

Intro to Lunch with Joao Carlos Espada (10/27/16)

I am Marc Plattner, Editor of the JoD. Very pleased to welcome you to today's event celebrating the publication of *The Anglo-American Tradition of Liberty: A View from Europe*, a new book by Professor Joao Carlos Espada.

A special pleasure for me to be able to introduce Joao. He has introduced me numerous times at events in Portugal organized by the institution he founded and still directs—the Institute for Political Studies at the Portuguese Catholic University. In fact, I have attended the Institute's Annual Meeting on Political Studies—now known as the Estoril Political Forum—for 19 consecutive years. But I think this is the first time I have been able to persuade Joao to give a talk here at NED.

The occasion is the publication of his new book, a revised and expanded English version of a text that he had published in Portuguese some years ago. Though it focuses on the thought of prominent political philosophers, it is also a very personal book that charts the author's own intellectual journey.

Joao's political activity began as a student in the underground opposition to Portugal's fascist government. A decade later he became a political advisor to Portugal's Socialist President Mario Soares, the hero of his country's transition to democracy. But as Joao recounts in the book, he decided to give up his prestigious political position to go to Oxford to study British and American political thought, earning a DPhil and then beginning a distinguished and productive academic career.

Over the almost two decades during which I have been attending his conferences in Portugal, I have been able to watch many of his students mature into leaders of Portuguese intellectual and political life. His influence has been truly remarkable, as his students have brought to academia, politics, and the media the seriousness, open-mindedness, and love of liberty that they have imbibed from his teaching and his example.

In addition to his scholarly accomplishments, Joao is the editor of the distinguished quarterly journal *Nova Cidania*, and he has been a regular columnist for leading Portuguese media. From 2006 to 2011, he also returned to political life on a part-time basis as political advisor to President Anibal Cavaco Silva. And from 2011 through 2014, he held the European Parliament / Bronislaw Geremek European Civilisation Chair at the College of Europe in Warsaw.

Despite being an admirer of the Anglo-American tradition, Joao is deeply attached to his native Portugal. In fact, his being Portuguese may even help to explain his attraction to Britain and to America. I remember once hearing a visitor in his presence referring to Portugal as being among Europe's Mediterranean countries. "No," Joao corrected him, "it is an Atlantic country."

A glance at a map shows that this is true, but it may have a deeper meaning as well. Joao's home is not far from Cabo da Roca, the westernmost point on the continent of Europe, a place that he has taken me to see. When standing there watching the waves crashing against the shore, one begins to appreciate why Joao likes to refer to the Atlantic as "the open sea of liberty." So it is not unreasonable to think that Portugal, as an Atlantic country whose historic ties with Britain form the world's oldest alliance, might harbor a secret affinity for the Anglo-American tradition of liberty.

So much for my own musings. Now I want to give the microphone to Joao, who will spend up to 30 minutes telling us about his book before we open the floor for questions and discussion.