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Carolina Beatriz Ângelo (1878–1911): A visionary Portuguese woman who fought for women's rights at the beginning of the 20th century

Abstract

This article introduces a pioneering Portuguese woman who fought for women's rights in the early 20th century. Carolina Beatriz Ângelo (1878–1911) was a doctor, the first female surgeon and the first woman to have the right to vote. This was because she was a widow, and the 1911 law did not specify that only male 'heads of household' could vote. Through her work as a gynecologist and her involvement in the pro-democracy movement, she campaigned for the political and social rights of women in her time. In a poor, illiterate country, she was ahead of her time and faced setbacks in her activism due to political turmoil. Her example, as a professional and an activist from a privileged social class who did not forget the poorest and least educated women, was fundamental to the women's movement in Portugal from the early 20th century onwards. However, there was considerable resistance following the establishment of the dictatorial regime in 1926, which lasted until the Carnation Revolution in April 1974. The legacy of this woman maintains and inspires the continuation of feminist political action by various women's groups today. This collective action is all the more urgent given that radical and populist movements are growing in Portugal too, threatening inalienable rights that we thought were beyond reproach.

Keywords: Carolina Beatriz Ângelo, women's rights in Portugal, activism for political and social rights, adult education, suffrage movement, First Portuguese Republic

Introduction

Throughout documented history, the courage of many women (and men) in fighting against the inequalities of their time has been overlooked or undervalued. Presenting only part of the story with certain facts and protagonists omitted provides an incomplete and inaccurate view of how previous generations organised themselves socially and resisted adversity. As is the case today, people in the past often had to overcome various obstacles, such as the silencing of women and the expectation to conform to prescribed behavioural norms, in order to survive and thrive as citizens and professionals. This is why it is important to write about our pioneers in the fight for democracy. We need to preserve the memory of brave individuals who can serve as examples for present and future generations. Following the thoughts of Hannah Arendt (2010), socialised human activities in public spaces require historical elements in order to produce stories and survive over time: ‘...the coming and going of generations, not only those who lived with us, but also those who came before us and those who will come after us’ (p. 67). The aim of this article is to present a pioneering woman who was ahead of her time and fought against a social order that restricted the political and social rights of half the population – women.

Carolina Beatriz Ângelo (1878–1911) was a Portuguese activist at the beginning of the 20th century (see Figure 1). She is mainly known for being the first woman authorised to vote in Portugal’s National Constituent Assembly of the First Republic in 1911. A republican and suffragist, she founded the Association of Female Propaganda and served as its first president. She was also vice-president of the Portuguese League of Republican Women. She began campaigning for a fairer world during the monarchy, joining the leadership of the Portuguese Committee of the French association *La Paix et le Désarmement par les Femmes* in 1906. She remained in this association until 1909. In 1907, she became a Freemason and acquired the status of Venerable of the Lodge of Humanity. This connection with the Masonic Association continued after her death, when a Lodge (*Grémio*) was created in her memory. Between 1907 and 1908, she was also very active in the Portuguese Group of Feminist Studies and was invited to speak at many events. During this period, she also supported the Republican Party that sparked the revolution in 1910, firmly believing in its promises.

During the turbulent sixteen-year period of the First Portuguese Republic, from the end of the Constitutional Monarchy (which ended with the 5 October 1910 Revolution) to the coup d’état that established a military dictatorship on 28 May 1926, which was later transformed into a national dictatorial regime known as the New State, Carolina Beatriz Ângelo was the only woman with the right to vote. She was also one of four women who attracted the attention of the elite to republican ideals, mainly women from the elite but also men in important political positions.

The names of the other women are: Adelaide Cabete¹; Ana de Castro Osório²; and Maria Velede³. This group of four women are considered the pioneers of the first wave of Portuguese feminism. They were very powerful in exerting political pressure on Parliament, the government and the President of the Republic during the period 1906–1911. Interestingly, the names and biographies of the last three women appeared in the Dictionary of Portuguese Educators (2003), which was edited by António Nóvoa and for which João Esteves wrote the entries. Carolina was probably not mentioned alongside the others because she was not, strictly speaking, an institutionalised educator. She did not participate in formal or non-formal educational contexts, such as schools, associations or local entities that organise literacy programmes for adults. Another reason may be her very short life. She died in 1911, returning from a meeting one night. She was 33 years old and left behind a young daughter who had already lost her father.



Figure 1. Photo of Carolina Beatriz Ângelo (1878–1911)

Source: *Wikimedia Commons* – Public domain.

¹ Adelaide Cabete (1867–1935) was a physician, activist and suffragist, as well as the founder and chairperson of the National Council of Portuguese Women (1914–1935).

² Ana de Castro Osório (1872–1935) was a writer, journalist, educator, feminist and republican activist. She is considered the creator of children's literature in Portugal.

³ Maria Velede (1871–1955) was a Portuguese teacher, journalist, feminist, republican, free-thinker and spiritualist. She was a pioneer in the struggle for children's education and women's rights.

The 'pressure group' formed by those four young women had many and diverse activities across the country in order to fight for their causes. They were able to bring together many other women, produce informative materials and hold conferences and seminars, always with the intention of spreading their ideals. Esteves (2007) described their work as being more than mere political activism because these women wanted to be recognised as citizens and professionals. They believed that only by empowering the current and future generations would it be possible to promote a better quality of life for all.

This aligns with the ideals of the United Nations' 2030 sustainable development goals, as envisioned by Carolina and her colleagues in feminist associations: 'no one should be left behind' on the path to social progress based on humanist values. More than a century after Carolina's death in 1911, international organisations and countries around the world are unfortunately still struggling with similar problems.

Methods and sources for gathering information about Carolina Beatriz Ângelo

Methodologically, considerable research was carried out in the form of the collection and analysis of secondary sources, almost entirely in Portuguese, in order to prepare the article. As Carolina Beatriz Ângelo is a well-known Portuguese figure who has been extensively studied by various academic authors due to her prominent role during a period of political and social instability in Portugal, in the early 20th century, we decided not to use primary documentary sources such as newspapers or official documents. The absence of primary sources in no way diminishes the relevance of the information summarised here, which is based on the selected publications.

All secondary sources found and analysed are referenced at the end, including links to openly accessible ones. Our intention was also to demonstrate the relevance of this documental review in order to encourage further analysis of this notable woman's role, using other theoretical lenses. Given our area of expertise and our roles as teacher, researcher and activist, we have chosen to focus this work on the example of Carolina Beatriz Ângelo as a non-formal educator of women in spaces that are not always recognised as potential educational settings.

Working as a doctor and acting as an activist takes courage: Carolina's work educating women in communities

Carolina Beatriz Ângelo was a doctor and the first female surgeon in Portugal. Although she did not work as a teacher, educator, lecturer or andragogist, she used her professional roles to raise awareness in Portuguese society, particularly among women, including the poor and illiterate, of women's rights and the importance of combatting sex discrimination using pacifist and legal mechanisms, such as revising the Civil Code, to ensure that both sexes had the same civic and political rights. So, "her struggle for the dignity of women extended to institutional and political grounds" (Barroso, 2025, p. 65).

As a doctor specialising in a field that allowed her to interact with women in a more private setting, Carolina was well aware of their most pressing needs, as well as their potential and aspirations. She was therefore instrumental in raising awareness of social inequalities and awakening women to the need to make their voices heard and assert their aspirations. Although not a formal educator, Carolina also played this role, particularly with illiterate adult women who had no access to resources or visibility in public life.

However, Carolina also exercised her activism among the more privileged classes. She gave fervent speeches at propaganda sessions held in the many school centres created by the Republican regime and accepted invitations to attend conferences, seminars and meetings where she could expound her ideas. She was convinced that her ideals, and those of the associations to which she belonged, could empower the voiceless, the poorest and those who could not claim their rights (Roseira, 2012). One such event was the 1st National Congress of Free Thought, which took place in 1908 and at which Carolina Beatriz Ângelo was a guest speaker. The conspirators of the monarchist regime saw her as a confident woman and she secretly worked with other women to make the Portuguese flag (see Figure 2), which was to be unfurled on 5 October 1910 – 115 years ago – during the revolution that implemented the republican regime (Esteves, 1998).

At the beginning of the 20th century, Portugal was a very poor country. Data from 1910 showed that the infant mortality rate was around 22%, while the average illiteracy rate among citizens over 7 years of age was around 69%, with women being more affected than men (71% vs. 68%). After primary education, only 0.2% of girls aged 10–18 were in secondary education in 1910 (Ferraz, 1975). These figures reveal a population that was very poor and had limited access to information, with few opportunities to make critical decisions about their lives.

Carolina Beatriz Ângelo was aware of this situation and decided to use her resources, including her role as a gynaecologist, to force the necessary changes and



Figure 2. The first proposal for the Portuguese flag (1910) that Carolina Beatriz Ângelo helped to prepare

Source: *Wikimedia Commons* – Public domain.

create better conditions for all. In our opinion, this attitude should be recognised, as she did not just perform her professional duties in her office, but was a woman ahead of her time. She believed that the only way to overcome the defects of the Portuguese country's cultural and political heritage (influenced by monarchist ideals, colonialism, patriarchy, conservatism and Catholicism) was to empower women and give them the same private and public spaces in which to express their opinions.

Considering the aforementioned arguments, we are convinced that Carolina Beatriz Ângelo should be recognised as a visionary woman because she used her privileged status in society to raise her voice and fight against oppression and patriarchy, focusing her efforts directly on the adult population and political decision-makers. Her educational work with adults, particularly women, can be seen as important in raising awareness of issues that are not usually on political agendas. Furthermore, combining the professional knowledge and 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1986) of privileged women (such as physicians, writers and teachers) with the 'popular' knowledge of less privileged women (and men), who could become associates or beneficiaries of actions (including propaganda sessions), could be considered a participatory empowerment methodology.

Such approaches to community intervention, which give a voice to 'invisible people' (those who do not belong to the mainstream), are at the core of the adult education tradition of research and practices (Ostrouch-Kaminska, Vieira, 2016). The goal is to help people develop the resources they need to fight for a better life. These principles were defended in Portugal at the beginning of the 20th century, during a period of great political turbulence and deep inequalities, but also of confidence in a better future. However, this confidence was betrayed by several decades of dictatorship. The democratic regime began to be established for the Portuguese population in 1974 following the Carnation Revolution.

A short biographical note on Carolina and her political struggles as a suffragist

Carolina Beatriz Ângelo was born in 1877 into a wealthy family living in the Guarda region of central Portugal. She left this rural area at the age of seventeen to study medicine in Lisbon. She qualified as a doctor in 1902, choosing surgery as her field of specialisation against her family's wishes. She became a leading gynecologist. She married a colleague and had a daughter. After her husband's death in 1910, she became the "head of the family", a status which led a judge to grant her the right to vote in the country's first democratic elections following her legal petition for this right.

At that time, women were denied the right to vote in Portugal, and this situation remained unchanged for many years after Carolina's premature death at the age of 33. In 1911, the law stated that only "heads of family" could vote, but did not explicitly mention the male sex. This omission in Portuguese jurisprudence was crucial to the arguments Carolina used to secure a favourable court decision on her claim (see Figure 3). Interestingly, in 1912, the law was rewritten to clearly state that only male citizens would have the right to vote.



Figure 3. Carolina Beatriz Ângelo (right) with Ana de Castro Osório on the day of the National Constituent Assembly elections. 28 May 1911

Source: *Wikimedia Commons* – Public domain.

Portuguese women would have to wait for the Salazar dictatorship (1931) to be granted the right to vote, albeit with restrictions. Only those who had completed secondary or higher education could vote, whereas men could vote if they could read and write. The electoral law of May 1946 extended the right to vote to illiterate men who paid at least 100 escudos (about 0.5 EUR/2.13 PLN) in taxes to the state, as well as to female heads of households and married women who could read and write, had their own assets, and paid about 200 escudos (about 1 EUR/4.26 PLN) in property tax. In December 1968, women were granted the right to vote, but Parish Councils continued to be elected only by heads of families.

It was only in 1974, after the Democratic Revolution of 25 April, that the right to vote was extended to all male and female citizens without restriction (Law No. 621/74 of 15 November). According to Mariano (2017, quoted in Machado, Vieira, Nunes & Fialho, 2023, p. 194), when compared to countries such as France, the United Kingdom and the United States, the late process of women's struggle for the vote in Portugal (and Spain) faced several obstacles, including 'the high rate of female illiteracy and the late entry of women from the middle and upper classes into the labour market, despite them being the ones who fought hardest for their political rights' (p. 6).

According to numerous historical accounts by Portuguese authors such as João Esteves (1998, 2004, 2007), Regina Tavares da Silva (2005), Maria de Belém Roseira (2012) and José Ruy (2016), Carolina Beatriz Ângelo firmly believed that significant societal and attitudinal changes should be implemented through democratic decision-making processes and legislation, rather than by force or dictatorial power. As a physician, activist, suffragist and female leader, she knew that her privileged position in society allowed her to be heard more loudly than other women with the same political and social convictions.

In the months following the implementation of the Republic, Carolina became very disappointed with the Republican Party because its promises of equal rights for men and women, including the right to vote, were not fulfilled. She did not live to celebrate the first anniversary of the new model of governance. Some authors believe that the Portuguese Republicans' failure to deliver on their promise to give women the right to vote during the First Republic (1910–1926) was rooted in the belief that women were profoundly conservative due to their relationship with the Catholic Church, which could restrict their freedom of decision and liberal ideas (Madden, 2018). Although this weakened her will to continue her direct involvement in 'political party' activism, it never weakened her convictions about the social principles that should govern people's lives, regardless of their biological sex. Due to the setbacks she faced, most of which were caused by influential male politicians she had trusted, she intensified her work as an activist while also pursuing an intense career as a physician.

Carolina's influence on feminist movements in Portugal since the beginning of the 20th century

During her very short life, Carolina fought for many causes, including the right to education and the right to vote, which, in her opinion, should be given to literate women and not illiterate women. She also fought for women to be able to participate in compulsory military service and for the right to divorce. Furthermore, she fought for women to be able to participate in democratic decisions and to be part of structured organisations that could empower and give a voice to poor and socially excluded women. A firm believer in the empowerment of people, Carolina knew that education and access to information were critical to fostering self-determination in both women and men. In her opinion, no matter how much effort was devoted to educating younger generations, the adult population should not be forgotten.

The question of imposing restrictions on the right to vote was a divisive issue among women's associations because some of them argued that this right should not be restricted. Others, such as Carolina, believed that only those who could access information and make informed decisions should have the right to vote. In an interview with the newspaper *A Capital* on 25 March 1911, Carolina discussed the nuances of the first republican law that remained silent on the issue of women's right to vote:

We will continue to fight for women's right to vote with more tenacity than ever. I am well aware that the eternal argument that women are not sufficiently educated to participate in politics is being used to silence us. I agree. We are not claiming the vote for all women right away. We are claiming it for those whose education and intelligence put them on an equal footing with men, or even above it. It cannot be said that this would affect the principles of equality, since the same selection is made among men. In a well-established society, especially in a country where democratic principles have been established, the right to vote for women is absolutely indispensable (quoted in Roseira, 2012, p. 66).

Carolina Beatriz Ângelo's declaration may be seen as a sign of the importance she placed on education as a means of promoting social change and equality of opportunity. Another issue that caused divisions within the feminist movement and led to criticism of Ângelo's ideas was her support for compulsory military service for women. In an interview published on 25 May 1911 in *A Capital*, she explained her point of view, stating that her intention in introducing women to military service was not to force them to use a shotgun alongside men, but rather to give them a role in the army that would be as useful as the one they

played at home. This role could be fulfilled in military administration services, ambulances, kitchens, and in nursing patients (adapted from the quotation of Silva, 2005, p. 22).

As an activist, she played a significant role in the field of adult education. She fought for women's rights and served as a role model for other women, working in associations that produced literature to inform women about their rights. She also participated in public debates, defending women's rights, including the right to divorce. Among the many causes she championed as a physician, we can mention improving women's access to education to help them take care of themselves and their families, participate in public life, work, improve children's health and live longer with better living conditions. She was not a theoretical feminist, but rather a practical one, as her discourse and actions promoted the empowerment of women in many areas, including through associative movements. Some authors describe her as a woman who knew that significant social change takes time and that radical proposals should be avoided, yet she championed the right to vote as the beginning of a 'new era' for women's rights. Throughout her life, Carolina strongly advocated for women's political participation because she believed that politics was the primary driver of social functioning (Roseira, 2012).

When asked about her conception of feminism at the 22nd February 1911 event at A Capital, Carolina Beatriz Ângelo reaffirmed her moderate yet steadfast commitment to feminist values:

We don't intend to show off, nor do we want to take away men's clothes, like some exaggerated feminists. I understand that it is necessary to take great care to avoid ridicule, and this is also true of my colleagues and companions. We are feminists who are also very feminine. I must confess that I detest spectacular manifestations that lead us to ridicule. I think otherwise. I am convinced that women, through carefully organised associations where dignity and character are core principles, can achieve their freedom, protected by the law. Then, occupying their true place in life, women will fulfil their mission worthily, instilling the same virtues in their sons and daughters, and ensuring that they enjoy the same civil equality and progress as their parents. In this way, women will prepare a noble and dignified race [humanity], full of happiness. (quoted in Silva, 2005, pp. 23–24).

Although she wanted to write a book or other publication about her conception of Feminism, Carolina never realised her intention (Esteves, 2004). She did not have the time. She preferred to act rather than write. For this reason, she should not be considered a theorist, but rather someone dedicated to practice, who was directly involved with people. She performed the role of adult educator in non-formal and informal contexts, both through her professional work and

through her public speeches and the activities she promoted through her participation in associative movements. In 1922, the main publication of the National Council of Portuguese Women, *Alma Feminina* (Feminine Soul), paid tribute to Carolina, stating that she set an example of energy, tenacity, and persistence.

Although she did not achieve victory for her feminist ideals during her lifetime, her attitude towards life and her beliefs were an act of rebellion against societal prejudice regarding the superiority of one sex over another (Silva, 2005). She deserves to be remembered for her pioneering role in defending women's right to vote in Portugal and the rest of Central and Southern Europe. In a letter to her friend Ana de Castro Osório in 1911, Carolina Beatriz Ângelo confessed that she felt unwell and was afraid of the approaching winter, expressing the sentiment that "she lived a lot in a short time"⁴.

Examples of Carolina's legacy in women's associations in Portugal today

For years, Carolina Beatriz Ângelo fought alongside the Republicans who formed the Portuguese government during the First Republic (1910–1926). She believed that the new regime would bring more rights and better living conditions to the more than three million Portuguese women, three-quarters of whom were illiterate. These rights included equal pay for equal work, voting rights, the right to administer one's own assets, family and maternity protection, and the right to education. These demands prevailed for decades after Carolina's lifetime, and her legacy inspired many Portuguese women's movements and associations. Only two examples are given here, but many others could be mentioned.

The *Portuguese Association of Women's Studies* (APEM)⁵, which was founded in 1991, is an example of such heritage. Although current resources differ in terms of technology, the circulation of information and the scientific evidence available, the core issues and reasons for women to organise in non-governmental civic associations remain the same. Since 1999, APEM has published the biannual international interdisciplinary journal *ex aequo*⁶, with the mission of promoting equality of opportunity between women and men by disseminating scientific knowledge produced by gender studies, feminist studies, and women's studies. Papers can be published in four languages (Portuguese, English, French

⁴ National Library, ACPC, Collection of Castro Osório, Esp. N12 / 419, letter to Ana de Castro Osório, dated July 2, 1911.

⁵ For more information about APEM, please see: <http://www.apem-estudos.org/en/>

⁶ For more information about *ex aequo* (open access full text online; indexed in SCOPUS): <http://exaequo.apem-estudos.org/?lingua=en>

and Spanish), and the diversity of subjects covered over the past two decades shows that, despite economic growth and general improvements in quality of life, there is still a long way to go.

Also, the *Portuguese Platform for Women's Rights* (PpDM)⁷ is an independent, non-governmental, social, cultural and humanist umbrella organisation. Its members are 29 women's rights NGO that deal with women of all backgrounds, respecting and promoting their diversity. Founded on 12 November 2004, the organisation's main goal is to promote women's rights and gender equality through collective reflection and action. It employs various methods to achieve this, including research, lobbying, disseminating information, raising awareness, and providing training. On International Women's Day 2023, PpDM received the Carolina Beatriz Ângelo Prize from the municipality of Odivelas (a city near Lisbon). This award recognises PpDM's ongoing efforts and valuable contributions to various areas, particularly in the development, implementation, and evaluation of public policies promoting gender equality in Portugal. The expertise and intervention of PpDM at local, national, European and international levels was also emphasised⁸. This annual award aims to recognise women and/or associations that stand out for setting a good example and making a significant contribution to achieving true equality between women and men at a local or national level.

The huge turbulence of the modern world, with its unbelievable setbacks to human rights, including gender equality, demands that we engage more actively as members of an open, diverse, multicultural, pluralistic and egalitarian community (Vieira, Ostrouch-Kaminska, 2025). Education in all its forms should prepare us for these challenges. After all, qualities such as attentiveness, kindness and solidarity are fundamental to democracy and social justice, regardless of our roles as students, researchers and professionals in different fields. Education itself doesn't solve people's problems, but individuals with more access to knowledge have more opportunities to develop autonomy of thought and become more self-determined. Consequently, they are less likely to accept any kind of discrimination, humiliation or denial of their rights. At the same time, they are more likely to be aware of their duties as citizens with a sense of identity and belonging.

⁷ For more information about PpDM, please see: <https://plataformamulheres.org.pt/international/english/>

⁸ Source: <https://womenlobby.org/portuguese-platform-for-women-s-rights-awarded-carolina-beatriz-angelo-prize-on/>

The legacy of Carolina Beatriz Ângelo continues to inspire feminist political action among women's groups around the world. Well-known 'old problems', such as sexual harassment, gender-based violence, the gender pay gap and the disproportionate burden of unpaid work on women, as well as the underrepresentation of less privileged women in politics, persist in many countries. Furthermore, women's rights continue to be used as bargaining chips in political negotiations to demonstrate the 'goodness' of the States. For these reasons, collective action is needed, particularly in light of the growth of radical and populist movements in Portugal that threaten the inalienable rights we believed to be beyond any kind of setback or anti-woke action.

Implications and clues for future research

Despite the countless examples we have and the abundant, yet poorly systematised, documentation, the invisibility of women's achievements continues to recur in various fields. Women's studies began to establish itself as a scientific discipline in the 1990s and has contributed to highlighting the 'added value that women have brought to knowledge and the development of humanity throughout history' (Ferreira, 2000, p. 15). However, there is a lack of interdisciplinary scientific work from different perspectives that addresses real problems experienced by specific people in specific contexts. Therefore, it is important to continue celebrating lesser-known figures whose example of civic and political action can inspire younger generations facing similar problems, albeit with different dimensions.

Carolina Beatriz Ângelo's concern for the most vulnerable, such as begging children or women forced into prostitution (Barroso, 2025), made her particularly attentive as a doctor and activist, using her socially superior position to echo concerns that would otherwise not have made it onto the political agenda. She was best known for her suffragist ideals and put Portugal at the forefront of women's emancipation movements around the world, but she was also an example of hard work and perseverance for the younger women who accompanied her in the daily struggles for a better life (Lousada, 2012).

Despite the ideological barriers and lack of funding that women's NGO face in their daily activities involving people and communities, the legacy of the woman remembered here remains alive in the everyday struggle for women's rights in Portugal. Indeed, feminist activism supported by scientific knowledge built from and with people's lives tends to remain unharmed, and hope remains.

Conclusion

Carolina Beatriz Ângelo is still honoured in Portugal in many ways. Organisations and awards bearing her name recognise outstanding women and initiatives. In 2012, a public hospital bearing her name was opened in Loures, a city near Lisbon. A book published in 2016 by the renowned Portuguese illustrator José Ruy portrays her life and struggles, and is titled *Carolina Beatriz Ângelo: Pioneer in Surgery and Voting Rights*. There is also an organisation called “Associação Beatriz Ângelo”⁹ that aims to challenge existing norms and provide support to women in STEAM, thus echoing the pioneering spirit of this remarkable woman. There is a page about her on the Portuguese Republic Assembly website at <https://www.parlamento.pt/Parlamento/Paginas/Carolina-Beatriz-Angelo.aspx>, and a resource on RTP Teach at <https://ensina.rtp.pt/artigo/beatriz-angelo-a-primeira-mulher-a-votar-em-portugal/>. A school has also been named after her (<https://aese.edu.pt/escola-carolina-beatriz-angelo/>) and there is a page about her on the Elina Guimarães Feminist Documentation Centre website, at <https://www.cdofeminista.org/carolina-beatriz-angelo-1878-1911/>. A historical video is also available to help keep her memory alive for present and future generations (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6NniZottDM>).

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⁹ Source: Fonte: <https://associacao-beatriz-angelo.pt/>

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Carolina Beatriz Ângelo (1878–1911): Wizjonerka, która walczyła o prawa kobiet w Portugalii na początku XX wieku

Streszczenie

W niniejszym artykule przedstawiono sylwetkę pionierskiej Portugalki, która na początku XX wieku walczyła o prawa kobiet. Carolina Beatriz Ângelo (1878–1911) była lekarką, pierwszą kobietą chirurgiem i pierwszą kobietą, która uzyskała prawo głosu. Wynikało to z faktu, że była wdową, a ustawa z 1911 r. nie określała, że prawo głosu przysługuje wyłącznie mężczyznom będącym „głowami rodziny”. Poprzez swoją pracę jako ginekolożka i zaangażowanie w ruch prodemokratyczny, walczyła o prawa polityczne i społeczne kobiet w swoich czasach. W biednym, analfabetycznym kraju wyprzedzała swoje czasy i napotykała przeszkody w swojej działalności z powodu zawirowań politycznych. Jej

przykład, jako profesjonalistki i aktywistki z uprzywilejowanej klasy społecznej, jednocześnie niezapominającej o najbiedniejszych i najmniej wykształconych kobietach, miał fundamentalne znaczenie dla ruchu kobiecego w Portugalii od początku XX wieku. Jednak po ustanowieniu reżimu dyktatorskiego w 1926 r., który trwał do Rewolucji Goździków w kwietniu 1974 r., napotykała znaczny opór. Dziedzictwo tej kobiety inspirowało feministyczne działania polityczne różnych grup kobiet w dzisiejszych czasach. Te zbiorowe działania są tym bardziej pilne, że również w Portugalii nasilają się ruchy radykalne i populistyczne, zagrażające niezbywalnym prawom, które uważaliśmy za niepodważalne.

Słowa kluczowe: Carolina Beatriz Ângelo, prawa kobiet w Portugalii, aktywizm na rzecz praw politycznych i społecznych, edukacja dorosłych, ruch sufrażystek, Pierwsza Republika Portugalska