatorship thousands of families wouldn't have been separated and thousands of people wouldn't have lost their lives.

However it can be argued that people left the country because they wanted to and not because they felt forced to due to the situation that Antonio de Salazar left the country in both economically and physically as it was the least developed country in Europe.

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