

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
AND THE PORTUGUESE DICTATORIAL REGIME:
THE CASE OF PAUL VI'S VISIT TO FÁTIMA *

DUNCAN SIMPSON **

The little-studied visit to Fátima of Paul VI on 13 May 1967 is an event of particular significance for the understanding of the nature of relations between Church and State under Salazar.

In order to fully grasp its implications as to the place of the Catholic Church in the Estado Novo, we shall first establish the historical background to the visit. A brief history of the relations between Church and State since 1928 will allow us to broadly define these as relations of persistent collaboration seemingly evolving towards loosened association. A focused study of the 1964 Bombay crisis and 1965 *Rosa de Ouro* episode will enable us to define this collaboration more closely – as one conducted under the strongly instrumentalist control of the political regime – and observe the mechanisms of political appropriation of religious events by the State, as well as the political symbolism of the Fátima shrine itself. Secondly, we shall study the diplomacy which preceded the papal visit and observe that the Portuguese dictatorial regime, despite its opposition to the process of *aggiornamento* in the Roman Catholic Church, intervened actively in order to “secure” the presence of Paul VI in Portugal. Contrary

* The present article is the result of an MA dissertation presented at King's College London, Department of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies, in September 2006. The publication of Bruno Cardoso Reis' *Salazar e o Vaticano* in December 2006 has brought new critical material to the subject, which I have sought to integrate in order to bring the argumentation up to date.

** Doctoral student, King's College London, Department of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies.

to Salazar's claims, it did not hesitate to intervene within the internal life of the Church for political motives, assisted as it did so by the majority of the national ecclesiastical hierarchy. Thirdly, we will analyse the inevitable politicisation of the visit, despite the Pope's efforts to the contrary. The political regime, with the collaboration of the national Catholic hierarchy, was effectively able to adapt the visit to its own needs and appropriate the papal Legate's visit politically, while measures such as the 13 May 1967 national bank holiday called into question the much-asserted separation of Church and State. Fourthly, we shall observe that the regime, again supported by the national hierarchy – and largely unhampered by the Pope himself –, succeeded in actively associating itself to the private pilgrimage of Paul VI to Fátima. Finally, we shall turn our attention to the effects of the visit in Portugal herself. Efficient propaganda meant it served to effectively "legitimise" the colonial wars, re-affirm the regime's ideological basis, and strengthen its domestic position politically by "cornering" the opposition further, evidence of the fundamental role of the Portuguese Catholic Church in legitimising the Estado Novo still in 1967.

1. The background to the visit: Paul VI's visit to Bombay and the *Rosa de Ouro*

The period preceding the Pope's visit to Fátima was marked by a serious crisis in the relations between Church and State, owing to the Pope's decision to attend the December 1964 Eucharistic Congress in Bombay. Though part of a broad trend of slowly deteriorating relations, it was a crisis quite uncharacteristic of the nature of such relations since the inception of the Salazar regime in the late 1920s, of which a brief account must first be made.

1.1. A brief summary of Church-State relations from 1928 to 1964

The history of the relations between Church and State from 1928 to 1964 may be broadly divided into three periods.

Until 1945, close collaboration prevailed. As Costa Pinto argues, it is possible to speak of an «ideological and political nucleus common to the Church and the regime, including corporatism, anti-liberalism and anti-communism», which meant that, until at least the end of the Second World War, the close association of Church and State «transcended a mere convergence

of interests»¹. Within the movement of “national regeneration” launched by the Salazar regime in the early 1930s, the Church was given the central task of leading the nation’s “re-christianisation”, following decades of liberal and republican secularisation, while “forming” its followers in the “interest of the Nation”, as Salazar would later make clear². Catholicism thus re-emerged “tightly woven into the nation’s historic formation through its rituals and official discourse”³, while the “youth organisations of the regime were set up within the framework of the nationalist and Catholic reform of the education system”⁴. Despite certain tensions — most noticeable in 1932 as Salazar called for an end to the political activities of the *Centro Católico* and “invited” its members to join the *União Nacional* —, in 1936 the episcopate expressed its full support for the regime in a *Carta Pastoral*, reaffirmed the following year by the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon and head of the Portuguese Catholic Church, Manuel Gonçalves Cerejeira⁵. The culminating point in this relation of close collaboration came on 7 May 1940 with the signing of a Missionary Agreement and Concordat, «acordo de mútuas compensações, (...) com (...) benefícios recíprocos»⁶, settling a wide range of issues⁷. Though a Concordat of separation, it was one in which the establishment of recognised spheres of intervention was designed to improve effective collaboration — in marked contrast to the April 1911 Law of Separation of Afonso Costa⁸. The difficulty of the negotiations which preceded the signing of the Concordat, however, demonstrate both how much the Church remained eager to re-establish its influence, and how equally determined Salazar was in preventing any religious intervention within the political sphere, preserve of the State.

That the Catholic Church should enjoy good relations with a regime headed by a former leading figure of the Catholic movement seems only

¹ Pinto, *Salazar’s dictatorship and European fascism*, p. 200.

² Letter to the Nuncio, dated 6 December 1958, in Braga da Cruz, *O Estado Novo e a Igreja Católica*, p. 126.

³ Pinto, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

⁴ *Idem.*, p. 198.

⁵ In Braga da Cruz, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

⁶ Braga da Cruz, in *Nova História de Portugal*, dir. Serrão, Oliveira Marques, vol. 12, p. 208.

⁷ Partial compensation for property “lost” by the Church since the start of the liberal era, to define but one.

⁸ Who had revealingly forecast an “end to Catholicism in several generations”, Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, p. 69.

logical ⁹. Collaboration, moreover, had much to offer to both parties. The Portuguese Catholic Church in 1928 was merely beginning to recover from the trauma of the First Republic. Through close cooperation it hoped to regain much of its lost prestige and influence – not to mention the ecclesiastical goods confiscated since the start of the liberal era. The new regime, on the other hand, reaped instant benefits from this collaboration. Indeed, as Braga da Cruz argues, «[a Igreja] possibilit[ou] ideologicamente a incorporação de massas no regime» ¹⁰, all the more so in a country of strong Catholic tradition ¹¹. In his analysis of the Estado Novo's remarkable longevity, Rosas identifies as an important structural factor the «massa de pequeno campesinato. (...) Enquadrada ideológica e politicamente pelos párocos da Igreja católica e [o] cacicado [local] (...) essa imensa massa rural despolitizada, analfabeta, submissa, funcionará historicamente como um pesado lastro de estabilização e conservação da 'ordem estabelecida'» ¹². To Salazar, the Church would effectively constitute not only an instrument of institutional support – and even of dissuasive repression which often dispensed the political police from having to intervene ¹³ – but also a tool in the effort to turn his organic vision of society into a reality.

The international context emerging after the Second World War would bring new pressures to bear on the collaboration between Church and State. Many of the changes in the international scene are obvious. The totalitarian regimes of Western Europe had been defeated and consequently growing credit was being given to democratic principles. Moreover, the defeat of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany naturally affected enthusiasm for Portuguese nationalism ¹⁴, with which Catholicism had closely been interwoven in official discourse. Catholics in Portugal also witnessed the rise of Christian Democrat parties in Western Europe, such

⁹ Elected to parliament for the *Centro Católico* in 1921, Salazar became regional party leader in Coimbra in 1925, and was by 1928 publicly considered a “representante dos católicos”, Cruz, *As Origens da Democracia Cristã e o Salazarismo*, p. 16.

¹⁰ Cruz, in *Nova História de Portugal*, dir. Serrão, Oliveira Marques, vol. 12, p. 201.

¹¹ 97% and 98% of total population declared themselves to be Catholic in the censuses of 1950 and 1960 respectively, though their degree of religiosity remained superficial. See Rezola, in *idem*, p. 248-255.

¹² Rosas, in *Salazar e o Salazarismo*, p. 20-21.

¹³ “Nesta acepção (...) mais profunda da repressão - a repressão das almas”, *idem*, p. 30.

¹⁴ Cruz, *O Estado Novo e a Igreja Católica*, p. 93-94.

as the MRP in France¹⁵, and started to question the restrictions imposed on the *Acção Católica Portuguesa* (ACP). As the Cold War developed and criticism as to the suppression of civil liberties within Communist regimes grew accordingly, awareness of the lack of freedom within Portuguese society also started to emerge within certain lay Catholic activist circles¹⁶. Increasingly Cerejeira was forced to defend either the position of the Church within the regime – already in his 8 November 1945 *Carta aos católicos portugueses* – or the nature of the regime itself – in the 1956 *A situação da Igreja em Portugal*. Along with disagreements over the inefficient implementation of corporatism, his position reflected growing divisions as much within Catholic circles as between them and the regime itself.

The post-1945 context had created new social, economic and political expectations that the regime was neither in condition nor prepared to meet. The only significant change to be effectively introduced – that of allowing a platform for legal opposition for presidential elections until the “scare” of 1958 –, led to a serious crisis in the relations between Church and State on the issue of intervention by members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the political arena, following the bishop of Porto’s notorious 13 June 1958 letter to Salazar¹⁷. The election of 1958 also signalled the emergence of a dissident trend among lay Catholic militants, some publicly backing the candidate of the opposition. The majority of Catholic militants, however, supported Salazar’s candidate, Américo Thomaz¹⁸, for whom there was also ample evidence of the hierarchy’s support. In Braga noticeably, political authorities were aided by «priests in every electoral ward to identify parishioners liable to support (...) Delgado, so that they could then be removed from the voting lists»¹⁹, a tendency confirmed by the fact that the bishop of Porto himself “rebuked parish clergy for using their sermons to urge the people to back the regime”²⁰. Dissidence in 1958 thus remained very much a marginal trend both within the Catholic hierarchy as well as among lay militants. If not close collaboration, it was at the very least resolute

¹⁵ *Idem*, p. 94.

¹⁶ *Idem*, p. 103.

¹⁷ Though rather than on the election, it concentrated mainly on reservations about the corporatist system as established by the Estado Novo. The crisis would only begin to appease as the bishop was forced into exile in July 1959. See Cruz, *idem*, p. 114-156.

¹⁸ *Idem*, p. 113.

¹⁹ Gallagher, *Portugal: a Twentieth Century Interpretation*, p. 94.

²⁰ Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal*, p. 360.

association which characterised the 1945-1958 phase of relations between Church and State.

The 1960s witnessed the growth of progressive Catholicism among lay activists, inspired by the process of *aggiornamento* initiated by John XXIII. The outbreak of the colonial wars in Angola, Guinea and Mozambique – in March 1961, January 1963 and September 1964 respectively – exacerbated the divisions within the Catholic sector along progressive and traditionalist lines, a fact already clearly visible during the 1965 election campaign – as we shall observe in greater detail in the final part of this work. To a limited extent their disaffection with the regime was reflected in the position of the hierarchy, as unrest persisted in relation not only to the question of the involvement of the Church in political questions and the removal of the bishop of Porto – against which a petition was signed by 300 Porto clerics in February 1960 –, but also as to the nature of the Salazar regime itself, as shown by Cerejeira's letter to the Ministry of the Interior already in August 1958 lamenting the violent methods of the PIDE ²¹. The "case of the bishop of Beira" ²² was also evidence of the development of progressive views among certain members of the Catholic hierarchy. Such public acts of defiance, however, were rare. If this final phase of relations between the Church and the Portuguese State (1958-1964) witnessed the development of a substantial lay progressive trend – whose importance, as we shall see, would later be made clear – it did not affect the institutional Church in any significant way. As the Bombay and *Rosa de Ouro* episodes demonstrate, the Catholic hierarchy's support for the regime was not called into question.

1.2. Paul VI's visit to Bombay

The Pope's decision to travel to Bombay in December 1964 in order to take part in the Eucharistic Congress represented for the Portuguese head of government – who saw in India little more than the illegal occupier of Goa since December 1961 – no less than a direct affront to the nation as a whole. On 21 October 1964, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Franco Nogueira, officially defined the visit as an «agravo gratuito» ²³. In relation to our present purposes, this crisis would reveal two fundamental points.

²¹ Cruz, *O Estado Novo e a Igreja Católica*, p. 157.

²² Fierce public critic of the effects of Portuguese colonial policy in Mozambique, *idem*, p. 177-178.

First, the visit to Bombay was to constitute the “mirror-image” of that to Fátima three years later, in as much as what Salazar criticised about it was precisely what he himself would be seeking to benefit from in 1967. «Sua Santidade não quis ver mais que o aspecto religioso da sua decisão, não se importando do mais», he lamented. «Pode o Santo Padre (...) apenas querer com sua presença dar maior esplendor ao Congresso (...), o que fica como um dos actos mais relevantes dos nossos tempos é a visita do chefe da Igreja Católica à União Indiana»²⁴. To Salazar, papal visits were official acts never likely to remain apolitical. Such were the moral implications of the Pope’s mere presence, that inevitably his visit would take on a political nature – all the more damaging to the Portuguese nation as, «[como] Sua Santidade (...) sabe bem (...), em política, os actos muitas vezes transcendem as intenções»²⁵, the impact of which he was determined to prevent from reaching Portugal. Less than three years later the Pope’s presence on Portuguese soil would equally constitute «um dos actos mais relevantes dos nossos tempos», which the regime would make sure reached the largest possible audience in order to maximise its “natural” domestic political effects.

Second, despite Salazar’s constant claims to the contrary and the fact that, ever since the Constitution of 1933, «o Estado Novo rejeitava (...) em termos constitucionais (...) qualquer veleidade cesarista de intromissão do poder político na vida da Igreja»²⁶, the Bombay crisis demonstrated that he would not hesitate to intervene within the internal life of the Church should political necessities require it, assisted as he did so by the majority of the national Catholic hierarchy.

Determined to prevent the Pope’s visit to Bombay from being publicised in Portugal, alongside the regime’s censorship services, Salazar expected the collaboration of the Catholic hierarchy. His expectations were met. «Logo recebi telegrama Vexa», the Portuguese Ambassador to the Vatican, António de Faria, reported back to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 1 November 1964, «falei com Senhores Cardeal Patriarca e Arcebispo Évora que ficaram recomendar padres suas dioceses se abstenham comentar igrejas visita Papa Bombaim e reacção governo»²⁷. Effectively, the

²³ In Mafra, *Lisboa no tempo do Cardeal Cerejeira*, p. 36.

²⁴ Arquivo de Oliveira Salazar, AOS/CO/NE-30A, Pasta 10, 5ª Subdivisão, carta para Cerejeira, 21 October 1964, p. 86 (underlined in original).

²⁵ *Idem*.

²⁶ Cruz, *O Estado Novo e a Igreja Católica*, p. 17.

²⁷ AOS/CO/NE-30A, Pasta 10, 6ª Subdivisão, p. 110.

Catholic hierarchy was willing to collaborate with the regime's censorship exercise, though directed against the Pope himself. Should the lower hierarchy not obey these instructions – and all did not – the State would not hesitate to employ more forceful means. PIDE informers were dispatched to churches around the country. «Nas Igrejas de Lisboa, com excepção das da Basilica da Estrela e de Alcântara, não foi feita qualquer alusão, durante a homília, ao facto», they reported back to Salazar ²⁸. Several priests from the diocese of Leiria were arrested by the PIDE for commenting on the Pope's visit to Bombay. The (feeble) attempt at dissidence by its bishop was rapidly brought into line. Initially siding with the dissident priests, he was not long in producing a circular to the *paróquias* under his responsibility, reminding all clerics of the «conveniência (...) de se abster (...) de qualquer (...) comentário à vida política nacional» ²⁹. State interference within the internal life of the Church was thus clear and indeed felt most painfully by those clerics who resisted it. The majority of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, however, did not.

The relation between Church and State as revealed by the Bombay crisis was thus one of close collaboration between the political regime and the ecclesiastical authorities, conducted under the former's instrumentalist control ³⁰. Paradoxically, the crisis with the Vatican had effectively tightened the links between the regime and the national Catholic hierarchy.

1.3. The “Rosa de Ouro” or the political symbolism of the Fátima sanctuary

Directly linked with the Pope's visit to India, a second event of significant importance preceded the Pope's visit to Portugal: the attribution of the *Rosa de Ouro* to the Fátima sanctuary on 13 May 1965. A brief analysis of the event will allow us to make three further fundamental points regarding Church-State relations shortly before the Pope's visit.

First, active State interference within the religious sphere was again clear as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sought to influence the choice of the Cardinal Legate – or papal representative – to deliver the *Rosa de Ouro*

²⁸ AOS/CO/PC-76, Pasta 7, 1^a Subdivisão, 26 October 1964, p. 459-460.

²⁹ In *idem*, 30 October 1964, p. 470.

³⁰ Caetano was certainly right noticing that Salazar tended to treat “de igual para igual (sinão de cima para baixo) com a Cúria Romana ou a hierarquia do País”, in *Minhas Memórias de Salazar*, p. 411.

to Fátima. As early as 23 December 1964, it had expressed its desire to see the more prestigious Cardinal Secretary of State Cicognani carry out this mission³¹. The Vatican ignored these demands and nominated Cardinal Cento as Legate. Having been singled out by Faria to Mons. Dell'Acqua (Vatican Substitute Secretary of State) as unsuitable, «por seu nome estar ligado período menos feliz relações com Santa Sé relacionado Bispo do Porto»³², it was a sign that the Vatican was not disposed to commit a gesture which may be viewed as too strong a political endorsement of the Salazar regime – which Dell'Acqua's belief that the mishandling of the situation was but the result of the “intervenção do diabo” seems to support³³.

Secondly, though the Portuguese government's intervention within the religious sphere had proved unsuccessful, it would not prevent it from seeking to benefit politically from the ceremony due to take place at the shrine. Quite literally, it would simply have to make do with Cardinal Cento. As Cardinal Samoré advised Faria in Rome, the Portuguese government ought to «tirar todo partido possível presença Cardeal Cento capaz de falar com entusiasmo na nossa língua e de fazer boa impressão nossa opinião pública»³⁴. The Vatican was thus well-aware of the intended political exploitation of what effectively constituted a religious ceremony – if anything, Samoré was effectively encouraging such exploitation. On 28 February 1965, Faria reported to the Foreign Ministry that «melhor será aceitar as explicações que nos foram dadas e (...) tirar todo o benefício possível da ida do Cardeal Cento»³⁵. Though deeply dissatisfied, by mid-March Salazar had decided to follow the Cardinal's advice.

On 13 May 1965, Cento delivered the *Rosa de Ouro* to Fátima. Among the 500,000 pilgrims who attended the ceremony was the President of the Republic himself. Cardinals Cerejeira and Cento were flanked throughout the proceedings by the Ministers of Justice and of the Interior³⁶. The following day, a banquet was offered in honour of the Legate, during which Franco Nogueira declared that the *Rosa de Ouro* honoured «toda uma Nação Missionária, devotada e heróica»³⁷. «Lido para lá das determinações

³¹ Arquivo Histórico-Diplomático MNE, PEA 481, Telegrama MNE para Faria, nº geral 5968, 23 December 1964.

³² *Idem*, Telegrama Faria para MNE, nº geral 1629, 27 February 1965.

³³ *Idem*, Aerograma Faria para MNE, nº geral 1630, 28 February 1965.

³⁴ *Idem*.

³⁵ *Idem*, nº geral 1631, 28 February 1965.

³⁶ Carvalho, in *História*, nº 29, p. 33.

³⁷ *Idem*, p. 33.

estritamente protocolares», Carvalho argues, «este cuidadoso cerimonial denuncia o entronsamento entre os poderes secular e religioso. (...) Testemunha também o esforço do governo português e da hierarquia católica em transformar a homenagem a toda a nação, mesmo tendo o Santo Padre tido, pelo menos inicialmente, a intenção de retirar ao acontecimento qualquer significado político»³⁸. It was a process which the regime would develop further two years later.

Finally, it is important to emphasise the fact that the attribution of the *Rosa de Ouro* was essentially discussed along compensatory lines. The day preceding the Pope's announcement of his visit to Bombay, Samoré, in conversation with Faria, had indeed alluded to the «possibilidade qualquer compensação demonstrasse (...) apreço Santo Padre por Portugal, tendo mencionado a tal respeito propósito enviar Fátima missão pontifícia para entregar Rosa de Ouro»³⁹. The attribution, to be announced at the closure of the third session of the Second Vatican Council, would occur merely in the absence of any «reação desagradável da nossa parte» to the Pope's visit to India, Faria was made to understand. In the near fifty years since the first reported apparition in the *Cova da Iria* on 13 May 1917, there had perhaps been no stronger evidence of the political symbolism which the Fátima shrine had come to acquire. Throughout the *Rosa de Ouro* episode, it was indeed considered almost exclusively as an instrument of diplomacy: in the hands of the Vatican to silence the Portuguese regime over the Pope's visit to India; in those of the Salazar regime to obtain reparation for the injury the visit had reportedly caused. A mere two years later, the Pope would attempt to discard any politicisation of his visit to Fátima. That such politicisation had become inevitable was perhaps not the exclusive responsibility of the Portuguese government.

2. The diplomacy preceding the visit – Direct State interference within the religious sphere: a visit much sought after by the regime

If Salazar had been partially appeased, the general sense of crisis between his regime and the Vatican was far from over. The conclusion of the Second Vatican Council in December 1965 effectively signalled the start of its implementation. Salazar's discontent over the Pope's visit to

³⁸ *Idem*, p. 34.

³⁹ AOS/CO/NE-30A, Pasta 10, 3ª Subdivisão, Aerograma Faria para MNE, 17 October 1964, p. 64.

Bombay – which led him to such extremes as declaring that «enquanto eu for vivo o Papa não entra aqui»⁴⁰ – progressively merged into his increasingly divergent views upon the nature of Catholicism itself. The progressive – indeed revolutionary – nature of the *aggiornamento* process initiated by John XXIII, and to a large degree pursued and concluded by Paul VI, in the internal life of the Roman Catholic Church is well known and need not be presented here. It is important however to stress that to Salazar, it was a process as erroneous as it was unacceptable, all the more so as developments in the Church were clearly beginning to overtake those permitted by the regime in Portuguese society, a reality which a disgruntled Salazar was increasingly becoming aware of. «Aí mesmo no Vaticano pensa-se muito democracia cristã, pensa-se liberalismo, permite-se progressismo» he wrote to Cerejeira on 21 October 1964. «Deus não permita que eu venha a ver o resultado de tais doutrinas e atitudes em Portugal»⁴¹. As Franco Nogueira observed following the attribution of the *Rosa de Ouro*, Salazar «não está convicto de que a política progressista do Vaticano seja alterada durante o pontificado de Paulo VI»⁴². It would not take long for his doubts to be confirmed. «Isto é horroroso», he exclaimed upon seeing photographs of the Pope at the UN⁴³. If Salazar so despised the direction that Paul VI was defining for the Catholic Church, it was clear that should the regime be actively manoeuvring for the Pope's visit to occur, it was not for religious purposes, and that it intended to benefit from it in other ways. The diplomacy which preceded the visit provides evidence of such manoeuvrings.

By mid-1966, Salazar «afirma que o governo português, como governo, não dará um passo para trazer a Fátima o Papa, ou para o evitar», claims Franco Nogueira⁴⁴. This claim was no truer than Salazar's declared position of non-intervention in the religious sphere regarding the Bombay and *Rosa de Ouro* episodes. In fact it was less true still as the internal stability of the regime deteriorated⁴⁵, and it consequently came to rely more heavily upon its elements of traditional support.

⁴⁰ Cruz, *O Estado Novo e a Igreja Católica*, p. 174.

⁴¹ AOS/CO/NE-30, Pasta 10, 5ª Subdivisão, p. 90.

⁴² Nogueira, *Salazar*, vol. 6, p. 44.

⁴³ During the Council of Ministers of 21 October 1965, in *idem*, p. 83.

⁴⁴ *Idem*, p. 188.

⁴⁵ Oliveira Marques defines the regime as increasingly affected by internal division, despite the “aparências de ordem e de tranquilidade”, in his *História de Portugal*, vol. 3, p. 417.

On 11 February 1966, asked during a press conference about a reported invitation by the Portuguese government to the Pope, Franco Nogueira had declared that papal visits being of a «natureza especial (...), não podiam mesmo ser objecto convites normais como para outros chefes de Estado pelo que se devia deixar Papa toda a iniciativa»⁴⁶. This answer was interpreted by the Apostolic Nuncio in Lisbon as signifying that the Portuguese regime would not particularly welcome a papal visit. The speed at which the misunderstanding was corrected by the Portuguese government once it had become aware of it, however, quickly contradicted this interpretation. «Conviria (...) que na primeira oportunidade», Franco Nogueira instructed Faria, «(...) Vexa deixasse cair Secretário de Estado palavras apropriadas»⁴⁷. It was a first indication that the regime would intervene in order to generate favourable conditions for the visit to occur.

A second telegram followed on 26 April 1966, through which the Minister enquired as to how appropriate it may be for Thomaz to express his thanks in writing to the Pope for the *Esporão de Ouro* he had recently been awarded. The letter, he added, the Portuguese Ambassador would then deliver in person to the Pope⁴⁸. «Afigura-se-me indicada carta pessoal Sexa Presidente da Republica», Faria replied, «que entregarei Santo Padre aproveitando eventualmente audiência tratar qualquer assunto maior interesse parecesse conveniente abordar. Se Vexa concordasse iria rapidamente Lisboa receber instruções»⁴⁹. The Portuguese Ambassador to the Vatican was indeed subsequently called back to Lisbon⁵⁰. That the «assunto maior interesse» to be discussed in Lisbon was most probably the potential papal visit to Fátima the following year appears to be confirmed by the nature of the first aerogram sent to the Foreign Ministry by Faria after his return to Rome. «Disse Mons. Dell'Acqua que em Lisboa toda a gente (...) me perguntava se o Santo Padre iria a Fátima no próximo ano», he reported. «(...) Aconselhou-me que não deixasse de o dizer a Sua Santidade na audiência solicitada. Tendo observado que não ousava fazê-lo, Mons. Dell'Acqua insistiu, dizendo que se tratava de uma informação interessante»⁵¹. Faria's

⁴⁶ MNE, PEA 375, proc. 332,52, telegrama MNE para Faria, n° geral 1561, 19 March 1966.

⁴⁷ *Idem*.

⁴⁸ *Idem*, n° geral 2285.

⁴⁹ *Idem*, Telegrama Faria para MNE, n° geral 3710, 27 April 1966.

⁵⁰ *Idem*, Telegrama MNE para Faria, n° geral 2322, 28 April 1966.

⁵¹ *Idem*, Aerograma Faria para MNE, n° geral 4635, 23 May 1966.

apparent reluctance to mention the subject during his audience with the Pope reflected more than his personal apprehension to do so. The Portuguese government, while prepared to actively intervene, was also well aware of the delicacy of the matter and of how excessive zeal displayed in its pursuit may be perceived as an attempt to pressurise the Vatican. Moreover, as it also well knew, by November 1966 «impunha-se (...) um convite formal dos bispos portugueses»⁵².

The bishop of Leiria had previously enquired as to the possibilities of a papal visit with Dell'Acqua on 18 August 1966. At the Episcopal Conference then taking place, he was entrusted with writing the invitation, subsequently to be signed by the entire episcopate, under the direction of Cardinal Cerejeira. It was subsequently delivered to Cicognani on 13 November 1966. There is no evidence of any relation between the government's needs and the Conference's concomitant decision to formulate its formal invitation, but the convergence in timing is noticeable. Cerejeira also travelled to Rome where he attempted to influence the Pope, while on 25 April 1967 the bishop of Leiria renewed his invitation. The eagerness with which the visit was sought much resembled a joint effort by the national authorities both political and religious.

These efforts, however, first met with little positive response in Rome. «[A] Santa Sé continua receosa qualquer iniciativa (...) possa representar gesto simpatia pelo nosso país», Faria reported on 10 April 1967⁵³. Believing to have reached the limits of diplomatic “correctness”, on 12 April 1967 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs instructed him not to intervene further⁵⁴. Barely a month before the fiftieth anniversary of the Fátima apparitions, any hope that the Pope would attend seemed to have been lost, all the more so following the nomination of Cardinal da Costa Nunes as «Legado *a latere*» on 15 April 1967 to act as papal representative during the ceremonies. Though not a definite sign of the Pope's intention not to attend in person – a similar Legate had been nominated for the Bombay Eucharistic Congress – it offered little encouragement to the Portuguese regime. It is a measure of its determination that it decided upon a final attempt to influence the Papacy⁵⁵.

⁵² Nogueira, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

⁵³ MNE, PEA375, Telegrama Faria para MNE, n° geral 9803.

⁵⁴ *Idem*, Telegrama MNE para Faria, n° geral 2179.

⁵⁵ In contrast to the assertion made by Braga da Cruz that the papal visit, interpreted as compensation for the visit to Bombay (highly improbable since, as we have seen, the

«Concordamos Vexa acolha sugestão Mons. Dell'Acqua podendo solicitar audiência Cardeal Secretário de Estado para os fins indicados [which we can assume to be the potential papal visit] mantendo-se dentro dos moldes (...) comunicações anteriores», Faria was instructed on 20 April⁵⁶. He then reported on positive developments on 23 April, the Pope's Secretary having enquired as to the capacities of Monte Real airbase, a mere forty kilometres from the Fátima shrine⁵⁷ – to which the Ministry replied that the airport could not accommodate aircraft superior in size to a caravel⁵⁸. Abruptly, the Portuguese government then decided not to attempt to influence the Vatican further. «Fizemos tudo quanto se poderia (...) fazer dentro limites dignidade e correção», it notified Faria. «Não devemos tomar qualquer nova iniciativa (...), passando a cingirmo-nos responder ao que nos for perguntado. (...) Qualquer outra atitude poderia mesmo ser aí considerada como intolerável tentativa de pressão»⁵⁹. Three days later, Faria was informed that the Pope would visit Fátima on the following 13 May, «se não houvesse objecção da nossa parte»⁶⁰.

Having attempted all that could be done «dentro [das] limites (...) [da] correção» to obtain the visit, no such objection would naturally be forthcoming from the regime.

Pope had refused even to send his Secretary of State to Portugal for that purpose in 1965), would occur in spite of the “resistência do governo”, in *Nova História de Portugal*, dir. Serrão, Oliveira Marques, vol. 12, p. 221. Reis argues that most of the Portuguese diplomatic activity aimed at making the papal visit possible was carried out by Faria and Franco Nogueira in the face of resistance from Salazar, in *Salazar e o Vaticano*, p. 308 and p. 318. While the Portuguese dictator undoubtedly remained determined to vent his disagreement with the Pope – be it merely to save face among his collaborators -, it is a policy that he revealingly did not carry out to the point of raising insurmountable barriers to the Pope's visit, well aware, as the present work will attempt to demonstrate, of the formidable advantages to be drawn domestically from the visit by his political regime.

⁵⁶ MNE, PEA375, Telegrama MNE para Faria, n° geral 2328.

⁵⁷ *Idem*, Telegrama Faria para MNE, n° geral 3166.

⁵⁸ *Idem*, Telegrama MNE para Faria, n° geral 2413, 27 April 1967.

⁵⁹ *Idem*, n° geral 2422, 27 April 1967.

⁶⁰ *Idem*, Aerograma Faria para MNE, n° geral 3411, 1 May 1967.

3. From the announcement of the visit to the visit itself

3.1. The Pope's announcement speech or the impossible attempt to depoliticise the visit

Paul VI officially announced his intention to take part in the Fiftieth Anniversary celebrations of the first reported Fátima apparition – also the twenty-fifth of the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by Pius XII – during his General Audience of 3 May 1967. From the very start, he made every effort to remove any political significance from his visit. «Esta peregrinação terá carácter absolutamente privado», he declared, «[e] será (...) muito breve»⁶¹. It was effectively limited to a single day, a fact that the use of Monte Real airbase made possible. It of course also enabled the Papacy to avoid having to make use of Portela airport, which would naturally have given a far more official nature to the pilgrimage⁶².

While the Vatican was anxious to avoid any politicisation of the visit, it equally had to avoid overtly stating such an intent, which may easily come to injure the already wounded pride of its host-to-be. «As nossas viagens têm este carácter (...) de brevidade», the Pope explained, «que os meios de transporte modernos permitem e que as obrigações do Nosso cargo apostólico Nos impõem»⁶³. As was thus clear, maintaining the visit apolitical in nature would require a balancing act of the most delicate nature, all the more so as the central reason invoked for the pilgrimage by the Pope himself related to what was most likely to give it a political edge. Indeed if the visit had been decided primarily in reply to the «pressões reiteradas e corteses do Episcopado Português» – in which as we have seen the Portuguese regime played a crucial, though discrete, part – the «razão espiritual, que quer dar a esta viagem a sua significação própria, é a de rezar (...) pela paz»⁶⁴. Paradoxically, the Pope's own stated intentions emphasised just how unfavourable to an apolitical visit the conditions were in Portugal.

First, Paul VI explicitly referred to war, and to the Vietnam conflict specifically, as naturally affecting the cause of universal peace.

⁶¹ “*O Discurso de Anuncio*”, in *Acção Católica*, nº 5, May 1967, p. 365-366.

⁶² While Franco Nogueira remarks that “facilmente, se chegou a acordo sobre os pontos simbólicos da despolitização” - in *op. cit.*, p. 279 – the impetus for depoliticisation came from the Vatican, not from São Bento.

⁶³ In “*Acção Católica*”, p. 365-366.

⁶⁴ *Idem*, p. 366.

«Queremos ainda esperar que novas propostas de negociações (...) não serão rejeitadas, mas estudadas e finalmente aceites (...) a bem de todo o povo vietnamita», he declared ⁶⁵. It was his silence over the protracted colonial wars the Portuguese regime was itself engaged in, however, which attracted much international attention. Portuguese rule in Angola was indeed under the combined – though not united – challenge from the FNLA, MPLA and UNITA; in Guinea, it faced the well-organised struggle of an increasingly threatening PAIGC, under the efficient guidance of Amílcar Cabral; while in Mozambique, the continuing threat posed by FRELIMO, though restricted to the country's northern regions, was very much a reality. Prayers for peace in the metropolis of a repressed empire were always bound to become politicised.

Secondly, the Pope further remarked, «esta causa suprema da paz penetra cada vez mais na consciência dos homens, (...) como coroamento desejável (...) de todos os esforços tendentes a dar ao Homem uma vida digna, na Verdade, na Justiça, na Liberdade e no Amor» ⁶⁶. The fact that none of the latter four ideals figured prominently on the Salazarist agenda would once again mean that reducing the Pope's visit to a purely private pilgrimage would prove extremely arduous, if not impossible. The recognised political symbolism of the Fátima sanctuary – highlighted once again merely two years earlier during the *Rosa de Ouro* episode – would not help either.

To Salazar though, such considerations mattered little. Quite the contrary, while naturally not relishing the negative publicity which the Pope's visit may generate internationally against his regime, its political significance was precisely what his regime would seek to benefit from domestically. As he had remarked less than three years earlier, what would remain as «um dos actos mais relevantes dos nossos tempos» was the mere presence of the Holy Father on Portuguese soil – and that by his side, benefiting from the huge political implications conveyed by the image, of the entire Estado Novo ruling elite.

⁶⁵ *Idem*, p. 367.

⁶⁶ *Idem*, p. 366-367.

⁶⁷ *The Times*, 12 May 1967, p. 10.

3.2. Reactions to the announcement: international controversy vs national jubilation and strict censorship

a) International controversy: the tensions surrounding the visit

The Pope's decision to travel to Portugal generated fierce controversy both for its religious and political consequences.

From the religious viewpoint, in the context of *aggiornamento*, the visit bore numerous consequences. First, as *Times* special envoy Peter Nichols reported from Rome on 11 May, the visit was «sure to damage the cause of greater unity among Christians». Indeed, while the Pope remarked with satisfaction that fellow Christians were ready to discuss Marian devotion with greater openness than ever, his decision to lend his weight «to the manifestation of the Marian cult at its most emotionally questionable»⁶⁷ was hardly Vatican diplomacy at its subtlest. In effect, its tactless assertion appeared to sharply contradict the ecumenical spirit of the Council. Secondly, due to the nature of the host regime, the Papacy risked losing its only recently acquired status as a force for progress. Indeed the papal visit certainly risked «undo[ing] the impression that the Church stands for progress in the developing countries of Africa particularly, hampering the already difficult task of the missionaries»⁶⁸. Finally, since Marian devotion was associated with the most conservative trend of Catholicism, and as devotion at Fátima in particular was «unhealthy, dubious theologically and politically right-wing»⁶⁹, the Pope's promotion of the Marian cult would take on more than a mere symbolic significance as the Council was being implemented. It constituted a clear call for restraint regarding certain “excesses” committed in the name of *aggiornamento*.

Politically, the effects of the visit were obvious. First, by going to Portugal, the Pope was acknowledging a regime both undemocratic and repressive in nature, which furthermore upheld in Africa «the ideals of trusteeship which the rest of the world has abandoned», as *Daily Telegraph* special envoy Douglas Brown reported from Fátima on 12 May⁷⁰. Second, despite his efforts to the contrary, the Pope's presence risked lending weight to the Portuguese regime's virulent anti-communism – of which, furthermore, the Fátima sanctuary had virtually become the practical embodiment. By travelling to Fátima, Paul VI naturally had objectives of

⁶⁸ *Idem*.

⁶⁹ Peter Hebblethwaite, *Paul VI*, p. 485.

⁷⁰ *The Daily Telegraph*, 13 May 1967.

his own, as we shall later observe. Their realisation, however, would come at the cost of formidable political benefits for the Portuguese dictatorial regime. The first step towards ensuring these benefits, from the point of view of the regime, consisted in silencing all criticism of the visit.

b) In Portugal: censorship and jubilation

In contrast to the international controversy, the news of the Pope's visit was greeted in Portugal with general rejoicing, a measure of the efficacy of the regime's censors and propaganda machinery. As Catholic opponents to the regime had put it in 1965, «o público continua a dispor de notícias truncadas ou deformadas com (...) o matiz que os serviços de censura entendem transmitir-lhe»⁷¹.

«A esperança da vinda era generalizada e profunda, mas nem por isso a notícia deixou de fazer vibrar todos, sem exclusão dos próprios agnósticos», the *Diário da Manhã* declared⁷². The following day, the regime's official organ continued to highlight the joy of the entire nation at the news of the Pope's visit. «A nação inteira emocionada com a notícia da vinda do Papa», the front page announced. Similar enthusiasm was shared by the *Diário de Notícias*, which on 4 May devoted most of its front page to the Pope's announcement and equally highlighted the nation's sense of jubilation, an editorial line also adopted by *O Século*⁷³. The national press reported none of the controversy surrounding the visit. The only reference to it was made in the subtlest of fashions, as *O Século* quoted Mons Vallainc (Vatican Press Secretary) as having declared that «as notícias da imprensa estrangeira que sugerem motivos políticos para a viagem do Papa (...) 'estão a tentar deturpar as palavras bem claras do Papa quanto aos objectivos da sua peregrinação'»⁷⁴. Since the reasons for such politicisation were not mentioned, and as it was the foreign press which was accused of "diminishing" the Pope's pilgrimage, even this lone indication reflected well on the regime.

The *Diário da Manhã*, *Diário de Notícias* and *O Século* clearly reported, however, that the visit had been defined by the Pope himself as a private pilgrimage. They did also make clear that the visit would be brief,

⁷¹ In Alves, *Católicos e Política*, p. 183.

⁷² *Diário da Manhã*, 4 May 1967, p. 1.

⁷³ *O Século*, 4 May 1967, p. 1.

⁷⁴ *Idem*, 6 May 1967, p. 11.

though perhaps not as readily as the *Diário de Lisboa*⁷⁵. Clear signs that the visit may not be to the liking of the nation as a whole were more surely visible in the way *República*⁷⁶ chose to cover the Pope's announcement. Contrary to the rest of the national daily press, it devoted only minimum space to the occasion and emphasised the private nature of the pilgrimage. «O papa disse que a sua peregrinação seria 'muito rápida' e terá carácter privado», it reported⁷⁷. In sharp contrast to the other press organs mentioned above, for whom the Pope's visit became front page news from the moment it was announced, it also made no further mention to the visit until the 13 May itself. This fact testified to the ruthless efficiency of the Estado Novo's censors. The only tolerated form of protest was the least potent of all as regards largely symbolic events such as a papal visit: silence.

The Pope's visit represented a momentous propaganda opportunity for the regime. Kept in the dark regarding the controversy surrounding the event, the realities of the average Portuguese newspaper reader were of a far different nature: the visit constituted a Pontifical blessing granted a deeply Catholic nation, and consequently a stamp of approval for the regime which presided over its destinies.

3.3. From private pilgrimage to national homage: adapting Paul VI's visit to the regime's needs

If the press did devote some space to reporting the private nature of the Pope's pilgrimage, it did not prevent it from quite contradictorily devoting more space indeed to presenting the visit as a tribute to the Portuguese nation itself, bestowed on it by no less a figure than the representative of Christ on Earth.

While the Pope's announcement made not even a reference to Portugal – but merely to the Marian sanctuary of Fátima – it was very much the nation as a whole, whose “historic Catholicism” was furthermore emphasised, that responded to it. The government noticeably expressed the «honra (...) da Nação Fidelíssima perante este acontecimento da maior relevância histórica»⁷⁸. The impression was thus subtly created that rather

⁷⁵ Declaring as early as 3 May that the visit would be “inteiramente particular” and last only one day, p. 1.

⁷⁶ Only newspaper of the republican left-wing opposition tolerated by the regime.

⁷⁷ *República*, 3 May 1967.

⁷⁸ In Nogueira, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

than on a personal spiritual pilgrimage to Fátima, Paul VI was on a visit to Portugal as recompense for the nation's virtues. «O Sumo Pontífice afirma a sua benignidade por Portugal», claimed the *Diário de Notícias*⁷⁹. Close association of the visit to the whole of the Portuguese nation was equally pursued in *O Século*, as the 13 May 1967 was to be a «dia que ficará inolvidavel (...) nos anais da Nação Fidelíssima»⁸⁰. The Pope's choice of Portugal constituted a «marca do destino que fez sempre da 'Nação Fidelíssima' e deste povo (...) de pioneiros do Mar os grandes missionários de Cristo e da História»⁸¹. The 6 May edition of the *Diário de Notícias* went as far as justifying the Pope's reluctance to use Portela airport. Merely did it reflect the nature of all papal visits, it reported. «Paulo VI foi em 1964 à Terra Santa, mas limitou-se a visitar Jerusalém e não foi a Amã (...) nem a Telavive. (...) Foi a Índia (...), mas apenas visitou Bombaim. (...) Em 1965 foi a Nova Iorque, mas limitou a sua visita às Nações Unidas (...). Foi o Presidente Johnson comprimentá-lo à sede internacional da ONU. O Papa não visita, é visitado»⁸². That the Pope would not set foot in the Portuguese capital thus in no way diminished his tribute to the *Nação Fidelíssima*, the reader was led to believe.

Moreover the Portuguese ecclesiastical hierarchy itself contributed to adjusting the Pope's intentions to the needs of the regime. «Visitando Fátima, o Papa engrandece o nome de Portugal», a jubilant bishop of Leiria declared on 3 May⁸³. Before his arrival in Portugal, Cardinal da Costa Nunes similarly contributed to re-defining the Pope's pilgrimage to Fátima as a nationwide tribute by declaring that «se até ao presente o Papa tinha um lugar muito especial no coração de todos os portugueses, agora conquistou-o de todo em todo»⁸⁴. In effect, leading figures of the Catholic hierarchy, talking on behalf of the Portuguese nation, seemed only too obliged in politicising the event by associating it to the nation as a whole. The regime's determination to associate itself with the Pope's visit and thus benefit from it politically was also to adopt more active forms. If the private nature of the Pope's visit denied the regime the opportunity to associate itself with the illustrious pilgrim through official protocol, such was not the case of the Cardinal Legate's visit.

⁷⁹ *Diário de Notícias*, 4 May 1967, p. 7.

⁸⁰ *O Século*, 10 May 1967, p. 11.

⁸¹ *Diário de Notícias*, 17 May 1967, p. 1.

⁸² *Idem*, 6 May 1967, p. 1.

⁸³ *Idem*, 4 May 1967, p. 7.

⁸⁴ In *Idem*, 8 May 1967, p. 7.

3.4. The visit of Cardinal Legate da Costa Nunes: active political appropriation

The Estado Novo was to maximise the very official nature of the Legate's presence on Portuguese soil. The fact that the actual choice of da Costa Nunes, former Portuguese missionary, had already been widely interpreted as an «homenagem da Igreja à Nação Fidelíssima»⁸⁵ only facilitated the regime's task in appropriating his visit politically.

It is a measure of the regime's determination to maximise the benefits it could draw from the visit that Salazar in person, who never previously had personally attended a reception ceremony at Lisbon airport itself, welcomed da Costa Nunes in Portela on 11 May 1967⁸⁶. Among the personalities accompanying him were General Humberto Pais (representing Thomaz), Franco Nogueira, Faria, Director of Protocol Emílio Patrício, the Apostolic Nuncio to Portugal Mons. de Furstenberg and Cardinal Cerejeira. The typical mix of political and religious personalities contributed to blurring the line between the political and religious. «Felicitamo-nos mutuamente por esta insigne honra», the Legate declared upon arrival blurring the division further, «e agradecemos a Nossa Senhora de Fátima ter trazido a nossa terra o chefe supremo da Cristandade»⁸⁷.

Aboard a Presidency of the Republic vehicle, the Cardinal was driven to the palace of Queluz, where he was to reside over the duration of his stay. The following morning, he officially visited the President of the Portuguese Republic in Belem, who in turn reciprocated the visit in Queluz. Official protocol was clearly being exploited to the full.

The Cardinal was then taken to Fátima, where he was to officiate in the *Benção do Santíssimo Sacramento* and *Procissão das Velas*. There he was greeted with the greatest pomp and ceremony. Heading the reception committee which included political figures such as Franco Nogueira, Faria and the ministers of Justice and of the Interior, was General Mario Romão⁸⁸. The pontifical and Portuguese national anthems were played in succession by a battalion of the Tomar 15th Infantry Regiment, followed by a «salva de vinte e um tiros»⁸⁹, under the respectful gaze of the huge crowd of pilgrims which had already assembled at the shrine. Similar ceremoniousness would

⁸⁵ *O Século*, 12 May 1967, p. 1.

⁸⁶ Carvalho, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

⁸⁷ In *Diário de Notícias*, 12 May 1967, p. 1.

⁸⁸ Commander of the *Terceira Região Militar*, in *Novidades*, 13 May 1967, p. 1.

⁸⁹ *Diário de Notícias*, 13 May 1967, p. 7.

be pursued even after the papal visit had actually taken place. An official banquet, attended by Salazar himself and the entire Portuguese government, was held in honour of the Legate on the evening of 14 May in the palace of Ajuda, followed by a reception «oferecida por Sua Excelência o Presidente da República»⁹⁰. A full GNR company greeted the Legate as he arrived at the palace, as the pontifical and Portuguese anthems resounded once more⁹¹. Finally, as the Cardinal left Portugal from Portela airport on 16 May, he was again granted full military honours in the presence of both Thomaz and Salazar⁹².

If the Pope's visit was to remain private, that of the Cardinal Legate could not have been made more official. As the Cardinal himself remarked, he departed «o coração cheio de reconhecimento pelas inúmeras atenções que me foram dispensadas oficialmente pelas autoridades quer civis quer eclesiásticas e militares»⁹³.

3.5. Separation of Church and State? The Bank Holiday and Amnesty Decree of 13 May 1967

Although Salazar persistently claimed to maintain a strict regime of separation between Church and State, he did not hesitate to order the passing of a Decree-Law on 9 May declaring the 13 May 1967, «data do começo das comemorações do cinquentenário das aparições de Nossa Senhora de Fátima e da visita do papa Paulo VI ao Santuário da Cova da Iria», national bank holiday⁹⁴. Furthermore, as the *Diário de Notícias* remarked, «o Feriado (...) é obrigatório para todas as actividades públicas e privadas»⁹⁵. The State's association to a purely religious event was thus not merely symbolic, but effectively imposed upon all employers and employees be they from the public or private sector. If the Pope's pilgrimage was supposed to be private, it certainly was made to feel most official in nature to the Portuguese people.

Moreover, the regime sought to further associate itself with the Pope's visit by issuing an Amnesty decree on 13 May 1967. «O governo deseja

⁹⁰ From the “*Programa Oficial da Visita do Cardeal Legato a latere da Costa Nunes*”.

⁹¹ *Diário de Notícias*, 15 May 1967, p. 1.

⁹² *Diário de Lisboa*, 16 May 1967, p. 1.

⁹³ *Novidades*, 17 May 1967, p. 1.

⁹⁴ Carvalho, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

⁹⁵ *Diário de Notícias*, 11 May 1967, p. 8.

que o memorável acontecimento (...) fique assinalado na legislação portuguesa», it stated, «por uma ampla medida de clemência, que, inspirada nos princípios mais puros (...) da fraternidade cristã, não deixara de ser extremamente grata ao apostolado do sumo pontífice»⁹⁶. *O Século* further reported that the decree would cover «numerosas infracções criminais», while preserving the «valores essenciais à segurança da colectividade»⁹⁷. While its origin has been traced back by Carvalho to a written suggestion by the bishop of Leiria to the President of the Republic on 10 May, the Pope himself had in fact expressed his desire to see such a decree published. On 9 May, Dell'Acqua had indeed presented Faria with a note handwritten by the Pope himself. «Não seria acto de grande homenagem a *Maria Virgo Clemens*», the Holy Father enquired, «uma amnistia da parte das autoridades portuguesas para qualquer categoria de detidos e especialmente para os que fossem presos por motivos políticos?»⁹⁸. Lisbon obliged. Unsurprisingly though, the decree's mentioned principles of Christian fraternity would not extend to political prisoners. Once again, the visit had been turned to the regime's advantage. Though formidably repressive, it was able to portray itself as a source of Christian clemency. While few Portuguese may have been fooled, it was a propaganda exercise which certainly did the regime no harm.

4. 13 May 1967: From private pilgrimage to “official” visit

4.1. Monte Real

It was a sign of things to come that even the Pope's journey to Portugal the Salazar regime should seek to “nationalise”. «La TAP se sentirait pleinement récompensée par la présence du Saint Père à bord de ses avions, raison pourquoi je vous confirme aussi que le transport en question n'engagerait pour le Vatican aucun déboursement», the company's managing director wrote to the Nuncio on 5 May 1967⁹⁹. It was indeed a propaganda success of international proportions that Paul VI should step out

⁹⁶ In *O Século*, 13 May 1967, p. 16.

⁹⁷ *Idem*.

⁹⁸ MNE, PEA375, Telegrama Faria para MNE, 9 May 1967. Franco Nogueira also alludes to the Pope's note, but highlights the decree as an initiative of the regime, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

⁹⁹ AOS/CO/PC-72, Pasta 4, 1ª Subdivisão, p. 246.

of a TAP caravel at Monte Real on the morning of 13 May. “Nationalisation” of the papal flight went as far as the use of specially crafted *Vista Alegre* cutlery onboard, while eagerness to associate the papal visit to the nation’s “glorious evangelising past” extended even to the interior decoration of the aptly named caravel. «As caravelas quinhentistas!», Paul VI reportedly observed as he entered the front section of the specially-fitted aircraft decorated with pictures of the Fifteenth Century vessels, «numa alusão gloriosa à missão civilizadora dos portugueses», the *Diário de Lisboa* special envoy aboard the aircraft reported ¹⁰⁰. Neither did Salazar forget to remind the Pope of their Indian disagreement by naming the TAP caravel Diu ¹⁰¹.

At 9:45, following a brief flight over the Fátima shrine which enabled the Pope to witness at first hand the huge crowd of pilgrims awaiting his arrival, the caravel touched down at Monte Real. While the private nature of the visit denied the regime the use of full protocol, and while the Pope was officially the guest of the bishop of Leiria – to whose diocese Fátima belonged – it did not prevent both Thomaz and Salazar from heading the reception committee at the small military airbase, accompanied by the entire government, alongside leading ecclesiastical figures such as the Apostolic Nuncio and Cardinal Cerejeira ¹⁰². To the Pope, Faria first introduced Américo Thomaz. Then followed Salazar, «que cumprimentou o chefe da igreja católica fazendo uma genuflexão e beijando o anel pontifício» ¹⁰³. In reply, the *Diário de Notícias* reported, the Pope «[deu] um demorado aperto de mão a Salazar» ¹⁰⁴.

Close association to the visit by the regime continued in the small tribune erected besides the airbase’s main building, where Paul VI and President Thomaz exchanged brief messages. In his welcome address, the head of the Portuguese State once more highlighted the country’s title as *Nação Fidelíssima*, «que não ostentamos com orgulho, mas apenas como indicador de um dever apostólico a cumprir», clearly indicating that the nation’s evangelising mission had not yet come to an end ¹⁰⁵. Emphasizing

¹⁰⁰ *Diário de Lisboa*, 13 May 1967, p. 16.

¹⁰¹ Evidence, however, contradicts *Le Monde*’s assertion that it was flown by the grandson of Delgado, fierce opponent to Salazar assassinated by the PIDE in 1965, *Le Monde*, 12 May 1967, p. 11.

¹⁰² *Diário de Notícias*, 13 May 1967, 2ª tiragem, p. 14.

¹⁰³ *Diário de Lisboa*, 13 May 1967, p. 1.

¹⁰⁴ *Diário de Notícias*, 14 May 1967, p. 6.

¹⁰⁵ “*Saudação do Chefe de Estado*”, in *Ação Católica*, nº 5, May 1967, p. 368.

the jubilation of the Portuguese people, «conhecedor do seu ânimo e da sua fé», he once more expressed the honour of the nation as a whole at the Pope's visit ¹⁰⁶. While Paul VI's address focused on the nature of his visit – a humble pilgrimage of prayer – it also partly echoed that of the President of the Republic. «Desta abençoada 'Terra de Santa Maria' partiu, no passado», he remarked, «(...) uma generosa plêiade de arautos do Evangelho» ¹⁰⁷. The reception ceremony, though brief and simple due to the private nature of Paul VI's visit ¹⁰⁸, had effectively played into the regime's hands; the Pope's mention of the nation's evangelizing past seemingly confirming the propaganda exercise interpreting the visit as a homage to the Portuguese nation.

In a rare public display of emotion, Salazar «não pode evitar as lágrimas, limpando-as discretamente com os dedos», the *Diário de Lisboa* reported ¹⁰⁹. While it was an image which, symbolically at least, wholly contradicted Salazar's much asserted separation of Church and State, it was also one most likely to stir the admiration of the Portuguese Catholic masses.

The difficulty experienced by the regime in directly associating itself to the visit was highlighted as the Pope covered the final forty kilometres to the *Cova da Iria*. Still, as far as was possible, it succeeded in doing so. First, the open-top Rolls Royce used by the Pope, the national media reported, was part of the Portuguese Presidential fleet ¹¹⁰. Secondly, while the Pope's cortege was to be composed solely of ecclesiastical figures – another, earlier cortege had been organised to transport all political personalities to the sanctuary – it also included Franco Nogueira ¹¹¹. Moreover, alongside his private secretary, the Pope was accompanied by the bishop of Leiria, who since 3 May had readily contributed to politicising the pilgrimage.

Under the heavy rain, thousands lined the roadsides. Standing for most of the journey, the Pope enthusiastically returned the acclaims. In Leiria, the cortege came to a standstill, as Paul VI was awarded the keys to the city by Mayor Bernardo Pimenta – an act which further contributed to blurring the line between political and religious domains on this

¹⁰⁶ *Idem*, p. 369.

¹⁰⁷ *Idem*, p. 370.

¹⁰⁸ Rather than to a deliberate “fria recepção oficial”, as has argued de Oliveira, *História Eclesiástica de Portugal*, p. 282.

¹⁰⁹ *Diário de Lisboa*, 13 May 1967, p. 28.

¹¹⁰ *Diário de Notícias*, 13 May 1967, 2^a tiragem, p. 6.

¹¹¹ Until the city of Leiria, *Le Monde*, 14-15 May 1967, p. 1.

momentous occasion. Already 100,000 people had greeted the Pope ¹¹². In the *Cova da Iria*, an estimated crowd of one million pilgrims welcomed him enthusiastically as, at 1:13 pm, the cortege finally reached its destination.

4.2. In the Cova da Iria

a) The Pope's homily

The Mass conducted by the Pope and the homily he pronounced on the occasion were always going to constitute the day's central event. Would the Pope denounce certain of the Salazar regime's most repressive aspects? Would he speak out against the country's colonial wars? These were the questions that the international community, the opposition to the regime and the regime itself all longed to have answered. In effect, it was to the Portuguese regime that the answers would prove most pleasing. Signs of divergence between the Vatican and the Portuguese regime, however, were clear.

First, Paul VI's call for international conciliation was a certain, if indirect, condemnation of war. «[A humanidade] possui um grande arsenal de armas terrivelmente mortíferas», he deplored, «mas o progresso moral não iguala o progresso científico» ¹¹³. Secondly, the Pope gave expression to the Vatican's policy of conciliation towards those nations under communist rule. «Rezamos por esses países», he declared ¹¹⁴. This was a tone quite at variance with the uncompromising anti-Communism still promoted by the Salazar regime in 1967 and which, as Costa Pinto has remarked, had come to constitute one of the ideological pillars on which the survival of the Estado Novo rested after 1945 ¹¹⁵. It was a divergence of views all the more noticeable as the Fátima sanctuary had very much become the embodiment of the regime's anti-communism. Though revealing as to the nature of relations between Church and State under the Estado Novo, the evolution of the ideological significance of the Fátima cult after 1926 will not be addressed here, as not directly relevant to our subject. Suffice it to say that already by July 1936, as the Civil War broke out in neighbouring Spain, it was evolving from Christian regeneration to increasingly virulent

¹¹² *Diário de Lisboa*, 13 May 1967, p. 28.

¹¹³ “A mensagem em Fátima”, in *Acção Católica*, n° 5, May 1967, p. 373.

¹¹⁴ *Idem*, p. 373.

¹¹⁵ Pinto, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

anti-communism ¹¹⁶. The trend deepened following the publication of the Memoirs of the last surviving of the three shepherds, Sister Lúcia, and most particularly of her *Quarta Memória*, written in 1941 at the request of the bishop of Leiria. While the original 1917 interrogatories of the three *pastorinhos* contained no mention of the future threat of Communism to Christianity ¹¹⁷, she now claimed to have been warned, on the third reported apparition – that of 13 July 1917 –, of a new world conflict to break out under the Pontificate of Pius XI. «Para o impedir», Lúcia reported the figure of the apparition to have told her, «virei pedir a consagração da Rússia a Meu Imaculado Coração (...). Se atendem a Meus pedidos, a Rússia se convertera e terão paz; se não, espalhara seus erros pelo mundo, promovendo guerras e perseguições à Igreja» ¹¹⁸. As the Cold War developed in the post-1945 era, anti-communism became a central tenant of the Marian devotion as practised in Fátima, which the creation of the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fátima reflected in October 1947. It was all the more so in 1967, as the Salazar regime sought to portray its colonial conflicts as part of a worldwide anti-communist struggle.

To the crowd of pilgrims gathered at the sanctuary on 13 May 1967 though, and indeed «to the general public, (...) such subtleties [were] unlikely to be grasped (...) They will continue to see the Pope's visit as a special benediction of the existing political order» ¹¹⁹. This was all the more true as there was much in the Pope's homily from which the Portuguese regime could effectively take comfort.

First, the Pope warned against the effects of excessive modernisation along the path to *aggiornamento*. «Que mal seria», he affirmed, «se uma interpretação (...) não autorizada pelo magistério da Igreja transformasse este renascimento intelectual numa inquietação (...) que substituísse a teologia dos verdadeiros (...) mestres por ideologias novas (...) que visam a eliminar da norma da fé tudo aquilo que o pensamento moderno não compreende» ¹²⁰. Salazar was no doubt right when later seeing in the Pope's decision an intention which suited his own brand of traditionalist Catholicism. «Apercebendo-se dos perigos do progressismo, [o Papa] terá querido (...) apoiar a ala conservadora da Igreja», he remarked during the

¹¹⁶ Torgal provides an excellent account of this early evolution, in *As 'Aparições de Fátima'*, p. 195-211.

¹¹⁷ See *Documentação Crítica de Fátima Vol. 1 – Interrogatórios aos Videntes, 1917*.

¹¹⁸ *Memórias da Irmã Lúcia*, p. 167.

¹¹⁹ *Daily Telegraph*, 15 May 1967, p. 17.

¹²⁰ In *Acção Católica*, p. 372.

Council of Ministers of 23 May 1967¹²¹. As a means to comfort conservative Catholics in the post-Council era, the choice of Fátima as a pilgrimage destination certainly made sense. More broadly, as Reis observes, the visit enabled Paul VI to fulfil «uma série de objectivos. Revalidava o culto mariano e recentrava a Igreja nos tempos agitados do pós-concílio. Amenizava, nem que fosse temporariamente [as the July 1970 papal audience of the leaders of the PAIGC, MPLA and FRELIMO would testify] as relações com Portugal. (...) Afirmava ao bloco comunista que lhe negara a entrada [in reference to recent plans for a papal visit to the Polish Marian sanctuary of Czestochowa, abandoned upon intervention from Moscow] que isso tinha consequências, levando o papa a visitar um regime que era anátema para Moscovo»¹²².

Secondly, and most importantly, the Pope had issued no direct condemnation of either the repressive nature of the regime domestically nor of its policies towards its overseas territories. This effectively guaranteed the political benefits of the visit for the regime through its impact on a population kept deliberately misinformed.

The ruling elite, moreover, was determined to benefit from the visit more actively.

b) Priests, politicians and private audiences

If the regime's ruling political elite had not been able to associate itself to the Pope's «caminhada triunfal»¹²³ through the Portuguese countryside, it did so at the most important moment of the visit, the religious ceremonies conducted by the Pope. Revealingly, little effort was made to effectively separate ecclesiastical figures from their political counterparts on the vast tribune erected over the Basilica steps, from which Paul VI conducted the Mass. Directly surrounding the papal throne, chairs had been put into place for Cicognani, Tisserant and Dell'Acqua. On their left, «lugares reservados aos cardeais Costa Nunes, (...) Cerejeira, (...) Palácios e (...) Rossi» were accompanied by «filas de bancos para o episcopado, *para os membros do Governo* e para o Corpo Diplomático»¹²⁴. The Portuguese government in its entirety seated in close proximity to the

¹²¹ Nogueira, *op. cit.*, p. 287-288.

¹²² Reis, *Salazar e o Vaticano*, p. 322-323.

¹²³ *Diário de Notícias*, 14 May 1967, p. 6.

¹²⁴ *Idem*, p. 8 (my italics).

episcopate was an image that most certainly could not help but further associate the political regime to the religious event. Moreover, to the right of the Pope, several more rows of benches had been set up to accommodate Sister Lúcia and members of her family, along with other guests of honour, including Thomaz, Salazar, the Presidents of the National Assembly, Corporative Chamber and Supreme Justice Courts, numerous members of Parliament, the civil governors of Lisbon and Porto, and further civil and military personalities. Such ostentatious participation by the State's ruling elite in what constituted a purely religious ceremony – which the Pope himself had insistently presented as a private pilgrimage – clearly demonstrates the regime's determination to appropriate the Pope's visit politically.

The regime's close association to the religious ceremonies was not limited to the presence beside the Pope of its highest ranking personalities. Salazar was noticeably shown meeting Sister Lúcia as he arrived from Monte Real. Though their conversation was brief, it sufficed to further express the regime's association not only with the papal visit but also with the cult of Our Lady of Fátima. Secondly, several of the regime's highest-ranking personalities were granted private papal audiences. To this intent, following Mass, the Pope, Thomaz and Salazar met formally, under the eager gaze of journalists and photographers. Revealingly, Salazar's usual aversion for public manifestations of faith found little expression on this momentous occasion ¹²⁵. Both were then granted individual audiences which lasted respectively fifteen and ten minutes. If the Pope expressed any reservations about the Salazar regime, they were kept private ¹²⁶. As photographs of the ageing dictator greeting the Pope filled the national press, the regime enveloped itself in its Christian cloak of legitimisation through the most powerful of symbolic images.

To the further benefit of the regime, moreover, papal recognition extended to its most repressive elements. Indeed, among the officials whom the Pope decorated was PIDE director Silva Pais, whose implacable

¹²⁵ Though Cruz highlights Salazar's instructions to his ministers not to publicly partake of the Holy Communion - in *O Estado Novo e a Igreja Católica*, p. 106-107-, it is a preoccupation which their ostentatious presence on the papal tribune wholly contradicts.

¹²⁶ By addressing Salazar as "Sua Eternidade", the Pope may well have been making clear that the regime had lasted long enough, see Reis, in *História*, n° 29, p. 27. Having not been given public expression, however, it was a tone of irony that did little else than amuse Salazar, see Nogueira, *op. cit.*, p. 288.

leadership of the political police very much explained its sinister efficiency – of which the Pope was well-aware. Not only had the *Frente Patriótica de Libertação Nacional* (FPLN) sent the Vatican a telegram documenting the regime's repressive exactions¹²⁷, a pamphlet denouncing the repression carried out by its political police had also been sent to all the participants of the third session of Vatican II. The decoration of Silva Pais was an act that certainly exasperated the opposition to the Salazar regime, which was already finding it difficult to counter the political effects of the visit. Indeed all principal opposition forces effectively found themselves “cornered”. Salazar was obviously delighted. As he was later to claim, what he had personally preferred about the Pope's visit was the «fúria dos nossos inimigos»¹²⁸.

This observation though, belongs to the final part of our work, that on the effects of the visit upon the Salazar regime and Portugal as a whole, to which we shall now devote our attention.

5. The effects of the visit in Portugal

5.1. A regime rejuvenated

a) “Re-placing” Portugal at the centre of world affairs

The Pope's visit being an event of worldwide dimension, it provided Portugal with a dramatically enhanced international exposure. The (legal) national press reported not only on the fact that it was the first ever papal visit to Portugal – a feat achieved under the Estado Novo, which in itself reflected positively upon the regime – but more importantly on the enormous international interest which it was attracting all over the world, presented as greatly enhancing the nation's prestige.

The *Diário de Lisboa* emphasised the weight being given to the Pope's announced visit in the Spanish and Italian press¹²⁹ and further declared that the «visita do Papa a Fátima está a ter repercussão em todo o mundo»¹³⁰. On 12 May, it also noted the «grande afluência de jornalistas estrangeiros» converging upon the shrine, as by 11 May «1370 livres transitos [foram]

¹²⁷ In *Avante!*, August 1967, p. 4.

¹²⁸ Nogueira, *op. cit.*, p. 288.

¹²⁹ *Diário de Lisboa*, 4 May 1967, p. 21.

¹³⁰ *Idem*, 9 May 1967, p. 1.

passados pelo SNI para a informação»¹³¹. As a measure of the international attention the visit to Portugal was attracting, the *Diário de Notícias* remarked that by 13 May Madrid would find itself virtually emptied of its foreign correspondents, Fátima having become the centre of the «atenção de toda a Europa e de quase todo o mundo»¹³². *O Século* also highlighted the «ressonância universal» which the Pope's decision to travel to the Fátima shrine had acquired¹³³, while the regime's official organ, quoting the bishop of Leiria, carried as its main headline on 10 May the claim that «o mundo [está] de olhos postos em Fátima»¹³⁴.

Such claims were, of course, to a large degree true. As the trend of papal visits was one developed by John Paul II, it is easy to overlook the international interest which they attracted in the 1960s. Since the national press did not report that such world attention generally reflected negatively upon the Portuguese regime, it merely portrayed the event as placing – or “re-placing”, one is tempted to say in view of the heavy emphasis being laid upon the nation's glorious past – Portugal at the centre of world affairs. It constituted a first victory for the regime's propaganda machinery.

b) Re-affirming the regime's ideological basis

The Pope's visit also provided a momentous opportunity to return to the “providential” themes which had so often marked the relations between the Salazar regime and the Fátima shrine. «Então vivíamos (...) na miséria», Gomes Branco wrote about the year 1917 and the First Republic more generally in the columns of the *Diário da Manhã*. «Poucos anos depois [das aparições], Portugal regressava aos caminhos da ordem, do trabalho (...) e da grandeza»¹³⁵. Though the theme was familiar, the Pope's visit provided the much needed opportunity to re-affirm it in the unsettled sixties, the prestige of the illustrious pilgrim seemingly confirming its veracity.

The papal visit also constituted an invaluable opportunity to praise the merits of some of the traditional values upon which the Estado Novo's ideology rested. The lives of all three witnesses of the reported apparitions, in

¹³¹ *Idem*, 12 May 1967, p. 18.

¹³² *Diário de Notícias*, 10 May 1967, p. 7.

¹³³ *O Século*, 5 May 1967, p. 1.

¹³⁴ *Diário da Manhã*, 10 May 1967, p. 1.

¹³⁵ *Idem*, p. 1.

particular that of Jacinta Marto – who had succumbed on 20 February 1920 to the influenza epidemic which tore across Europe after the First World War, as had the third witness, her brother Francisco, on 4 April 1919 – were presented as embodying some of the values which the regime had sought to inculcate since its inception. «A sua (...) edificante vida, o seu estóico (...) sofrimento (...), a alegria interior com que recebeu o anúncio, logo na primeira aparição, da sua breve passagem pela Terra, encerram (...) um maravilhoso poema de humildade», the *Diário da Manhã* declared ¹³⁶. Such values as humility, abnegation and obedience were also suitably found in abundance among the pilgrims who in their thousands converged upon the sanctuary.

The Pope's visit equally provided the opportunity to praise the Portuguese peasantry as a whole, thus reaffirming the regime's rural ethos, on which the Portuguese people were increasingly turning their back during the 1960s ¹³⁷. Indeed, among these pilgrims, one element distinguished itself: «é o homem e a mulher do campo (...) que tudo abandonaram para estarem presentes na hora grande de Fátima» ¹³⁸. «Na sua maioria são gentes humildes das aldeias. (...) Deixaram os campos, as fábricas, a faina da pesca, a fim de cumprirem promessas feitas em momentos de ansiedade», the *Diário de Lisboa* reported ¹³⁹. Noticeably, most of these promises related to the nation's colonial wars.

Finally, the papal visit enabled renewed emphasis to be placed upon the religious piety of the Portuguese people, encouraged by the regime in its most traditional forms. As a Portuguese cleric wrote anonymously in the French progressive Catholic publication *Informations Catholiques Internationales*, the Estado Novo «reconnaît et flatte une petite religion 'innocente', faite (...) de cette piété individuelle qui aide les gens à devenir plus soumis» ¹⁴⁰. The Fátima cult, still in 1973 the «grand foyer (...) du mysticisme populaire portugais» ¹⁴¹, certainly featured many of the

¹³⁶ *Idem*, 12 May 1967, p. 1.

¹³⁷ Rural exodus, urbanisation, industrialisation and mass emigration certainly meant that new mentalities were emerging in the 1960s, as Portuguese society underwent “um dos mais profundos processos de mudança estrutural da sua história, não obstante poderosos factores (...) de resistência que subsistiam, condicionando negativamente (...) o alcance das transformações modernizadoras”, Rosas, in *História de Portugal*, dir. Mattoso, vol. 7, p. 419.

¹³⁸ *Diário de Notícias*, 12 May 1967, p. 1.

¹³⁹ *Diário de Lisboa*, 11 May 1967, p. 1.

¹⁴⁰ *Informations Catholiques Internationales*, n° 288, 15 May 1967, p. 26.

¹⁴¹ Silas Cerqueira, in *Revue Française de Science Politique*, vol. XXIII, n° 3, June 1977, p. 481.

deviations of traditional religiosity – a fact deplored by the progressive Catholics themselves as they highlighted the «carences de la liturgie» in the Fátima Pastoral ¹⁴² – despite some efforts at modernisation and theological deepening of the Fátima “message” carried out by the Portuguese Church in the wake of Vatican II ¹⁴³. The use of expressions such as *Nação Fidelíssima* by the Portuguese authorities, be they political or religious, already bear witness to the propensity to highlight the Portuguese people’s supposed attachment to the Roman Catholic Church. It was a point further highlighted by references to the birth of the Portuguese nation under the auspices of the Christian Church, the nation visited by the Pope being the «velha e multissecular terra de Santa Maria, assim chamada desde os primórdios da nacionalidade» ¹⁴⁴. The pilgrimage of 13 May 1967, taking on proportions unknown even to Fátima, seemed to constitute evidence of such religiosity. Indeed, in the first half of May 1967 the shrine had become the magnet to which the people’s traditional piety was irremediably attracted. From all over the country, the *Diário de Lisboa* reported, «sob chuva torrencial milhares de peregrinos tomam os caminhos de Fátima. (...) Embora fatigados (...), entram no Santuário a desfiar as contas do Rosário e a entoar canticos em louvos a Nossa Senhora. Para trás ficaram rastros de sangue dos pés, que são autênticas chagas» ¹⁴⁵. «Os caminhos pertencem aos romeiros», the *Diário de Notícias* also remarked. «Não há, com efeito, ponto do país donde eles não irradiem (...) Caminhando, entoam canticos. Os campos perderam o seu silêncio habitual. O Rosário é entoado por milhares de vozes» ¹⁴⁶. Portugal herself piously recited the Rosary, the reader was led to imply. If in the columns of the *Diário de Lisboa*, no effective judgment seemed to be passed upon these humble pilgrims, such was not the case in those of the *Diário de Notícias*. Relating to the extreme difficulties of a pilgrim met en-route to the shrine, its chief editor commented: «sei que ela concluíra sua caminhada. Uma força daquelas vence todo» ¹⁴⁷. As Silas Cerqueira observes, movements of popular mysti-

¹⁴² In *Informations Catholiques Internationales*, n° 288, p. 29.

¹⁴³ Though the desire in certain Catholic circles for «uma pastoral [de Fátima](...) que não se confinasse ao catolicismo mais devocional do mundo rural» would effectively lead to a crisis between the ACP’s new lay leadership and the episcopate in 1967, Fontes, in *História Religiosa de Portugal*, dir. Azevedo, Vol. 3, p. 260.

¹⁴⁴ *Diário de Notícias*, 4 May 1967, p. 7.

¹⁴⁵ *Diário de Lisboa*, 11 May 1967, p. 1.

¹⁴⁶ *Diário de Notícias*, 9 May 1967, p. 7.

¹⁴⁷ *Idem*, 11 May 1967, p. 8.

cism exercise certain «fonctions para-politiques»: “(...) en cultivant à une échelle de masses ‘certains états d’esprit de type religieux’ (Gramsci), ceux-ci servent de formidable force d’inertie et de conservation sociale»¹⁴⁸. In a context of urbanisation and industrialisation, to which Salazar was only reluctantly giving in, the papal visit provided a timely opportunity to once more call upon the inertia of the uneducated peasantry.

c) Uniting the Empire, “legitimising” the colonial wars

Much of the (legal) national press systematically linked the people’s present piety to its glorious past as an evangelising nation. The Portuguese nation was constituted by a «povo crente e ordeiro que descobrira novos mundos ao serviço de Deus, construindo um império em quatro continentes», the *Diário da Manhã* affirmed on 10 May 1967. It was an interpretation which fitted that officially promoted by the regime since the 1930s, replacing commercial considerations as the inspiration for the Discoveries by the purely religious objective of spreading the Christian Faith – and, naturally, expanding the Empire - throughout the world¹⁴⁹. Where the regime’s propaganda was most efficiently able to actualise its message was precisely in relation to the nation’s sense of mission as it set out to build its Empire: «para melhor dilatar a Fé de Cristo nessas terras de onde agora forças contrárias a Civilização Cristã nos pretendem arrear»¹⁵⁰. The rhetoric surrounding the nation’s great role in the Era of Discoveries was thus also designed to play a practical part in the contemporary national political context and the event which dominated it: the colonial wars.

The idea developed by the Salazar regime of the nation’s «divine mission to civilise», coupled with the luso-tropicalist theory developed by Freyre at the service of the regime from the early 1950s¹⁵¹ was in need of practical evidence by May 1967. As the experience of overseas assignment became more difficult for the young conscripts being sent to Angola, Mozambique and (particularly) Guinea, nationwide concern regarding the inability of the military to bring the conflicts to a victorious end may soon begin to emerge. While the Fátima visit could offer no hard evidence of

¹⁴⁸ Silas Cerqueira, *op. cit.*, p. 480.

¹⁴⁹ Pinto, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

¹⁵⁰ *Diário da Manhã*, 10 May 1967, p. 1.

¹⁵¹ See Léonard, in *História da Expansão Portuguesa*, vol. 5, dir. Bethencourt, Chaudhuri, p. 37-41.

victory to come, it could provide ample proof of the “special” nature of the Portuguese “mission” in its African colonies, a capital step towards justifying the conflicts themselves – all the more so as the Fátima sanctuary had rapidly become a centre of pilgrimage for Portuguese soldiers either returning from the colonial conflicts or about to be assigned to them.

Such “proof” was first provided by the reported general enthusiasm generated throughout the Empire at the announcement of the Pope’s decision to travel to the metropole. On 5 May, the regime’s official organ already emphasised the «intense vibração em todo o ultramar português»¹⁵². «Desde Cabinda ao Cunene», it remarked about Angola, «reina a alegria». It also highlighted the «jubilo sentido em toda a Provincia [de Moçambique]», as well as in Guinea, Macau and Timor – where «todos os timorenses regozijam com a grande nova»¹⁵³.

Secondly, a generous amount of space was devoted to emphasising the nation’s “special mission” itself. «A dominação [da minoria branca]», d’Assac – reporter and apologist biographer of Salazar – wrote in the *Diário da Manhã*, «não é por ela exercida como branca, mas como civilizada. (...) Em Africa (...) se trata de diferencias de nível de civilização (...), de (...) subdesenvolvimento mental. (...) O branco, muito naturalmente, é levado, não a dominar o negro, mas (...) a civilizá-lo»¹⁵⁴. That the leader of the Catholic Church should decide to visit the mother country lent huge power of persuasion to these claims. Such propaganda was not limited to the pages of the regime’s official organ but revealingly found its clearest expression in the columns of the «órgão officioso do episcopado»¹⁵⁵, *Novidades*. In these times of «criminosos ataques de que é vítima Portugal», it recalled the nation’s action in Africa, «toda ela (...) de libertação da pessoa humana». Portugal, it asserted, «fundiu com a alma dos nativos a sua própria alma, vendo neles irmãos com iguais direitos e o mesmo destino»¹⁵⁶. Much of the rest of the national press followed a similar – if less extreme – line of argument, the *Diário de Notícias* most particularly. Reporting on the African soldiers fighting the “terroristas invasores” alongside the Portuguese forces, it stated, «assim se demonstrou que o solo pátrio é património sagrado de gente de todas as cores e

¹⁵² *Diário da Manhã*, 5 May 1967, p. 3.

¹⁵³ *Idem*.

¹⁵⁴ *Idem*, 12 May 1967, p. 5.

¹⁵⁵ In *História Religiosa de Portugal*, dir. Azevedo, vol. 3, p. 135.

¹⁵⁶ *Novidades*, 20 May 1967, p. 1 and 8.

religiões. (...) Comandados pelo próprio *soba*», it remarked about the Muslim soldiers integrated within the Portuguese forces in Guinea, «(...) tem assegurado a defesa da região em que vivem sob a protecção da bandeira de um país multiracial»¹⁵⁷. That most of the Muslim Fula ethnic group did fight alongside the Portuguese colonial forces in Guinea was true, though not on the basis of a shared sense of nationality but rather as a result of their already heavily compromised position vis-à-vis what was now seen by much of the Guinean population as an occupying army¹⁵⁸.

The sense of unity of the whole Empire as expressed throughout its shared enthusiasm at the Pope's decision to visit the Fátima shrine also took on practical forms, as the "overseas provinces" were called upon to take part in the religious ceremonies which preceded the Pope's arrival. Such "mobilisation" was carried out first within the overseas provinces themselves, as *Procissões das Velas* were organised in Lourenço Marques, Luanda and Bissau. Additionally, an image of the Holy Virgin, blessed in Fátima, was sent to Angola on 11 May, where it was received with great enthusiasm and exhibited in Luanda cathedral until 14 May. Finally, each colony was to be represented at the 13 May Fátima ceremonies – Mozambique, for instance, by the bishops of Porto Amelia, Inhambane and Vila Cabral¹⁵⁹. Additionally, a special "Ceremony of the Roses" was organised in Fátima on 11 May, during which representatives from each of the Portuguese colonies deposited flowers in the *Capelinha das Aparições*. «Portugal na sua unidade de raças e cores vai depor rosas aos pés da Virgem», the *Diário de Notícias* reported¹⁶⁰.

Thirdly the emphasis upon the special tribute to the Portuguese nation which the papal visit was portrayed as added weight to the criticism of the African nationalists which also filled the columns of the (legal) press. Indeed, in sharp contrast to the mother nation – civilising centre radiating its Christian values to its "overseas provinces" and host to the Holy Father – the "barbarity" of the African nationalists was emphasised. «São queimados vivos ou comidos os nativos aprisionados pelo MPLA», the

¹⁵⁷ *Diário de Notícias*, 10 May 1967, p. 6.

¹⁵⁸ Hierarchic ethnic groups such as the Fula tended to collaborate with the Portuguese during the period of effective occupation – see Chabal, *Amílcar Cabral*, p. 20, 79 – assuming that it would enable them to maintain a certain degree of autonomy – i.e. the traditional chief would keep control over the community.

¹⁵⁹ *Diário de Notícias*, 10 May 1967, p. 7.

¹⁶⁰ *Idem*, 12 May 1967, p. 9.

Diário da Manhã noticeably reported ¹⁶¹. The same “barbaric” attitude was attributed to Republic of Guinea President Sékou Touré as he expelled all foreign Catholic and Protestant missionaries from the country. «Africano no mau sentido da palavra e marxista, o Presidente era naturalmente impelido para o campo da perseguição religiosa», the *Diário da Manhã* commented ¹⁶², also seeing in Sékou Touré’s decision evidence of the «fundo primitivo da superstição que, na alma negra, tem até agora resistido a toda a acção educativa» ¹⁶³. Additionally, the Pope’s visit quite logically enabled negative reports from the colonial conflicts to be buried deeper still inside the daily press ¹⁶⁴.

Finally, in spite of the political subtleties of the Pope’s homily, the visit lent weight to the regime’s portrayed anti-communist crusade in Africa, thus helping to justify its colonial wars. Linking these conflicts to the war then dominating the international scene, d’Assac returned to the pages of the *Diário da Manhã* to affirm that Cuba was attempting to open up, «por conta da Internacional Comunista, um conflito ‘estilo vietnã’ em África, afim de aliviar os vietnamistas do Norte». «A resistência portuguesa em África», he continued, represented the «único obstáculo, com as resistências sul-africanas e rodesianas, à abertura da ‘segunda frente’, tão ambicionada pelos estrategos do Kremlin» ¹⁶⁵. Despite the Pope’s tone of conciliation with Communism, his silence over the Portuguese colonial wars did not help counter such justification. Neither did the discourse of members of the Portuguese Catholic hierarchy. Noticeable in this respect was the address of the Leiria *Prelado Auxiliar* during the 12 May *Procissão das Velas* in Fatima. «[É] indispensável renovar os votos pela Paz pela continuidade da Pátria em todos os continentes e oceanos», he declared to the huge crowd of pilgrims ¹⁶⁶, thus succeeding in conciliating both the Pope’s message of Peace and the regime’s policy of war. Support for the government’s policy in Africa was also clearly expressed in the official “revista de cultura do clero”, *Lúmen*, as it bluntly asserted Portugal’s right to «defender o que é seu» ¹⁶⁷.

¹⁶¹ *Diário da Manhã*, 8 May 1967, p. 7-8.

¹⁶² *Idem*, 7 May 1967, p. 1.

¹⁶³ *Idem*, 8 May 1967, p. 1.

¹⁶⁴ Such as the 30 April-6 May “Comunicado das Forças Armadas em Angola”, *Diário de Lisboa*, 12 May 1967, p. 12.

¹⁶⁵ *Diário da Manhã*, 11 May 1967, p. 6.

¹⁶⁶ *Diário de Notícias*, 13 May 1967, p. 9.

¹⁶⁷ *Lúmen*, vol. XXI, June 1967, p. 430.

The powerful accumulation of these factors led the *Diário de Notícias* to claim on 13 May that a «Nação inteira, católica, apostólica e romana, aquela que se acolhe sem fronteiras, sem diferenças de credos, raças ou línguas à sombra universal da Santa Igreja, ajoelha, emotiva, perante o altar que é a Pátria dos domínios da Fé». The regime had succeeded in turning the Pope's private pilgrimage of peace into confirmation of the nation's "divine mission to civilise", and not only justification for, but also reason for the continuation of, its colonial wars. Modern technology would enable it to extend its propaganda exercise further.

5.2. Expanding the effects of the visit: the role of television

Three distinct effects of the televised broadcast of the visit can be observed. First it ensured that the largest possible national audience was exposed to the visit. Secondly, it extended coverage to a larger worldwide audience in a purely instrumentalist fashion. Finally, by highlighting the RTP's technological prowess, it endowed the regime with a much-needed aura of modernity, at a time which tended precisely to highlight the negative effects of the regime's conservative policies upon the nation's modernisation.

Estimates concerning the number of pilgrims at the Fátima shrine on 13 May 1967 range from 750, 000 to 1.5 million, the generally accepted figure lying at 1 million. To this substantial figure, television permitted to add a far larger part of the population. Transmitted live by the RTP, the event occupied most of the network's daily programming. There is little doubt that it succeeded in gripping the nation's attention. Those who did not own a set met in those cafés and restaurants which did – or were urged on by manufacturers to purchase one¹⁶⁸. This student's mother-in-law, then a teenager, was taken to a (packed) restaurant along with the rest of her family to follow the papal visit. In the rural centre of Portugal, such outings were a rare occurrence, and testify to the importance of the event. Nor was interest restricted to the countryside, as the capital's deserted streets on 13 May demonstrated¹⁶⁹.

¹⁶⁸ As advertisements along the lines of "Fátima Dia 13, com Philips uma data histórica em sua casa" flourished, *Diário de Lisboa*, 8 May 1967, p. 9.

¹⁶⁹ Of which impressive photographs are to be found in the *Diário de Notícias*, 14 May 1967, p. 14.

Televised transmission naturally extended across Portugal's borders. Through the Eurovision network, 14 European countries were granted live coverage of the event. The regime's instrumentalist use of the broadcast was demonstrated first by its determination to ensure that the RTP controlled the transmission. The RAI's claims to supervision as the "official" network of papal events were thus resisted. «Opinião pública portuguesa não compreenderia que tivesse de ver por canal estrangeiro (...) transmissão TV cerimónias Fátima», Franco Nogueira conveniently reminded Faria¹⁷⁰. Secondly, it was demonstrated by the regime's attempts to control as strictly as possible which journalists were to cover the event, as the incident over a RAI reporter named Colombo illustrates. Believed erroneously by the Portuguese government to be the author of an «insultuoso programa anti-português» aired by the RAI only weeks earlier, diplomatic crisis was merely avoided by Faria's investigations in Rome – where he was assured by Dell'Acqua that it was a case of mistaken identity. The particular Colombo travelling to Fátima «vai com instruções Director Geral RAI fazer reportagem agradável nosso país»¹⁷¹. Finally, it was demonstrated by the reports sent from Portuguese embassies around the world to the Foreign Ministry commenting upon the "results" of these broadcasts. About the one on Brazilian television on 14 May, the Portuguese Consulate in São Paulo notified Lisbon of the «bons resultados obtidos», having generated «uma reacção generalizada que nos é muito favorável»¹⁷². From the USA also came "favourable" results. The government's constant preoccupation with assisting US journalists in their mission while in Portugal – such as providing helicopter delivery of the film footage from Fátima to Lisbon twice for NBC on 13 May¹⁷³ – had paid off. «Os três principais canais televisão CBS, NBC e ABC», the Portuguese Ambassador to Washington reported, «transmitiram (...) cerimónias Fátima acompanhadas comentários de forma geral muito favoráveis»¹⁷⁴.

By ensuring control of the televised broadcast, the regime was able to benefit from its much-publicised success. To this effect, the written press

¹⁷⁰ MNE, PEA 375, n° proc. 332,52, telegrama MNE para Faria, n° Geral 2735, 6 May 1967.

¹⁷¹ *Idem*, telegrama Faria para MNE, n° Geral 3592, 9 May 1967.

¹⁷² *Idem*, telegrama Consulado em São Paulo para MNE, n° Geral 3856, 19 May 1967.

¹⁷³ *Idem*, telegrama Embaixada de Portugal em Washington para MNE, n° Geral 3630, 10 May 1967.

¹⁷⁴ *Idem*, n° Geral 3714, 14 May 1967.

joined in the propaganda effort. First, the highly technological nature of the RTP's transmission was emphasised in the regime's official organ. «Imagens do percurso até o Santuário (...) serão captadas por um carro equipado com uma câmara e um emissor que transmitirá para um helicóptero, fazendo este de estação *relay*, e dali para a *regie* final», it reported ¹⁷⁵. The modernity of the equipment at use reflected well on the regime itself, answering critics which denounced the *atraso tecnológico* its reactionary policies were generating. It was a point that the generous attention given to how much foreign journalists had praised Portuguese efficacy served to further emphasise. «O presidente da ABC (...) telegrafou mesmo (...) ao presidente da RTP manifestando-lhe (...) a sua admiração pela magnífica reportagem da visita do Papa», the *Diário da Manhã* further highlighted ¹⁷⁶, while also reporting that all US journalists had been «surpreendidos [pelas] facilidades que encontraram em Portugal» ¹⁷⁷. The *Diário de Notícias* equally remarked that the «valor técnico do pessoal da TV merecerem elogios de americanos e italianos» ¹⁷⁸, while the *Diário de Lisboa* observed that the international press had recognised the RTP's work as «excepcional, impressionante» ¹⁷⁹. Such reports worked clearly to the benefit of the regime. The modern technologies available to the RTP, along with its professionalism, recognised by the international community, implied that the Estado Novo was a force for progress. In the most unexpected of ways, the visit was again working to the benefit of the ageing traditionalist dictator.

It is a measure of how efficient the regime was in appropriating the visit that the opposition met with so little success in countering it. The Pope's visit, indeed, left the opponents to Salazarist rule in disarray.

5.3. Trapped opposition, strengthened regime

By 1967, the Salazar regime had survived several attempts to overturn it, be it through legal means or otherwise. From the 1949 presidential elections to those of 1958, from the March 1959 *Golpe da Sé* to the January 1962 Beja rebellion, from the 1962 student demonstrations to the emergence of a

¹⁷⁵ *Diário da Manhã*, 12 May 1967, p. 3.

¹⁷⁶ *Idem*, 16 May 1967, p. 3

¹⁷⁷ *Idem*, 18 May 1967, p. 11.

¹⁷⁸ *Diário de Notícias*, 16 May 1967, p. 7.

¹⁷⁹ *Diário de Lisboa*, 16 May 1967, p. 1.

progressive Catholic movement, opposition to the regime was mounting and expanding to new sectors of society. Conversely, in an international context marked by Castrist seizure of power in Cuba in 1959, international Guevarism and the Vietnam War, and a national environment dominated by the colonial conflicts, opposition was moving further to the left and undergoing a process of radicalisation, most noticeable with the creation of Palma Inácio's LUAR in 1967¹⁸⁰. However, by 1967, opposition forces to the regime were also limited both by an increasingly repressive regime and by persistent internal divisions – a trend which would deepen in the early 1970s. Noticeably, 1964 witnessed the creation of the *Associação Socialista Portuguesa* (ASP), barely a year after the *Movimento de Acção Revolucionária*, while a pro-Chinese section split from the PCP to form the *Comité Marxista-Leninista Português* – initiating the *grupuscolização* of the extreme left¹⁸¹.

The Pope's visit placed the already divided opposition to the regime in a more difficult position still. First, the international stature of the regime's guest was naturally not one that was easily countered. Secondly, the new orientation of the Catholic Church often corresponded with its own claims. Had the Vatican not denounced dictatorship as a form of governance? Was it not promoting social justice, freedom of expression and self-determination? About Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio*, Casimírio indeed remarked in the socialist-oriented *Seara Nova*, that the «espírito que presidiu à criação da Igreja de Jerusalém não morre. Guarda-se no coração dos melhores. E logo começa a avivar-se dentro da própria Igreja que ia ser (...) o seu túmulo. Esse espírito, desde São Paulo a Santo Agostinho, a João XXIII e Paulo VI, (...) cresce em presença imperativa»¹⁸². The ASP leader-in-exile Ramos da Costa was also forced to partly praise the Pope's encyclicals. «Il y aurait pour le Pape une seule manière de ne pas apporter de caution à Salazar» he declared, «ce serait de marcher (...) dans la voie des encycliques *Pacem in Terris* et *Populorum Progressio*: confirmer la bonne nouvelle de la décolonisation, condamner clairement la guerre coloniale, désavouer (...) l'oppression policière»¹⁸³. As we have seen, the Pope would do no such thing. Ironically, the spirit of Vatican II, which Salazar so much despised, was working to his advantage, "cornering" the opposition further by denying it the possibility of frontal criticism. This was only

¹⁸⁰ Rosas, in *História de Portugal*, dir. Mattoso, vol. 7, p. 542-543.

¹⁸¹ *Idem*, p. 542.

¹⁸² *Seara Nova*, n° 1459, May 1967, p. 157.

¹⁸³ In *Le Monde*, 13 May 1967, p. 13.

partly true when opposition expressed itself from exile, but in Portugal, coupled to efficient censorship, it led to a predominantly pro-papal tone even in the declarations of the left-wing. *Seara Nova* chose not to address the visit. At the most it limited itself to indirect sarcasm, noting for instance that the contemporaneous issue of *Novidades* «incluiu surpreendentemente esta máxima de Luz Soriano: ‘Nada há pior, nem mais insuportável na sociedade, que o despotismo dos demagogos’»¹⁸⁴.

In 1967, the Portuguese Communist Party remained the «backbone of [the] opposition»¹⁸⁵. Despite criticism from the radical left over its «alegada incapacidade de fazer face à nova situação» (resulting from the active opposition phase of 1958-1962) and its rigid alignment behind Moscow¹⁸⁶, meaning that as early as 1964 both Delgado and the ASP had left the Algiers-based FPLN, the PCP gained new impetus from its 6th Congress, held in Kiev in September 1965. The Pope’s visit, though, was also to place it in a difficult position. The Pope who visited Fátima was the same Pope who sought conciliation with the Communist states and supported self-determination. Not even the Communist Party, it seemed, could easily confront Paul VI over the Church’s orientations. Again *aggiornamento*, in a perverse turn of events, was working to the regime’s advantage.

In the Pope’s visit, the PCP faced two formidable threats: the potential division of the workers’ movement, whose unity it saw as the *sine qua non* condition for revolution – as the Pope’s visit would provide moral backing to what the Party saw as an «ampla campanha de divisão entre a classe operária [conduzida pelos] monopólios capitalistas, a ditadura fascista, o alto clero reaccionário»¹⁸⁷ – and its own alienation from the Portuguese masses – whose religiosity it was well aware of. Both threats it sought to counter by praising the new Conciliar line of Catholicism and by exposing the unchristian nature of the Salazar regime.

As the visit was announced, the PCP’s initial reaction was to praise the «esforço de milhões de católicos, que no mundo inteiro (...) lutam (...) sinceramente pela Paz»¹⁸⁸. It was a sign of the progressive Catholic movement’s growing importance that the PCP was eager to differentiate between precisely those Catholics who followed the new Conciliar line

¹⁸⁴ *Seara Nova*, n° 1460, June 1967.

¹⁸⁵ Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, p. 80.

¹⁸⁶ Rosas, in *História de Portugal*, dir. Mattoso, vol. 7, p. 543.

¹⁸⁷ *Avante!*, n° 377, April 1967, p. 1.

¹⁸⁸ *Idem*, n° 378, May 1967, p. 1.

and the ecclesiastical hierarchy which stood behind the regime. The Communists were largely reduced to the paradoxical position of writing the apology of Papal encyclicals (those of John XXIII and Paul VI) and the way their propagation in Portugal had been impeded by the regime – though how much this also reflected the PCP’s own “especulações” over the religiousness of the Portuguese masses, from which it was keen not to alienate itself, also has to be asked.

While there was little in the orientation of Paul VI’s pontificate which the PCP could more directly oppose – and well-aware of the religiosity of its own people – it was effectively reduced to denouncing the regime’s own unchristian nature in as much as it did not comply with papal doctrine. Cunhal’s 4 May 1967 broadcast on *Radio Portugal Livre* is particularly revealing as to this particular point. «Quando católicos (...), mesmo o próprio Papa, tomam posições que não servem os interesses da política fascista», he stated, «Salazar não hesita em considerá-los imediatamente como sendo do campo inimigo. (...) Os governantes fascistas, que agora expressam tanto júbilo pela vinda do Papa Paulo VI a Portugal são os mesmos que criticaram grosseiramente a visita do Papa a Bombaim (...), que censuram a publicação das encíclicas do próprio Papa Paulo VI quando a sua doutrina não serve os interesses do fascismo e do colonialismo»¹⁸⁹.

The clandestine nature of the Communist organ, however, allowed it to express far more critical views. Indeed it denounced the Pope’s silence over the regime’s repressive orientation and colonial policies¹⁹⁰, but also some of the Pope’s own actions, which contributed to the regime’s much-desired politicisation of the event. «Recebeu (...) em audiência particular (...), os escravizadores do povo português, os responsáveis directos pela guerra colonial. Não é um tal acto de natureza política?», the PCP deplored¹⁹¹. It also condemned the Amnesty decree, «espelho de hipocrisia fascista», as well as the Pope’s decision to decorate Silva Pais, «director de um selvático instrumento de tortura e de crimes»¹⁹². If along with the fear that the regime may come to succeed in its politicisation, «especulando com os sentimentos religiosos da grande massa dos portugueses»¹⁹³, some hope had been harboured about the Pope’s visit, huge was the disappointment as it

¹⁸⁹ Transcript from MNE, PEA 375.

¹⁹⁰ «Num país onde domina um regime fascista, mantido pelo terror (...), a voz do papa não se ergueu», *Avante!*, n° 379, June 1967, p. 5.

¹⁹¹ *Idem*.

¹⁹² *Idem*, n° 381, August 1967, p. 4.

¹⁹³ *Idem*, n° 378, May 1967, p. 1.

unfolded. «Em nome da causa da defesa da pessoa humana, que Paulo VI diz defender, não se louvam (...) assassinos», the PCP concluded ¹⁹⁴.

If the PCP remained the opposition's backbone, a significant new force was emerging by 1967, the progressive Catholic movement. Paradoxically, it was to be the most affected by the presence of the Pope of Vatican II on Portuguese soil.

As we have seen, internal Catholic opposition had first emerged on a noticeable scale during the 1958 presidential elections. If progressive Catholicism found some expression within certain limited sections of the clergy, and more so in lay activism, whose role was enhanced by the Council – reflected in the preoccupation of the May 1967 *Assembleia Plenária do Episcopado* «com a evolução da mentalidade que se está a processar (...) nas camadas jovens do clero e do laicado» ¹⁹⁵ –, it is in the non-militant Catholic elite that it was given its clearest expression. During the elections of 1965, leading Catholic personalities associated themselves with the opposition for the first time through the celebrated “Manifesto of the 101”, a concerted denunciation of Salazarism in the light of papal doctrine ¹⁹⁶. Published in the national press, it had been a major victory for progressive Catholicism, exposing the «monstruosa mistificação do pseudo Estado Católico, que se serve da Igreja para manter (...) o País (...) debaixo do jugo de um regime que oprime (...) os direitos dos homens por entre fari-saicas exibições de religiosidade» ¹⁹⁷. The movement also exerted its influence through Catholic cooperatives, the most important of which being the Lisbon-based Pragma established in 1965. Forcibly shut down by the regime on 11 April 1967, shortly before the Pope's visit, it was a sign of the movement's growing influence. Despite increased collaboration between socialists and progressive Catholics ¹⁹⁸, the trend developed as a movement of Christian conscience rather than as a united political front, contributing both to the “dispersed” nature of the movement itself ¹⁹⁹ and to the fractionalisation of the opposition as a whole. It was also conversely what lent

¹⁹⁴ *Idem*, n° 381, August 1967, p. 4.

¹⁹⁵ In *Acção Católica Portuguesa*, n° 385, Março-Maio 1967, p. 21-22.

¹⁹⁶ In Alves, *op. cit.*, p. 175-208.

¹⁹⁷ In clandestine progressive Catholic *Direito a Informação*, n° 7, undated (circa December 1965), p. 1.

¹⁹⁸ Noticeable in October 1966 as five personalities including Mario Soares and Catholic lawyer de Sousa Tavares jointly attempted to organise a series of topical lectures, in Kay, *op. cit.*, p. 391.

¹⁹⁹ Raby, *Fascism and Resistance in Portugal*, p. 233.

greater efficiency to its «efeito corrosivo (...) nos pilares ideológicos do Estado Novo»²⁰⁰. As Rosas remarks, it came to bear no less than an «enorme impacte na desagregação ideológica do regime»²⁰¹. The visit of Paul VI paradoxically stopped the movement in its tracks.

An extract from progressive Catholic João Bénard da Costa's *Nós, Os Vencidos do Catolicismo* shows just to what extent: «Que após [suas] viagens de sentido tão aberto ao diálogo com o mundo contemporâneo (...) o Papa viesse agora a Portugal, ao Portugal de Salazar, pareceu-nos devastador»²⁰². Progressive Catholics found themselves in an untenable situation. «Deixava-nos perfeitamente encurralados: não podíamos saudar a vinda do Pontífice [sabendo que era fatal o aproveitamento político que o governo ia fazer desta visita] também a não podíamos condenar, para não nos situarmos na mesma posição que tantas vezes tínhamos assacado aos católicos salazarentos: a falta de sintonia com o pensamento e a acção do Papa»²⁰³. Just how “trapped” the movement was is shown by the coverage of the Pope’s visit in the progressive Catholic publication *O Tempo e o Modo*. Once again it was left with little option than almost total silence. The briefest of allusions to the visit to which it was reduced do however convey its sense of injury. Under a section entitled “*Crítica de Noticiário*” – in which any article from the national press particularly deserving of it was satirically exposed– a specially written poem about the Pope’s visit, published in the *Ecos de Extremoz*, was given renewed publication²⁰⁴. In its July to October edition, the same sarcastic treatment was reserved to the Nuncio’s address as he departed from his function²⁰⁵. Effectively “trapped” by the nature of the visit and efficiently muzzled by the regime’s censors, progressive Catholicism was relegated to the underground world of clandestine publications – where it directly denounced the misery to which the regime condemned the rural world, the colonial wars, and the hierarchy’s complicity with the dictatorial regime²⁰⁶. By his presence at Salazar’s side, Paul VI effectively called into question the credibility of

²⁰⁰ Almeida, in *História*, n° 8, p. 61. To which may be added the fact that it emanated from the “coração do regime”, *idem*.

²⁰¹ In *História de Portugal*, dir. Mattoso, vol. 7, p. 543.

²⁰² Costa, *Nós, os Vencidos do Catolicismo*, p. 84.

²⁰³ *Idem*.

²⁰⁴ *O Tempo e o Modo*, n° 49, May 1967, p. 524-525.

²⁰⁵ *Idem*, n° quádruplo 50-53, June-October 1967, p. 656.

²⁰⁶ In *Direito a Informação*, n° 2 (circa January 1964), n° 3 (circa August 1964), n° 8 (circa January 1966) respectively.

the progressive movement. Quite paradoxically, the increasingly painful thorn of Conciliar Catholicism had been removed (though only temporarily) from the regime's side by the Pope himself.

The attempts made by the opposition movements to vent their disapproval during the visit – the FPLN issuing a radio call for its militants to disrupt the Pope's journey from Monte Real to Fátima ²⁰⁷ – had been efficiently silenced by the regime. The opposition in disarray, the internal position of the Salazar regime had very concretely been strengthened politically by the visit.

Conclusion: a regime re-legitimated

The papal visit constituted a diplomatic coup of momentous proportions for the Salazar regime. Not only had it permitted to once again legitimise the Estado Novo in the eyes of the Portuguese Catholic masses through the most powerful of symbols, it had also, owing to the mechanisms of efficient censorship and the active collaboration of the majority of the ecclesiastical hierarchy with the regime, been used to “re-place” the nation at the centre of world affairs, re-affirm the regime's ideological basis, “legitimise” the colonial wars and ultimately present the Estado Novo as a force for progress.

Into an ageing regime, the papal visit injected new life, delaying further its increasingly inevitable collapse, to the extent that it does not seem excessive to suggest that subsequent developments may have been different had it not taken place. Progressive Catholicism, so severely discredited by the papal visit, may most noticeably have developed far more rapidly and enabled an earlier transfer to democracy following Salazar's incapacitation in 1968.

The visit and its effects upon the nation, as well as the role played by the national ecclesiastical hierarchy throughout, are proof of the Catholic Church's fundamental part in legitimising the Estado Novo still – and one may argue, more than ever – in the changing 1960s, despite the notable efforts of a limited number of progressive clerics and lay Catholic activists. Though the extent to which the Catholic Church had participated

²⁰⁷ «Em todo o percurso (...) escrever por toda a parte: 'Portugal sim, Salazar não', [e] gritarmos: 'Queremos liberdade!'», in MNE, PEA 375, “A Voz da Liberdade” transcript of 7 May 1967.

in the regime's early establishment and subsequent consolidation, as well as influenced its eventual downfall in 1974, remains to be accurately established, it is a first sign of its prime importance in explaining the regime's exceptional longevity.

Bibliography

A) PRIMARY SOURCES:

1 – Official Archives

a) *Arquivo Histórico-Diplomático do Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros* (MNE) (Lisbon):

- PEA 375, n° Proc. 332, 52: Diplomatic relations with the Vatican.
- PEA 481: Religious questions – Fátima.
- SP 190, n° Proc. 69, 52: Visit of Paul VI to Fátima.

b) *Arquivo de Oliveira Salazar* (Torre do Tombo, Lisbon)

- AOS/CO/NE-30^a, File 10: “Correspondência sobre as seguintes questões: participação do Papa Paulo VI no Congresso Eucarístico, Bombaim. Entrega da Rosa de Ouro do Santuário de Fátima e de colecção de medalhas comemorativas do primeiro ano do Pontificado de Paulo VI, ao Prof. Doutor A. de Oliveira Salazar”.
- AOS/CO/PC-67, File 21: “Realização de *Te Deum* na Sé Patriarcal de Lisboa, por ocasião da eleição do Papa Paulo VI”.
- AOS/CO/PC-69, File 35: “Correspondência sobre as seguintes questões: preparação das comemorações do cinquentenário das aparições de Nossa Senhora de Fátima”.
- AOS/CO/PC-71, File 29: “Organização da peregrinação de goeses a Fátima”.
- AOS/CO/PC-72, File 4: “Correspondência sobre as seguintes questões: visita do Papa Paulo VI a Fátima”.
- AOS/CO/PC-76, File 7: “Reacções clero português às posições do governo sobre visita Papa Bombaim”.
- AOS/CO/UL-55, File 5: “Visita Paulo VI a Bombaim”.

2 – Newspapers

- *Acção Católica*, Boletim Arquidiocesano, Braga, n° 5, May 1967.
- *Acção Católica Portuguesa*, (former *Boletim da Acção Católica Portuguesa*) from n° 384 (February 1967) to n° 386 (June-August 1967).
- *Novidades*, from n° 23793 (1 May) to n° 23813 (22 May 1967).
- *Avante!*, from n° 374 (January 1967) to n° 386 (December 1967).
- *Diário da Manhã*, from n° 12855 (4 May 1967) to n° 12871 (20 May 1967).
- *Diário de Lisboa*, from n° 15938 (3 May 1967) to n° 15952 (17 May 1967).

- *Diário de Notícias*, from nº 36335 (1 May 1967) to nº 36354 (21 May 1967).
- *Direito a Informação*, nº 2 (undated, circa January 1964), nº 3 (circa August 1964), nº 7 (circa December 1965), nº 8 (circa January 1966).
- *Informations Catholiques Internationales*, from nº 286 (14 April) to nº 289 (1 June 1967).
- *Le Monde*, from nº 6945 (12 May) to nº 6948 (16 May 1967).
- *Lúmen*, Ano XXXI, vol. XXI, 1967, January to December 1967.
- *O Século*, from nº 30560 (4 May 1967) to nº 30566 (20 May 1967).
- *O Tempo e o Modo*, from nº 45 (January 1967) to nº 54-55 (November-December 1967).
- *República*, from 3 May 1967 to 23 May 1967.
- *Seara Nova*, from nº 1457 (March 1967) to nº 1462 (August 1967).
- *The Daily Telegraph*, 13 May and 15 May 1967 issues.
- *The Times*, nº 56939 (12 May 1967), nº 56940 (13 May 1967), nº 56941 (15 May 1967).
- *Time Magazine*, vol. 89, nº 20, 19 May 1967.

B) SECONDARY SOURCES:

- Alfarcic, Prosper, *A Fabricação de Fátima*. Lisboa: Edições Delfos, [1971].
- Almeida, João Miguel de, “A oposição católica ao Estado Novo – Rupturas ‘em família’”, in *História*, Ano XX (Nova Série), nº 8, November 1998, p. 54-62.
- Alves, José da Felicidade, ed., *Católicos e Política – De Humberto Delgado a Marcelo Caetano*. Lisboa: edição do autor, 1970.
- Azevedo, Carlos Moreira, dir., *História Religiosa de Portugal*, vol. 3, *Religião e Secularização*, coord. Clemente, Manuel, and Matos Ferreira, António. Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores, 2002.
- Barthas, Claude, *Fátima 1917-1968, Histoire complète des apparitions et de leurs suites*. Toulouse: Fátima Editora, 1968.
- Bethencourt, Francisco and Chaudhuri, Kirti, dir., *História da Expansão Portuguesa*, vol. 5, *Último Império e Recentramento (1930-1998)*. Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores, 2000.
- Brandão, Pedro Ramos, *Salazar – Cerejeira, a “força da Igreja” – Cartas inéditas do Cardeal Patriarca ao Presidente do Conselho*. Lisboa: Editorial Notícias, 2002.
- Caetano, Marcelo, *Minhas Memórias de Salazar*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Record, 1977.
- Carvalho, Rita Almeida, “Fátima e Salazar”, in *História*, Ano XXII (III Série), nº 29, October 2000, p. 28-37.
- Cerqueira, Silas, “L’Église Catholique et la Dictature Corporatiste Portugaise”, in *Revue Française de Science Politique*, P.U.F, vol. XXIII, nº 3, June 1973, p. 473-513.

- Chabal, Patrick, *Amílcar Cabral*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Chilcote, Ronald H., «*Salazar's Portugal: Anniversary on thin ice*», in *The Nation*, nº 22, Vol 202, January - June 1966, 30 May 1966 issue, p. 638-641.
- Costa, João Bénard da, *Nós, os Vencidos do Catolicismo*. Coimbra: Edições Tenacitas, 2003.
- Cruz, Manuel Braga da, and Rezola, Maria Inácia, “*O Estado Novo e a Igreja Católica*”, in Serrão, Joel and Oliveira Marques, A.H.de, dir., *Nova História de Portugal*, vol. 12, *Portugal e o Estado Novo (1930-1960)*, coord. Fernando Rosas. Lisboa: Editorial Presença, 1990.
- Cruz, Manuel Braga da, *As origens da democracia cristã e o salazarismo*. Lisboa, Editorial Presença, 1980.
- Cruz, Manuel Braga da, *O Estado Novo e a Igreja Católica*. Lisboa: Editorial Bizâncio, 1999.
- *Documentação Crítica sobre Fátima, vol. 1: Interrogatórios aos Videntes – 1917*. Fátima: Santuário de Fátima, 1992.
- Duffy, Eamon, *Saints and Sinners – A History of the Popes*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997.
- *Fascismo (O) em Portugal*, Actas do Colóquio realizado na Faculdade de Letras em Março de 1980. Lisboa: Regra do Jogo Edições, 1982.
- Ferreira, António Matos, “*A Igreja e a República*”, in Medina, João, dir., *História de Portugal*, Vol 10, *A República*. Lisboa: Edição e Promoção do Livro Lda, 1994.
- Fischer, Luís, *Fátima à luz da autoridade eclesiástica*. Lisboa: Tipografia da União Gráfica, 1932.
- Gallagher, Tom, *Portugal, a Twentieth Century Interpretation*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983.
- Hebblethwaite, Peter, *Paul VI – the First Modern Pope*. London: Harper Collins Publishing, 1993.
- Holmes, J. Derek, *The Papacy in the Modern World 1914-1978*. London: The Catholic Book Club, 1982.
- Ilharco, João, *Fátima Desmascarada*. Coimbra: Tipografia Comercial, 1971.
- Kay, Hugh, *Salazar and Modern Portugal*. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1970.
- Kelly, J.N.D, *The Oxford Dictionary of Pope*. Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Lee, Stephen J., *European Dictatorships 1918-1945*. London-New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Léonard, Yves, *Salazarismo e Fascismo*. Mira-Sintra: Editorial Inquérito, 1998.
- Lúcia, Irmã, *Memórias da Irmã Lúcia*. Fátima: vice-postulação, 6ª edição, 1990.
- Machado, António Augusto Borelli, *As Aparições e a Mensagem de Fátima nos manuscritos da Irmã Lúcia*. Braga: Companhia Editora do Minho, 1990.
- Mafra, Luís de Azevedo, *Lisboa no Tempo do Cardeal Cerejeira*. Lisboa: Centro de Estudos de História Religiosa Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 1997.
- Marques, A.H. de Oliveira, *História de Portugal*, vol. 3, *Das Revoluções Liberais aos Nossos Dias*. Lisboa: Editorial Presença, 1998.

- Mattoso, José, dir., *História de Portugal*, Vol 7, *O Estado Novo (1926-1974)*, coord. Fernando Rosas. Lisboa: Editorial Estampa, 1993.
- *Message (The) of Fátima*. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Publishers to the Holy See, 2000.
- Neto, Vítor, *O Estado, a Igreja e a sociedade em Portugal (1832-1911)*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1998.
- Nogueira, Franco, *Salazar*, vol. 6, *O Último Combate*. Porto: Livraria Civilização Editora, 1985.
- Oliveira, Miguel de, *História Eclesiástica de Portugal*. Lisboa: Publicações Europa-América, 1994.
- Pereira, Carlos Santos, “*Fátima na Cruzada do Século*”, in *História*, Ano XXII (III Série), nº 29, October 2000, p. 38-46.
- Pinto, António Costa, *O Salazarismo e o Fascismo Europeu – Problemas de Interpretação nas Ciências Sociais*. Lisboa: Editorial Estampa, 1992.
- Pinto, António Costa, *Salazar’s Dictatorship and European Fascism – Problems of Interpretation*. Boulder: Social Science Monographs, 1995.
- Raby, D.L., *Fascism and Resistance in Portugal – Communists, Liberals and Military Dissidents in the Opposition to Salazar, 1941-1974*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1988.
- Reis, Bruno Cardoso, “*Os primeiros cinquenta anos de Fátima*”, in *História*, Ano XXII (III Série), nº 29, October 2000, p. 16-27.
- Reis, Bruno Cardoso, *Salazar e o Vaticano*. Lisboa: Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, 2006.
- Robinson, R.A.H, *Contemporary Portugal – A History*. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1979.
- *Salazar e o Salazarismo*, AA.VV., incl. António Costa Pinto, Fernando Rosas, Manuel Braga da Cruz. Lisboa: Publicações Dom Quixote, 1989.
- Torgal, Luís Filipe, *As “aparições de Fátima” – Imagens e Representações (1917-1939)*. Lisboa: Temas e Debates, 2002.
- Vidler, Alec. R, *The Church in an Age of Revolution – 1789 to the Present Day*. London: Penguin Books, 1974.
- Wheeler, Douglas L., *Republican Portugal*. London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978.