

The Porto Delegation of the National Secretariat for Information (1945-1960): the Relationship with the City and its Institutions

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Abstract

The National Propaganda Secretariat, founded in 1933, was the first political institution of the *Estado Novo* (New State) during the period of the regime's structuring and consolidation. Following its restructuring in 1944, it became the National Secretariat for Information, a designation it maintained until 1968. Answerable to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, its action was concentrated in the fields of propaganda, information, culture, and tourism. In 1945, a delegation of the secretariat was established in Porto, traditionally a city that was resistant towards the regime. This research seeks to analyze the Porto Delegation. It examines its activities and discusses how these were linked to the Secretariat's fundamental mission, namely the rhetorical construction of the New State regime.

Keywords

New State; National Secretariat for Information; Porto Delegation; Cultural organizations; Media

Resumo

O Secretariado de Propaganda Nacional foi o primeiro dos organismos políticos do Estado Novo, fundado no período de estruturação e consolidação do regime, em 1933. Alvo de reestruturações em 1944, passou a Secretariado Nacional de Informação, designação que manteve até 1968. Dependente da Presidência do Conselho, a sua ação desenvolveu-se nas áreas da propaganda, da informação, da cultura e do turismo. Em 1945, estabelecia-se uma Delegação do Secretariado no Porto, um meio marcadamente difícil para o regime. Esta investigação centra-se em torno da Delegação no Porto. Aborda-se a sua atuação e como essa ação se conectou com a função primordial deste organismo, de construção retórica do regime do Estado Novo.

Palavras-chave

Estado Novo; Secretariado Nacional da Informação; Delegação do Porto; Organismos culturais; Meios de informação

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Introduction²

The National Propaganda Secretariat (1933-1944), later transformed into the National Secretariat for Information, Popular Culture and Tourism (1944-1968), was one of the most important bodies of the Portuguese *Estado Novo* [the regime known as the New State].

Ramos do Ó viewed it as “the most important interface of Salazarism” (54), while Daniel Melo referred to it as a “centralizing platform of the official cultural policy” (18), mainly concerned with the consolidation of a (specific) idea of the nation, which established a collective identity and memory in keeping with the ideology of the regime. This explains why it was the first new organization to be set up by the *Estado Novo*, having been founded as early as September 1933, at a time when the regime was still in the throes of its structuring and consolidation. Being directly answerable to the President of the Council of Ministers—in other words, to António de Oliveira Salazar—the secretariat became one of the institutional bases of the new regime’s (in)formation policy.

Despite its early establishment and importance to the regime, it is an institution that has remained largely unexplored. Current research has not led to any general studies about this agency, thus making it impossible to paint an overall picture of its existence between 1933 and 1974; the same can be said about any in-depth investigation of its internal organization, budget, and initiatives, which at present is practically non-existent.

This article therefore presents a study of the only delegation of the secretariat to be situated in Porto, the country’s second largest city, seeking to answer the following questions: how was the secretariat’s delegation in Porto organized? Why was the delegation established only after World War II? What kind of activities did it develop? What was its geographical scope of action? What was the political importance of the delegation and how was it linked to the primary function of the secretariat—the rhetorical construction of the regime?

We have chosen to adopt the methodology of a case study, using qualitative techniques and discourse analysis to examine the available information. To a certain extent, this methodology is strengthened through the further use of models proposed by so-called regional studies, since the article seeks to analyze the relationship between the center (the state, embodied in the *Estado Novo* regime) and the periphery (the northern region and the city of Porto in particular). This option has resulted from recent research, which has shown that the “identities of regions with no separatist inclinations also became increasingly well-

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defined towards the end of the nineteenth century” (Storm and Augusteijn 2012:1). In fact, these processes for the construction of a regional identity, in the sense of consolidating “a distinct identity, as an indispensable but unique part of the fatherland” (Storm and Augusteijn 2012:2), were visible, to a certain extent, in the northern region and in the city of Porto throughout the twentieth century (although this paper focuses specifically on the period between 1945 and 1960), favoring “a kind of *Landespatriotismus*” or “regional pride” (Storm and Augusteijn 2012:4).

Given the lack of any detailed analysis of this subject, as already mentioned, a deliberate selection was made regarding the use of documentary sources drawn from the secretariat’s collection of papers deposited at the national archives of the Torre do Tombo, more specifically the reports issued by the Porto Delegation in the 1950s. These documents represent a prolific source of information: providing a sometimes quite detailed insight into the functioning of the delegation, discussing the reality of the city of Porto and the north of the country, and offering a clear picture of the situation that prevailed at that time, as well as the administrative thinking that surrounded it. It is important to emphasize that these are the only reports of the Porto Delegation existing in the secretariat’s collection of documents at the Torre do Tombo. The whereabouts of the remaining reports, dating from the 1960s onwards, have yet to be located.³ While the documents used here were not previously unknown to scholars, they have remained barely examined until now, historiographically speaking, and therefore their disclosure was considered essential. In addition, hemerographic sources were also used, in particular the daily press, both at the national level and in the city of Porto. The press, closely linked to daily life, is a source of essential information, reporting facts, reflecting on issues, discussing and commenting on the everyday reality (despite the considerable effects of the censorship that was imposed on the written press during this period).

The State of the Art—Concerning Culture, Propaganda, and the Secretariat

As far as Portuguese historiography is concerned, in the last few decades there has been a substantial increase in research focusing on the cultural field, notably in relation to

³ The researcher José Guilherme Victorino used a series of letters emanating from the delegation, further indicating that, at the time of his visit (during the preparation of his PhD thesis, presumably between 2006 and 2007), the collection was housed at the Documentation Centre of the then Directorate-General of Tourism, with no reference number having been assigned to it. However, in a recent personal conversation that I held with him, he pointed out to me that the documentation is no longer in the same place and that there is no news about its current location.

cultural organizations and propaganda in the period of the *Estado Novo*. In this context, we highlight the research of Ellen Sapega (2008) on the cultural production in Salazar's Portugal, presenting some of the discourses on national identity disseminated by the regime, stressing the role that consensus played in the official propaganda, and analyzing the artistic and literary counter-responses. Attention is also drawn to the study by Maria Isabel João (2003) on the use that the regime's propaganda system made of culture, history, and commemoration, as well as Goffredo Adinolfi's book (2007), resulting from his doctoral thesis, which examines the use of propaganda as an instrument for the establishment and consolidation of authoritarian and fascist regimes, assessing its dimension and importance during the first decade of the Portuguese *Estado Novo*. The research studies undertaken by Jorge Ramos do Ó (1999) and Daniel Melo (2001) are also noteworthy: the former examined the practice, structure, and cultural discourses of the regime's various institutions and initiatives (the National Board of Education, the Institute for High Culture, the National Society of Fine Arts, and also the Secretariat for National Propaganda), while the latter focused on the official perspective on popular culture during the period of the *Estado Novo*, from 1933 to 1958, including, but not being limited to, the secretariat. Reference should also be made to Luís Cunha's work (2001), focusing on the interpretation of the complex symbolic architecture with which the *Estado Novo* was supported and through which it projected its indisputable truths, analyzing three main events (the Porto Colonial Exhibition, the Most Portuguese Village Competition, and the Portuguese World Exhibition of 1940), and Margarida Acciaiuoli's (1998) review of the aesthetic and ideological implications of the exhibitions that the *Estado Novo* attended or held, looking at how these initiatives helped to shape and consolidate its political status.

As for the Secretariat, Heloísa Paulo's (1994) comparative study is noteworthy, since it was concerned with the propagandistic action of the Portuguese and Brazilian regimes, conducted through their institutional agencies, respectively the secretariat and the Press and Propaganda Department. On more specific aspects relating to the cultural work of this institution, we can find several studies from outside the field of History, such as the master's degree thesis written by Ema Pires (2003) and the PhD thesis by Vera Marques Alves (2013), both of which have since been published. Making use of a series of crossovers between History and Anthropology, the first of these examines the tourist narratives and propaganda discourses in António Ferro's policy, from 1933 to 1949, which used tourist propaganda to build a country that was suited to internal and external consumption. Vera Alves' PhD thesis focuses on the secretariat's folklore policy, based on the theories developed by Anthropology

and other social sciences in relation to the nationalist uses of popular culture and ethnography. Finally, mention should also be made of the recently published doctoral thesis by José Guilherme Victorino (2018), which discusses the *Panorama* magazine, edited by the secretariat from 1941.

This reinforces the view that has already been expressed, namely that the existing scientific production about the secretariat does not include any systematic analysis of the organization. In fact, the current studies refer, almost exclusively, to the initial period, between 1933 and 1949, and mainly focus on the figure of its first director, António Ferro.

This is the case with Margarida Acciaiuoli's book (2013), which provides a systematization of Ferro's action and thinking as the head of the secretariat, inherently allowing for a clearer understanding of the cultural history of the period. In their different ways, studies by Ernesto Castro Leal (1994), António Rodrigues (1995), and Fernando Guedes (1997) highlight António Ferro's political and cultural trajectory under the *Estado Novo* regime. Authors such as Raquel Pereira Henriques (1990) approached Ferro from an essentially anthological viewpoint, mapping out his career, beginning with his adoption of a modernist vocabulary and aesthetics, proceeding to an analysis of his subsequent traditionalist and nationalizing view of the arts and his compliance with the authoritarian political solution of the *Estado Novo*, and ending with his diplomatic 'exile' in Berne and Rome. Most recently, there have been several studies made by young researchers, focusing on Ferro's relationship with Salazar and the regime's ideological universe: the articles by José Pedro Zúquete (2005), who examines Ferro's ideological trajectory in his early years, developing from an intellectual and modernist writer into the director of the secretariat, and Goffredo Adinolfi (2008), who outlines Ferro's public and political career from 1915 to 1954. Reference should also be made to Nuno Rosmaninho (2008), who interprets Ferro as a nationalist anti-modernist, and José Barreto (2011), who describes Ferro as being responsible for the anesthetization of politics and the politicization of art. Lastly, there are Fernanda de Castro's two volumes of memoirs (1988), which enable us to appreciate Portugal's cultural evolution throughout the twentieth century, mainly through the activities of Ferro, to whom she was married, and the secretariat.

This brief overview of the existing literature on the subject makes it apparent that the academic studies produced so far have paid little attention to the secretariat's accomplishments outside Lisbon, especially in the years after World War II. Therefore, this investigation is considered to be pertinent, since it seeks to fill this historiographic void.

The National Secretariat for Information and the Establishment of the Porto Delegation

According to its statutes, the secretariat's purpose was to "unify the Portuguese under the moral spirit that governs the nation."⁴ In other words, it implied the production of a symbolic world, creating one single discourse that was capable of engaging the masses. As argued by Júlia Leitão de Barros, it was an "ideological siege" of the nation (2005: 235).

This was not a new concept. It was a form of engagement that was well-tested in Europe at the time. Although the scope of this article does not allow us to perform such a task in its entirety, to some extent this international dimension suggests the need to undertake a comparative analysis with other similar realities, albeit in a somewhat telegraphic form. The German Nazi regime, Mussolini's Italy, and the Portuguese New State all shared "an evident, albeit unfulfilled, totalitarian tendency, which consisted in an attempt to impose a single ideology, the rejection of any sort of competing world-views" (Adinolfi 2012: 616). To this end, all these regimes resorted, in their different ways, to the use of both repressive and persuasive instruments, which, in the latter case, involved creating propaganda structures. In this sense, 1933 proved to be a turning point, with the establishment of the Reich Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda, which served as a benchmark for the Italian and Portuguese experiences. It was a centralized ministry that enjoyed extensive powers of intervention. At its head was Joseph Goebbels, who "oversaw a network of regional propaganda offices, whose competencies covered all areas of information, including legislative and regulatory developments, propaganda, radio, the press, cinema, theatre, literature, art, music and popular culture" (Adinolfi 2012: 614). In Italy, it was only in 1937 that the agency responsible for performing this role became the Ministry of Popular Culture under the leadership of Galeazzo Ciano. The minister participated in the meetings of the Council of Ministers and legislated in matters relating to the press and the dissemination of information; this constituted "a formal attribute, since it involved effective decision-making competencies" (Adinolfi 2012: 615). However, as Adinolfi points out, "the post of propaganda chief was very unstable" and the ministry "was not driven by a coherent and long-term ideological program" (2012: 616). In the Portuguese case, "the relationship between power and propaganda [...] stood at the opposite end of the spectrum" (Adinolfi 2012: 614), since the secretariat lacked the powers that its counterparts in Germany and Italy had, despite the change that occurred in 1944, with the secretariat gaining control over

⁴ *Diário do Governo*, 1st series, Nr. 218, Decree-Law 23 054 of 25.9.1933, preamble.

censorship, for example. This is an essential idea, which needs to be stressed in this context, namely that, in Portugal, despite its importance from the very beginning, the secretariat was never given the power that a ministry should possess, even though its director went to great lengths to achieve this. To conclude this brief note, the similarities between the Italian and Portuguese regimes (more so than between the German and Portuguese ones) should be highlighted, since they were based on the notion of Latinity. Indeed, “events show that a balanced bilateral movement [...] had characterized relationships between the regimes” (Gori and Almeida 2019: 16). Such a relationship involved the participation of cultural institutions, universities, diplomatic representations, and intellectuals such as Francisco Homem Christo Filho and even António Ferro himself. The Portuguese regime thus followed a process of embracing some fascist principles and emulating “its propaganda methods, civil liturgies, and mass mobilization tools” as well as the reproduction “of some of its important juridical and economic organization,” specifically militia and youth organizations (such as *Legião Portuguesa* and *Mocidade Portuguesa*), corporatism, and, of course, the National Propaganda Secretariat itself (Gori and Almeida 2019: 11). Nonetheless, as the researchers Annarita Gori and Rita Almeida have emphasized, the supporters of the *Estado Novo* “did not want to completely emulate it or be under its influence” and “there was never a unanimously positive assessment of Fascism” (2019: 16).

As a propaganda agency that coordinated all the information about the activity of the various ministries, the secretariat was divided into two sections: an internal one, designed to regulate the relations between the local press and the state powers, disseminate the government’s doctrine, and prevent disruptive ideas that were considered capable of destroying national unity from infiltrating the country; and an external section, designed to collaborate with the Portuguese organizations abroad, inform international opinion about the regime (in other words, by clarifying its overall vision), and promote exhibitions in major centers. The secretariat gave special privilege to writers and journalists, diplomats, and foreign press agencies, whom it regarded as its interlocutors at both an internal and an external level.

In order to pursue these lines of action, the secretariat organized a broad range of cultural activities—visual arts, performing arts, cinema, drama, literature—and also controlled the media—the press and the radio. A series of other initiatives were also undertaken as part of this process for the self-representation of the nation, involving, in particular, commemorations such as ceremonies and public festivities that promoted the desired emotional mobilization of the population, exhibitions, which had an indelible impact

on the political and cultural calendar of the country (since to a large extent they enacted the worldview of the New State), and, finally, popular contests, which were seen as a means of fostering regionalism within the state, providing models of good taste and enacting the nation for foreign audiences to see. However, the implementation of these initiatives had different outcomes and varying degrees of efficiency.

As World War II escalated, a certain sense of unease began to set in, despite the neutral stance adopted by Portugal. It was in this context that the then director of the secretariat, António Ferro, wrote a memorandum addressed to the president of the Council of Ministers. Although this document does not display an official date, it is assumed that it dates from 1943. The memorandum listed a series of possible causes for the “Portuguese unrest,” such as, for example, “the misunderstanding of the corporatist regime [...], the crisis and the bureaucratization of mysticism [...], the lack of a continually guided press,” and, equally important, the “lack of any legal means of propaganda and the lack of coordination with the public services” (Ferro 1943: 1-2).

Do these statements imply that the secretariat was not functioning as intended? Did they not amount to an (unconscious?) acknowledgement of a possible failure of the organization’s work? Did they imply that the secretariat had to step up its activities in order to tackle the issue of emerging political-ideological movements? As it is difficult to answer these questions in any meaningful way, they will be left open in this paper. The general hypothesis is, however, that these statements were the outcome of the unsuccessful process that had been set in motion by Ferro with the intention of having the secretariat upgraded to a ministry, as was the case in Italy and Germany, expecting that this would free the secretariat “once and for all from its inferiority complex, which does not allow it to fully implement its program” (Ferro 1943: 9).

It can safely be said that this memorandum contained Ferro’s solution for tackling this problem, which consisted of a series of 25 political measures covering many different areas of activity, in particular the need for more intervention and greater power in controlling the press and cultural events, demanding that the secretariat be allowed to supervise these areas. We assume that it was this document that lay behind the secretariat’s later metamorphosis into another institution, which took place in 1944. Although the propaganda role of the new secretariat did not differ greatly from that of the old one, it clearly took on a politically more repressive and coercive role, ensuring—as requested in the 1943 memorandum—the control of information and the press, as well as of the following tasks: the registration and licensing of journalists and news agencies; the oversight of radio

broadcasting; and the performance of the tasks formerly undertaken by the General Inspectorate of Cultural Events (enabling it to centralize the supervision and provision of registrations, licenses, and permits for all artistic exhibitions or venues open to the public, which, in practice, meant either permitting or prohibiting the organization of cultural events), in addition to controlling the censorship of all national cultural productions.⁵

This new secretariat was now an effective body of political command that supervised, centralized, and monitored the country's cultural and artistic life. It is worth highlighting both its abandonment of heavily fascist propaganda and the emerging role that tourism played in the propaganda of the New State.

Against this new political background, a delegation of the secretariat was established in March 1945. This decision was part of a strategy designed to expand the government's sphere of intervention by increasing the number of bureaucratic bodies. It also provided an important medium for broadening and strengthening the secretariat's action in the country's northern region. Established at Praça Dom João I, nr. 25, (a building owned by the import company Maurício Macedo & C^a), the delegation was managed by António Maria Pinheiro Torres⁶ until his death in 1966, when he was replaced by Manuel Sabra.

The project for establishing a delegation had, nevertheless, been planned since 1934, when Artur Maciel,⁷ then in charge of the secretariat's Internal Services (later known as the Information and Press Services), travelled to the north of the country where he visited cities such as Braga and Viana do Castelo with the explicit mission of finding a location in Porto for the delegation. It seems that he rented two rooms in Avenida dos Aliados, equipping them so that "despite its modest appearance, the facility would be as appropriate as possible for representing the Presidency of the Council of Ministers in Porto" (Maciel 1934: 5). The archives of the secretariat give no indication as to what may have been the fate of this

⁵ Until 1944, and under the auspices of the Ministry of the Interior, the secretariat's cooperation with the Censorship Services, through its Internal Services, was placed in the hands of Artur Maciel. In 1944, and until 1974, the secretariat incorporated all of the censorship services, which therefore became directly dependent on the presidency of the Council of Ministers.

⁶ 1895-1966. Originating from a family of renowned magistrates and physicians, Pinheiro Torres graduated in law from the University of Coimbra (1918) and practiced law in Porto, having also been the president of the District Council of the Portuguese Bar Association. He was involved with the *Estado Novo* from an early stage, as a board member of the Porto National Union (Council Commission and District Commission) and president of its Propaganda Commission between 1945 and 1950. He was also a member of the National Assembly in the 2nd (1938-1942) and 4th (1945-1949) legislatures.

⁷ 1900-1977. A writer and a journalist, he collaborated with periodicals such as *A Época* (1925-1927) and *A Voz* (1927-1937), becoming editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Noite* in 1939. He was a founding member of the Association of Theater and Music Critics (1929) and the National Association of Journalists (1933), of which he was made chairman in 1937. He led the Internal Services and the Information and Press Services of the Secretariat between 1933 and 1937 and worked for Emissora Nacional (the state-run radio station) between 1952 and 1954, where he was head of the station's news services.

delegation. The fact is that the project was resumed, as already mentioned, in 1945, after the end of World War II, at a time of ideological restraint and a certain softening of the regime's doctrine, with Salazar announcing in that same year, in an interview with *Diário de Notícias*, that the elections would be as free as those that were held in England.

The Secretariat's Porto Delegation: Organization and Funds

The internal organization of the secretariat was similar to that of the main office in Lisbon, being divided into four sections: First Section—Central Services (Central Office, Treasury and Accounting); Second Section—Information Services (Press, Radio); Third Section—Popular Culture Services; Fourth Section—Tourism Services, Technical Office and Information Agency. The staff of the various sections reported directly to the section heads or delegates.⁸

The head of the Porto Delegation soon criticized this system in a report, dated 1954 and addressed to the National Director of the secretariat, José Manuel da Costa, stressing how important it was to have all the delegation staff reporting directly to him. Pinheiro Torres was disappointed, in particular, with the independence granted to the Central Services in matters relating to budgets and accounts, which were still administered by the delegate of the First Section. This meant that the head of the Porto Delegation would not have a say in the preparation of its general budget, only “learning about it when it is ready and no longer subject to discussion” (Torres 1954: 3). In his opinion, he should be informed about the funds allocated to the delegation each year, and, after analyzing the requirements of each service, he would prepare the budget to be sent for the approval of the national director of the secretariat. It seems that the budgeting issue was the primary target of his criticism as it had “the disadvantage of creating an obvious independence in other services” (Torres 1954: 4).

Nothing, however, seems to have been done to remedy the situation: two years later, in a report sent to the new national director of the secretariat, Eduardo Brazão, Pinheiro Torres reiterated the fact that each service continued to be run independently from the head of the delegation, and that the drafting of budgets and accounts was still being done by the delegate of the First Section; in short, everything remained the same as before.

⁸ In order to better understand the delegation's mission, it is essential to be familiar with its staff. However, this survey has only been partially carried out. For further information, consult the secretariat's collection of documents at the Torre do Tombo, in particular boxes 82, 765, 1707, and 2044.

As far as the funds requested for the functioning of the delegation⁹ are concerned, we can conclude that these were quite sizeable until António Ferro stood down from his position as National Director of the secretariat, varying between 500,000\$00 and 700,000\$00.¹⁰ This cost would have been justified by the importance that was given to the delegation and to the role that it was expected to play in Porto and in the north of the country. However, from 1950 onwards, the budget fell significantly to about 300,000\$00, as can be seen in the delegation's statements of income and expenditure, which are kept in the secretariat's archives at the Torre do Tombo. This left an indelible mark on the delegation's activity.

Another difficulty felt by this organization was the environment itself: in other words, the city of Porto. For the government and the secretariat, it was a 'difficult' city, as we can see from the words of the delegate of this agency in the city: "Fundamentally liberal, it will hardly accept any restrictions being placed on what it considers to be its rights. Fiercely parochial, its natural tendency is to be independent. It is Catholic, but with an anti-clerical propensity. It is conservative, but individualistic" (Torres 1954: 7). For Pinheiro Torres, it was a "favorable hunting ground for the opposition, which operates wherever it wishes and in whichever way possible" (1954: 7).

Having presented, as it were, an overview of the Porto Delegation, we now choose to divide our analysis of its initiatives into three distinct, yet interrelated fields of action: politics, culture, and tourism.

The Relations between the Porto Delegation and the Press

As noted above, the Porto Delegation had an office that was entirely dedicated to the provision of information services, indicating the importance that was given to the media, and in particular the press, as the essential means for consolidating the ideology of the *Estado Novo*. The role of the press was, indeed, to unify the nation and make this political model viable, either by coercion or consent.

Despite being essential for the fulfilment of its duties, the relations between the secretariat's delegation and the Porto press were hardly easy during the period under analysis.

⁹ Note that these are partial figures for 1946 to 1949 and 1952 to 1956, obtained from the secretariat's draft budgets for these years (Torre do Tombo—Portuguese National Archives/Archive of the National Secretariat for Information, box 4311).

¹⁰ Nevertheless, these figures were lower than the budget allocated for the Verde Gaio ballet group in the period 1946-1949—about 800,000\$00 to 900,000\$00 per year (Torre do Tombo—Portuguese National Archives/Archive of the National Secretariat for Information, box 4311).

The delegate's 1954 report reveals its concern that "the opposition has infiltrated [the] newspapers, in terms of both editorial staff and collaborators," adding that "it is regrettable that censorship allows so much poison!" (Torres 1954: 7-8). In another report, dated 1956, Pinheiro Torres continued to attach importance to "the penetration of the so-called oppositionists into Porto's daily newspapers," describing those papers as denoting "an advanced, not to say communist-leaning, doctrine," (Torres 1956: 33). This situation had already been reported in 1952 by the delegate of the Second and Third sections, António Pinto Machado, who showed his dissatisfaction with the Porto press, in particular with its resistance to the delegation's requests for newspapers to publish political news, arguing that they lacked the space.

Although the 1933 constitution stated that the press was an instrument of public interest—or of national interest, in the wording of Article 23—in reality, Porto newspapers showed their resistance towards indulging the requests of the secretariat's delegation.

This trend had been reported since 1934. For example, in a report on the trip that he undertook, Artur Maciel referred to *O Primeiro de Janeiro* as a newspaper with a powerful market penetration, as it was greatly liked by the public and was of major journalistic interest. However, in the opinion of this secretariat official, the newspaper assumed an anti-situationist stance, emphasizing the idea that, even though censorship had already changed it a great deal, it had not yet destroyed it completely (Maciel 1934).

Maciel's reflections coincided with two reports, drawn up in 1934 and 1935 by the secretariat, on the state of the press in the provinces. These reports were the result of the "growing difficulties of the District Censorship Delegations and the Civil Governors faced with the rise in critical postures and political controversy in the newspapers" (Tengarrinha 2006: 185). In 1941, Maciel's successor, Tavares d'Almeida, acknowledged in a report about the regional press that cooperation with the daily press in the city of Porto was unsatisfactory, pointing out that the newspapers had avoided publishing the official information that they were sent and were reluctant to comply with the secretariat's requests. This situation still continued to exist in 1943, as the monthly report on the daily press in Lisbon and Porto highlights: "It is still impossible to say that the newspapers feel that they are integrated and efficiently fulfil the duties of the true public opinion agencies that they should be" (Tengarrinha 2006: 195). During the year that the Porto Delegation was established, on the occasion of elections to the National Assembly, the secretariat made a new survey of the newspapers published in mainland Portugal and the islands: the findings were highly

negative, as the number of newspapers opposed to the *Estado Novo* had risen from 4 to 33, mainly in the districts of Lisbon, Aveiro, Coimbra, and Porto.

Under such circumstances, how could the Porto press be brought under control? The secretariat's delegation used two different ways to deal with this problem: coercion and repression, exercising its censorship prerogatives¹¹ and enticement, so as to have these media freely join the regime and its political beliefs.

In this particular case, we focus our attention on the 'seduction' strategies used by the Porto Delegation, in particular the active promotion of a good relationship with journalists, in a spirit of camaraderie, so that the delegation became "indispensable to the newspapers" (Torres 1954: 8-9). Most importantly, we are concerned with the indirect financing of new supportive or situationist newspapers.¹² Such was the case with the *Diário do Norte*, established in 1949, about which Pinheiro Torres commented: "I made no mistake in [...] fighting for the establishment of this newspaper, or in assessing its beneficial influence on others, [since it came to] have a major influence on the reporting of news in Porto, for the benefit of the nationalist cause" (1954: 8).

Expectations were high when it came to this evening newspaper, a newspaper "of the City and Nation," considered by the delegation to be crucial in "refreshing the tense environment of the northern press" and as an "important bastion for gauging the actions of the other newspapers" (Machado 1950: 2). It was, therefore, believed that by receiving and publishing the news sent by the delegation, the *Diário do Norte* forced the other newspapers to act in the same way: "The position of Porto newspapers is more attentive and understanding, and today our 'news reports' are fully utilized, with few exceptions. Incidentally, the requests that have been made to that press to highlight political or social news or reports have been well accepted" (Machado 1951: 2).

The head of the delegation had more ideas for the newspaper. In particular, he defended measures to enhance the attractiveness of the newspaper for Porto readers, by introducing a literary page "of great scope, benefiting from the work of the best people, in order to be better than that of other newspapers" (Torres 1956: 34). Was this a mirage? The editorial staff of the Porto daily newspapers, such as *Jornal de Notícias*, *Comércio do Porto*, and

¹¹ Under the provisions of Decree-Law Nr. 26 589 of 1936, the press was subject to a number of restrictions. The Office of the Director-General of Censorship Services had the power to prohibit the establishment of new periodicals, supervise the character of newspaper editors, approve their appointment, impose fines and suspensions, eliminate publications, and supervise the entry, distribution, and sale of foreign publications in the country (Cabrera 2008).

¹² Supportive newspapers were those that, despite the fact that they publicized the regime's work, did not seek to justify its political and social principles, but simply reported the facts; situationists were those who supported the propaganda of the *Estado Novo*'s principles and actively defended the 'situation' (Barros 2005: 271).

Primeiro de Janeiro, included famous writers known for their anti-situationist stances, such as João Gaspar Simões, José Régio, or Jaime Cortesão. Could there really be any competition? Such was, undoubtedly, the desire of the Porto delegate.

However, the financial budget was what ultimately affected the aims of the delegation in connection with the Porto press: between 1947 and 1953, the delegation's funds fell by almost 50%, forcing the agency to reduce and even eliminate several services and activities, "to the detriment of its role and purposes" (Torres 1954: 5-6).

One of the items eliminated from the budget was "Collaboration," which served to infiltrate the political ideals of the regime into the provincial newspapers, regarded by the delegation as a practical school of nationalism (Torres 1954). The Press Office was one of the departments that was most hit by the budget cuts: it stopped delivering reports outside the city, thus losing its influence in this regard. Due to this, the Porto Delegation continued to request more facilities (i.e. financial support) from the National Secretariat, so that it could "secure its position with the Press, a position that was so difficult to achieve and in need of greater appreciation" (Machado 1951: 1).

The Relations between the Porto Delegation and the Radio

In a country where, in 1950, about 40% of the population was illiterate (Barros 2005), the importance given by the regime to the modern means of communication was quite obvious, particularly the radio, used as an instrument for the formation, information, operationalization, reproduction, and dissemination of the *Estado Novo* ideology.

At the end of World War II, the financial resources of the small radio stations in Porto were depleted. In early 1949, they were authorized to broadcast adverts to bring in some extra funding, but, in return, these authorizations served as a bargaining chip with which to muzzle the radio stations and prevent them from mentioning the activities of the political opposition (Santos 2015). From the delegation's viewpoint, this made sense. A report from the head of the delegation mentions that it was a "difficult means of information, as most of those who managed the radio stations were misguided politically" (Torres 1954: 10).

As a rule, the relations between the delegation and the private radio stations of Porto were founded on two pillars. Firstly, through censorship, which played a key role in the elimination of the Porto Rádio Clube Lusitânia, referred to in an official document of the Porto Delegation in June 1946 as engaging in the dissemination of "thoroughly Communist

programs, under the guise of literary and artistic criticism made by students” (Victorino 2013: 141). As a result, its license was cancelled and the station had to close down in 1948.

Secondly, by working on a regular basis with radio stations (namely with CSB 5), broadcasting cultural programs such as *Páginas da História*, by Pedro Homem de Melo; *Páginas Literárias*, *Autores Portugueses*, and *Registo de Actualidades*,¹³ by Pinto Machado; *Lâmpada de Aladino* and *Norte* (centered on Portuguese traditional literature); *Dois dedos de conversa* and *Conheça a sua Terra* (on tourism), by Manuela Couto Viana, who also shared a radio theatre program with Humberto Magalhães; also, through two programs for which the delegation was entirely responsible, *Viagens na minha Terra* and *Postais Radiofónicos do Porto*. Most of these were programs developed for the private radio stations in the city, with the aim, as the Porto delegate stated, of “raising the level of programming” (Torres 1954: 6).

The secretariat was well aware of the financial weaknesses of private radio stations and tried to take advantage of this by implementing an indirect financing system that would guarantee that the various stations remained in line with the regime’s ideology, or at least that was what it expected. The aim was to exercise “a more effective influence” as the stations “accept everything that we offer them,” and, in return, the secretariat, through its Porto Delegation, could “demand whatever we want from them” (Torres 1954: 11). In this sense, we can understand the emphasis given by the Porto radio stations to the press reviews and opening notes prepared by the delegation, which served as political indoctrination messages read by the stations at the start of their daily programs. Such precautions, however, did not restrain certain attitudes of rebellion, as described in one of the delegation’s reports of February 1946, which stated that the meeting of the Grémio dos Comerciantes da Rádio had declared that the reading of the secretariat’s press review wasted useful broadcasting time and that they therefore wished to be compensated for that loss (Victorino 2013).

These situations were the reason why the delegation eventually decided to set up its own radio station in 1949. According to a report by the delegate from the Third Section, António Pinto Machado, such an option would result in a more efficient and cost-effective action, also bringing “benefits of public-radiophonic interest” (Machado 1951:4). Although we know that the radio was installed by 1951 and was working as expected, after this, news about it became scarce. Therefore, in the absence of any documentary evidence to provide us with better information at the moment, no further details can be provided on this delegation’s radio, which was not mentioned in subsequent reports.

¹³ This was a radio documentary, reporting on the events that had taken place during the previous fortnight and highlighting the events considered most significant in the city’s life.

The Cultural Activity of the Porto Delegation

While newspapers and the radio already mentioned the attention that should be paid to culture, specific consideration was also given to these issues, which we will now analyze, aiming to show the cultural focus of the secretariat in Porto and in the northern part of the country. The cultural activity of the delegation was quite intense when António Ferro was at the helm of the secretariat, but the funds allocated to the delegation decreased when he left, as has already been mentioned, and consequently so did the cultural activity until it was almost totally focused only on the *Maio Florido* event, first held in 1945 at the suggestion of Ferro. Several Porto institutions joined forces under the secretariat's leadership for the organization of this event: the city council, the Central Committee of Municipal Councils, the Porto press, the Porto Trade Association, the Porto Industrial Association, and the Porto Union of Shopkeepers.

Maio Florido consisted of a number of cultural and artistic initiatives intended for all sectors of the population of Porto and organized into a “tasteful program” (*O Comércio do Porto* 4.4.1946: 1). The city's elites had access to conferences and recitals, the Exhibition of Modern Art from the North of Portugal (similar to the initiative sponsored by the secretariat's main office in Lisbon since 1935), concerts by the National Orchestra, and the closing event, the *Maio Florido* evening.¹⁴ The common people were offered popular culture: films shown by the secretariat's itinerant cinemas in different neighborhoods of the city; popular festivals at the Palácio de Cristal, which included folklore dance groups from the northern region; a rose exhibition also held at the Palácio de Cristal, with the collaboration of the City Council; and the annual radio festival, with artists from the state-owned radio station Emissora Nacional. A number of popular contests can also be added to these events: for example, the garden contest of the Porto social housing districts and the shop window contest.¹⁵

As far as we know, the *Maio Florido* program of events continued to be held annually until 1965, but its *modus faciendi* changed when Ferro left the secretariat in 1949. This change was linked to a substantial drop in the secretariat's material and financial investment. Some of the events included in the extensive program idealized by Ferro gradually disappeared: for example, the rose exhibition, the shop window contest, and the window flower box

¹⁴ In its first year, 1946, the event also included poetry and classical dancing by the Verde Gaio ballet group (see Ribeiro 2014).

¹⁵ See Ribeiro 2015.

decoration contest, while the budget allocation for other events that continued at least until the late 1950s decreased, as was the case with the *Maio Florido* Evening Festival, the event that traditionally marked the end of the festive cycle, and the highly popular Radio Festival.

The regional press were quick to highlight the dismissive attitude that people had developed towards the initiative, criticizing it openly. The newspaper *Diário do Norte* (the unofficial periodical of the secretariat in Porto) stated that *Maio Florido* had deteriorated badly and had lost its expressiveness and meaning. This dissatisfaction explains why in 1957 and 1958 attempts were made to revive the “initial program of *Maio Florido*” (*Diário do Norte* 1.6.1957: s/p). Thus, in 1957, the event brought a return of the itinerant cinema, the Radio Festival, and the final event (again with the exhibition of the Verde Gaio ballet group), in addition to the traditional Exhibition of Contemporary Art from the North of Portugal; the following year, the program included the Flower Games, the inauguration of the Casa de Camilo Castelo Branco, in Seide, and the folklore festival of the groups from north of the River Douro.

One other fundamental pillar of the delegation’s cultural activity was its collaboration with the Porto City Council in the City Festivities (or the Festival of São João), noticeable in the decorated balconies contest (Porto’s version of the Lisbon window box decoration contest), the São João singing contest in collaboration with the Emissor Regional do Norte (the Porto radio station of the Emissora Nacional), or the contest for the best poster announcing the São João festivities. However, as a result of the spending cuts, the peak of these activities occurred during the early period of the delegation’s existence, until about 1949, gradually declining thereafter.

The importance of this cultural activity was mainly to be noted at the political level. For the delegation, it was necessary to combat, in the city, “a sub-realistic virulent group of existentialist oppositionists-communists that permeates all segments of society through newspapers and guilds [...], presenting and expounding their cleverly disguised ideas in conferences, exhibitions, films, music and the theater” (Torres 1954: 14). According to the same source, in addition to their own venues, they also met in cultural associations of the city, such as Ateneu Comercial and Clube dos Fenianos, known for their anti-situationist views. For the delegation, it was necessary to “unite all forces, in a targeted action, to block these manifestations, countering them by the same means with our own ideas” (Torres 1954: 14). It therefore sought to stage several artistic events throughout the year, bringing to Porto the secretariat’s conferences and exhibitions that were held in Lisbon in order to achieve a “fighting front in the city” (Torres 1956: 35).

It is also important to note a practice introduced in 1934 by António Ferro, then head of the secretariat: that of bringing foreign journalists and intellectuals to Portugal in order to visit and write about the country. The secretariat's guests were an eclectic group of prominent personalities in their respective fields: literature, fine arts, diplomacy, and the world of politics. Nevertheless they all shared one common feature—they were opinion-makers, men and women, who, through the access that they enjoyed to the press in their countries, both informed and shaped the respective public opinions. The aim was obvious: the promotion of an external image of the nation and of Salazar through these public figures who could endorse the president of the Council of Ministers as a politician by helping to build the aura that was indispensable for a leader, as well as by depicting Portugal as a country of order and balance where modernity and tradition went hand in hand. This seduction strategy was, however, twofold, as the intention of engaging in internal propaganda was also evident: a favorable international view of the nation was thus reflected, disseminating an ideologically-oriented view of the country among the population.

The continued existence in the secretariat's budgets of an item that was described as expenditure on foreigners, as well as in the budget of the Porto Delegation, is testimony to the political importance that was given to these visits. In fact, while the funds for other initiatives seem to have decreased or even disappeared from the delegation's budget statements as a consequence of a series of spending cuts, the opposite happened in the case of foreign expenditure. For instance, from an expense of \$7,512 in 1945, the spending rose to \$59,259 in 1954.¹⁶ These costs included trips around Porto and the north, as well as a variety of events and ceremonies. Thus, a range of different personalities came to Porto and the north of the country, accompanied by officials of the secretariat's delegation in that city, on visits that were duly advertised in the newspapers linked to the regime. Such figures included the president of Brazil, Café Filho, the consul general of Brazil, Dr. Cantuária Guimarães, the king of Italy, the ambassadors of England, the renowned Brazilian intellectuals Gilberto Freire and Pedro Calmon, the baron of Sévigné, Brazil's minister of labor, the daughter of the Brazilian president Getúlio Vargas, the Mexican Children's Orfeão, the roller skating hockey world championship players, and the Brazilian journalist Paulo Tacla, among many others.

¹⁶ Torre do Tombo—Portuguese National Archives/Archive of the National Secretariat for Information, boxes 2457, 2985, 4311, and 5249.

The Tourist Activity of the Porto Delegation

The tourist promotion program developed by the Porto Delegation and in other places across the northern region shared the same concerns as the cultural initiatives analyzed, mixing together aesthetic discourses, the regime's values, and the fight against the progressive ideas of some Porto associations and media. These tourist concerns are the topic for discussion in this last section of the paper.

Tourism had been the responsibility of the secretariat since 1940. However, after the implantation of the republican regime in 1910, this sector was considered by the government as a strategic pillar, a key enabler of economic growth, and, at the same time, the means for developing patriotic feelings and a new civic awareness (Henriques and Lousada 2010).¹⁷ Although its importance continued to be recognized, the political changes that had occurred in the meantime—the establishment of a military dictatorship in 1926 and, from 1933 onwards, the *Estado Novo* regime—resulted in the tourist sector being placed under the supervision of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. However, as the Ministry of Internal Affairs had always been more tailored to maintaining public order, this new arrangement compromised the efficiency of the national tourist activity. As a result, a more appropriate form of management was needed, which turned out to be the National Secretariat, most likely because it was directly answerable to the President of the Council of Ministers.

Under the supervision of this entity, tourism became a privileged instrument for promoting the regime: “a very reliable means not only of effective national propaganda, but also of simple political propaganda” (Ferro 1949: 34) and also a means of ensuring internal order. It was, therefore, a form of “ideological tourism,” as stated by Guilherme Victorino (2018: 358) and, in the words of the secretariat's director himself, as such it played “the most important role in presenting and eternalizing the nation itself” (Ferro 1949: 34).

The secretariat's Porto Delegation also provided tourist services, for which responsibility was divided between the Third and Fourth Sections. These services covered a broad range of sector-related activities, such as inspections of hotel establishments (hotels, guest houses, *pousadas*, *pensões*, restaurants, and cafés), technical assistance to several entities, graphic work, participation in jury panels, and the work carried out by the newly-created tourism agency. These activities allowed for effective interventions of the secretariat, via the delegation, not only in the city of Porto, but also across the north of the country. Its purpose

¹⁷ These ideas resulted in the creation of the Tourism Board as early as in 1911, assisted by a Tourism Department, both of which were part of the then Ministry of Development.

was quite clear: the presentation of an idealized nation worthy of being visited by erudite, cosmopolitan foreigners, as well as of a national public, consisting of upper-middle-class city dwellers and intellectual, political, and economic elites who offered these visitors an ‘authentic’ and refined Portugal. For this reason, the aesthetic standards of society had to be improved, namely with the creation of pleasurable locations and scenarios that matched the expectations of these publics; at the same time, they had to function as symbols of the ‘true’ Portugal, or of a ‘Portuguese way’ as idealized by the regime, via the secretariat.

The ultimate goal was to create a visual rhetoric for the *Estado Novo* based on ideas of ‘good taste’ and ‘beauty’ as promoted by the secretariat. This resulted in the implementation of what can best be described as an aesthetic plan that was, at the same time (or above all?), a political plan. This “Good Taste Campaign”¹⁸ of the secretariat was brought to the north of the country by the Porto Delegation, which took on a formative and pedagogical role, and also, in some cases, a supervisory role.

The campaign was begun immediately with a series of contests, some of which were specifically regional, while others were replicas of what was being done in Lisbon, demonstrating different degrees of success and efficacy. One example was the northern beaches contest, launched in the summer of 1945, and described in the daily press as a “tasteful contest” (*Diário de Notícias* 15.8.1945: 2), which was nevertheless only held on three occasions, between 1945 and 1947, or the Porto social housing garden contest, initiated in 1947 and held until 1958, presented by *Diário do Norte* as a “contribution to the aesthetic refinement of a common project” (*Diário do Norte* 10.12. 1949: 5). There was also the shop window contest organized by the secretariat, and offering a continuation of what had been done in Lisbon since 1940. This contest formed part of the first *Maio Florido* festivities and was designed to “give value to the products showcased in the commercial and industrial establishments, in the utmost good taste and in keeping with the modern propaganda processes” (*O Comércio do Porto* 4.4.1946: 7). Finally, the window flower box decoration contest was regarded as a “service to the city, and a powerful contribution to its embellishment” (*Diário de Notícias* 24.6.1944: 1).

Exactly what was the purpose of these contests? To give the north of the country and the country itself a new nationalist and regionalist appearance for tourist purposes that emphasized popular resources and was designed by the modernist artists of the secretariat’s

¹⁸ The cultural initiative known as the “Good Taste Campaign” was implemented by António Ferro in 1940, following the Double Centenary Commemorations, with the purpose of forming a (specific) awareness and aesthetic model for the country. It consisted of very diverse interventions and initiatives, creating an image for the nation and presenting it as a civilized country that was simultaneously both modern and traditional (Ribeiro 2017).

teams. In essence, this represented an alternative to the international tourist market, which was filled with erudite and cosmopolitan attractions.

The delegation also provided technical assistance for the organization of national or local events and festivities—such as the *Festas Gualterianas* in Guimarães and the Fafe Agricultural Trade Fair, the funeral honors of Queen Amélia (involving the decoration of the Igreja da Lapa in Porto), or the campaigns for the 1954 presidential elections. Its presence was such that a report of the delegation to the secretariat's main office stated: “Either we are asked to provide technical assistance to every major event in the north, or our advisory services are called upon to help” (Torres 1954: 25).

Another of the delegation's roles was to guide and collaborate in technical projects being developed by private tourist facilities, particularly concerning furniture and decoration, for which it would propose decorative solutions that used ‘typical’ Portuguese materials such as cork, regional fabrics, wrought iron, and tiles. Some examples of this work include the design of furniture and decoration projects for the Pousada Barão de Forrester, Pousada São Gonçalo, and Hotel Toural in Guimarães, or for the Tourist Office in Barcelos. Many of these efforts to adapt tourist facilities to the standards and values upheld by the secretariat were carried out by its hotel teams,¹⁹ which covered the north of the country, through the Porto Delegation, giving support and providing decorative solutions and improvements.

The northern team was supervised by the Porto Delegation. Between 1945 and 1948, it took charge of nine in-depth renovations of hotels, guest houses, and restaurants. An official document sent to António Ferro by this delegation in January 1947 reveals the many flaws found in these establishments: for example, the high breakfast prices at the Grand Hotel in Porto and the costly meals at the Leonardo restaurant in Póvoa de Varzim. Several facilities were not rated by the team as being of tourist interest, as was the case with the Camões, Expresso, and Porto restaurants; the classification of other facilities was downgraded, with some hotels and guest houses losing their right to be classified under their respective categories and having to use the name ‘hostel’ (Victorino 2018).

Also of note was the delegation's execution of various graphic items, such as publicity leaflets for festivities, mock-ups, tourist maps, or posters, in response to the many requests that it received, especially from local councils, asking for funds and equipment for their activities—contests, festivities, or other events. By advertising these kinds of municipal activities using its own graphic materials, the Porto Delegation was able to control

¹⁹ Two teams were created by the Secretariat, one for the north and one for the south of the country, which initiated their activity in April 1941. They consisted of an architect, an interior decorator, and an official of the secretariat's Tourist Services.

expenditure and, at the same time, guarantee better graphic quality for these materials than if they were made by local services. It also gave more work to local artists: for example, António Cruz, who was responsible for producing a roadmap of the northern beaches in 1946; Albano Neves e Sousa, who designed a poster for Espinho in 1948; or Carlos Carneiro, responsible for the poster for the São João festivities in Braga, in 1946. It similarly gave more work to the delegation's staff. In the latter case, when the president of the Municipal Tourism Committee of Vila do Conde applied for financing for a flyer to be produced locally, the delegation provided it with a proposal for a poster mock-up, most likely produced by the delegation's in-house artist and the delegate of the Fourth Section, José Luís Brandão de Carvalho²⁰ (Victorino 2018).

Finally, the following initiatives are worthy of note as far as general tourist promotion is concerned: the delegation's requests to the civil governors and the mayors of northern councils to send photographs of monuments, landscapes, and the works that had been carried out in order to create a portfolio to be used in the future; and the memos sent to the directors of various radio stations (Rádio Renascença, Emissor Regional do Norte, and private stations) asking them to give coverage to tourist events taking place in the northern region of the country.

Due to the increase in the number of tourists visiting the north of Portugal—from 3,674 in 1951 to 8,960 in the following year and then doubling in 1953—it was absolutely urgent for the Tourist Information Office to have sufficient brochures to offer to the tourists who visited it. However, here, just as in other areas in which the delegation operated, there seemed to be no solution to a major problem: the lack of funds resulted in far too few information leaflets. In 1946, Brandão de Carvalho was quite annoyed by the fact that only a few copies of the *Guia Portugal Pousadas* were sent to the delegation after a three-month wait, while, in that same year, a German tourist complained about the lack of a tourist map for the city of Porto (Victorino 2018).

These budget constraints were also reflected in the layout of the windows at the delegation's office, an essential feature of the promotion of the city as a tourist destination as well as of the region and the delegation itself. Its director complained that the windows could not be properly decorated due to a lack of promotional material, so they were left

²⁰ 1900-1962. A monarchist and a gifted painter, he was a student of painting and drawing with the architect Conceição e Silva. He was part of the Administrative Council of the Braga district and of the Braga City Council after the advent of the military dictatorship in 1926, where he organized the first Minho Fair. He was a loyal servant of the regime and worked at the 1934 Porto Colonial Exhibition as a painter-decorator; he was responsible for the 1940 Labor Parade of the Double Centenary Celebrations in Porto and the head of the fourth section of the Secretariat's Porto Delegation.

empty. The solution was to decorate them with material sent from the head office or to allocate a specific amount from the delegation's funds for this purpose.

Final Considerations

The aim of this brief description of the Porto Delegation of the National Secretariat for Information was to provide some insight into the lesser known facts about this organization.

Understanding the vital role played by this body in constructing the rhetoric of the Estado Novo regime is of paramount importance: at the level of censorship and repression, it protected the dictatorship from opposing propaganda campaigns and eliminated any forms of expression that ran counter to the unilinear understanding of reality that it conveyed; at the level of propaganda, it disseminated the ideological principles on which Salazarism was based and mobilized and united the rural and urban populations around an idea of nationhood conceived by the regime. In order to do this, it had to exercise a tight and permanent control over every aspect of daily life in Portugal.

The documents that were examined clearly showed the internal and external difficulties faced by the delegation, one of which was the extreme centralization enforced by the regime in the internal organization of the various services and departments of the Porto Delegation in its relationship with the head office. Indeed, the information that was collected gives a clear indication of the lack of autonomy of the delegation vis-à-vis Lisbon, both in administrative terms—reports pertaining to the activity of the delegation's departments were always addressed directly to the director of the National Secretariat – and in terms of the competences and services initially assigned to the Porto Delegation and then later taken over by the head office in Lisbon. This was the case with the collaboration with the press in the north of Portugal. The transfer of the delegation's competences to Lisbon was not viewed favorably in Porto, as was noted by the delegate Pinto Machado: "It seems that the people in Porto and in the north of the country would do the job better" (1952: 4).

The resources available to the Porto Delegation differed greatly from those enjoyed by the head office, largely due to another constraint identified and often mentioned in this paper: budgetary limitations. Despite the apparent robustness in the first few years, the fact remains that the delegation was always subject to financial constraints and to national projects which the secretariat considered a priority. The situation deteriorated greatly when António Ferro stood down as director of the secretariat. The reports we have referred to

clearly show his exasperation. The head of the secretariat in Porto spoke, more than once, of the “envy of Lisbon for everything assigned to it, and for the very little it distributes [to Porto]” (Torres 1956: 40).

These funding constraints were not exclusive to the delegation, for they affected the Lisbon headquarters in the same way. This chronic underfunding dated back to the early days of this state agency, perhaps due to Salazar’s well-known “semitic character” (Acciaiuoli 2013: 103). Indeed, if one compares the amounts allocated to the secretariat (which nevertheless increased with the 1944 change, in view of the new responsibilities undertaken) with other similar European organizations, this assessment is corroborated: in Italy, in 1934, 3% of the State Budget was reserved for Mussolini’s press office, while Hitler assigned 14 million marks to his Ministry of Propaganda (Acciaiuoli 2013). A certain inconsistency appears to have existed between the understanding of the secretariat’s key political role and its having always struggled with the lack of funds to effectively accomplish this.

António Ferro’s departure considerably affected the delegation’s activities, as mentioned. The new national secretary, José Manuel da Costa,²¹ distanced himself ideologically from Ferro’s ideas, especially as far as its mission was concerned. He returned to the main lines of action that had been established for the organization in the speech given by the president of the council at the inauguration ceremony in 1933, and, in doing so, he converted the secretariat into an agency of the so-called “national crusade:” “We will not allow a thought, word or act that denies God, the Church’s precepts and Christian virtues; such a thing distorts Portugal’s identity by mistaking civilization and culture for appearances that are illusory and misleading” (*Notícias de Portugal*, 3.3.1951: 3-4). Hence, in his view, many of the initiatives that had been implemented in Porto proved to be superficial, so he regarded them as being of little importance.²²

Another significant obstacle to the activity that the delegation intended to carry out was the very nature of the city and its political resistance to the *Estado Novo* regime, as the Porto delegate soon found out, particularly in the case of the Porto radio station and press, as mentioned before.

It must be acknowledged that, despite containing an abundance of information about the functioning of the institution, the reports that were consulted were not sufficient to cover the entire scope of the Porto Delegation of the National Secretariat for Information.²³

²¹ And, in fact, those who followed him: Eduardo Brazão and César Henrique Moreira Baptista.

²² See Ribeiro 2014.

²³ In this particular regard, a more systematic examination will have to be made of other archives and collections of documents, in particular: the Archives of Fundação Quadros and the documents relating to António Ferro,

However, they do provide some very good clues, which I have sought to explore, and they also pave the way for future research, for they now provide some strong ideas about how the regime sought to create an image of Portugal, although it was not skillful enough to fully implement it. Perhaps the reason for this was that this work depended too heavily on a strong personality such as António Ferro, and, once he had left the secretariat, they were unable to complete the task. Or perhaps the regime could not find a way to free itself from a centralized practice that systematically diminished the resources that were needed in order to materialize that representation of Portugal outside Lisbon. Perhaps, ultimately, the regime was trying to thwart the cultivation of a possible spirit of regional autonomy on the part of Porto.

and the Salazar Archives at Torre do Tombo, specifically the official correspondence relating to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, national propaganda, and the Secretariat, mainly dealing with expenditure, and reports in the provincial press.

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