

WHEN THE ARCHIVE VOMITS SALAZAR: REPRESENTATIONS OF WOMEN IN CONTEMPORARY PORTUGUESE FILM¹

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ABSTRACT

Starting from the provocative Paula Rego painting entitled “Salazar Vomiting the Homeland,” this essay discusses some filmic representations of women during Salazar’s New State. With a view to questioning the public representations of the dictatorship, a selection of films made by contemporary Portuguese filmmakers that mobilize public and private memories and a diversity of archival materials is analyzed. From a feminine and comparative perspective, this essay examines the epistemological gaps of the archive and reflects on how the latter, besides unveiling the intricate processes of ideological manipulation that illustrate the violence of the archive and its disciplinary power (Derrida 1995; Foucault 1972), interrogate cinema as a privileged means of formation, circulation, and reconfiguration of cultural memory.

KEYWORDS: Archive; Portuguese Film; Filmic Representation of Women; Portuguese Filmmakers; Margarida Cardoso; Inês de Medeiros; Catarina Mourão.

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1. Introduction

Since the Carnation Revolution that brought Portugal's long authoritarian regime to an end in April 1974, some Portuguese filmmakers have demonstrated an increasing interest in the cultural memory of *Estado Novo* (New State). This interest has been translated into the relevance they gave to the archive as a privileged means of mnemonic practices that enable one to reflect on: (a) how memories circulate and the implications thereof for the comprehension and representation of the national past; (b) the dynamics of modes of remembrance and forgetting; (c) the transformation of what Assmann (2008) calls "storage memory" in "functional memory"; and (d) the renegotiation of social frameworks of memory in terms of the appropriation and transference of memory through mnemonic media, as it is the case of cinema.²

The interest in the archive is not circumscribed to the Portuguese context, for, as Machado and Blank (2015) note, since the late 1980s, public and private archives have gained notoriety around the world. The use of images and other materials has been recurring in a wide range of works in various media and institutions, thus resulting in an ontological, epistemological and ideological reflection on the archive.³ This tendency is related to the fact that the epistemological potentialities of the archive, as far as its organization and manipulation are concerned, imply questioning what the archive is (be it public or private), how it is built, on which criteria it is based and to what ends. In other words, to enter the labyrinth that an archive constitutes means questioning its essence and recognizing that this process implies, more than the appropriation of material to intervene in it, the creation of a new archive that may in the future determine new modalities of remembrance and forgetfulness, and, in the same way, be the target of appropriation and redefinition.

Within the framework of the evolution of Portuguese film, I devise two great moments of interest in the archive, which translate mnemonic practices that pave

² Among the Portuguese filmmakers that have demonstrated interest in the archive are: Alberto Seixas Santos, Rui Simões, João Canijo, Daniel Blaufuks, José Filipe Costa, Margarida Cardoso, Susana Sousa Dias and Catarina Mourão.

On mnemonic practices, cf. Rigney (2005, 2016), Kneightley and Pickering (2012). On the renegotiation of social frameworks through mnemonic media, cf. Rigney (2005) and Erll (2008). On cultural memory and the specificity of media, cf. Brunow (2015), Sturken (1997), Assmann (2011), Erll (2011) and Murphy (2019).

³ Machado and Blank (2015) concentrate their attention on the migration of corpus of archive images that are retrieved in two films: *Quando chegar o momento (Dôra)*, by Luiz Alberto Sanz and Lars Säfström (1978) and *Seams*, by Karim Aïnouz (1993).

the way for the reflection on how the images of the past are subject to processes of resignification with implications in the cultural dynamics of the production of memory, forgetfulness, and contestation of narratives of power.

The first moment was observed in the immediate aftermath of the April Revolution and it corresponded to what Leonor Areal (2011) called within the framework of the “April cinema” (this is Areal’s expression) the “urgency of the real,” that is, the imperative filmmakers had to go out into the streets to register the first moments of political freedom and give voice to those who had been silenced by the regime, whether because they feared the repression or did not know they had the right to speak up and to express their ideas and anxieties. The “urgency of the real” became particularly impactful when confronted with archive images of the regime itself. The films resulting from this confrontation proposed a counter-narrative that laid bare the fallacies of the *Estado Novo* at the political, social, cultural and economic levels, as *Deus, Pátria e Autoridade. Cenas da Vida Portuguesa 1910-1974* (*God, Homeland and Authority. Scenes of the Portuguese Life 1910-1974*) (Simões 1976) demonstrates. It was still during the post-revolutionary period that the cooperative movement and the tendency to collectivize cinema (Cruz 2013, 209) were reinforced, as epitomized by *As Armas e o Povo* (*Arms and the People*) (1975).⁴

The other remarkable moment of interest in the archive is more recent, and it emerged at the end of the 1990s, at the beginning of the new millennium. If, on the one hand, this attraction is in line with the tendency of international cinema, on the other hand, it rests on the need for a new generation of filmmakers (who was still young at the demise of *Estado Novo*) to understand not only the Portugal of the authoritarian regime, but also its impact on Portuguese society nowadays. This need is related to filmmakers’ awareness that a representative part of the Portuguese population already born in democracy does not know what life under the dictatorship was like or the huge restraints people were subjected to during this

⁴ Even though this essay is not about the evolution of Portuguese film, it is worth recalling that Cruz (2013, 210) draws the attention to the fact that the end of PREC (*Processo Revolucionário em Curso*/Ongoing Revolutionary Process) brought the failure of the cooperative model. With the internationalization of Portuguese film, co-productions with other countries (France, in particular) increased the visibility of national cinema. The decade of 1980, as Cunha (2013, 215) noted, was a period of rupture and continuity with previous years, when the coexistence of films of political intervention with auteur films was observed. This period, besides providing filmmakers with a response to their concerns and esthetic demands, was dominated by an identity search that would be observed in the following decade (Ferreira 2013, 251).

time. The filmmakers' motivation explains the epistemological and pedagogical dimension that films that explore archive material from *Estado Novo* assume. This motivation also stimulated filmmakers, on the one hand, to question the ontological character of the archive itself and its ideological implications. On the other hand, filmmakers were led to examine the potentialities of cinema as a privileged medium in the formation, circulation, and reconfiguration of cultural memory, thus conferring on the films a degree of self-reflexivity that is worth examining. It is interesting to observe that this concern was not evident in the first devised moment of interest in the archive, which can be justified by the lack of temporal and critical distance as far as the Carnation Revolution and the filmmakers' need to question in an incisive manner the values of the regime that had been just overthrown are concerned. Even if this need also conferred a relevant pedagogical dimension to films that incorporated archive images immediately after the Revolution, the pedagogical dimension was more related to the willingness to intervene politically rather than to any aesthetic concern.⁵

Turning to the figurations of women during the dictatorship in Portugal, in this essay I will focus my attention on two documentaries and a docudrama made at the turn of the millennium by Portuguese female filmmakers that make use of archival material. My aims are twofold: The first one is to examine and to confront processes of filmic mediation of the female model typical of Salazarism from a feminine and comparative perspective; the second one is to discuss how the filmmakers take profit from the epistemological gaps⁶ of the archive to give prominence to the ideological manipulations the archive is subjected to and to propose alternative memories about the women's role in the *Estado Novo* society and about Salazarism as an authoritarian regime. In my reflection, I will consider the following films: Margarida Cardoso's *Natal 71 (Christmas 71)* (1999); Inês de Medeiros's *Cartas a uma Ditadura (Letters to a Dictator)* (2006); and Catarina Mourão's *A Toca do Lobo (The Wolf's Lair)* (2015).⁷

⁵ Within the framework of the films that appeared in the immediate aftermath of the Carnation Revolution, it is necessary to make reference to the singularity of *Brandos Costumes/Gentle Manners* (Santos 1975). The film does not belong to the set of movies that respond to the "urgency of the real," as it addresses the private life of Portuguese people in the domestic sphere. On the singularity of *Brandos Costumes*, cf. Martins (2017).

⁶ With a view to reflecting on the epistemological gaps of the archive, Derrida (1995) and Foucault (1972) are key references. On the failures and ambiguities of the archive, see also, among others, Agostinho (2014) and Brunow (2015).

⁷ It is important to clarify that the filmic representation of the New State woman is not circumscribed to the three films that compose the corpus of this essay. In the Portuguese contemporary

2. When the archive vomits Salazar

I provocatively borrow the title that the Portuguese painter Paulo Rego gave to her 1960 canvas “Salazar Vomiting the Homeland” (“Salazar a Vomitar a Pátria”) and use these words in service of my aims in this essay. In the famous and controversial painting, which Victor Musgrave refused to exhibit in London in Gallery One, and that would only be exhibited in Lisbon at Gallery S. Mamede in 1972, Paula Rego dared (the verb is Rego’s) represent Salazar vomiting the homeland during the dictatorship, even if the artist was living in London by then.⁸ The dictator is portrayed in a grotesque way as a glutton that devours everything in such a way that he ends up vomiting. It is as if in 1960 Paula Rego was anticipating the lyrics to “The Vampires” (“Os Vampiros”), Zeca Afonso’s famous protest song of 1963, which made reference to the vampires that “eat everything” and to the atmosphere of disenchantment and asphyxiation that haunted the country. The painting under analysis could, to some extent, be read as a kind of treatise of Paula Rego’s pictorial art when one considers that, throughout her career, the painter has pictorially demonstrated how Salazar vomited the homeland, mainly as far as the patriarchal society’s severity and oppression are concerned.

Inspired by Paula Rego’s work and by this particular canvas, I aim to discuss how the work of some Portuguese filmmakers, despite the thematic and aesthetic distinctions of their work, converges when they utilize material from public and private archives dating back to the dictatorship to let the archive “vomit.” In other words, and in line with Stuart Hall’s premise, to let the past speak. What results from the filmic mediation of the *Estado Novo* women is an image that does not always coincide with the one produced by historiography as far as Portuguese women, the dictator and Salazarism are concerned.⁹

cinematography, it is necessary to put into relief Susana Sousa Dias’s filmography that, despite not having as main motivation the figurations of women in the dictatorship, can be analyzed from this perspective. Its non-inclusion in this corpus derives, on the one hand, from the author’s decision to make a comparative analysis of the films that approach distinct aspects of women’s lives during the dictatorship (in particular, those who supported to great or less extent the previous political regime), and, on the other hand, from the willingness to examine Sousa Dias’s work as a whole in an inter and intra-dialogical perspective, what would not be possible in the scope of the present analysis.

⁸ On the painting of 1960, cf., among many, https://gulbenkian.pt/museu/works_cam/salazar-a-vomitar-a-patria-156664/ e Alfaro e Oliveira (2014). Alfaro and Oliveira, on footnote 15, identify Marco Livingstone as providing the information on Musgrave’s refusal to exhibit the painting “Salazar a Vomitar a Pátria”. The authors do not indicate the year when such refusal happened.

⁹ Here I make reference to Stuart Hall who stated: “The past cannot speak, except through its ‘archive’.” (Hall 1991, 152 *apud* Brunow 2015, 15).

3. Women during the dictatorship and their representation in films

Before focusing my attention on the analysis of representations of women during the dictatorship, it is important to understand their role during the *Estado Novo* within a patriarchal society that was rigidly stratified and in which gender roles were very well delimited.¹⁰ During the New State, a woman was expected to play three main roles: mother, spouse, and housewife. It was understood that a woman should be discreet, passive, demure and obedient (while single, she should obey her parents; after getting married, she should obey her husband). As the family was one of the pillars of the regime, a woman was expected to play a fundamental role in the dissemination of *Estado Novo* values. She was seen as the guardian of the family and of children's education, even if, in practical terms, she did not have any kind of autonomy and was controlled by male figures, the family and the school system. Her domain of action was circumscribed to the domestic sphere, even if a reality of poverty obliged disadvantaged women to work to ensure the subsistence of large families.

In the selected corpus, I will examine the filmic mediation of women that characterized the ideal of the regime with a view to demonstrating not only the effectiveness of Salazar's ideological machine, but also its impact and longevity already in democratic times. The representation of women differs considerably among the films in response to the filmmakers' aims, the discussed topics and degree of aestheticization of women's representation in the process of digging up and reconstructing public and private memories.

Two films stand out in the representation of women who supported the regime: *Natal 71* and *Cartas a uma Ditadura*. In *Natal 71*, Margarida Cardoso revisits the turbulent period of the Colonial War. As a pretext to address this controversial topic, she uses her interest in the polemical record "Natal 71" that she had found among the old objects of her father, an officer of the Portuguese Air Force during the Colonial War. Having interviewed her father, his comrades, and other former combatants, as well as artists that participated in the project of the record that was offered to military personnel in the Christmas of 1971 (when a substantial part of the troops did not even have access to electricity, let alone a record player), Cardoso revisits the phases of the record production that was under

¹⁰ On this issue, cf., among others, Basto (2015), Neves and Calado (2001), Pereira (2008), Pimentel (2011) and Rosas (2013).

the responsibility of Cecília Supico Pinto, the president of the Movimento Nacional Feminino (MNF – National Women’s Movement), and of its reception in the period. The MNF was an organization of women who gave moral and care support to soldiers who departed to the war fronts in Africa. The MNF became known due to the support given to military personnel through the war godmothers, the distribution of thousands of aerograms that facilitated the communication between the combatants and their relatives, radio programs, and the visits paid by Supico Pinto and other leaders of the movements to diverse war scenarios.¹¹ If, on the one hand, Supico Pinto was the face of the colonial political propaganda of the regime, as she belonged to the high bourgeoisie and was married to one of the members of Salazar’s government, she also contradicted the profile of the submissive and discreet woman the regime valued with her dynamism and voluntarism. Despite her independence, Supico Pinto was undeniably a defender of Salazar (whom she mostly admired and with whom she had excellent relations) and she was considered by historian Espírito Santo as a “primary anti-feminist” (“uma anti-feminista primária”), as the causes she supported did not aim at emancipating Portuguese women.¹²

In Margarida Cardoso’s film, there is another woman that stands out and, who, despite having a profession that could be faced with a degree of mistrust during the *Estado Novo*, embodies the alienation in which many Portuguese women lived. The woman is the singer Florbela Queiroz who, when interviewed about her participation in the recording of “Natal 71,” reveals that, besides knowing nothing about the meanders of the Colonial War and Salazarist mechanisms of repression, did not question the principles of the regime. In the documentary it is the confrontation between public archives and the private memories of all those who participated in the record production that unveils a different facet of the regime as well as the soldiers’ increasing discontent as far as the conflict was concerned (both

¹¹ The war godmothers during the Colonial War were women of diverse ages from various social strata that attempted to provide combatants with moral support through epistolary correspondence and, in some cases, the contact with soldiers’ families. The figure of the war godmother emerged in France during the First World War and was introduced by a monarchic and catholic organization called *Assistência das Portuguesas às Vítimas da Guerra* (Assistance of Portuguese Women to War Victims). The entity gave assistance to combatants in hospitals and to their families. With the Colonial War, the war godmother was ‘recreated’ by the MNF, having established, as aforementioned, an epistolary contact aiming at providing spiritual comfort and affect to soldiers at the three fronts of the conflict.

¹² On Cecília Supico Pinto and the MNF, cf., among others, Espírito Santo (2003, 2008), Oliveira (2008) and Pimentel (2011).

being aspects projected onto the Niassa Songbook¹³). The tension between the public archives and private memories also reveals the constraints imposed upon all those who dared to question or mock the dictatorship.

If Margarida Cardoso in *Natal 71* resorts to the regime's archive of images and videos to approach the role of women who openly supported Salazarism (and that gave it support through Cecília Supico Pinto's familiar face), Inês de Medeiros, in *Cartas a uma Ditadura*, makes use of epistolary correspondence to reveal the hidden face of the "female army" upon which the New State informally rested the careful process of indoctrination of Portuguese people.¹⁴ Among the selected films that compose the corpus, *Cartas a uma Ditadura* is perhaps the one that best represents what I call in a provocative manner "Salazar's women," that is, the group of anonymous women who, consciously or unconsciously, disseminated and embodied the regime's values, those who did not hesitate to demonstrate the admiration they had or were led to have for the dictator. Starting from the discovery of about a hundred letters found in a secondhand bookstore – letters that the bookstore's owner was not interested in because he thought those were love letters – Inês de Medeiros interviews various women who had allegedly received a circular that had been sent by an unknown group that supported the dictatorship in the troubled year of 1958 when the future of *Estado Novo* was threatened by the potential victory of General Humberto Delgado. The circular persuaded women to join efforts to defend the nation, thus creating, through their network of contacts with other women, the Church and the initiatives of social assistance they were involved with, a "female army." This army, in an informal but organized way, would make efforts to encourage people to vote for the candidate supported by Salazar – Admiral Américo Tomás – freeing, thus, the homeland of the chaos that could result from Humberto Delgado's election.¹⁵

The film starts with the overlapping of voices that reproduce excerpts from the letters women wrote in response to the aforementioned circular. What follows

¹³ The Niassa Songbook is a collection of songs written by soldiers positioned in the Niassa region in Mozambique in the late 1960s during the Colonial War. The songs that were mostly adaptations of great hits and that had an informal and clandestine circulation were about the soldiers' daily life, their anxieties and the conflict itself. They were very critical of the government and of the military hierarchy.

¹⁴ The expression *female army* is used in Inês de Medeiros's documentary.

¹⁵ It is worth recalling that when inquired about what, if elected, he would do as far as Salazar was concerned, Humberto Delgado categorically asserted that he would fire him, what scared many voters that saw Salazar as a warrant of stability.

is the presentation of archive images related to the “Manifestação das Mulheres Portuguesas a Salazar” (Demonstration of Portuguese Women to Salazar), portraying the homage that hundreds of women belonging to diverse social sectors paid to Salazar in the gardens of the Palace São Bento in 1959 when Salazar celebrated his seventieth birthday and thirty-one years of governance. The selection of images reveals the admiration, respect, and gratitude that Portuguese women held for the politician, and it supports the interviews about the 1958 circular conducted by the filmmaker. It is important to retain the date when the images at the gardens of Salazar’s official residence were taken (one year after the presidential elections) as well as the manner through which the narrator of the archive material refers to Salazar’s supporters. The “women distressed by gratitude and love to Salazar” are characterized as beings “with less political ideas,” “people less complicated,” “with notions of more restricted values,” expressions that nowadays could configure an evident downgrading of women’s position in society, but that in the context of the portrayed period corresponded to the expectations towards women. The images translate an atmosphere of hysteria and recall the commotion that fans make whenever they see stars from the world of cinema and music, as if Salazar were a kind of fetish object the women worshipped.

In the excerpt of the filmic archive that is incorporated in the documentary, Salazar addressed a speech to the “mothers, wives, sisters and daughters” who he thanks for the support to the regime and to the nation. On the one hand, it is worth observing that Inês de Medeiros’s interviews about the letters put into relief the acceptance and the naturalization of the features pointed out by the female speaker in the extract of the newsreel shot in the gardens of São Bento, regardless of women’s social position. When inquired about what democracy and dictatorship were, the interviewees demonstrate that they do not have any kind of political awareness, as they blindly reproduce the belief that Salazar was a kind of messiah and that it was necessary to do whatever was necessary to save the regime from the threat represented by Humberto Delgado’s ideas. The interviews demonstrate that women did not have a definite position regarding what democracy was, having asserted that they were not interested in politics. One of them even states that a dictatorship could be a “necessary” regime, expressing discontent for life in democracy. In sum, interviewees seemed to be easily manipulated. Despite appearing to feel valued and empowered when their support in the name of national

political stability was solicited, the interviews and the comments made on the letters they had written reveal the conformist mentality of the period and dread towards any change in perspective. Thus, women from a higher social condition commented on their daily lives that were circumscribed to domestic life, children's education, participation in the activities of the Church and charitable actions. The tendency to naturalize poverty, to accept the low levels of education and also domestic violence was evident in the portrayed period.¹⁶

The interviewee from the working class, who had throughout her life worked as a servant, is the one who, despite having supported the women's mobilization in the late 1950s as requested by the circular, demonstrates a lower level of political alienation, having made it clear that people lived their lives without questioning anything. This position is understandable in a society in which compliance with authority was part of the cultural and political indoctrination from a young age. This woman demonstrates the awareness of what she did *not* want for her children: the same life of inequalities, poverty and deprivation she had always experienced. It is significant that the film, shortly before its conclusion, ends with a reference to this woman's pride as she had helped educate her grandchildren who had all graduated and who had, already in democratic times, broken the shackles of social immobility that determined the fate of generations at birth.

Inês de Medeiros resorts once more to the archive in the final part of her documentary when she discusses the big farce that was engendered after Salazar's illness with the intention of making the politician believe he continued to rule the country. Besides the filmmaker's voice-over, the images of the preparations for Salazar's TV allocution to the nation reveal a man that was obviously fragile in physical and intellectual terms, a man who did not resemble the politician who appeared on the balcony to address the women who cherished him in the gardens of São Bento in 1959. However, the cult of the myth continued and it was replicated in the scenes of Salazar's funeral when, once more, the man was worshipped even in death. This veneration to some extent was perpetuated by the nostalgia of reports made by the majority of interviewees decades after the letters under analysis were

¹⁶ One of the interviewees revealed a feeling of mission accomplished when she commented on how she had saved a marriage that was to be dissolved on behalf of morals and good manners, having, thus, prevailed the marriage indissolubility, even if the wife was a frequent target of the husband's violence.

written (except for the most disadvantaged woman who unmistakably craved a different living condition).

In *A Toca do Lobo*, Catarina Mourão proposes a more refined filmic mediation of the women of the regime, even if it is somewhat problematic. The filmmaker tries to rebuild the life path of her grandfather, the writer Tomaz de Figueiredo, through private and public archives. During the *Estado Novo*, Tomaz de Figueiredo lived apart from his wife and children (despite maintaining his marital status of married), and for about two years he remained in a psychiatric hospital against his will. In her research, the filmmaker's privileged source is her mother (known by the nickname of Zinha and who was the writer's youngest daughter). As Zinha presents and comments on photo albums and home movies, besides giving accounts of family life and talking about her problematic relationship with her father, she recalls the punishing education she had received. Although Mourão's grandfather was a known person and there were abundant traces of his presence (books, recording, testimonies to one RTP¹⁷ program, street signs, a library named after him), the filmmaker has to cope with a series of silences and gaps in the process of digging public and private memories about her grandfather's life.

The major obstacle to having access to sources that could be fundamental to clarify the doubts about her grandfather's path is her own family, and in particular her aunt Maria Antónia (whose nickname was Mitó). Mitó resists giving the filmmaker access to the house of Casares (Tomaz de Figueiredo's childhood home) and to the writer's estate (also located in Casares), as she considers herself the sole guardian of her father's estate. This impossibility was probably one of the main motivations that led Mourão to make the film *A Toca do Lobo* that corresponded to the practical part of her Ph.D. in Film Studies at the University of Edinburgh. With a view to making the film, Mourão searched for a myriad of archive elements, through which she attempted to retrieve and articulate public and private memories, thus creating a puzzle that revealed the serious problems of a bourgeois family of the regime, a family that did whatever was possible to comply with the customs and morals of the time.

One of the most interesting aspects in *A Toca do Lobo* is precisely the filmmaker's ingenuity in profiting from the meanders of her family drama and the

¹⁷ The acronym for *Rádio e Televisão de Portugal*, the Portuguese public broadcasting service.

culture of fear and silence that characterized the regime¹⁸ to make the social portrait of the time and to unveil the mechanisms of control and coercion Salazarism applied to all those who challenged the regime (the family, the political police, the prison system, the school, psychiatric hospitals).¹⁹ If it is true that Mourão's primary aim in her film was not to discuss women's roles in the authoritarian regime, I contend that the filmmaker makes an eloquent portrait of her grandmother (Zita and Mitó's mother and Tomaz de Figueiredo's wife) and of her aunt Maria Antónia as belonging to the group that I have named "Salazar's women." In other words, women who were educated to defend the values of the regime and who conformed to the "culture of silence" (in broad terms, the idea that private issues should be either hidden or silenced;²⁰ that there is an image of correction and conformity to social laws that must be maintained at all costs). Therefore, it is no exaggeration to draw a parallel between these two women (the filmmaker's grandmother and aunt) with the interviewees in Inês de Medeiros's *Cartas a uma Ditadura*.

To what extent can Mourão's grandmother and aunt be considered "Salazar's women"? The filmmaker's grandmother is apparently a figure of less importance in the film. She does not have a "physical" presence, contrary to her husband Tomaz de Figueiredo. What the viewer infers is that Mourão's grandmother and her husband did not get along well, and that during many years they lived apart, despite the references to Tomaz de Figueiredo's love for his wife, as illustrated by the allusion to his emotional reaction in his wife's funeral. However, Mourão's grandmother had a decisive influence on the relationship her youngest daughter (Zinha) had with her father. The film suggests that Mourão's grandmother insinuated that Tomaz de Figueiredo was not concerned with the family in a financial or sentimental sense. The film tries to deconstruct this idea through several archive materials appropriated by Mourão. On the other hand, it is this same woman

¹⁸ On the culture of fear and silence that was characteristic of Salazar's authoritarian regime, cf. Gil (2005). According to the philosopher, this culture informs what he calls "politics of non-inscription" that corresponds to a state of passivity and an inability to react. Cunha (2018, 292) draws the attention to the relevance of the non-inscription phenomenon in *A Toca do Lobo* as well as to its transgenerational impact.

¹⁹ On this issue, cf., among many, Rosas (2013).

²⁰ With a view to illustrating this idea, I recall two expressions that remain common until nowadays in popular discourse, and, among older people in particular. These expressions translate the tension between "being" and "appearing" that has pervaded social interactions in the former regime in the name of the respect for the moral codes of the patriarchal society: (i) the saying 'roupa suja lava-se em casa' ('do not wash your dirty linen in public') and (ii) the phrase 'parece mal' ('it looks bad') to justify the obliteration of everything that was considered less positive, or challenging the order.

that was able to find stratagems (and it is suggested that she did so with the family's support) to live legally married, but, in practice, apart from her husband, when that was considered socially unacceptable during the dictatorship. Nonetheless, Mourão's grandmother has a fundamental importance in the film. It is the grandmother who alerts the filmmaker about the existence of a testimonial Tomaz de Figueiredo gave to RTP and that she would like Mourão to have watched.²¹ Mourão finds the recording of the program *O Clube dos Coleccionadores* (The Collectors' Club) about bizarre collections, and it is curious how, through an archive element, Tomaz de Figueiredo (who, when the program was shot, did not have grandchildren yet), when presenting his collection of pipe pouches, asserts that he would like his granddaughters (and perhaps one whose name could be Catarina) to inherit and give new uses to it. If the recording is a key archive piece in the creation of a bond of affection that has never existed between grandfather and granddaughter (because they had never met and because the filmmaker's mother had grievances with her father)²², the spectator is surprised when he/she learns that Zinha, Mourão's mother, never knew about the TV program nor about her father's wish to have a granddaughter called Catarina. If it is undeniable that the aforementioned archive element is interesting, it is even more thought-provoking to speculate about the reasons that led Tomaz de Figueiredo's wife not to comment about the program with her daughter (Zinha), but to mention it to her granddaughter (the filmmaker). The truth is that Catarina Mourão's grandmother remains a mystery throughout the film, and it is possible to consider her as an unfit family puzzle piece, mainly when one thinks that she was a woman of the regime at the same time that in her own way and with her "weapons," she tried to circumvent it by always attempting to save the family's good name. A question remains: has Mourão opted for leaving the characterization of her grandmother open to invest in a sequel of *A Toca do Lobo*?

Mitó is the other unfit family puzzle piece. Despite appearing in a few photos and in the home movie that stages a robbery, the viewer knows Mitó through Zinha's reports and because of a letter Mitó has sent to Zinha with Tomaz de

²¹ In her film Mourão states that her grandmother trusted her with a "secret".

²² On this issue, consider the distinction Baron (2014) makes between *archive effect* and *archive affect*, bearing in mind the implications of the recontextualization and resignification of archive materials when introduced in diverse contexts. This distinction is also useful when one considers Mourão's willingness to build a narrative that unveils another side of her family history and another interpretation of a specific period of the national past.

Figueiredo's pipe pouches as a response to another of Zinha's attempts to persuade her sister to grant Mourão access to the house of Casares. I identify Mitó as one of "Salazar's women" because the film suggests that she has never tried to do anything to get closer to her father or to bring him closer to Zinha when the family considered Tomaz de Figueiredo a strange and eccentric figure, even if she did not hesitate to remain with her father's childhood house and estate and to self-proclaim her unique guardian. Despite the fact that in her film Mourão alludes that Mitó only grants entry to Casares to people that she wants, the film does not mention that Mitó transformed the house of Casares into a kind of house-museum that is not open to the public. Moreover, the film does not allude to the existence of a site organized by Tomaz de Figueiredo's eldest daughter that dates from 2013 and that presents the writer's life and work according to the criteria established by Mitó, as if the site corresponded to the "official"/ "authorized" version of his life and work.²³ It becomes evident that on the site there are almost no references to Zinha and none to Catarina Mourão and even less to the film *A Toca do Lobo* that was only launched after the site was made available. In other words, when one considers the site under Mitó's responsibility and Mourão's film in the reconstitution of Tomaz de Figueiredo's personal and professional path, it is as if there is a confrontation of archives that reveals both their mutable character and epistemological gaps.

Mitó may be considered one of "Salazar's women" as, already living in democracy and through her site, she attempts to preserve the image of her family by introducing her father as "the owner of a complex personality" (see the tab "Apresentação"/ "Introduction"). On the pretext of being *exempt*, she omits a past of family strife from the information available to the public. She justifies the period during which her father was hospitalized with depression as resulting from what had happened in the episode of the registry in Estarreja, when Tomaz de Figueiredo was held accountable for a crime committed by an officer.²⁴ In the introductory text to the site, Maria Antónia Figueiredo claims that the only way to do justice to her father's past is by "giving him voice" through his work, thus preventing any other interpretation of the writer's path from being considered credible. It is not clear if

²³ The site organized by Tomaz de Figueiredo's eldest daughter is available on <http://www.tomazdefigueiredo.net/>.

²⁴ Mourão's film presents another version for Tomaz de Figueiredo's hospital admission through one of her aunts' accounts. According to the old lady (that is filmed talking to Mourão and Zinha when they pay her a visit), the family had decided to admit Tomaz de Figueiredo to the psychiatric hospital to prevent him from being arrested due to the episode in the registry.

the existence of the site is due to Mitó's knowledge of her niece's project to make a film about Tomaz de Figueiredo in which some private aspects of the family life could be revealed. If this hypothesis is viable, the site may be understood as Mitó's attempt to protect her own image and that of her family in line with the morals of the period of *Estado Novo*. Mourão's film actually questions the family morals when it suggests that a family decision could have been behind Tomaz de Figueiredo's hospitalization (which made him suffer enormously) as the family feared compromising its good name if Tomaz de Figueiredo were arrested. It is worth recalling that the writer's son was a political prisoner of the regime. Because he was considered someone with a "marginal" personality, the references to him are almost "deleted" from family registers, as if he had never existed. In her filmic narrative, Mourão reinscribes the life of Tomaz Figueiredo's son in the family history when she draws a parallel between her grandfather's "prison" in the psychiatric hospital and her uncle's effective prison, thus suggesting that both men were to some extent victims of the regime, as they had, albeit in diverse ways, challenged the status quo. A possible reading of the film is to consider *A Toca do Lobo* as the filmmaker's attempt to "free" her grandfather and his past from the prison he continued to experience in the house of Casares under Mitó's control years after his death.

4. Conclusion

Despite the fact that none of the filmmakers' primary aim was to address the representation of women during the dictatorship, all of the films under analysis reveal the profile of the New State idealized woman and her fundamental role in the dissemination and consolidation of regime's values within the family, considered one of the key cells of generations' indoctrination.

Through the appropriation of diverse materials from public and private archives, all of the filmmakers propose an alternative representation of *Estado Novo*. The films constitute mnemonic practices that, by making memories circulate through the confrontation of various perspectives (the process of the transformation of storage memory into functional memory), convert themselves into counter-narratives of the public representation of memory. As far as the representation of women is concerned, the films as counter-narratives reveal how the model of the ideal woman of the regime was put into the service of the preservation and longevity

of Salazarism: the MNF with the activities of support given to the soldiers as if the homeland were a big family in *Natal 71*; women that organized an invisible but effective network to defend the regime through the ballot in *Cartas a uma Ditadura*; and the attempt to preserve the face of a cohesive and unblemished family and the praise for authority and morals in *A Toca do Lobo*.²⁵

Besides counter-narratives, the films can be considered *meta-narratives* that discuss the potentialities of cinema as a privileged means of formation, circulation, and reconfiguration of cultural memory. Therefore, the films propose a reflection that stems from the acknowledgment that the archive is not static or armored, and that it has gaps that, when explored, lay bare the authoritarian and disciplinary character of the archive. As counter- and meta-narratives, the three films symbolically “vomit” Salazar and draw the attention not only to the different levels of staging underlying the principles of Salazarism, but also to the elaborated construction of Salazar’s myth, whose impact is still perceived in the democratic Portugal, and that films such as *Natal 71*, *Cartas a uma Ditadura* and *A Toca do Lobo* deconstruct.

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²⁵ In the case of *A Toca do Lobo*, it is important to bear in mind that the interpretation here proposed is a possible interpretation. This reading must take into account the filmmaker’s subjectivity, as Mourão deals with private memories that are invested with feelings and emotions, and that are influenced by the disagreement with her mother’s sister (Mitó). Such aspects may condition the process of resignification of memories in the film. However, the interpretation that derives from *A Toca do Lobo* in terms of Tomaz de Figueiredo’s life path, family interactions during the New State and the role played by women is probable, which reinforces the film’s value as a counter-narrative.

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