

Chapter 9

Gender Equity Evaluated by Five Successful Women in the Medical Profession

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ABSTRACT

The authors (five women with successful experiences in different medical specialties, researchers, academics, Hospital Service Director, Presidents of Board of Health Institutions and National Agency, Minister of Health and Director of the Medical Faculty), make a reflection about gender equity in Portugal and the impact of 45 years of democracy. The medical profession in Portugal has a high rate of women, but this is not the same in leadership positions. The role of women in the medical profession needs to be re-evaluated, especially in top positions. This chapter is divided into four sub-chapters: “The role of organizations and professional associations to improve gender equality”, “Gender equity in Academia: past, present and future”, “Gender Equity in the Medical Profession as a Management Strategy”, and “The role of gender to the networks in research and medical education”, by Fátima Carvalho and Helena Alves, Maria do Céu Machado, Ana Jorge and Maria Amélia Ferreira.

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THE ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS TO IMPROVE GENDER EQUALITY

The History of the involvement of medical women in political and associative movements tending to the installation of democracy in Portugal and the greater participation of women in public life, dates to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In the end of the 19th century the progressive Portuguese periodicals *A Voz Feminina* and *O Progresso* (*The Feminine Voice* and *The Progress*) marked the beginning of the debate about the cause of women's rights in Portugal.

Female Doctors were leaders in the feminist movement organized in Portuguese associations since the beginning of the 20th century.

Portuguese feminism emerged in the struggle against the monarchy.

The end of the monarchy and the installation of the Portuguese Republic took place in 1905. A few years later emerged the Republican League of Portuguese Women (1909-1918), the Feminist Propaganda Association (1911-1918) and in 1914 was founded the National Council of Portuguese Women, founded by the physician Adelaide Cabete (1867-1935), that was the third Portuguese woman to be trained in Portugal (1909-1918). (Gomes A. (2004)).

Adelaide Cabete started her basic studies at age 22, after being married. She graduated at the Medical School in 1900 defending the thesis: "*Protection of poor pregnant women as a means of promoting the Physical Development [of new] generations*".

Adelaide Cabete was not just a famous physician, but also a social activist, being in the origin of the foundation of the National Council of Women Portuguese (Conselho Nacional das Mulheres Portuguesas - CNMP) where she was reelected successively President up to the 30s (Lousada I, 2010).

Adelaide Cabete and Carolina Beatriz Ângelo (1878-1911) other female physician known to be the first woman to vote in Portugal and the first woman to practice surgery in Portugal, founded the Feminist Propaganda Association in Medicine (Associação Portuguesa de Propaganda Feminista) (1911-1918), (Janz & Schonpflug, 2014, Lousada I, 2010) less connected with political power, but very close to Freemasonry. All the leaders were Freemasons, in the independent feminine shop Humanity, with the exception of Maria O'Neill.

After the fight against monarchy, women faced the disappointment of the diminution of rights that the Republic recognized to women. Regrettably, the right to vote that was denied to them.

Carolina Beatriz Ângelo passed away young, at the age of 33 years. After a very active political and social intervention, her death was an important loss for the feminist cause.

In 1924 there were only one feminist association, the National Council of Portuguese Women, headed by Adelaide Cabete.

The Council of Portuguese Women was part of the International Council of Women, an international federation of the various national women's councils from many European countries and America. There was a common program at the basis of the different national Councils, mainly: improving the legal status of women in the family and in the State; women's right to vote; improvement of public health; creation of a consultation bureau for professions, education and protection of migrants, especially women and children.

In 1924, the Council included several feminists, from different social backgrounds, educational and welfare associations, such as a group of the Seamstresses "Tuna das Costureiras de Lisboa", the Boxes of Aid to Poor Female Students "Caixas de Auxílio aos Estudantes Pobres do Sexo Feminino", the

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