

# Elites, single parties and political decision making in Southern European dictatorships: the Salazar, Franco and Mussolini regimes

António Costa Pinto *ISCTE*

Awareness of the interaction between the single party, the government, the State apparatus and civil society appears fundamental if we are to achieve an understanding of the different ways in which the various dictatorships of the fascist era functioned. The party and its ancillary organisations were not simply parallel institutions: they attempted to gain control of the bureaucracy and select the governing elite – forcing some dictatorships towards an unstable equilibrium in the process, even while they were the central agents for the creation and maintenance of the leader's charismatic authority. These articles focus on an analysis of the gradations of these tensions, that may be illustrated by the eventual emergence of a weaker or stronger 'dualism of power' that appears to be the determining factor in explanations for the typological and classificatory variations used to qualify those dictatorships that have been historically associated with fascism and which have been variously defined as 'authoritarian' and 'totalitarian', or as 'authoritarian' and 'fascist'.<sup>1</sup> It is in this perspective that we will study three dictatorships that have each been associated with European fascism: Portuguese Salazarism, Spanish Francoism and Italian Fascism.

The articles published here are revised versions of papers that were presented to the 'Fascism and Governmental Elites' panel at the University of Lisbon's Social Science Institute's Third International Colloquium, entitled *The Social History of Elites*, which took place in Lisbon from 13–15 November 2003.

- 1 Linz, J.J. (2000), *Authoritarian and totalitarian regimes*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner. See also, from the same author (2001), *Fascism, breakdown of democracy, authoritarian and totalitarian regimes: coincidences and distinctions*, mimeo.; and Pinto, A.C. (2002), 'Elites, single parties and political decision making in fascist-era dictatorships', *Contemporary European History*, 11 (3): 429–54.