

**Utopia and Resignation: Case Studies of Science  
Fiction in the Portuguese Society during the Estado  
Novo**

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*To learn is to broaden, to experience more, to snatch new aspects of life for yourself. To refuse to learn or to be relieved at not having to learn is to commit a form of suicide; in the long run, a more meaningful type of suicide than the mere ending of physical life.*

*Knowledge is not only power; it is happiness, and being taught is the intellectual analog of being loved.*

— Isaac Asimov, *Yours, Isaac Asimov: A Life in Letters*

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# **Utopia and Resignation: Case Studies of Science Fiction in the Portuguese Society during the Estado Novo**

**Pedro Santiago**

## **Resumo**

Esta dissertação foca-se no estado da literatura de ficção científica em Portugal durante o Estado Novo e o seu efeito na sociedade. Para tal, começa por abordar o estado geral do país nessa altura e os ideais do seu governo, com foco nos pilares principais do Estado Novo e o seu plano para a sociedade portuguesa. Em seguida, tenta explicar como ocorreu a propagação da ficção científica no país, e como este tipo de conteúdo literário poderia, por um lado, enriquecer os conhecimentos de uma população que era, na altura, uma das mais culturalmente deficientes da Europa, e por outro lado, como poderia ser usado para imaginar um futuro ideal, uma utopia. Por conseguinte, há necessidade de estudar a utopia e a sua significação para definir o futuro, bem como o papel da ficção científica como forma de aprendizagem. Também se torna relevante haver uma definição concreta do que se considera o conhecimento público da ciência. De forma a desenvolver estes temas, esta dissertação centra-se em seguida na análise de duas obras literárias, *A.D. 2230*, de Amílcar de Mascarenhas, que irá demonstrar como este tipo de literatura podia ser usado para fins propagandísticos, e *O Aquário*, de Alice Sampaio, que irá demonstrar a face mais crítica da ficção científica, e como, ao analisar e escrever sobre um potencial futuro distante, é possível criticar e ponderar sobre o presente. Estas duas obras também refletem duas noções muito diferentes de utopia, pelo que a conclusão apresenta as considerações finais sobre os verdadeiros efeitos da literatura de ficção científica numa sociedade tão afectada pela censura.

Palavras-chave: Estado Novo, Ficção Científica, Ideologia, Sociedade, Utopia.

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## **Abstract**

This dissertation aims to explore the state of science fiction literature in Portugal during Estado Novo and its potential effect on society. For that, it starts by giving a general overview of the country at the time and its government, referring to the main tenets of Estado Novo and its plan for the Portuguese society. Afterwards, it attempts to explain how the spread of science fiction occurred in the country, and how the content of this type of literature could, on the one hand, enrich the knowledge of a population that was, at the time, one of the most culturally deficient in Europe, and on the other, how it could also be used to imagine a future where everything was ideal, a utopia. Thus, there is a need to define the significance of utopia and its meaning in defining the future, as well as the role of science fiction as a tool for learning. Through this, an understanding of what entails a public understanding of science must also be determined. To achieve this, the theoretical basis is complemented by the analysis of two books, *A.D. 2230* by Amílcar de Mascarenhas, which will show how this type of literature could be used for propaganda purposes, and *O Aquário*, by Alice Sampaio, that will show the more critical facet of science fiction, and how, by analysing and writing about a potential distant future, we can very well criticize and ponder about our present. These two books also reflect two very distinct notions of utopia, setting the stage for the conclusion to present some final remarks about the actual effects of science fiction literature in a society so affected by censorship.

Keywords: Estado Novo, Ideology, Science Fiction, Society, Utopia.

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## Introduction

For most of the twentieth century, Portugal was ruled by a dictatorship, with António de Oliveira Salazar as the head of the country for 35 years (1933-1968). According to Garcia (2017):

Differently from what one would expect from the Italian and German totalitarian regimes, where media were celebrated and enthusiastically used to galvanize the people, to Salazar, far from being a useful tool to politically guide the people, they were seen as a hindrance, which should be controlled in order to reduce its nefarious effects. (p.7)

In Salazar's Portugal, the media had a repressing role. Radio, for example, made its way to Portuguese society around the same time as Estado Novo and was mostly focused on news bulletins — heavily censored by the regime — or other content reminiscent of Portugal's cultural societal branding that was imposed by the regime as the soul of the Portuguese, *Fado*, *Football* and *Fátima* (religion), among others. This specific programming was tailored to build a certain Portuguese identity based on these 3 Fs. This, along with the ultranationalist view the regime had of Portugal's history as a seafaring Empire, and the God, Family and Work doctrine core of what the regime believed would create the perfect Portuguese, meant that the role of radio in Portuguese society was, most of all, an indoctrination tool.

But literature also was very important for the regime's censorship machine. According to Melo (2022), "In the world of reading, censorship and propaganda became decisive factors in the choices of the Portuguese." (p.207). The press, like the radio, was constantly monitored and censored, all in the name of the regime, which led to a decrease in problematic publishers over time. This included cultural and scientific publishers, since "official persecution in the 1930s led to them being uprooted from vast areas of the country and to their withdrawal in proportion to the total number of nationally circulated periodicals." (Melo, 2022, p.208).

This had a severe impact on an already very culturally deficient society, which got exacerbated by the extremely high levels of illiteracy all around the country, especially outside of the major two cities, Lisbon, and Porto. However, despite the best efforts of the government to stifle the literary freedom of the population, there were vast

“circulation networks of printed matter across the Atlantic” (Melo, 2022, p.207). Books were translated and imported from Spain and other European countries, as well as Brazil. Among these books, there was a huge demand for fiction, mainly related to science and philosophy.

According to Enfield (2018): “Science can’t exist without telling a story.” This is the crux of the way Science Fiction was used to give food for thought to an entire population starved of any new scientific knowledge.

In a way, the severe repression and censorship gave way to a renewed interest in these kinds of publications. Science Fiction was tolerated since due to its futuristic settings and utopian context; it wouldn’t disrupt the factual reality and could avoid the censors’ guidelines for what constituted forbidden content. This, coupled with the international events surrounding Humanity’s technological advancements such as the Space Race<sup>1</sup>, WWII, the Nuclear Race, among others, created the adequate environment for an explosion of Science Fiction content being published and distributed in Portugal, both from Portuguese and foreign (translated) authors.

This served as an escape for the readers who, through reading, could experience different realities by means of technologies that were much ahead of their time, but still based in reality. According to Gernsback, “science fiction work — is, or intends to be, compatible with current scientific knowledge, and it communicates this knowledge to its readers” (as cited in Westfahl, 1998, p. 38-39). This means that, by reading science fiction, the Portuguese population at the time could be updated on current scientific trends, as well as imagine and ponder how science could benefit society on the short and on the long term.

Based on these ideas, in this dissertation I will attempt to understand how the proliferation of Science Fiction publications in Estado Novo’s Portugal could have contributed to the betterment of society, namely by providing the population with scientific knowledge it was sorely lacking and was prevented to acquire through more conventional means.

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<sup>1</sup> The Space Race was the term used to describe the United States of America and the Soviet Union’s attempts at projecting power through space exploration. The Soviet Union managed to be the first nation to put a man in space (Yuri Gagarin, in April 1961), but on the 20th of July 1969, the United States successfully landed a spacecraft on the Moon. For more information, please refer to History Channel, 2010.

Due to the nature of this subject, I will also analyse the relationship between the regime's ideology and the topics discussed in specific Portuguese Science Fiction publications and discuss how the same imagination that could create utopias in planets far away could also be used to spread the regime's ideals and create a future Portuguese colonial Empire, where Salazar's dream of bringing Portugal back to the height of world power would be achieved. To accomplish this, I will analyse the book *A.D.2230*, written in 1938 by Amílcar de Mascarenhas.

This last point will be contrasted with another facet of Science Fiction, which is the entropy of a utopic existence, where the only thing that drives Humanity forward is the demand to reach beyond our own reality. This thirst for freedom, for more knowledge, becoming more than what we already are is a stark difference to Estado Novo's purpose of limiting the population's knowledge and purpose in life. To analyse this topic in more detail, I will study the book *O Aquário*, written in 1963 by Alice Sampaio.

Considering the perspectives contained in both books, chosen as case studies, I will attempt to discuss not only how utopia and resignation were displayed, following the lines of my dissertation title, but also what was the cultural impact of Science Fiction on the population, and whether it contributed to a bigger interest in science and literature as a whole.

As such, to accomplish my objectives, I will divide this dissertation in seven separate parts, as I believe it is the best way to properly address all necessary matters.

I will start by considering the wide influence Estado Novo's policies had on Portuguese society, at distinct levels. Through this, I will be able to trace and reproduce, to the best of my abilities, the mentality of Portuguese society, and how the people got on with their daily lives. By considering how the average Portuguese person behaved and their level of instruction, along with their socio-economic status, I will study how understandable and how approachable Science Fiction was to them.

Secondly, I will do a study of the state of Portuguese society during Estado Novo, namely their socio-economic status, the influence of the government in the cultural organisation of society, as well as the impact of censorship not only in general, but specifically in the types and quality of publications available to the people.

Afterwards, I will expand on the different kinds of Science Fiction publications that were available in Portugal at the time, namely in terms of themes and to which audiences they were mostly directed to. This dissertation will have a major focus on Portuguese Science Fiction, even though imported Science Fiction will be referenced as well, as a means of comparison to the access that national readers had to better known foreign authors of the genre. This part will serve to understand the differences between both types of Science Fiction, as well as how the political and social situation of Portugal influenced this genre and its writers and, finally, the influence of the ever-present censorship on these authors.

This topic will serve as a bridge to the next one, that will focus on the concept of utopia and how Science Fiction can serve as a learning tool for the masses. The traditional concept of utopia of the early twentieth century will be contrasted with the concept of dystopia, that results from the disenchantment and impossibility of an eternal, stable utopia. Here, the importance of Science Fiction as a means to educate people is made apparent, especially taking into consideration the special circumstances Portugal was in regarding accessibility to information. For this, there is also a discussion regarding the purpose of the Science Fiction writer regarding the transmission of information through a story.

The following part will focus on defining what is a public understanding of science, and how important it is for a society to have a basic notion of scientific concepts, not only for the sustained growth of a society that is constantly in technological development, but also for the empowerment of the citizens, that will enter a workforce that is also in constant development. Also, a more informed population will be able to make more informed decisions regarding the vote for important policies and create a greater support for their government's investment in scientific research.

The next two parts will be focused on two publications, one written in the late 1930's, Amílcar de Mascarenhas' *A.D. 2230*, and another in the early 1960's, Alice Sampaio's *O Aquário*. The first refers to a future where Portugal has restored its status as a superpower, leaning towards the imperialist ideology Estado Novo wanted to portray. It will serve to understand how Science Fiction could also be used as propaganda, as a way to portray the strong future Portugal could have under Salazar. Due to its imperialist themes, and the year it was published (one year before the start of World War II), I will

also study Science Fiction's perception of what would be the future of Humanity's war industry, and how it would influence the centuries to come.

As for *O Aquário*, a much more introspective book, it ponders the futility of a future where everything already exists, and the existential issues that come with it, the only way to feel something is through discovery, the intent to go beyond what is known. The author focused on "constructing the Man of the future by posing problems from the Man of today" (Sampaio, 1963, p.2). Through this, there's an evident need to portray the future based on what is already known today. The constant yearning for something more, to solve today's existential issues to create a better future was a topic that, to any dictatorial regime, was completely out of the question, and a radical shift in tone compared to Mascarenhas' book. I will study this book in order to explain the other side of Science Fiction, the one that makes us think outside the box, and therefore the one that made the Portuguese population that read it think that there was more to their lives and future than what the regime had planned for them.

In the seventh and final part, I will conclude the analyses of both publications. Together with the impact of other publications (both Portuguese or foreign), as well as the opinions of Portuguese Science Fiction writers, I will attempt to show the lasting influence this genre had on a society that had its creative wings clipped by the suppressive pen of censorship, and how it contributed for the feeling of restlessness and rebellion that culminated in the Carnation Revolution that put an end to forty-one years of dictatorship.

## **Chapter 1: How Salazar created his perfect society: The indoctrination of the three Pillars (God, Fatherland, Family) and how it shaped the Portuguese people**

### **1.1 Tradition**

In May 1914, when António de Oliveira Salazar, at the time a young student of Law at the University of Coimbra made a speech for the Second Congress of the Federation of the Portuguese Catholic Youth, he mentioned: “What *is* lives almost solely from what *was*. To reconnect the broken thread of tradition is thus for a nationality a matter of life and death” (as cited in English in Leal, 2016, p.131). He also added: “All Portuguese history is God, Fatherland, Family! It is religion, glory, love!” (as cited in Leal, 2016, p.131)<sup>2</sup>. Nobody could imagine that, not only this student would one day be Portugal’s uncontested ruler for more than 30 years, but also that in these words laid the blueprint of what would be the Portuguese society’s set of values for the biggest part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

To analyse the influence these three words had in Estado Novo’s designs of a new Portugal, there needs to be a deep study of each individually, and how they complement each other in the bigger picture.

The main root of Estado Novo’s ideology was tradition. In its point of view, the country was built from tradition and history and prospered throughout almost a millennium. It was this tradition that gave Portugal its right to exist as a country and as an empire. According to Leal (2016):

In this speech, Oliveira Salazar goes on to offer a Christian providentialist and heroic vision of history, based on the ‘Miracle of Ourique’, taken as the foundational myth of the nation. This myth recalls the tradition, going back to the fifteenth century, of the legendary appearance of the ‘sacred image of Christ’ to D. Afonso Henriques on the eve of the Battle of Ourique (1139), at which he would be victorious over the Muslims. It linked in imagination the genesis of Portuguese autonomy and destiny with the alliance between the sacred, in the Christian cross, and the profane, in the soldier’s sword (p. 131).

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<sup>2</sup> *Pátria* can be translated as Homeland, Fatherland or Motherland. However, in my opinion, due to the militaristic connotations and the similarities with Hitler’s Nazi ideology, Fatherland seems the most appropriate term to use.

This would later be used as a pretext to show the Portuguese people their nation had the blessing of God to establish itself and to expand and prosper through war against the enemy, who was not favoured by God.

## 1.2 God

This leads to the first of the three pillars, God. Since the 4<sup>th</sup> century, when Emperor Constantine the Great of Rome proclaimed the Edict of Milan in 313 D.C, Christianity had been leading the fates of European nations. The Portuguese/Spanish Reconquista of the Iberian Peninsula from the Moors, the Crusades summoned by the Papal States to reconquer the Holy Land of Jerusalem back from Muslim control, and the Age of Discovery, which Portugal started during the 15<sup>th</sup> century, are three major events that would be used by Estado Novo to display what was believed to be Portugal's divine right to their imperialist designs. The Portuguese, as God's chosen people, expanded in the Iberian Peninsula and throughout much of the unknown world at the time, Africa, South America, and Asia, with the permission of the Pope<sup>3</sup>, establishing missions in many of its occupied territories that would later become colonies, with the purpose of spreading Christianity to those foreign peoples. This was used as a tool for the colonizer to convert the colonized into a subservient state. In fact, Portugal used its control over the colonies in Africa to profit from slavery, exporting slaves from all over Portuguese Africa, not only to Brazil and other Portuguese colonies, but to the Portuguese mainland as well.

The relationship between Portugal and religion also remained unchanged throughout the centuries. Ever since the founding of the country, the Portuguese kings and queens obeyed the Pope. During the period of the Reformation, when the Dutch lowlands and the German duchies of the Holy Roman Empire rebelled against the Pope, following the writings of authors such as Martin Luther and John Calvin, parting from Christian Catholicism, and England, led by their king Henry VIII, also separated from the

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<sup>3</sup> The Treaty of Tordesillas, signed by the Portuguese king João II and the Catholic Monarchs Isabel of Castile and Fernando of Aragon on the 7th of June 1494, and ratified by Pope Julius II on the 24th January 1506, granted Portugal the legitimacy of the Catholic Church to expand and conquer in the limits that the treaty indicated (the larger part of Brazil, Africa and Asia). For more information, please refer to Zalama, 2019.

Pope-led church, establishing the Anglican church, Portugal remained stoically at the side of the Papal States.

This is the tradition of which Salazar speaks, this deeply ingrained religion, that was always part of Portugal's history and would always continue to be. Following the Catholic God and spreading His influence had always been part of the Portuguese identity, and through the use of historical symbols and myths, this idea of Catholic Nationalism would rise to help create a sense of unity, an ideal for the people to bond and follow.

### **1.3 Family**

Religion also served to instil morality on a nation. The Portuguese society was expected to adhere to the status quo, to tradition, to order and absolute obedience to the government. The God-fearing, hard-working Christian family was the gold standard every Portuguese should strive for. Order was a very discussed topic in the years preceding the 1926 military coup d'état. The successive failed Republican governments after the end of the Portuguese monarchy, coupled with the disastrous Portuguese participation in World War I led to severe instability in the country. Taking a page out of Mussolini's new Fascist government in Italy, where the government had total control of every institution, and as such, could control the citizens and repress any undesirable sentiments, Estado Novo adopted many measures similar to the ones used by Mussolini in Italy, like the creation of a state police (Polícia Internacional de Defesa do Estado, abbreviated to PIDE), the cult of personality and the creation of a youth organization tied to the government (Mocidade Portuguesa), among others. These served as a way to create the so desired order Estado Novo wanted. Morality by force and indoctrination. This morality also spilled into family dynamics.

As an extremely conservative regime, Estado Novo put a great emphasis on the idea of the family unit as one of its pillars. Men should work and be the breadwinner, while the women should take care of the house and the children, even though their role in any decision related to children should be just as an adviser, as men had the last word on everything. Women assumed a subservient role compared to men, to the point where the former couldn't leave the country or work without the express permission of their

husbands or fathers. Divorce was also practically illegal<sup>4</sup>. Women who performed certain jobs, like teacher or nurse, were not allowed to get married or needed to have a special permit issued by the government to marry. These restrictions were meant to make women comply with the predetermined role of child bearer and home carer, and to never rebel against their husbands, to remain obedient and to nurture the next generations. By maintaining and spreading this notion of family and gender roles, Estado Novo would attempt to create order and keep the society united on strong familial units.

#### **1.4 State**

The notion of unity is ever-present in Estado Novo's politics. According to Leal (2016), "The idea of the strong state is another element of the political doctrine of the Estado Novo, nourished by the perception that the liberal state in Portugal had been a weak state, because it was too individualist and parliamentarist" (p. 141). The people needed to feel a strong connection to their country, to feel proud of Portugal's history and accomplishments, and to love their country above all else. This is why Estado Novo focused a lot of its efforts on displaying Portugal not only as the country that was born against all odds, but also grew into a world empire and one that, centuries later, was still on top of European politics. Estado Novo had to show to their people and to the world Portugal's historical and contemporary relevance in the world stage. One of the most important examples of these displays was The Exhibition of the Portuguese World<sup>5</sup>, a gigantic event in Belém, Lisbon, that lasted from June to December of 1940. This event marked the 800th anniversary of the founding of Portugal in 1140, and also the 300th anniversary of Portugal's independence from Spain in 1640. The inauguration of the Exhibition on the 23rd of June was also very important. As Gori (2019) mentioned: "Only a few hours earlier, France had signed the Armistice of Compiegne and war had spread

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<sup>4</sup> Estado Novo, throughout its existence, tried to abolish divorce permanently. After the 1st of August 1940 it became impossible to divorce if the marriage was celebrated through the Catholic Church. Throughout the 1960s, other efforts were made in order to make it extremely difficult for people who had not celebrated their marriage through religion to get divorced. Overall, between 1941 and 1974, the percentage of Catholic marriages were always above 80%, and the rate of divorces never reached 2% (as cited in Cid, 2014).

<sup>5</sup> In Portuguese, *Exposição do Mundo Português*.

quickly to the rest of Europe. Portugal was thus presented as an ‘oasis of peace’; 1940 as a year dedicated to the celebration of national renaissance; and Salazar, as the creator of this new period of recovery” (p. 2)

Estado Novo wanted to portray itself not only as the government of a peaceful and stable empire, but also as the culmination of centuries of legendary conquests and spreading religion to the non-believers. Although this exhibition shared some similarities with other exhibitions made in the past by other European dictatorships in the 1930s, the Portuguese one had also some remarkable differences. As Gori (2019) said:

(T)he comparison with a previous governmental system; the demonisation of other ideologies; the supremacy of the new regime; the theological nature of the dictatorship; and the educational function of the “show and tell” - it was deeply influenced by Portuguese myths and national values. The mission given by God to Portugal to spread the Catholic faith all over the world, the idea that, the country was historically destined to be powerful and, in addition, its uniqueness, were particularly stressed in the historical journey staged through the pavilions (p. 8).

There was a very deep connection between Portugal’s achievements and their status as a Christian country. This was also used to legitimize the regime against other left-wing parties whose ideals clashed and were opposite of Estado Novo’s more conservative stance, so Christianity was not only a pillar for Estado Novo’s policies and their ideal of a society, but also a way to give themselves credibility in the world stage and internally. Once again, the idea of maintaining the status quo, in this case applied not to the traditional family, but to the position of Estado Novo’s regime in domestic and external policy.

This pride in the country, the revival of Portugal’s myths and legends to create a sense of accomplishment in what their forefathers had achieved, was Estado Novo’s answer to excite the Portuguese society’s sensibilities and to make them have faith in their government and hope for the future, after decades of mismanagement by so many leaders. If the people fought for Portugal till the end, Portugal would always take care of its citizens, and Salazar, as the head of the regime, would portray himself as the Father of the Nation. Thus, the third pillar of Estado Novo lays bare, the Fatherland or *Pátria* itself.

As a form of uniting the Portuguese people, Estado Novo employed a plethora of propaganda, promoting the Portuguese conquests of the past and achievements of the present, to enhance the status of the country amongst the world's superpowers, and to instil the so-called pride for their country in each Portuguese person. The aforementioned Exhibition is an example of this propaganda, but also the famous poster titled "Portugal is not a small country", which portrays the size of the Portuguese Empire — Portugal and colonies — in comparison to Europe. This poster also shows the importance Estado Novo gave to the colonies, not using them just as a means to extract resources, but as an integral part, an extension of the metropolis. This simple comparison allowed even the less-instructed people to understand the size of Portugal, and how the country was still relevant, as it had been centuries past.

This idea of the Portuguese colonies was also a theory that Estado Novo cultivated, in a time where the Portuguese territories were sufficiently stable, and the population within those territories was pacified. This led to a different idea of the Portuguese settlers in Africa, where they were seen as "the Colonial Heroes" (Baptista, 2013, p. 290), the civilized people who came to rescue the uncivilized.

According to Baptista (2013):

In this seminal period of the Estado Novo, in which a complimentary and very clear image of the negro to be civilized became 'assimilated', as that of the white Portuguese, represented as the 'civilizing genius' as its concrete action was framed and legitimized by a collection of legal documents produced by the Estado Novo (p. 291).

From here, we can see the steps Estado Novo was taking in order to change the public perception of Portugal's treatment of the colonies and its native population. As such, the Fatherland notion was ever-present in Estado Novo's Portugal, a sign of its everlasting legacy, and a beacon of hope and pride for all Portuguese, being a rallying cry for Estado Novo and a great contributor to their idea of a stable Portugal.

With all these ideas in mind, it is necessary to have a discussion regarding the daily lives of the common Portuguese people, and the degree of interference the government's oppression had on the people. This will pave the way to answer how Science Fiction, a genre with characteristics different from the traditional literary genres Portugal was used to, made its mark on this society.

## **Chapter 2: Characteristics of the Portuguese society**

### **2.1 Socio-Economic status of the Portuguese**

In 1926, when the military took over the country, they inherited an impoverished country, that was still healing from the disastrous participation in World War I (and would still suffer the consequences of the 1929 market crash), a population that, in 1930, had a literacy rate of 32.30% and severe societal deficiencies. When the Constitution of 1933 was signed, signalling the beginning of Estado Novo, they started to stretch their many tentacles in order to create a society devoted to their country, and with a cult of personality for Salazar, their absolute ruler.

Throughout Estado Novo's almost 50-year duration, the regime used its many institutions to maintain the Portuguese society in a stagnant status-quo. The idea that the population had to maintain the tradition and the lifestyle of their forefathers, along with a blind loyalty to their leadership, permeated through every facet of society. As Melo refers (2022):

The defence of rurality and catholicity served the restoration of a supposedly ancient, mythical order, rooted not only in the idiosyncrasies of the dictator but also in a diffuse reaction to the recent path taken by society. This discourse was simultaneously anti-First Republic (1910–1926) and averse to urban worldviews and cosmopolitanism, replacing citizenship and the right to be one's own master and master of one's future with the ordering of the world and social time through corporatism. (p.203-204)

In the midst of this order, women and children were in the limelight for different reasons. After 1936, children would join Mocidade Portuguesa, an institution dedicated to spread the devotion to the homeland, and specifically the cult of military duty for boys, and to instil the values of the role of women at home and in the family, to girls. Through this, they would be exposed daily to the Estado Novo propaganda, and be expected to join in military parades and other similar activities. As for women, Estado Novo's idea of tradition meant that the place of a woman was at home, taking care of the family within the private sphere, while men went to work and fulfilled their role within the public sphere as providers of their family well-being. The God-Fearing woman the Estado Novo desired as the standard for all Portuguese women led also to the erasure of many of their rights to act independently from their husbands.

However, as Melo (2002) says:

This project clashed with the reality of secular economic needs, which involved the majority of women, especially from the mainstream strata, in a multitude of jobs that occupied their lives. Women were engaged in gardening, farm work, animal husbandry and grazing, spinning and other domestic work outside the home. They sold produce in the markets and local squares, provided services in the homes of the rich and middle classes, and worked in factories, bars and cafés. Women were also teachers (but almost always only primary school teachers) and worked in health care (from midwives to nurses, and they were forbidden to marry), and in services (almost always only as telephonists and postal and office workers). (p. 210-211)

This ideal only got more and more unattainable during the Colonial War, that saw almost 1.2 million men going to the frontlines, leaving women to fill many of the job positions now left vacant by men.

So, to maintain their plan, order was paramount, and any semblance of culture would have to be guided by the regime's strong hand, which led to the creation of what may be called a filter bubble<sup>6</sup> that the Portuguese were allowed to consume. Content that was verified, changed, cut, and sanitized by PIDE, the authority in charge of this task. By not exposing the people to other views and more modern ideas, the government would have a more docile population, that could be more easily controlled and manipulated.

## **2.2 Social activities during Estado Novo**

In order for Estado Novo to maintain a constant control over the population, the government's influence had to be omnipresent. To achieve this, corporativism was widely implemented. In the countryside, several *casas do povo* were created, that served to provide basic services to the people, including but not limited to social assistance, education and leisure activities. These provided a daily source of culture to the people who did not live in the main cities and were therefore more isolated from other sources

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<sup>6</sup> Thanks to censorship, Estado Novo created a filter in Portuguese society, where all forms of media had already been verified and adjusted by PIDE before they were accessible to the public.

of entertainment and services. These activities were, for the most part, more traditional than the ones the state provided in the urban areas, with a big focus on folklore, who served also to reinvent and solidify those same traditions what would build the Portuguese national identity the Estado Novo so craved.

As for the urban areas, these activities were organized by national trade unions, and had a bigger focus on classic arts and mass culture, without forgetting more traditional forms of culture, like *fado*. As for physical activities, football became the institution it still is today, as the main sport of Portugal. The involvement of the population with these activities, in time, made these become core activities in the daily lives of the Portuguese.

According to official data, the population in urban areas of Portugal rose from 31.75% in 1926 to 59.60% in 1970. This meant that it was ever more important to maintain control in the urban areas, and for these, once again taking a page out of the book of Hitler's Nazi Germany or Mussolini's Fascist Italy, Estado Novo promoted a plethora of official activities designed to contribute to the idea of nationalism and to inflame the people's hearts with pride for their country and for being Portuguese. These activities included festivals, parades, exhibitions (like the Exhibition of the Portuguese World in 1940), among others. The regime took many events that had already been taking place, and instilled them with their own brand of nationalism, to serve as tools of indoctrination to the masses.

### **2.3 Propaganda and Censorship**

This control also permeated to the media. Radio, cinema, theatre, music, literature, and later television were all under the constant surveillance of PIDE, not only correcting any offending material, but also imposing heavy fines (or in the worst cases, imprisonment) to any individual responsible for creating or spreading that content.

The purpose of this censorship was made apparent in article 3 of the 1933 Portuguese Constitution. The article reads as follows:

Censorship's only purpose will be to prevent the perversion of public opinion in its function as a social force and should be imposed in order to protect it against all factors that may disorient it against truth, justice, moral, good

administration and the common good, and to avoid that the fundamental elements of the organisation of society are put in jeopardy<sup>7</sup>.

As previously mentioned, Estado Novo's authoritarian stance meant that they, as the government, had the duty to control public exposure to harmful content. As Salazar mentioned in his speech for the inauguration of the Secretariat for the National Propaganda: "The men, the groups, the classes see, observe everything, study events in the light of their own interests. Only one entity, by duty and position, has to see everything in the light of everyone's interests<sup>8</sup>". Estado Novo was the all-powerful entity that, in their own opinion, as the government, had no ulterior motives in disseminating certain types of information, and therefore took the decision to protect the Portuguese society from those types of information<sup>9</sup>. Of course, as is the case in all dictatorships, what was against official Estado Novo's doctrines was also harmful to the country, and therefore was censored by the state.

## 2.4 Publications during Estado Novo

In the case of printed material, the brunt of the efforts in terms of censorship was taken by the press, and of these, the scientific and cultural journals had an enormous impact in the scientific *zeitgeist*. As Melo asserts (2002):

As for the cultural and scientific journals, official persecution in the 1930s led to them being uprooted from vast areas of the country and to their withdrawal in proportion to the total number of nationally circulated periodicals. The sharp fall in reading publications of this type contributed to a structural cultural deficit, officially stimulated and linked to Portuguese people's low level of cultural

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<sup>7</sup> All the translations of Portuguese sources to English are my responsibility. In the original: "Censura terá somente por fim impedir a perversão da opinião pública na sua função de força social e deverá ser exercida por forma a defendê-la de todos os factores que a desorientem contra a verdade, a justiça, a moral, a boa administração e o bem comum, e a evitar que sejam atacados os princípios fundamentais da organização da sociedade" (as cited in Rodrigues, 1980, p. 67).

<sup>8</sup> In the original: "Os homens, os grupos, as classes vêem, observam as coisas, estudam os acontecimentos à luz do seu interesse. Só uma entidade, por dever e posição, tudo tem de ver à luz do interesse de todos" (as cited in Rodrigues, 1980, p. 67).

<sup>9</sup> To this end, António Ferro was responsible for suggesting to Salazar the creation of a propaganda secretariat and became its minister, and through that, the one responsible for many of Salazarism's propagandistic devices, building up the many myths of Estado Novo's regime (Ferro M. & Ferro, R., 1999).

education, which declined until the 1950s and was aggravated by the ageing of the literate population. (p. 208)

However, this low level of cultural education was much more prevalent in the rural areas, and the main urban areas, Lisbon and Porto, had a very healthy reading culture, a big part of this due to the several connection networks these cities had with other countries like Brazil, Spain, France, among others. This added a plethora of translated works, who had to compete with national works.

The presence of foreign media meant that PIDE had to reinforce its efforts to adequately contain all dangerous information from being available to the masses. Due to the fact that most of the population only had access to books through libraries, the government passed a decree that read as follows: “In all popular and mobile libraries, it is absolutely forbidden to provide books, magazines and pamphlets that contain insults to morals and religions, or doctrines contrary to state security” (from Decree 19952, published in 1931).

This created a more restrictive availability in terms of reading offers to the ordinary people, but nevertheless, due to developments by entities like the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, founded in 1956, libraries became a more and more common sight all over Portugal, especially in areas where these were sorely lacking. Demand was one of the main factors behind which books were made available, which lead to an increase mainly in works of fiction, with steady demand as well of books related to philosophy or sciences. Even though the notion of Science Fiction in Portugal was not set in stone, Luís Filipe Silva (2024) considers that the works of Jules Verne and H.G. Wells — the former’s *Voyage to the Centre of the Earth* (1863), *From the Earth to the Moon* (1865), *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1870), and the latter’s *The Time Machine* (1895) and *The War of the Worlds* (1898) —, given their status of popular literature for the younger generation, could be among those books made available through these libraries, although there is no specific data regarding this.<sup>10</sup>

Through libraries, the literacy indicators started to rise steadily, as Melo (2002) refers:

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<sup>10</sup> L. Filipe Silva, personal communication, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

But both aspects (i.e., works related to literature and to philosophy and sciences) had an innovative degree of diversity and renewal, until then inaccessible to most people and breaking with the official concepts and screens used to select works for distribution. The Gulbenkian libraries resulted in a leap in reading indicators in the country and became an icon of social and cultural transformation for citizens from several generations. (p. 209)

The overall context of the Portuguese society during Estado Novo's government shows a country and people lacking adequate means in many aspects, and the extreme censorship the government only created a bigger rift between the rich and the poor. Melo (2002) adds: "The daily lives of the Portuguese were subject to a combination of official, corporate, educational, cultural and propagandistic impositions. The aim of the New State was to strengthen domestic, institutionalized and controlled leisure" (p.219). Melo continues by explaining that Estado Novo's objective with these impositions was to "promote twin policies and practices, one for the people and another the elites, in education and reading, production, circulation and cultural consumption" (p.219). Nevertheless, the effort of institutions like the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation to create networks and give support to libraries across the country was crucial to allow a big part of the population to finally interact with literature and to cultivate an interest in it.

## Chapter 3: Science Fiction Literature in Portugal

### 3.1 Science Fiction before the Second World War

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the literary environment during Estado Novo had more than its fair share of challenges, and Portuguese authors had to be very careful with what they wrote, since PIDE was always surveying all publications, censoring every word that did not fit with the guidelines created by the government.

There was a big influx of foreign publications, translated to Portuguese — the works of Jules Verne, like *The Steam House*<sup>11</sup>, were possibly the most popular examples — and in terms of Portuguese Science Fiction at the time, the first courageous steps were made by not well-known authors, many of them publishing at their own expense in author's editions. Here we can see an advertisement in a Lisbon newspaper, *Diário de Lisboa*, for *A Grande Ameaça*, written by Adolfo Coelho in 1935:



Fig. 1 – Newspaper clipping from *Diário de Lisboa* dated from 29th March 1935

Many of these books written before the Second World War focus on the growing tensions between the world nations, mirroring what was happening at the time in world politics. As this was also a matter for discussion among the readers, they also learned more about possible technologies in the future, as well as other plausible realities for Portugal and the world. One of the two books I will analyse later, *A.D. 2240*, is centred

<sup>11</sup> First translated to Portuguese in 1888 and published by Casa Editorial David Corazzi.

around this topic as well, albeit in a different record, as the world superpowers in that story are distinct from the ones we had during the 1930s, when the book was written.

These publications were a different phenomenon in Portugal compared to other countries, as the Portuguese publishers focused exclusively on publishing science fiction in book format, discarding the whole format of pulp fiction, widely popular in other countries. In this case, one could even argue that, before the 1950s, Portugal had a particular kind of Science Fiction literature. Luís Filipe Silva (2024) mentions that it would be more correct to speak of a Utopian/Adventure style of literature — taking into account the translations of H.G.Wells and Jules Verne — as an example rather than of a proper Science Fiction style of literature. And this style of translating specific foreign books, on the one hand, and publishing sporadic Portuguese science fiction books, on the other, remained until the 1950s, where the post-war state of the world created a larger interest in this genre of literature, very influenced by the American production of Science Fiction. It was also in this decade that the first big collections of science fiction appeared in Portugal, the first of which was *Argonauta*.

## 3.2 Science Fiction after the Second World War

### 3.2.1 *Argonauta*

*Argonauta* was a collection by the publishing house Livros do Brasil, that focused on delivering Science Fiction novels from all over the world to a Portuguese-speaking audience. The first issue was *Adrift in the Stratosphere*<sup>12</sup>, by A. M. Low, published in November 1953. This collection lasted until 2016<sup>13</sup>, amounting to 563 different novels, from a plethora of well-known Science Fiction writers. Names such as Isaac Asimov, Philip K. Dick or Ray Bradbury were amongst the authors whose novels were published as part of this collection.

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<sup>12</sup> *Perdidos na Estratosfera*, translated to Portuguese by Correia Ribeiro.

<sup>13</sup> The last book published in this collection was the science fiction classic *Dune*, written in 1965 by Frank Herbert and translated by Eurico da Fonseca.

To appeal to the audience, the covers of these books always showed a scene evocative of the plot of the story, many of which were reproductions of the covers of the original books.

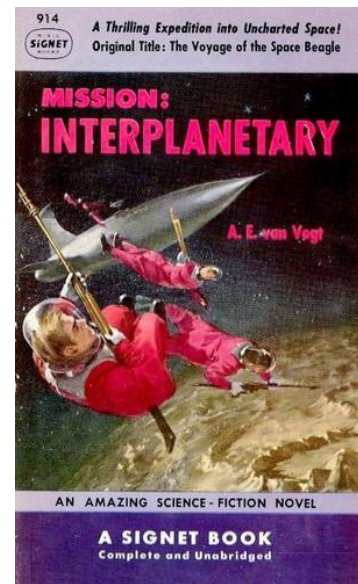
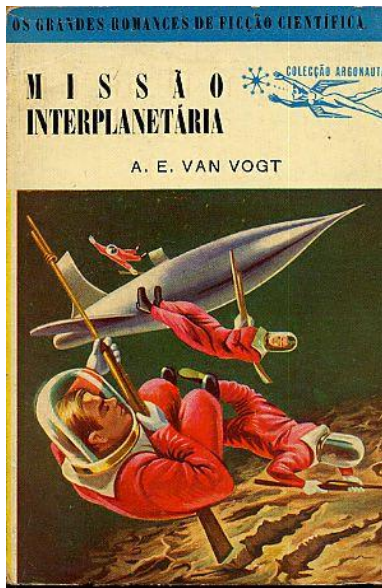


Fig. 2 – The cover of *Missão Interplanetária*, written by A.E. Van Vogt, to the left, and the original cover of the book, titled *Mission: Interplanetary*, to the right

Cândido Costa Pinto was the designer credited with the illustrations of the covers of the first 32 issues of this collection. He greatly contributed to the appeal and success of this emerging collection.

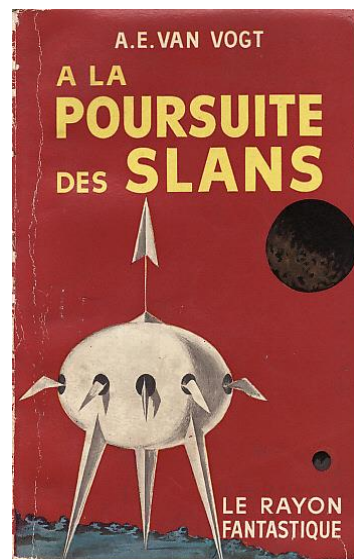
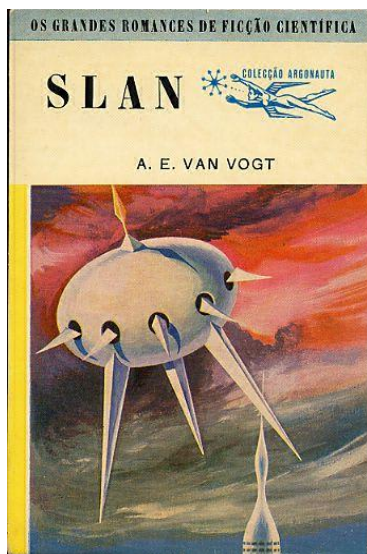


Fig. 3 – The cover for issue 23 *SLAN*, by Cândido Costa Pinto, to the left, and the original *A la poursuite des SLANS* French cover, to the right. In spite of using elements from the original cover, Cândido Costa Pinto was able to imbue his version with a lot more depth and colour, making the cover more favourable to the imagination of the reader.

*Argonauta* was the precursor of many other collections that started appearing at the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s. It made Science Fiction more accessible to a wider audience, who no longer had to rely on the small number of translated novels published sporadically, nor needed to master a second language in order to read the English, French or Spanish original novels that were also in the market.

In addition to this, it is worth mentioning one event that occurred in Portugal and illustrated well the effect Science Fiction could have on the masses.

### **3.2.2 A *Invasão dos Marcianos***

In the year of 1958, José Matos Maia, renowned radio spokesman, had the idea to emulate Orson Welles, when the latter transmitted H.G.Wells' *War of the Worlds* on the American radio, in such a way as to make the audience believe the events of the story — an invasion of the Earth by aliens — was actually happening in real time. Matos Maia did several adjustments to the original story, replacing the names of American cities with Portuguese ones, to make this as believable as possible.

So, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 1958, at 08:40 pm, Matos Maia interrupted the regular programming of Radio Renascença to request to the audience to stay calm, because strange events were about to unfold. This marked the beginning of the 'Martian Invasion', "*A Invasão dos Marcianos*". He continued updating the public on the unfolding situation, and this gave way to a report of unbelievable events happening in Mars, and from that, reports of airships landing in Carcavelos, false reports from the government addressing this incoming invasion and reporters on the scene documenting every single second of this event.

The Portuguese public, glued to their radios, fell into widespread panic. Thousands of calls to the police, firemen, hospitals were made, and the populace went *en*

*masse* outside to try to flee the Martians and even started themselves reporting strange phenomena, no doubt caused by this panic.

The chaos was such that the PSP (Polícia de Segurança Pública) had to invade the Radio Renascença studios to put an end to the broadcast, and Matos Maia spent three days in jail at PIDE headquarters as punishment for, as he mentioned later, “not to make fun of serious issues<sup>14</sup>”.

This significant episode encapsulates the power of Science Fiction. This literary genre can serve as a tool of learning, as well of dreaming, but it can also be used to spread misinformation or to act as a propaganda tool, as it will be discussed in the next part of this dissertation.

The repression from the government occurred due to the sudden and overwhelming effect this radio event had on the population, but generally, PIDE did not focus much of their effort in Science Fiction publications, not only censoring very specific writings, but doing it in a sporadic way. As will be shown below regarding the analysis of *O Aquário*, a possible explanation may be that Science Fiction, by its very nature, allows the writer to criticize contemporary society through the lens of a different reality or future, not raising the alarm of the censorship agents.

### 3.2.3 The 1960's

The 1960's saw a renewed interest in Science Fiction, much aided by the Space Race, and *Argonauta's* incredible success showed to other publications that there was a huge potential in Science Fiction. However, the “professionalization” of this type of literature led the Portuguese authors to try to emulate the templates of other popular novels, in order to achieve greater exposure. A good example of this is *A Ameaça Cósmica* (1962), written by Luís de Mesquita, which is similar to the *When Worlds Collide* movie (1951), and *Mensageiro do Espaço* (1957), also written by Luís de Mesquita, similar to the famous *The Day The Earth Stood Still* movie (1951). From here it can also be seen the influence that film had on Science Fiction literature, serving as another medium in which to draw inspiration from.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> In the original: “Para não brincar com coisas sérias” (as cited in Santos, 2019).

<sup>15</sup> For more information regarding Portuguese Science Fiction authors and the historical context, see Appendix 1.

The literary environment remained somewhat unchanged until the end of the period comprised by this dissertation (1974), although according to Silva in *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* (2020), there was an *Antologia do Conto Fantástico Português* that was published in 1967 and revised in 1974, which consisted of a collection of Portuguese short-stories from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, that despite touching more on the fantastical genre than specifically on science fiction, also shows that, even with the advent of science fiction, there was already a tradition of this type of content within Portuguese literature.

## **Chapter 4: Utopia in the depiction of the future and Science Fiction as a tool for knowledge**

### **4.1 Utopias and Utopists**

According to Stableford & Langford in the *Science Fiction Encyclopedia* (2024):

The concept of a utopia or “Ideal State” is linked to religious ideas of Heaven or the Promised Land and to folkloristic ideas like the Isles of the Blessed, but it is essentially a future-historical goal, to be achieved by the active efforts of human beings, not a transcendental goal reserved as a reward for those who follow a particularly virtuous path in life.

Utopias have always been a topic of discussion, both due to their desirability, since it is thought of as the ultimate achievement of Mankind, but also due to being virtually impossible to achieve. The dream of having a perfect world is somewhat commonplace in our society, but what does exactly entail a utopia? For all intents and purposes, is a conceptualized idea of Heaven on Earth, but this concept suffered some changes throughout the years, and Science Fiction has part of the blame in removing the lustre that Utopias once had.

According to Vieira (2010), the concept of Utopia has been historically connected to one of four characteristics: the content of the imagined society, the literary form into which the utopian imagination has been crystalized, the function of utopia and, finally, the desire for a better life, caused by a feeling of discontent towards the society one lives in (p. 6). Of all of these, the latter is the most important and inclusive, as it retains what is the reflection of the person who writes and reads about Utopias, the feeling of hope. The feeling that drives a person to achieve more, to change what is negative about their present situation and society and to bring a positive change into it. Francis Bacon's utopia *The New Atlantis*, published posthumously in 1626, is a seminal text that presents technological progress and science built upon a spirit of collaboration and only destined for the benefit of mankind.

Vieira (2010, p. 8) also explains that Utopists depart from the observation of the society they live in, note down the aspects that need to be changed and imagine a place where those problems have been solved. This allowed Utopists to criticize their own society through a veneer of distance from reality. In the case of repressive regimes like Estado Novo, I would add, this could empower the writer to suggest change in their

country, without agitating the political police's sensibilities. And through these critiques, the writer could spread the message to the reader that change was necessary in order for society to progress. But these writings could also be used to teach the reader about possible technological developments in the future.

It is obvious that utopia preceded 'science fiction'. The term itself was coined in 1929 by the American editor and writer Hugo Gernsback, and since then it has been debated whether science fiction is a part of utopia or utopia a branch of science fiction. Gregory Claeys (2011) asserts that utopia constructs a representation of the ideal commonwealth or city-state, whereas "science fiction is a sub-genre in which science and technology predominate thematically — utopically, when expressed positively, or dystopically, when used negatively" (p.163). Moreover, although science fiction works may still act as social criticism and/or satire, science and technology are always regarded as key concepts when the future is foreseen.

Both the presence and the absence of science are thus crucial to distinguish the genres of SF and utopia, since SF can be utopian or dystopian, and utopias and dystopias can be science fictional. The complexity of the connections between the two genres is pointed out by Raymond Williams (in Milner, 2010, p. 95-97), who proposes four types of elements in common: the paradise or hell, the externally altered world, the willed transformation, and the technological transformation. In science fiction, the scientific and technological knowledge, development, and appliance dominate the way in which these four types contribute to the narrative.

In his book *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre* (1979), Darko Suvin explains that science fiction is distinct from other literary genres due to the use of two devices, Novum<sup>16</sup> and Cognitive Estrangement. Both these devices allow the writer to make use of scientific concepts like time travel or hyperintelligent AI without breaking the logic of their own created world. Suvin (1979) mentioned that all the epistemological, ideological, and narrative implications and correlatives of the novum lead to the conclusion that significant SF was in fact a specifically roundabout way of commenting on an author's collective context. This gives

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<sup>16</sup> According to Suvin (as cited in Broderick, 2022), the former is distinctive in creating and understanding the imagined world as different from our own, by means of scientific observation, theorizing and empirical experiment. Such new textual worlds are set off from ours chiefly by means of a drastic disruption, an anomalous breach in accepted verities; in short, an intrusive novelty so strange, and at first inexplicable, that it deserves a category of its own: the novum.

us a better image of how the author wants to criticize his own society, his reality, through literary devices that are so foreign to our own reality.

Moreover, Suvin (1979) considers utopia “the socio-political subgenre of science fiction” (p.61). This relationship between both is further discussed by Suvin (1979):

SF is at the same time wider than and at least collaterally descended from utopia; it is, if not a daughter, yet a niece of utopia — a niece usually ashamed of the family inheritance but unable to escape her genetic destiny. For all its adventure, romance, popularization, and wondrousness, SF can finally be written only between the utopian and anti-utopian horizons (p. 63-64).

Through this, it is understood that it is impossible to speak about science fiction without speaking about utopia, as they are intertwined by their nature.

The connection between utopias and Science Fiction to promote learning is well referenced in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*. In it, Fitting (2010, p.139) explains that Science Fiction brings an awareness of the effects and importance of science and technology. He later expands to considering the role of technology as a tool for social transformation.

According to Reis (2009, p. 93-94), science is autonomous, finite and paradoxically immeasurable as a heuristic endeavour of the human spirit. Drawing on George Steiner’s conference “Is Science Nearing Its Limits?” at the Gulbenkian Foundation in 2007, the author refers to the speculative search for empirical knowledge in conceptual ideals that may or may not be applied to the utopian phenomenology.

Utopian theories have always been met with some scepticism, ever since Aristotle casted doubt on the theories of Plato’s republic, and as more literature was written with a focus on utopias, the general sentiment started to shift from utopias to dystopias. The supreme dominion of Man over machine was only surpassed by their inevitable inaction, when machines take over all functions, rendering humans useless. There was a counter-current of aversion to technology, but nevertheless, the focus was still as a utopia created by Man’s achievements. This would give way to a different kind of problem. Scepticism reared its head in another way. Having peace among people and all needs ensured isn’t necessarily a synonym of happiness. E.M. Forster, in his book *The Machine Stops* (1909), argues that these ideals would only lead to the stagnation of the human mind, and the complete abandonment of purpose in one’s life.

## 4.2 Dystopias

After World War One, the panorama shifts definitively to a dystopian one. Books like *Brave New World* (1932) by Aldous Huxley were instrumental in developing this fear of a technology-based utopia. Behind the curtain of magnificence, the rotten core of society would always appear to show the reader that a true utopia will always be impossible to achieve. As mentioned by Stableford & Langford in the *Science Fiction Encyclopedia* (2024): “The necessity for works of fiction to be dramatic and the fact that workable plots require conflict inhibit the use of sf to display utopian schemes”. This creates a conflict between the practicality of an interesting plot embedded in a perfect society, as both are mutually exclusive. But this is not the only reason for the impossibility of a true utopia, as human beings are, by their very nature, complex creatures, with different ideals, cultures, and backgrounds, meaning it is impossible to idealize a utopia that would be perfect for every living being on Earth. But just because reaching a utopian state is impossible, this doesn’t mean that society cannot hope to achieve ever greater technological advances and to strive for a better future for the coming generations. Many authors who were extremely devoted to the betterment of society through technological advances, like Arthur C. Clarke or Isaac Asimov, put very little thought into utopias and focused on the science itself.

This focus on science was paramount to the main objective these authors had by publishing Science Fiction. Isaac Asimov<sup>17</sup> believed that a public understanding of science was very important to counter the public’s hostility towards scientists and science itself. People fear what they don’t understand. Which is why, in order to bridge the gap between the public and the scientific community, it was and still is ever more important for this work to be made.

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<sup>17</sup> According to Asimov (as cited in Thomas & Durant, 1987): “Without an informed public, scientists will not only be no longer supported financially, they will be actively persecuted” (p.3).

### 4.3 Science Fiction's role in the learning process

Science Fiction's role in this process can be an important one, but in my opinion, it begs the question: Can people effectively learn Science through Science Fiction? According to Stephen Hawking: "Science fiction is useful both for stimulating the imagination and for diffusing fear of the future." In fact, given the infinite possibilities within science fiction to create situations that would be impossible in real life, it can be used to emulate a reality that would be more conducive to the learning of science. As people read and watch Science Fiction, learning about the many different technologies mentioned in these stories, they can understand the basic concepts of the Science being discussed here. A reader does not have to be a Doctorate in Robotics to understand the logic behind Azimov's Three Laws of Robotics, and how they could be applied to AI in the future, in the same way as a reader does not have to have an academic background in cybersecurity to understand the implications of a future similar to the one represented in George Orwell's *1984*. These stories allow everyone to understand the wider implications of scientific development in a simple way, and instil on the person a taste and love for science. In the same way many people followed a career in NASA or other space agencies due to being inspired by the Moon Landing in 1969, there were as well many other people who followed a career in Computer Science because they were inspired Isaac Asimov's *I, Robot*, or followed a career in Palaeontology due to Michael Crichton's *Jurassic Park*.

Through this, we can see the power Science Fiction can have not only as a means for knowledge, but also to inspire people to follow a career path related to Science.

However, there still needs to be a discussion regarding the practical applications of promoting science learning to the masses, and how the individual learning of science can contribute to a more stable and informed society, creating a snowball effect that will improve the country that society lives in on many levels, which are interconnected. This public understanding of science needs to be understood first in order to be applicable, and Science Fiction can have a very important role in establishing this public understanding of science on a large scale.

## **Chapter 5: The importance of a public understanding of science**

### **5.1 Benefits**

What does public understanding of science entail? According to Gregory and Miller (2000):

One of the most succinct summaries of reasons for enhancing public understanding of science was produced in 1987 by Thomas and Durant<sup>18</sup>. They grouped the various motivations under nine “benefits” that are supposed to accrue to society, organizations, or individuals. (p. 10)

These benefits are as follows: Science; National Economies; National Power and Influence; Individuals; Democratic Governments; Society; Intellectual; Aesthetic and Moral. Of these, even though they are all interconnected, I will cast light on Science, Individuals, Democratic Governments and Society.

#### **5.1.1 Science**

Science would benefit from a more general scientific knowledge from the public, as the investment in many fields of science depends on the support of the public, either by paying taxes that will be allocated for these fields, or by voting for policies that benefit and encourage scientific research. However, this knowledge must be tempered with some moderation, since even an informed public may not necessarily agree with the scientific establishment. Topics like nuclear energy and its risks raise doubts even on the most informed individuals.

#### **5.1.2 Individuals**

Regarding the individual, in an ever more technological world, it’s imperative that there’s a basic understanding of some scientific concepts, to ensure an easier navigation through everyday life. We engage with science every day, and people tend to be more knowledgeable about a scientific subject if it has a direct effect on their lives, for example, they tend to do research about a specific disease they or a family member/friend are going through. But a worker in a factory doesn’t need to know all the technical aspects of the machinery, as there are other people tasked with ensuring everything works correctly in order for the worker to be able to perform his/her job.

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<sup>18</sup> Gregory and Miller refer to Geoffrey Thomas and John Durant, Why should we promote the public understanding of science? *Scientific Literary Papers I* (1987), p. 1-14.

### 5.1.3 Democratic Governments

As far as benefits for Democratic Governments are concerned, there are several groups of people who feel disenfranchised from the current political spectrum, especially in the case of matters related to science, who are increasingly losing their grasp on how to function in a technological society, and who respond by doubting science and policies that support it. This anti-science movement can be very dangerous for society, creating a chasm that can have a big impact in the development of modern thought. This is why it is paramount to raise the public's awareness and knowledge of science, so that a more informed society can embrace development and grow. In the case of dictatorial governments, such as the case of Estado Novo in Portugal, it is to the benefit of that government that the masses stay ignorant, as they are easier to control. The repression a dictatorship exerts over its people can have many forms, and one of the more powerful ones is precisely censorship, hence the constant efforts of PIDE to block every single piece of information that could be deemed problematic to the government. Information is a weapon the people can use to build a better and fairer future.

### 5.1.4 Society

In the book *Misunderstanding science? The public reconstruction of science and technology*, the authors focus on the dichotomy between the experts (scientific community) and the public. Irwin and Wynne (1996) use several examples across different scientific fields to show the importance not only of this public understanding of science, but also how the scientific community itself is seen by the public. One example they used was the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) epidemic that occurred in the 1990's, known commonly as "mad cow disease". While the opinion from the experts was that the actual risk to public health was diminutive, the public reaction was as follows:

Meanwhile, public concern was high — as indicated by the sudden drop in meat sales accompanied by a steep rise in media attention. Despite the official statements on BSE and the claims that scientific evidence suggested the risks to be small, two aspects of the public debate were very apparent. Firstly, that — as with the nuclear issue — scientific opinion was by no means unanimous (with Professor Richard Lacey, for example, taking a public stand against the 'official' position). Secondly, as the House of Commons Select

Committee on Agriculture observed, 'Scientists do not automatically command public trust' (p.10)

This distrust of scientists by the public is quite alarming and can bring nefarious consequences in the future. If the public does not believe in the primary sources of information regarding these topics, it will only create more misinformation and general panic. A more recent phenomenon that occurred was the Covid-19 pandemic and the plethora of misinformation that was circulating regarding possible treatments for this disease. Many people adopted these fraudulent treatments they saw online instead of following the advice of the World Health Organization and other reputable entities. This severe misinformation only propagated due to the distrust many people already had of these institutions, which were amplified thanks to social media. In the article *The Danger of Misinformation in the COVID-19 Crisis* published in 2020, right in the middle of this pandemic, the following was stated (Nelson et al, 2020):

Several well-publicized incidents have demonstrated the negative impact of false information. As an example, early during the pandemic, questions were raised regarding the possible use of disinfectants administered internally to patients with COVID-19. On June 5, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reported a steep increase in calls to poison centers regarding exposure to household disinfectants. A CDC survey of 502 adults in the United States found that 39% of responders engaged in dangerous practices including washing food products with bleach, applying household cleaners directly to skin, and intentionally inhaling or ingesting disinfectants with the goal of preventing COVID-19 infection. (p.510-511)

These examples serve to illustrate the importance of the need for a proper understanding of science by the public, and the effort governments all over the globe have to do in order to prepare the new generations for this technological world.

## **Chapter 6: A.D. 2230, the promised Empire**

### **6.1 The triumph of the Portuguese spirit**

In 1926, when the military coup that toppled the First Republic took place, even though it was a time of turmoil, the ruling powers already had a blueprint of what they wanted the future of Portugal to be. And, taking some pages out of Mussolini's Fascist regime, which had risen to power back in 1922, the military junta that would later evolve into Estado Novo started investing heavily on propaganda. It mainly spread information on how bright and strong Portugal's future would be, namely, that it would recover the prosperity and prestige it had during the Discoveries. In 1932, one year before the approval of the Constitution of 1933 that would transform the new Second Republic to Estado Novo, Amílcar de Mascarenhas wrote his only novel, a sci-fi book titled *A.D. 2230*, that would bring to its readers an idea on how Portugal would develop during this new, strong leadership into becoming one of the leading countries of the future. A summary of this novel is needed in order to make a connection to utopian paradigms.

In this fictional universe, after the end of the Great War (World War I), the feminist movement — emboldened by the ever-growing freedom and power women got by joining the workforce to replace the men who went to fight in the war — took power over North America, uniting all of its countries into the USA and all the countries of Europe, with the exception of Portugal and Great Britain, into a Super-Country, called the Confederation of European States, creating a new city called Europa to serve as its capital. Both governments overhauled the political system, giving all important jobs in administration to women, relegating men to jobs where they were indispensable, namely military, or to otherwise second-rate jobs. Portugal alone — as Great Britain implemented an extremely isolationist policy, effectively closing from the world — stood firm against the new women-led governments of the two power blocks of the world, resisting any attempt to overthrow their government in favour of the feminist movement. The exclusion of Great Britain in this European block is also quite interesting, as the oldest known military treaty still active is the Windsor treaty, signed in 1386 between Portugal and England. Being Portugal's oldest ally, Great Britain wouldn't fall under the influence that would affect all other European countries. However, due to fear of being broken by these new feminist-run superpowers, they shut down all external influences and stayed on their own islands. Portugal, on the other hand, thrived despite all these influences, and embraced its destiny without fear, as it was meant to do.

The Portuguese people had a very specific mindset. As Mascarenhas refers (1932):

A writer from the 19th century once said that the Portuguese crisis would end on the day each Portuguese decided to perform their job well. The Portuguese thought about it for a long time, as if doing a deep conscience exam or as if they were interiorizing this truth, and they finally considered that it was true<sup>19</sup>.

As we can see, like what happened in reality, the military coup ended the First Republic due to its many failings. The old regime was seen as incompetent, and a revolution was the only solution possible. But this revolution couldn't just happen in the government itself, but in all spheres of Portuguese society. The whole country needed to shift its perspective, the people needed to focus on what really mattered, to take their jobs seriously in order to bring as much prosperity as possible to the nation.

In this new Portuguese society, there were two different currents, the traditionalists, more contemplative and anchored in the ways of the past, whose dogma was "A People with this past cannot die"<sup>20</sup> and the foreigners, that believed they should look to the past only to collect strength to build a better present and future. Their dogma was "A People with this past has the duty and the obligation to create an even grander future"<sup>21</sup>. In these two different but somewhat similar dogmas, we see one of the roots of Estado Novo, history. The destiny of the Portuguese people, a country full of legendary feats that once held the world in their hands, was to once again recover its lost status as a superpower, as it was always meant to be.

Coupled with the destiny of the Portuguese people due to their history, the reader is also provided with the fact that this Portuguese government nationalized all its colonies, and established the Portuguese Empire, emphasizing the idea that the colonies were essential to the growth of the Empire. This idea was popularized by Estado Novo

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<sup>19</sup> In the original: "Um escritor do século XIX dissera que a crise portuguesa cessaria no dia em que cada português se resolvesse a bem desempenhar a sua profissão. Os portugueses meditaram longamente, como que fazendo um longo exame de consciência ou como que a compenetrar-se de tal verdade, e entenderam por fim que assim era" (Mascarenhas, 1932, p.15).

<sup>20</sup> In the original, "Um Povo com este passado não morre" (Mascarenhas, 1932, p.16).

<sup>21</sup> In the original, "Um Povo com este passado tem o dever, a obrigação de fazer um Futuro ainda maior" (Mascarenhas, 1932, p.16).

throughout its duration, to the point Portugal waged a disastrous war, Guerra do Ultramar, against many of its former colonies in the vain hope of being able to hold on to them.

The actual story begins in Lisbon, with a declaration by the government of the Portuguese Empire, stating that the USA and the Confederation of European States are pressuring the Portuguese government to surrender and install a feminist government in its stead, or else they would be forced to take other measures. Amid chants of “Long live the Empire”<sup>22</sup>, the government announce that two ambassadors, one from the USA and another one from Europe, will come to Portugal to negotiate with the Duumvirate.

With the arrival of the ambassadors and their secretaries, the reader is given the first description of women. One thing to note is that their portrayal is almost exclusively through the lens of their physical attributes. The foreign women, although they are in positions of power, only get noticed and described by their physical attributes, and are otherwise described as weak or incompetent. In fact, the only act where a woman accomplished something is when one of the secretaries / spies escapes from jail. However, the description of the events detail this as not only an accomplishment of her skill, but also that she only succeeded due to the excessive confidence and laxness of the Portuguese police during her captivity. The Portuguese women that appear in the story, although they are also described exclusively through their physical attributes, do not share this aura of incompetence, as they are working for the Portuguese secret service as spies, and manage to trick the foreign spies, by working undercover as maids during the ambassadors’ stay in Lisbon. These portrayals show one of the pillars of Estado Novo, the status quo. According to Estado Novo’s propaganda, the place of the women was to support their family, to stay at home and take care of the children, not to work in positions of power, they were not meant for that. Only men had the strength, the knowledge and the courage to lead efficiently the destinies of a country, and by portraying women in such a manner, it would give credit to the ideals of the new regime in Portugal.

This interference of foreign powers in Portugal’s affairs was also a way to unite the country against a common enemy. In the story, when the Duumvirates communicate to the people that, due to the manner in which the USA and the Confederation of European States conducted this whole affair, they had no choice but to declare war, the Portuguese people erupted in euphoria, screaming *Viva o Império*, as they were ready to sacrifice

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<sup>22</sup> In the original: “Viva o Império” (Mascarenhas, 1932, p.7).

anything they needed in order to guarantee the victory and supremacy of the Portuguese empire. This devotion to one's country was the dream not only of all autocratic governments, but Estado Novo's in particular, due to the great emphasis put on the pride of being Portuguese.

The superiority of the Portuguese Empire is recognized by both the Americans and the Europeans, as they say repeatedly that the Portuguese weaponry are superior, and specifically their armada, as ships are the main force in which the war is fought, however they still believe that the overwhelming size of both the American and the European armadas together will be more than enough to easily crush the Portuguese. Their numbers may be fewer, but they are more industrious, intelligent, professional and overall more united than their enemies, and therein lies the key to their success. They have a date with destiny, and they will fulfil it, like their grandfathers dreamed of.

Due to the superior tactics of the Portuguese, who utilized well their reduced numbers in order to lure the enemy into a false sense of security, which lead the Portuguese armada to outmanoeuvre them and, aided by the light fleet armed with the rays of destruction, the unbeatable secret weapon the Portuguese developed, they managed to completely destroy the American and European armadas.

The coup-de-grace, however, came later, as the Portuguese fleet unleashed total destruction on Washington DC, to prompt the surrender of the Americans. Seeing such devastation, the American female president passed over her powers to the highest-ranking admiral in the American navy, Admiral White, who, after the catastrophic loss of the American navy against Portugal, had started to get support to stage a coup, and he promptly surrendered to the Portuguese, and a peace treaty was concluded between the three powers. The Portuguese empire, in its magnanimity, despite achieving total victory, only requested Olivença, who at the time was already a disputed territory between Portugal and Spain, and the formation of a protectorate in Galiza, along with war reparations, as conditions for the peace treaty.

At the end, the Portuguese empire re-established the equilibrium in the world once again, while also proving itself as the strongest power and the world leader of the future.

## 6.2 Technology

Since this story was written in 1932, seven years before the beginning of the Second World War, it also serves as a time capsule of how the author thought the world would be in 2230, the 23<sup>rd</sup> century. As it is a story based around a war, there is inevitably a great deal of focus surrounding means of transportation, as well as weaponry. As far as means of transportation goes, the author explained that, due to the harnessing of the power of electricity, the cars of the past were discontinued, as they were inefficient and created a lot of pollution. In their place we have the “sliders”. As Mascarenhas (1932) mentioned:

The sliders replace the old automobile with all its inconvenients: the irritating smell of gasoline, the noise, the vehicle breaking down, all of this disappeared with the slider.

The slider is a perfect sled that moves due to a propeller on the back. A small radio-receptor in the place of the driver, with a hidden antenna in the windshield, captured the energy emitted by the radio-transmitter facility where the slider is registered.<sup>23</sup>

These “sliders” moved on roads made of molten glass, allowing them to slide quickly and efficiently. But this new way of locomotion pales in comparison to the magnum-opus of the capital, the airport.

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<sup>23</sup> In the original: “Os deslizadores substituem o antigo automóvel com todos os seus inconvenientes: o cheiro irritante a gasolina, o ruído, as panes desconcertantes, tudo desapareceu no deslizador. O deslizador é um perfeito trenó impulsionado por uma hélice que lhe fica por detraz. Um pequeno rádio-receptor no lugar do condutor, munido de uma antena disfarçada no para-brisas capta a energia emitida pela central rádio-emissora onde o deslizador está matriculado.” (Mascarenhas, 1932, p. 27).

What is now Lisbon's airport was inaugurated in 1942, meaning that, in 1932, there was just a primitive airport for the few flights the capital received every week. When Mascarenhas imagined the airport of the future in Lisbon, he created more than just an airport, he created a landmark, an imposing tower with land strips in the middle, so remarkable that even one of the ambassadors that came to Lisbon couldn't help but comment with Bernardo, the chief of the Portuguese Secret Services, who received them at the airport, that: "I had read several descriptions of your Airport, but I had a very different idea of it. You cannot imagine the feeling I got when I saw how big the size of its silhouette was as the airship approached it."<sup>24</sup> To whom Bernardo answers that it is one of many proud achievements of the Empire and a masterpiece of engineering, reinforcing the technological strength of the Portuguese Empire. This marvel was powered by yet another fantastic achievement of the Portuguese, the harnessing of the power of the everlasting current in Boca do Inferno to create an endless supply of clean electricity, a source that only the Portuguese are able to have — due to the very specific characteristics of Boca do Inferno — and another sign of the ability of the Portuguese to rise above all expectations and achieve what all others thought impossible. An amazing resource that was ignored by the former, weak regimes, but put to good use now in this new Portuguese empire.



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<sup>24</sup> In the original: "Já tinha lido várias descrições do seu Aeroporto mas fazia dele uma ideia muito diferente. Você não imagina a impressão que me causou a grandiosidade da sua silhueta quando se chega na aeronave." (Mascarenhas, 1932, p.52).

Fig. 4 – Cover of the book *A.D. 2230*, showing the airport mentioned in the story.

All these are examples of technological advancements that would be projected on the minds of the readers, of how the world would function in a century, or two. And along with it, the potential of a strong leadership like the one the military coup of 1926 aimed to create.

### 6.3 The three pillars

Much has been discussed regarding Fatherland<sup>25</sup>, one of the three pillars Estado Novo would later proclaim as the foundation for the new Portuguese society. However, this story also touches upon the other two pillars, albeit in a more discreet way. Regarding Family<sup>26</sup>, it is told in the beginning that, when the feminist regimes swept through Europe and North America, there was a huge wave of immigration due to men being removed from all positions of power and other important positions. Portugal welcomed everyone, with equal rights to the Portuguese, except in terms of politics, with the caveat that they must bring their families, and their children, as children of the Portuguese empire, should be raised in Portuguese schools, and acquire the Portuguese nationality. This emphasis on family was extremely important, as it showed that the Portuguese wanted to keep the nuclear families intact and allow them to grow in the Portuguese way and prosper within the empire, while the other country blocks destroyed the nuclear family by removing the capacity for the men to be the breadwinners, forever changing the dynamic that Estado Novo wished to convey for the people. We get small snippets later regarding the state of the family in other countries. In Europe, the women and men are forced to marry to have children, to such a degree that, on the wedding night, the groom of the European ambassador drank himself to death, portraying the despair and degradation these feminist governments created on their societies. These societies would have an incredible amount of broken or non-existing families, which would create broken children and rotten adults, far from the righteous, orderly and loving families the Portuguese empire created.

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<sup>25</sup> “Pátria”, in Portuguese.

<sup>26</sup> “Família”, in Portuguese.

As far as God<sup>27</sup> is concerned, the devotion to God by the Portuguese is well portrayed at the end, where every single Portuguese, no matter how rich or how poor, contributed to the construction of a magnificent temple, to thank God for the victory in the war against Europe and North America, and it was also in this temple that the marriage of the two Duumvirates was celebrated, as a sign of God that the Portuguese Empire will now take the reins of the World in their hands and lead the way to world prosperity. But before the war was over, while the Portuguese planes were destroying Washington from above, the President of the United States, Barbara Sullivan, after passing her powers over to Admiral White, as she couldn't face the consequences of this loss, went down on her knees and begged God for salvation. God would now help this land and its inhabitants to step away from darkness and bask once again in the light. This, coupled with the return of power to the hands of men, meant a new start for America. The degeneracy brought by decades of feminist governments was over, and traditional values would return and with it, peace on earth.

*A.D. 2230* uses the ideals of the newfangled Second Republic — and later Estado Novo — in order to create an imaginary world where this regime prospered and evolved throughout the years. The descriptions of the many technological advancements, the state of world politics, society and gender norms serve to instil on the reader that these ideals are the way to create a perfect society, for Portugal and the Portuguese to finally achieve their long-lost Dominant status in the world. And, in a world where the Second World War was still seven years away, to wonder about the state of science in the 23<sup>rd</sup> century considering all the technology shown throughout the story. Though it is not a complex book in the way that it is written, the simple yet detailed descriptions allow the reader to imagine and ponder about how these technologies can actually be developed in the future, as well as serve as a propaganda tool for describing a world with Estado Novo at the helm of Portugal.

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<sup>27</sup> “Deus”, in Portuguese.

## Chapter 7: *O Aquário*, the Man of today through the lens of the Man of the future

### 7.1 The imperfections of a perfect society

In contrast with the utopian concepts designed for the Portuguese society, as seen in *A.D. 2230*, some dystopian views were also to be considered. In order to illustrate this, Alice Sampaio wrote in 1963 her novel titled *O Aquário*, that touches upon the more contemplative side of Science Fiction, tests the limits of individual freedom within a perfect society, and how such a society managed any discontent brought upon by individual citizens who saw the cracks under the surface of this utopia. To achieve a better understanding of how Sampaio did this, we need to do a summary, so as to touch upon these concepts as they appear throughout the novel.

When we first delve into the world of *O Aquário*, we meet the protagonist Maga Moniz Ya-Tsé, who is being woken up by her robot-slave called Riri, and we get immediately exposed to one of the characteristics of Science Fiction narratives: a new vocabulary, new words who are used to describe meanings that our current vocabulary already is capable of doing. However, this overly descriptive vocabulary is a window to the supremely logical and reason-based society of *O Aquário*. Expressions like “laments-without-voice-or-reason-without-face-and-without-meaning<sup>28</sup>” or “spherical-white-antispaces-with-room-for-everything<sup>29</sup>” show that the excessive emphasis on logic removes all emotion from the dialogue and from the people themselves. It is symbolic that, when Maga wants to express any emotion, like love, for example — deemed as unnecessary and indicative of an individual who has not achieved mental maturity —, she uses French, *je t’aime*, considered a dead language in this society.

Maga yearns for a life without the omnipresent control of the “Robot Biológico”, a semi-artificial entity that controls all aspects of society and permits the citizens to live their lives without harm, as immortal beings, with every need they have catered to them and with the ability to control the weather. In order to not feel any emotions, everyone has a bracelet called the s.l.i, that automatically detects changes in mood and immediately takes measures to bring the person back to a normal state.

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<sup>28</sup> In the original: “lamúria sem-voz-nem-tino-sem-rosto-e-sem-significado” (Sampaio, 1963, p.18).

<sup>29</sup> In the original: “antiespaço-esférico-e-branco-com-espaco-para-tudo” (Sampaio, 1963, p.49).

Through this endeavour, Maga gets the help of a scientist, Albert de Michigan, who proposes that he can help people feel again without the intervention of the s.l.i. In summation, to reach a stage long forgotten as part of the pre-adult state.

In the climax of the story, Albert de Michigan, knowing the interest of Maga and Alexei, her friend, in going through the breaches of this enclosed, unfeeling society, invites them to join him in his spaceship, and they travel to the unknown, getting stuck between dimensions, between “Nothing and Zero”. There, seeing the desperation of Maga and Alexei in wanting to go back to their old lives, Albert gives them instructions on how to propel the spaceship back to their dimension, and then leaves the safety of his spaceship, getting consumed by the void.

## **7.2 Satirizing the present by using the future**

Taking into account the year this book was written, we can extrapolate some meaning from this society in *O Aquário* to the Portuguese society of the 1960s. At a time where Estado Novo was in its zenith, there was an overwhelming control of the government in people’s lives. PIDE’s watchful eye was almost as ever present as the s.l.i bracelets, constantly monitoring the citizens' everyday lives.

The perfection of the society in *O Aquário* was only on the surface. As we can state throughout the book, this is a very dysfunctional society, where the young people have a controlling device attached to them that will eliminate any emotion they feel, any dissent they may have against their ruling body, as it is unnecessary for the individual to live in that society. Any feelings are deemed negative and as such should be eliminated in the pre-adult stage of their development, so that the individual can become a perfect adult. This perfection was something Estado Novo wished to convey. Salazar and his government, along with his censorship agents, tried to create an image of stability and strength, where all the Portuguese loved the regime, and no one was against it. Any dissent towards the government was crushed and eliminated at the root, so that it wouldn’t grow and compromise the stability of Estado Novo’s society, just like these pre-adults could compromise the stability of their society, if they started asking undesirable questions or to revolt against their leaders.

The modelling of the young people into unfeeling, perfect adults was also something that resonated with Portugal at the time, as Salazar had instituted “Mocidade Portuguesa”, the system all Portuguese children had to pass through, where they would be conditioned to devote themselves to the regime. As Melo wrote (2002):

Extra-curricular activities were developed by youth groups suitable for boys (Mocidade Portuguesa) and for girls (Mocidade Portuguesa Feminina). These were militia organizations following the Nazi and fascist format, that trained youngsters for the defence of the ‘nation’ and the aggrandizement of the ‘race’, with the consequences being physical preparation and militarist, nationalist and patriarchal ideological indoctrination. (p. 210)

This conditioning is also apparent by the classes these young people take. Led by a robot, they study purely logical subjects, through complicated equations, without any room for discussion about non-scientific topics. So much so, that when a debate originates in the classroom regarding the existence of the human, not only is it during a segment the robot teacher calls “Time-for-questionnaire-of-trivialities-and-illogical-reasonings<sup>30</sup>” but the teacher itself approaches the subject without any seriousness at all, as they believe the topic doesn’t merit any. These segments serve to record any meaningless questions and ideas said by the pre-adults and submit to the governing body for further analysis. As mentioned by Sampaio: “The Omegas would constantly register disconnected questions, trivial or non-sensical questions, the majority of them very confusing and then, after conveniently catalogued and selected, ordered through a criteria of recency or purpose, were sent to the Scientific Council of the Theta<sup>31</sup>”

Not only is this a way to undermine and anticipate any problematic questions the pre-adults could have, but we can also find many similarities with the way PIDE operated regarding any published material. They had to review every single line written on every document, book, newspaper or other written material and erase content that was against the government’s policies before it could be published. This was an attempt to reduce as much as possible society’s exposure to any ideas that could create issues for Estado Novo.

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<sup>30</sup> In the original: “Tempo-de-questionário-de-trivialidades-e-raciocínios-ilógicos” (Sampaio, 1963, p.31).

<sup>31</sup> In the original: “Constantemente, os Ómeas registavam perguntas desconexas, questões fúteis ou descabidas, confusas na maioria e que, depois de convenientemente catalogadas e seleccionadas, ordenadas segundo um critério de novidade ou a-propósito, eram enviadas ao Conselho Científico dos Teta” (Sampaio, 1963, p.58).

### 7.3 The individual in a hive society

The placement of the individual within society is also one of the main topics of *O Aquário*. To contrast with the pre-adults Maya's and Alexei's perception of their place in society (she just wants to be free and to feel human, he wants to escape the control and destroy the system, take revenge on the people who created and perpetuate this dormant society), and Albert de Michigan's perception (Mankind is a mistake that gets bigger with each technological advancement), we have the common people who feel accomplished just by being a cog in the machine, to fulfil their duty as commanded by the higher authority, without questioning anything. These people worked, lived and died by their authority-defined purpose, a greater purpose. The first example in science fiction of a society that functioned as a hive mind was in H.G. Wells' *The First Men in the Moon*, where the mysterious Selenites, the creatures that inhabited the moon, worked in the same way as the bee in a hive or an ant in an ant colony, each individual part working together as a single unit. However, this idea was later developed, and hive mind behaviour was also applied to human societies. Examples like *We* (1920), written by Yevgeny Zamyatin or George Orwell's *1984* (published in 1949) showed us how a totalitarian government could eliminate the individuality of the human being, and instil complete control over a society, where the individual's only purpose was to fulfil the designs of the government. This idea of the individual devoting his whole being towards a bigger authority was all the purpose a person in *O Aquário*'s society needed in order to feel accomplished in life. The conversation Albert de Michigan has with his colleague José Fernandez illustrates this quite well. In it, Fernandez, in contrast to Albert's relaxed and open attitude, states that "Me, for my part, I feel like an indispensable atom of the Universe, a naive and well-behaved atom – Not good nor bad-behaved, let's say: passive. Exactly as she wants, because like this, and only like this, do my gestures have meaning, none of them disagreeing with the gigantic and monstrous pulse of the Fat.<sup>32</sup>" He continues: "Glory to Matter, the Indestructible, the Brute, the Suffocating, Luxurious, Nauseating, glory to

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<sup>32</sup> In the original: "Eu, pela minha parte, sinto-me um átomo indispensável do Universo, um átomo ingénuo e bem-comportado – nem bem nem mal comportado, digamos: passivo. Exactamente como "ela" quer, porque assim, e só assim, os meus gestos têm sentido, nenhum deles discordando do pulsar gigantesco e monstruoso da Gordá..." (Sampaio, 1963, p. 61-62).

the glorious Whore! I'm an obedient child, nothing more! And to hell with all the resto of the filth, and freedom most of all! Voilà!<sup>33</sup>”.

This will to follow orders and the status-quo was the norm in *O Aquário*'s society, and our heroes cling to this notion as going against the status-quo to reach their objectives. However, as they found out at the end, such change cannot be made by a single person. When the three characters tried to escape their universe, their own aquarium, and crashed at the dimensional barrier, finding themselves between dimensions, existing within non-existence, desperation set in, and the only option they had was to go back or stay in limbo forever. Maya and Alexei were young and idealists, who had no idea of what to do after escaping their reality. However, Albert, more experienced and knowledgeable, knew that, at that moment, there was no exit for him. He could not return to a society he so desperately wanted to escape, and as such, following the footsteps of Rama, the only human known to have escaped, he left the spaceship and died on his own terms. By dying, Albert had the last laugh against a society that didn't even allow his citizens to die. And by letting Maya and Alexei return home safely, he became a legend. Near the end of the story, when Maya and Alexei tell their story to their colleagues, Alexei says: “Now that we are here, I ask for a moment of silence in memory of Rama-the-Incomprehensible and Albert-the-Great, the only two Mortals ever known. Amén<sup>34</sup>”. He added: “Seeing the World-from-Above. Laughing at Mankind. Of the I-Collective<sup>35</sup>”. Maya, Alexei and Albert showed the cracks of an enclosed society, that there was hope to rise above it, that their masters weren't all powerful and omnipresent as they believed. And, in the last sentence of the story, we know that the s.l.i devices attached to Maga and Alexei start reacting to their feelings of love, before stopping completely, illustrating the lack of influence the governing powers now have over them. Maga and Alexei know that they can fight the system, that the reality they always considered as certain was not so certain after all. They hold the reins of destiny, and by perpetuating the story of Albert, others who are as discontent with society as them will also join them, and true change can finally happen, by people united behind a common goal.

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<sup>33</sup> In the original: “Glória à Matéria, a Indestrutível, a Bruta, a Sufocante, Luxuriosa e Nauseabunda, glória à Gloriosa Putain! Sou um rapazinho obediente, nem mais! E que se lixe toda a imundície restante e a liberdade em primeiro lugar! Voilà!” (Sampaio, 1963, p. 62).

<sup>34</sup> In the original: “Já agora, peço um instante de silêncio à memória de Rama-o-Incompreensível e de Albert-o-Grande, os dois únicos Mortais conhecidos. Amén” (Sampaio, 1963, p. 229).

<sup>35</sup> In the original: “A verem o Mundo-de-Fora. A rirem-se da Humanidade. Do Eu-Colectivo” (Sampaio, 1963, p. 229).

In Portugal, due to the repression the government imposed on the people, they too were unable to, individually, revolt against the regime. However, after years of underground upheaval and due to the fact that Marcello Caetano, Salazar's heir to the Portuguese government, did not soften the regime's strict policies, as was expected, but rather continued them, led these whispers of revolt to become louder and louder, culminating in the Carnation Revolution, the 'Revolução dos Cravos', on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April 1974. In a way, through this ending, Alice Sampaio wanted to shed a light of hope on Portugal's predicament as well, being at the mercy of a repressive government who wanted its citizens to be mere cogs in a machine, and also her wish for the fire that was already lit under the hearts of the Portuguese population to ignite, for the people to unite and know that they weren't alone in this fight. Through the united effort of the populace, Estado Novo could be toppled, and Portugal could finally be a free country, with a government elected by a real democratic process.

#### **7.4 Satirizing the future by using the present**

Another interesting part of *O Aquário* is the study of other dimensions. Due to the fact that the characters in the story live in the 5<sup>th</sup> dimension, they have an extreme lack of awareness of what happens in other realities. So much so that one of the duties of Albert de Michigan is the study of subspecies from other systems. He does this by isolating and observing them through an ampoule, as if he picked them up from their reality and inserted them there. In the subspecies' perspective, Albert resembles a God, for only a divine being would be able to do something like this. Albert studied two subspecies throughout the story, 1 male and 1 female. They both acted and spoke as Portuguese people of the 1960's, which would place this system that Albert was studying as our own reality. The male, acting scared at first, but later opening up to Albert, spoke about all of his life's frustrations, the ridiculousness of the situation he was in, as if he was already dead and just confessing to a higher being. Albert and his robot assistant Bob saw no meaning in what the man said and considered this specimen a failure in terms of extracting information, which, to the reader's mind, makes sense, as the highly emotional speech of the man would not have any relevant information to this highly logical species, who abhorred feelings above all.

The second specimen, a woman, had a much angrier demeanour towards Albert, expressing that she was just a 40-something woman, as normal as any other. She expresses anger for her situation, saying that she was defeated and eliminated before even having a chance to discover, to find a ray of light to guide her through exploring herself, describing her current — and all female existence as a whole — as a death before the real death. Albert comments with Bob the following: “It’s strange, Bob, that all these subspecies aspire to Freedom and yet cannot overcome the most insignificant obstacles<sup>36</sup>”, before adding: “The better they know their conditioning, the more they get tangled in them<sup>37</sup>”. This perspective shows that, to Albert, the complaints made by these subspecies are easily solvable, and even though they are aware of them, they don’t do anything to overcome these obstacles or achieve their freedom. However, what these subspecies are saying are common complaints of our society. How many people have envied their boss? How many people have envied the youth and cursed their aging? Envy, desire, frustration, anger. All of this is part of being human, and the incomprehension of Albert regarding these feelings show how devoid of emotion the Human of the 5<sup>th</sup> dimension really is. Just looking down on these subspecies, hearing what they say but not actually understanding, due to a mixture of boredom and simple inability to process the usefulness of these feelings, considering everything just an almost incoherent rambling devoid of any actual meaning. This was also the perspective of Estado Novo towards any critic or rebel against the system. Any cog that stopped working as intended was to be dismissed, ignored and re-educated if needed. This dichotomy Albert / subspecies mirrors Estado Novo / Portuguese people, as the government does not care for the worries and concerns of the populace, as long as they are able to achieve their goals.

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<sup>36</sup> In the original: “É estranho, Bob, que todas estas subespécies aspirem à Liberdade e não consigam contornar os mais insignificantes obstáculos” (Sampaio, 1963, p.178).

<sup>37</sup> In the original: “Quanto melhor conhecem os condicionamentos mais se enredam neles” (Sampaio, 1963, p.178).

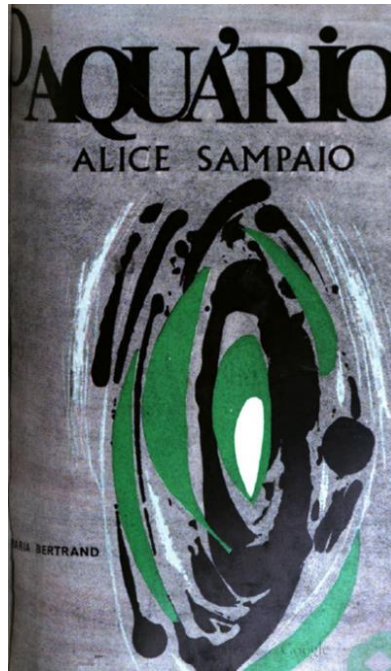


Fig. 6 – Cover of the book *O Aquário*

### 7.5 Alice Sampaio

When asked in an interview for *Jornal de Letras e Artes* (1963), what was the central theme of *O Aquário*, Alice Sampaio mentioned that “Men from all eras helped to shape the men of today. So – I ask – why can we not collaborate in the construction of the men of the future by posing problems of the man of today?<sup>38</sup>”. In the same interview, when questioned about the central theme of *O Aquário*, Sampaio only said that she was waiting for the readers to answer that question<sup>39</sup>. Sampaio wanted to question, without necessarily providing answers, to have a dialogue with the reader, using problems that were relevant to her era through a futuristic environment. And since this book was written through the lens of 1960’s Portugal, we cannot understate the influence Estado Novo had in this, even though Sampaio prefers the audience to clarify what is the theme of *O Aquário*, it has been made clear throughout this chapter that many of the problems and themes the author mentions throughout the book are related to Portuguese society under

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<sup>38</sup> In the original: “Os homens de todos os tempos ajudaram a formar o homem de hoje. Então – pergunto – , por que razão não podemos colaborar na construção do homem futuro, pondo problemas do homem actual?” (1963, p.1) For the whole interview, see Appendix 2.

<sup>39</sup> In the original, Sampaio replies the following: “Qual o tema central de “O Aquário”? Aguarda pacientemente as respostas dos leitores.” (1963, p.1) See Appendix 2.

Salazar. As such, this book provides us a more philosophical view of the state of the individual in Portuguese society, and the perspective they had of the government. Near the end of the interview, when questioned if her approach is due to the social situation she was in, Sampaio asked the interviewer if he believes that this is all a way to evade the topic at hand, when what was needed was to tackle it. This is a way for Sampaio to let the reader understand that this book's purpose was in fact to criticize our society and the government, in order to pull Portugal from the lull the country was in. As Sampaio said, it is a book to make us think and ponder on the reality of Man and the problems we faced, are facing and will face as a society, in order to build a better future for ourselves and future generations.

Sampaio also refuses to self-categorize her writings in a category, saying that she only has one belief, the belief of what's real. Through that, she can understand what is around her and how to construct the world in its totality. However, Sampaio mentions that fantasy is held back by the rigorousness of the scientific process, that, for her, understanding reality is going towards metamorphosis, the melding between human and mental and the domain of nature. Like this, the writer uses Science Fiction not necessarily as a tool to teach Science, but to lead the reader to consider other aspects of life, while also continuing to establish connections between Portuguese society and the society described in *O Aquário*.

## Conclusion

Throughout the long 41-year term of Estado Novo, the government tried their best to keep the common people as ignorant as possible of everything that was against Estado Novo's interests. PIDE was always hard at work to ensure that nothing against their directives passed through them, and every entity they found that tried to go against that was swiftly punished. Writers were in a constant state of panic, leading them to try their best not to go against their censors. According to Ferreira de Castro, writing like this was torture. He not only had to fear what censorship prohibited, but also what it could prohibit. Writers always had to have this question in their mind: "Are they going to prohibit this"<sup>40</sup>?. They had to resign to the fact that, at any time, they could be interrogated or jailed, even if their writings didn't have the intention to criticize the government.

The Portuguese had to navigate a society filled with propaganda, that constantly tried to hide information from them, with a government with ideals stuck in the past, in search to recover a past glory that no longer existed, emulating the other dictatorships in Europe at the time. And while the government dreamed of their utopia, the people too dreamed of a utopia. A utopia where they would no longer be repressed, where they would be free to express their own opinions without fear of repercussions. It was in the midst of these dreams of utopias that Science Fiction first set foot in Portugal.

Portuguese Science Fiction followed many of the trends that existed on foreign Science Fiction, but, as it can be seen on the two books covered by this dissertation as case studies, Science Fiction, through the depiction of utopia/dystopia, could on the one hand, serve as propaganda for Estado Novo, while on the other hand criticise it.

The goal of many Science Fiction writers was to teach their readers about science while engaging them in futuristic plots and technologies, since through these devices, the readers could grasp some scientific concepts. However, given the cultural deficiencies of the Portuguese society during Estado Novo's government, just Science Fiction alone would not be enough to significantly increase the scientific knowledge of the people. A bigger effort would have to be done by the responsible entities in order to create an environment conducive to this learning, something that, like many other aspects, was not in the interests of the government.

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<sup>40</sup> In the original: "Eles deixarão passar isto?" (as cited in Rodrigues, 1980, p.76).

To create a public understanding of science in a population, there needs to be a structured and lasting system that informs the population, that teaches them how to properly differentiate between good and bad sources, that allows them to, when confronted with reports regarding a specific topic, discern the basic ideas behind it, and to create a base of trust between the society and the scientific community. In the case of Portugal, it is well documented that Estado Novo only reported what they wanted the population to know and hid everything else<sup>41</sup>. The scientific community in Portugal was also hostage of the government, and so, they could only report what they were allowed to. This created an inherent distrust on the government and hindered the construction of these important bases that would later allow Science Fiction to have a more effective role in the creation of this public understanding of science.

This is not to say that Science Fiction had a negligible impact on Portuguese society. Even though it is true it did not have the same rate of writing production as other countries, the early translations of foreign classics and the first tries at author's editions gave way to many successful series of publications like *Argonauta*, and Science Fiction, due to its nature, provided the public with something different, with new ideas, with fresh perspectives, in sum, with a world people could slip in to forget the troubles and tribulations of their own reality. As the world around Portugal developed, and the population got to know some breakthroughs in the scientific field, their hunger for Science Fiction only increased. And this hunger to explore, to discover, to go beyond what they knew and learned through the system, this was also lumber to feed the fire of liberty that was burning in every Portuguese who wanted to be free from a system that was designed to contain their hopes and their dreams.

Throughout the two case studies discussed in this dissertation, we can see two parallels, two opposing realities that, at first glance, don't seem to have many similarities. However, both of them present two utopias with different characteristics, and both have different notions of what a utopia is. In *A.D. 2230*, the Portuguese Empire is portrayed as a utopia moulded by the same ideals of Estado Novo and, if the Portuguese in the story have the unassailable patriotism and love for their country and government as they display

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<sup>41</sup> According to Rodrigues (1980, p.71-72), through the Circular number 323 published in the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1970, the censors had to cut any information other than the one officially transmitted by the government regarding a plethora of issues, but notably information regarding the spread of Cholera in the continent and the colonies, as well as the severe droughts occurring in the colonies.

in the story, it is no less true that any reader who doesn't follow the same ideals as Estado Novo can see how this utopia in reality would not be a utopia at all. Regarding *O Aquário*, the society Maga and Albert live in is also seen as a utopia by everyone except the characters the plot revolves around, as they alone can peek behind the curtain and see their society as the dystopia it really was.

In both stories, the main characters are fighting for the freedom to be able to live as they want. In *A.D. 2230* the Portuguese Empire fights against the tyranny of the European and North American empires and in *O Aquário*, Maga, Albert and Alexei fight against the constraints of a society that is designed to protect them from the unknown, and in both stories also, they succeed, and society changes with them, albeit to varying degrees. The Portuguese Empire ends up winning the war, and due to that, the feminist governments of Europe and North America dissolve and there is a return to the old format of government, a return to tradition. After Maga and Alexei return from their adventure, they know there is something beyond what is shown and told to them, and, by explaining what they went through and the death of Albert, they can teach their peers to also peek behind the curtain and escape the control of their society.

What is, in fact, a utopia? Every person has their personal idea of utopia, but I believe that one notion that is present in all the different ideas of utopia is the freedom to one's expression, to live life as it is meant to be lived, without any repression, censorship or repercussions. Portuguese society during Estado Novo had many deficiencies, and even though Science Fiction, alone, was not able to function as a consistent tool for the teaching of science, it helped to instill the Portuguese dream. It gave to the people hope that, one day, things would be different. That they no longer would be repressed from speaking the truth, for fighting for their rights, to live their lives free from the ever-watching eye of the state police. It showed to the people that it was possible to envision a different future from resigning to live under the boot of Salazar and Marcello Caetano, and it contributed to the drive and the hunger needed to finally break from that authoritarian cycle.

As this dissertation is being written in 2024, the year that also marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Carnation Revolution, I write with the hope that, today, this public understanding of science can be constructed with the help of Science Fiction, in a free society. Ultimately, I hope that this dissertation may inspire a discussion about the

potential of Science Fiction as a tool for learning, and that literature in general can become increasingly important to our society, so that we may never hear again sentences similar to what an agent from PIDE wrote in a censorship report about Charlotte Brontë's book *The Professor*: “This reading does not educate neither does it construct knowledge.”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> In the original: “Esta leitura não educa nem constrói” (Secretariado Nacional de Informação, Censura. (1943).

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## Appendix 1

### Chronology of the Military Dictatorship/Estado Novo and Science Fiction in Portugal (1926-1974)<sup>43</sup>

28 May 1926 - Military coup puts an end to the First Republic (1910-1926).

22 June 1926 - Press Censorship established (something that would last until the end of the Estado Novo).

26 March 1927 - Creation of the Special Intelligence Police (Another Special Intelligence Police was created in Porto on 11 April of the same year).

27 May 1927 - The General Confederation of Workers is dissolved.

17 March 1928 - Unification of the two Special Intelligence Police, giving rise to the Polícia de Informação.

27 April 1928 - António de Oliveira Salazar takes over as Finance Minister.

24 October 1929 - Start of the Great Depression.

18 November 1929 - Manuel Cerejeira is appointed Patriarch of Lisbon.

30 April 1930 - Publication of the Colonial Act, creating the concept of the Portuguese Colonial Empire.

30 July 1930 - Creation of the National Union.

8 July 1931 - Extinction of the Information Police, functions passed to the Public Security Police.

30 July 1931 - Creation of the Portuguese International Police.

2 July 1932 - Death of King Manuel II.

1933 - *O Licor Vermelho*, by **Gambetta Neves**.

19 March 1933 - New constitution approved in plebiscite.

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<sup>43</sup> This chronology was devised by me, as a result of several readings about Estado Novo, together with Cronologia da Ficção Especulativa as main source. For full references, see Bibliography. The Portuguese science fiction books and authors are listed in bold.

11 April 1933 - Constitution comes into force. The Estado Novo begins. Prior censorship regime definitively established.

29 August 1933 - Creation of the Polícia de Vigilância e Defesa do Estado (PVDE).

25 September 1933 - Formation of the National Propaganda Secretariat.

1934 - *A Grande Ameaça*, by **Adolfo Coelho**.

1 August 1935 - Inauguration of Emissora Nacional (future Radio and Television of Portugal).

19 May 1936 - Creation of Mocidade Portuguesa (Portuguese Youth).

30 September 1936 - Constitution of the Portuguese Legion approved.

1937 - *No Mundo Desconhecido*, by **Lapas de Gusmão**.

1 January 1937 - Radio Renascença begins broadcasting.

1938 - *A.D. 2230*, by **Amílcar de Mascarenhas**.

1 September 1939 - Start of World War II. Salazar declares Portuguese neutrality in the conflict.

1942 - *Através do Espaço*, by **Frederico Cruz**.

1943 - *Lançaram Fogo ao Planeta*, by **J. Matias**.

8 May 1945 - Capitulation of Germany, Allied victory celebrated in the streets of Portugal.

8 October 1945 - Creation of the Democratic Unity Movement (MUD).

18 October 1945 - Decree Law stipulates partial amnesty for prisoners accused of crimes against the internal and external security of the State.

22 October 1945 - Creation of PIDE (Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado) to replace PVDE.

1946 - *O Homem que Salvou o Mundo*, by **Augusto Cunha**.

1 February 1946 - 110 of the Tarrafal detainees arrive in Portugal (as a result of the partial amnesty decreed on 18 October 1945).

June 1946 - Creation of the National Liberation Military Junta.

3 August 1946 - Portugal's application to join the UN vetoed by the USSR.

4 March 1947 - Marcello Caetano takes office as president of the Executive Committee of the National Union.

10 April 1947 - Military Junta of National Liberation revolts.

26 April 1947 - MUD declared illegal.

1 March 1948 - All the members of the MUD's Central Committee and Lisbon District Committee are arrested, as a result of the previous year's decree declaring the movement illegal.

13 February 1949 - Presidential elections. Carmona Rodrigues wins unopposed. General Norton de Matos withdrew the day before.

March 1949 - Several PCP leaders, including Álvaro Cunhal, are arrested by the PIDE.

18 April 1951 - Carmona Rodrigues dies. Salazar takes over on an interim basis.

11 June 1951 - Constitutional revision, overseas provinces are now used instead of colonies. Portuguese Overseas Territory is now used instead of Portuguese Colonial Empire. Colonial Act repealed.

22 July 1951 - Presidential elections. General Craveiro Lopes elected President of the Republic.

25 October 1951 - Queen Amélia dies in France.

22 February 1952 - NATO becomes a permanent body, with headquarters in Paris.

4 February 1953 - Batepá massacre, which led to the intervention of the police authorities and claimed 1000 lives.

1953 - The United Struggle Party of Africans (PLUA) is founded in Angola.

26 January 1954 - The Tarrafal Penal Colony is closed.

20 April 1954 - The Statute of the Portuguese Indians of the Provinces of Guinea, Angola and Mozambique is approved.

26 April 1954 - Geneva Conference, North Vietnam is governed by Ho Chi Minh and the Vietnamese Workers' Party.

22 July 1954 - The Indian Union occupies the enclaves of Dadrá and Nagar Aveli, claiming possession of the Portuguese territories in the Indian subcontinent.

1955 - *Vieram do Infinito*, written by Eric Prince (pseudonym of A. Maldonado Domingues).

14 May 1955 - Warsaw Pact.

8 August 1955 - Indian Union cuts off relations with Portugal and, on 15 August, attempts to invade the territories of the State of India, resulting in violent clashes.

14 December 1955 - Portugal votes to join the UN.

1956 - *O Construtor de Planetas e Outras Histórias*, by Alves Morgado.

12 March 1956 - New Decree-Law strengthens PIDE's power to intervene in the context of provisional security measures.

19 September 1956 - The African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde emerges in Guinea-Bissau.

October 1956 - Creation of the National Liberal and Democratic Front.

December 1956 - The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) emerges.

1957 - *Mensageiro do Espaço*, by Luís de Mesquita.

1958 - *A Espada de Dámocles e Outras Histórias*, by Alves Morgado.

8 June 1958 - Presidential Elections. Américo Tomás wins against Humberto Delgado, under an aura of contestation.

18 June 1958 - In response to the election result, Humberto Delgado creates the Independent National Movement.

1959 - "AK". *A Tese e o Axioma*, written by Romeu de Melo.

1959 - *Bula Matari*, written by Karel Külle (pseudonym of Carlos Sardinha).

1959 - *Objectivo Marte*, by Karel Külle.

1959 - *Tigres no Céu*, by Karel Külle.

29 August 1959 - Change to the Constitution. The President of the Republic is now elected by an electoral college and not by suffrage.

16 June 1960 - Mueda uprising in Mozambique. The Revolutionary Front for the National Independence of the Portuguese Colonies is formed.

1960 - Portugal joins the IMF (International Monetary Fund).

1960 - Portugal joins the IBRD (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development).

1961 - *O Fogo Sagrado*, written by Manuel de Seabra.

1961 - *O Nariz de Cleopatra*, by Augusto Abelaira.

15 March 1961 - Start of the Colonial War.

12 April 1961 - Yuri Gagarin becomes the first man to travel into space.

18 December 1961 - Indian Union invades Goa.

1962 - *A Ameaça Cósmica*, written by Luís de Mesquita.

1962 - *Laika, Princesa do Espaço*, by B. Guerra Conde Júnior.

1962 - *O Grande Sonho*, by Ataíde Guerra (pseudonym of Artur Parreira).

25 June 1962 - Foundation of FRELIMO (Mozambique Liberation Front).

21 December 1962 - Foundation of the FPLN (Patriotic Front for National Liberation).

1963 - *Laika, Hóspede de Vénus*, by B. Guerra Conde Júnior.

1963 - *O Aquário*, by Alice Sampaio.

1963 - *O Grande Cidadão*, by Virgílio Marinho.

1963 - *Os Cotovelos de Vénus*, by Santos Fernando (pseudonym of Fernando dos Santos).

February 1963 - Battlefront opens in Angola (Cabinda).

September 1963 - Guerrilla warfare begins in Guinea.

January 1964 - The Patriotic Action Front emerges after a split with the PCP.

April 1964 - Humberto Delgado splits with the PCP and is removed from the FPLN.

2 September 1964 - Craveiro Lopes dies.

25 September 1964 - FRELIMO begins guerrilla warfare in Mozambique.

1965 - *A Fantástica Experiência*, written by **W. Strong-Ross** (pseudonym of **Francisco Valério de Rajanto de Almeida e Azevedo**).

1965 - *Em Busca de Novos Mundos*, by **Oliveira de Fontemar**.

13 February 1965 - Assassination of Humberto Delgado.

21 May 1965 - The Portuguese Writers' Society awards a literary prize to Luandino Vieira for his book *Luanda (sic)*, leading to protests from groups linked to the regime.

14 October 1965 - The opposition presents a manifesto defending the self-determination of Overseas Territories.

15 March 1966 - Jonas Savimbi founds UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola).

15 November 1966 - Incidents in Macau.

12 to 29 July 1966 - Portuguese football team finishes 3rd in the World Cup in England.

13 May 1967 - Pope Paul VI visits Portugal (Fátima).

1968 - *Crónicas do Tempo do Cavaleiro Charles e do seu Fiel Escudeiro Pompidouze*, by **Miguel Barbosa**.

1968 - *Os Exploradores da Lua*, by **Pedro de Sagunto** (pseudonym of **Pedro Alves de Carvalho**).

1968 - *Terrestres e Estranhos*, written by **Robert Silverberg** and **Lima Rodrigues**.

1968 - *Um Homem de Outro Mundo*, by **Reis Ventura**.

January 1968 - Demonstrations in Lisbon and Porto against the colonial war and US intervention in Vietnam.

8 July 1968 - Salazar falls from a chair and is diagnosed on 4 September with an incapacitating illness as a result of the fall.

1969 - *A Morte da Terra*, written by **Alves Morgado**.

20 July 1969 - Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins arrive on the Moon, becoming the first (and only) human beings to land on this celestial body.

1970 - *Canopus 98*, designed by **Carlos Moutinho**.

1970 - *Não Lhes Faremos a Vontade*, written by **Romeu de Melo**.

1970 - *Pioneiros do Futuro*, by **Pedro Boaventura**.

25 January 1970 - The creation of SEDES, the Association for Economic and Social Development, is announced.

22 April 1970 - Sá Carneiro and Pinto Balsemão present a draft of a new press law, providing for an end to prior censorship.

27 July 1970 - Salazar dies.

18 September 1970 - The MRPP (Movimento Reorganizativo do Partido do Proletariado) is founded.

5 October 1970 - The Intersindical is founded, beginning the PCP's armed struggle against the regime.

16 December 1970 - A project for a global revision of the Constitution is presented.

1971 - *As Torres Milenárias*, written by **Urbano Tavares Rodrigues**.

16 August 1971 - Revision of the 1933 Constitution, overseas provinces become autonomous regions.

13 May 1971 - António Ribeiro is appointed Cardinal of Lisbon, succeeding Cardinal Cerejeira.

1972 - *A Buzina*, written by **Romeu de Melo**.

4 December 1972 - Positive opinion on Portugal's association agreement with the EEC (European Economic Community).

1973 - *Contos do Gin-Tonic*, written by **Mário-Henrique Leiria**.

1973 - *Novos Contos do Gin*, written by Mário-Henrique Leiria.

6 January 1973 - 1st copy of the newspaper *Expresso*.

9 March 1973 - Three bombs explode in Lisbon at military installations. This would be the first of several violent acts carried out by factions against the regime.

19 April 1973 - The Socialist Party is founded.

25 April 1974 - Coup d'état by the military forces, marking the end of the Estado Novo.

## Appendix 2

### Interview to Alice Sampaio

*Jornal de Letras e Artes*, 17 de Julho de 1963, pp. 1-14<sup>44</sup>

#### **Alice Sampaio: Creio no real e busco-lhe o significado**

*Aventura a um tempo científica e metafísica, a intriga de «O Aquário» afirma o dom de fantasia de Alice Sampaio, que, após ter-se revelado, com «A Cidade Sem Espaço», atenta observadora do quotidiano, comete agora os domínios da Humanidade futura. Arrojada aventura que nos transporta a um mundo de robots e super-homens, cuja faculdade de amar se atrofiou, mas que conservam a nostalgia da comunicação perfeita. Obra diversa do habitual, colocará possivelmente crítica e pública numa atitude de perplexidade. Porque se trata de um romance inteligente e original, sejam quais forem os seus defeitos de composição e estilo, entendemos dever procurar Alice Sampaio, a quem começámos por perguntar:*

#### **Jornal de Letras e Artes (JLA) – Qual o tema central de «O Aquário»?**

**Alice Sampaio (AS)** – Atendendo a que escritor, obra e leitores formam um todo, creio ser quase inútil interrogar um sem os outros. E eu gostaria de deixar ao cuidado desses leitores, se existirem, o encargo de me darem conta desse tema. Pretendi, na forma mais artística possível, contar uma história que fosse simultaneamente uma conversa inteligente – a autora simples parceira ou comparsa – e onde se pusessem perguntas, mal ou bem, a que outros deveriam responder, mal ou bem – uma larga discussão, «un amusement», se me é permitido. Quer isto dizer que me nego a colaborar na construção dum «tempo presente» válido e concreto? Nada disso! Estou convencida, sim, de que os homens de todos os tempos ajudaram a formar o homem de hoje. Então – pergunto –, por que razão não podemos colaborar na construção do homem futuro, pondo problemas do homem actual? (Tentei pôr problemas do homem actual, embora servindo-me de um mundo a mil léguas de distância, menos que hipotético mas nem por isso destituído de «real»).

E se, no dizer de Bertrand Russell, o importante para o homem não é responder a todas as perguntas que porventura se ponham ao seu espírito mas sim formulá-las, se a cada era competem específicas perguntas (Copérnico não saberia interrogar-se sobre a face invisível da Lua), então – repito – que fazer de nós quando possuidores de um «spaac»,

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<sup>44</sup> For full reference, see Bibliography.

ou seja do tapete-mágico? Perguntas talvez inúteis, talvez descabidas, mas que insisto em fazer. Qual o tema de «O Aquário»? Aguarda pacientemente as respostas dos leitores.

**JLA – Considera-se uma escritora realista? Em que corrente ou tendência se sente integrada?**

**AS** – Que significa ser-se classificado ou catalogado como escritor realista? Dar a primazia à solução dos problemas de ordem material, no sentido restrito e simultaneamente largo de que todos tenham pão para a boca? Sem dúvida, é isso o primeiro grande passo do homem. Contudo, afigura-se-me impossível resolvê-lo sem nos decidirmos a fazê-lo e, para que essa decisão seja tomada, há que resolver muitas outras que se nos põem simultaneamente e a diferentes níveis. Eu interrogo: porque tudo é construir. Sou nesse caso uma escritora realista? Parece-me que sim. Tenho um Credo que enuncio: Creio na Matéria-Toda-Poderosa – no «real» portanto – e busco-lhe o significado, a dimensão, a forma, a tonalidade e a ausência de colorido, o som e o silêncio – quereria saber-me por instantes apreendendo-a totalmente, que a minha inteligência durante um ínfimo segundo compreendesse e me deixasse dizer: vejo, escuto – que a minha sensibilidade e imaginação, rodeando-a por todos os lados, às tantas acabasse mesmo por lhe desvendar um dos milhares de segredos tão ciosamente guardados. Não, um laboratório, com a sua rigorosa aparelhagem, não me seria de grande utilidade – a fantasia nega-se à rigidez dos métodos de uma investigação verdadeiramente científica. E eu desejaria sobretudo que o meu livro fosse Arte e não Pseudo-Ciência. E, porque compreender o «real» é caminhar no sentido da Metamorfose, o simplesmente Humano a transformar-se em Humano e Mental, a Irritabilidade em Inteligência, o Domínio da Natureza (longe de mim a ideia de fazer de Pitonisa, ou de Sábio-das-Sete-Partidas, ponho apenas afirmações como hipóteses, suposições como intuição poética – chamemos-lhe assim) – eu quereria compreender esse «real».

Que podem significar entretanto os termos realistas, neo-realista, surrealista, etc, senão denominações da mesma busca, da mesma vontade deliberada de transcender-se? (Os homens de todos os tempos inventaram deuses não por brinquedo ou desejo de mergulhar no obscurantismo, antes pelo contrário... Temos necessidade dos nossos deuses, ultrapassá-los dialecticamente, reinventar outros, sempre, «ad infinitum»).

Em que escola ou tendência me sinto integrada? aguardo que alguém de boa-vontade queira catalogar-me, arrumando-me com toda a sem-cerimónia na prateleira que for mais conveniente.

**JLA – Acredita num nexo entre o romance e o local ou o tempo em que vivemos?**

**AS** – O local onde hoje vivemos é a Terra inteira, um pequeno globo que os astronautas vêm através de écrans-visores e dizem ser raro e fantástico esferóide girando lento e imperturbável, brilhante e escuro, para lá de querelas e diversões, mares ou continentes. O «local» do romance, o seu «tempo» apoucam-se assim, visto, através da teleobjectiva, os indivíduos dão-se conta de um universo hertziano, onda média e curta até aqui desconhecido... E os diferenciados problemas do nosso «habitat» tornam-se menos diferenciados: em toda a parte os seres se agitam no mesmo febril Movimento: crescer e transformar-se. É certo: há zonas de cultivo especiais e... experimentais, onde a vida se processa num diapasão mais vibrante, outras onde se alongam ainda abutres de miséria e vergonha – que o Céu se compadeça e as criaturas arranjem unhas para se defender e livrar do Mal, «âmen». São os meus votos mais ardentes.

**JLA – Não será a sua resposta ainda o resultado de um meio social...?**

**AS** – Acha que isto é ainda o resultado do meio social que nos condiciona? Um processo de evasão – quando tudo deveríamos fazer para assentar bem os pés na terra (terra essa que pode ser uma nebulosa qualquer...) – dizermo-nos a cada passo que há foguetões interplanetários prontos a largar para o Cosmos e levar-nos em belíssimo passeio Pólo-Norte-Pólo-Sul-da-Galáxia? (Que afinal a Imaginação é o elemento perturbador da pacata ou preocupada vida burguesa?) Possivelmente...

**JLA – Projectos?**

**AS** – Continuar a interrogar, insistir em contar histórias a pessoas mais ou menos desinteressadas, mas – quem sabe? – talvez às tantas acabemos por levar-nos a sério, mutuamente, narrador e ouvintes.

Preparo um romance em grande-estilo, quero dizer, uma longa narrativa, à antiga, realista ou não, continuação da mesma busca – noutra tom (para não maçar demasiado). Antes disso desejaria publicar uma peça de teatro, duas peças de teatro, três peças de teatro, que aguardam numa gaveta, prontas a passar ao prelo, à falta de cena...

Faço à Humanidade esta dádiva de imaginação – que não me foi solicitada, valha a verdade. Se a Humanidade do meu breve tempo, do meu reduzido espaço a recusar – que fazer de mim?