

Comparison between salazar and other authoritarian regime in the era



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Estado Novo or simply the New State was established after the overthrowing of the first republic in 1933. The second Republic was established by Antonio de Oliveira. This authoritarian regime adopted an integral orientation totally different from what characterized most of the fascist states in Europe. The basis of his authoritarian rule was on the premises of economic and political stability; he instituted major reforms which greatly privileged the people in the upper classes to the disadvantage of the poor section of the society.

The regime that Salazar established was more inclined towards the church and there was much influence from it, perhaps this emanates from the fact that he was a strong catholic himself. It has been described as a nationalist political regime which was almost similar to the one established by his italian counterpart , Benito Mussolini. The regime was nevertheless different from the Mussolini Fascism because of its different and less totalitarian leanings. His State was basically founded on the Catholicism and the Anti-communism ideologies.

Salazar did not claim in developing power for his regime with the same degree as fascist did (Cook, B 2001) One of the outstanding difference between Salazar and other dictators is that he did not initiate the cult of personality instead he is more recognized for his mere simple and ascetic manners. " his one party system was based on a different premise to those of Germany and Italy, the ruling party Unicao Nacional was not intended as a radical means of reshaping political view and mobilizing political opinion rather it was a device to create consensus or to demobilize politics altogether. (Lee, Stephen 2000) The origin of Salazar and Hitler's regimes is coincidental, Hitler and Salazar arose to power on the same year and

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precisely the same month, the two dictators' ascension to power was seen by many as the hope of their nations. The two leaders had the same agendas but none seemed to be fascinated by the other. During the Second World War Portugal chose to remain neutral and safeguard her interest both locally and internationally.

Her support for either of the sides would have threatened its own existence and the colonies it owned overseas. (Stanely, G 2008) Perhaps the common factor that the two dictators shared during this war period was the hatred towards soviet communism, they felt that rise of communism would be a great threat to the capitalist attitudes adopted by their regimes. (Lieitz, C 2000) notes that the two leaders worked very hard towards frustrating Soviet attempt to spread their communism ideologies to the different parts of Europe.

Salazar and Franco of Portugal had a common fear of the Anglo-Russian agreement and the relationship that Russia was having with the United Nation. As time went on the two dictators greatly depended on Germany for trade as this was a very important element for their retention of their power, they felt that the rise of communist power would have a great influence and this would ultimately jeopardize their regimes. (Cull, N Holbrook, D, Welch, D 2003)

Stanely, G (1987) attribute Salazar regime survival in power to his manipulative ability where he gave some fictitious power to some of the institutions, elections continued to be held where president was elected but he continued to control the most powerful office on the land, Stanely, G

notes that Salazar allowed kept some kind of constitution dispensation something which was totally different with Franco's regime. According to Stanely and Paney this " enabled Salazar to the degree of opprobrium suffered by the Franco regime in 1945"(p631).

Despite being a dictator he was able to penetrate the walls made by the international community barring dictators the limelight enjoyed by the democracies especially in the western world. (Christian, L 2001) Despite the fact that Salazar wanted Portugal to thrive economically he has been described as having established a traditional and conservative regime. Compared to what Mussolini and his Germany counterpart achieved he fell short of industrializing his country. He had no ambitions of expansion " Portugal has no need for wars, usurpations or conquests" (Lee, Stephen 2000).

Portugal seemed more satisfied with what they had explaining the reason why Salazar felt they should first preserve what they had acquired in the past, this contradicted with Hitler and Mussolini who felt that expansion was the only way to consolidate power. Salazar regime has been described as one of the milder dictatorships in the period after the two great wars. The carefully adopted policy initiated and approached by Salazar explains why his regime outlived the other right wing authorities but this longevity has been greatly attributed to the country's delay in democratization.