

“Year X of the National Revolution” — Salazarist palingenetic myth in the *Diário da Manhã*

Joe Williams

Universidade de Coimbra, Faculdade de Letras

joewilliamstranslation@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9266-7010>

Texto recebido em / Text submitted on: 30/01/2025

Texto aprovado em / Text approved on: 27/05/2025

Abstract

This paper contributes to the debate surrounding the extent to which Salazarism constituted a fascist ideology by analysing the discourses in an edition of the *Diário da Manhã* — official organ of the National Union, the only legal political party during the Estado Novo — published on 28 May 1936. This edition of the *Diário* commemorated 10 years of the May 28 1926 coup which installed the Military Dictatorship, later transformed into the Estado Novo with the 1933 Constitution. This article adopts Roger Griffin’s palingenetic myth analytical framework, which defines fascism in ideal-typological terms with reference to its discursive content, while also incorporating aspects of Emilio Gentile’s notion of the sacralisation of politics, to afford a more nuanced understanding of Salazarism’s ideological foundations. The analysis finds that the discourses in this issue of the *Diário* exhibit a degree of conformity with Griffin’s definition of a fascist ideology yet with several caveats, concluding that Salazarism can best be described as a para-fascist ideology predicated on a specifically Portuguese configuration of a palingenetic myth rendered via elements borrowed from Catholic discourse to confer Estado Novo politics with sacred

Resumo

Este artigo contribui para o debate sobre a medida em que o salazarismo constituiu uma ideologia fascista, analisando os discursos de uma edição do *Diário da Manhã* — o órgão oficial da União Nacional, partido político único do Estado Novo — de 28 de maio de 1936. Nela, comemoraram-se os 10 anos do golpe de 28 de maio de 1926 que instaurou a Ditadura Militar, posteriormente transformada no Estado Novo com a Constituição de 1933. O artigo adota o quadro analítico do mito palingenético de Roger Griffin, que define o fascismo em termos ideal-tipológicos com referência ao seu conteúdo discursivo, complementado por elementos da noção de sacralização da política de Emilio Gentile, permitindo assim uma compreensão mais matizada dos fundamentos ideológicos do salazarismo. A análise conclui que os discursos nesta edição do *Diário* alinham-se, em certa medida, com a definição de Griffin de uma ideologia fascista, embora com algumas ressalvas, concluindo que o salazarismo pode ser melhor descrito como uma ideologia para-fascista baseada numa configuração especificamente portuguesa do mito palingenético elaborada com elementos provenientes do discurso católico que conferem à política do Estado Novo dimensões sagradas. Estes resultados apoiam

dimensions. These findings support the position that Salazarism underwent a degree of fascistisation during the 1930s.

Keywords: Estado Novo; fascism; palingenetic myth; sacralisation of politics; Salazarism.

a tese de que o salazarismo sofreu um grau de fascistização nos anos 30.

Palavras chave: Estado Novo; fascismo; mito palingenético; sacralização da política; Salazarismo.

Introduction

On 28 May 1936, on the eve of the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, the *Diário da Manhã*, the official mouthpiece of the Portuguese Estado Novo, published a special commemorative issue celebrating 10 years of the coup which toppled the beleaguered 1st Republic (1911-1926), a period characterised by anarchic levels of instability, extreme political violence and near constant regime change, and installed the Military Dictatorship (1926-1933) which would go on to be institutionalised as the Estado Novo in 1933 (1933-1974) with former Minister of Finances António de Oliveira Salazar at the helm. With civil war in Spain looking imminent and the advent of Italian Fascism and German Nazism heightening political tensions between the European powers, this was a crucial political conjuncture and thus a period of ideological construction and consolidation in Europe, including in Portugal. The crisis of faith in the liberal political order and economic depression characterising 1930s Europe catalysed intensified and increasingly polarised political debate on the continent, conferring greater legitimacy to voices calling for radical and revolutionary solutions to the contemporary political, economic and cultural maladies, especially in those countries which more most affected by the impacts of the crises. In this context, the ideology of Salazarism fluctuated in response to the socio-historical contingencies of 1930s Europe.

This article analyses the discourses contained in the commemorative edition of the *Diário da Manhã* cited above, with the objective of shedding light on Salazarism’s ideological fluctuation during the 1930s and examining the extent to which Salazarism constituted a fascist ideology. To do so, the article adopts a theoretical framework which synthesises Roger Griffin’s notion of a palingenetic myth, which he contends resides at the core of generic fascist ideology, with Emilio Gentile’s work on the sacralisation of politics, which he argues is the process by which fascism elevated itself to the status of a political religion. The article is structured as follows: the 2nd section provides a brief overview of the necessary context; the 3rd section details the theoretical framework; the 4th section deals with the empirical analysis of the *Diário da Manhã*; the 5th section offers a discussion of these findings, with the final section offering some conclusions and suggesting avenues for further research.

1. Background

On 28 May 1926, a group of high-ranking military officers launched a coup d’état which snatched power from the desperately anarchic 1st Republic and

installed a military dictatorship. Beyond a commitment to ending the tumultuous chaos which characterised the 1st Republic and restoring some semblance of order and stability to Portuguese politics, the leaders of the coup had little in the way of a political programme or vision of the country's future, defining their political values mainly in negative terms.¹ There was initially a prominent liberal and republican element, but the more conservative and authoritarian elements soon began to gain pre-eminence within the Dictatorship's internal balance of power.² The Military Dictatorship was initially framed as a temporary measure to return a degree of order to society while a more lasting political solution could be found. However, the Dictatorship endured far longer than originally envisioned, with internal power struggles and political differences impeding any transition to a more democratic regime.³ Ultimately, the conservative authoritarian elements gained the advantage and installed the highly conservative and avowedly devout Catholic Minister of Finance António de Oliveira Salazar as effective dictator with the 1933 constitution, which restructured the dictatorship and inaugurated the Estado Novo.⁴ The Estado Novo, desperate to assert its legitimacy and project a self-image of a bold and daring political project ushering in a glorious new age of Portuguese politics, sought to frame the 1926 coup as a radical and transformative rupture with the pre-revolutionary dark ages.⁵ By this point, both the domestic and European political climate had shifted, and the newly formalised Estado Novo was formulating a much clearer and coherent ideological and political programme than the preceding Military Dictatorship, a programme that would continue to be consolidated and refined over the coming years.

The political right was united in its hatred of both liberal and class politics and the diagnosis of national decadence, but divided on how to recoup Portugal's prestige. More conservative elements such as *Integralismo Lusitano*, which advocated an integral nationalism to restore traditional sources of authority and legitimacy in pursuit of a structured and firmly hierarchical society supposedly resembling a social order from a putative golden medieval age, coexisted with

¹ Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, London, Pinter, 1991, p. 122; António Costa Pinto, *Os camisas azuis. Rolão Preto e o fascismo em Portugal*, Santo Amaro, EDIPUCRS, 2016, p. 70-1.

² António Costa Pinto, "The Radical Right and the Military Dictatorship in Portugal: The National May 28 League", *Luso-Brazilian Review*, 23, 1 (1986), p. 3.

³ Fernando Rosas, "Os Quatro Regimes" in Fernando Rosas (ed.), *O Século XX Português*, Lisboa, Tinta-da-China, 2020, p. 28-29.

⁴ Fernando Rosas, "Os Quatro Regimes...", cit., p. 40.

⁵ Rui Ramos, "A Segunda Fundação (1890-1926)" in José Mattoso (dir.), *História de Portugal*, vol. VI, Lisbon, Círculo de Leitores, 1994, p. 553.

more modernising movements, such as Nacional Syndicalism, which envisioned a more active and participatory role for the masses to establish a revolutionary new social order along the lines of Italian Fascism and German Nazism. As we shall see, the ideology of Salazarism synthesised elements from across the spectrum of right-wing political thought to produce a syncretic nationalist ideology equally fervent in its opposition to both liberalism and communism.⁶

By the time the *Diário da Manhã* published its 10-year commemoration of the May 28 coup, Salazarism had undergone drastic ideological crystallisation and evolved far beyond the vaguely conservative outlook espoused by the Military Dictatorship, in an attempt to offer a vision for the country's future which reconciled the competing tensions on the political right behind a shared hatred of liberal and class politics. As we shall see, the Estado Novo instrumentalised the commemoration of the coup as a means to consolidate its ideology and the public image of Salazar himself, in an attempt to mobilise a broader support base in the face of imminent civil war in Spain. The Estado Novo viewed the Spanish Republicans as a threat to “Christian civilisation” and sought to present itself as the last bastion of Christianity in Europe and Salazar as the messianic saviour figure sent to deliver Portugal from the clutches of Godless and nihilistic communism. Consequently, the regime's official propaganda apparatus intensified its activity to disseminate the Estado Novo's reconfigured ideology and self-perception in response to the need to adopt more radical measures in the face of the perceived existential threat posed by the possibility of Marxist social revolution in Spain. The *Diário da Manhã* was established in 1931 as the official organ of the National Union party, which itself was created in 1930 and became the only legal party under the Estado Novo. Vitor Neto shows that the *Diário da Manhã* was instrumental in consolidating Estado Novo ideology during the 1930s as the regime's official mouthpiece and instrument to constitute mentalities and forge public opinion favourable to the Estado Novo's political and ideological objectives.⁷ Through its editorials, the *Diário da Manhã* articulated a discourse that denounced liberal individualism and parliamentary democracy, while promoting a corporatist and nationalist worldview aligned with Salazar's vision of political unity, moral order and national regeneration.⁸ As such, the *Diário da Manhã*, beyond

⁶ See Ernesto Castro Leal, “Nacionalismo e antiliberalismo em Portugal. Uma visão histórico-política (1820-1940)”, *Historia Critica*, 56 (2015), p. 113-135.

⁷ Vitor Neto, “A construção do Estado Novo vista pelos editoriais do jornal *Diário da Manhã*”, *Revista de História das Ideias*, 37 (2ª série) (2019), p. 285-312.

⁸ Vitor Neto, “A construção do Estado Novo...”, *cit.*, p. 291-294.

functioning merely as a propagandistic mouthpiece, constituted a key site in the ideological construction and dissemination of Salazarism, offering critical insight into how the regime framed its legitimacy and elaborated its public image. The commemorative edition of the *Diário da Manhã* thus makes a case study par excellence to discern how Salazarism evolved in response to shifts in the European political climate during the 1930s.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 *Palingenetic myth*

Roger Griffin's highly influential 1991 book *The Nature of Fascism* coined the notion of "palingenetic myth," adapting the term *palingenesis* derived from the Greek *palin* (again) and *genesis* (birth). Griffin argues that this palingenetic myth resides at the core of fascist ideology, offering the following succinct definition of fascism: "Fascism is a genus of political ideology whose mythic core in its various permutations is a palingenetic form of the populist ultranationalism."⁹ Defined more discursively, fascism is founded on a palingenetic myth of regeneration in which the fascist regime comes to rescue society from some form of adversity (a foreign dominant power, corrupt politics, perceived decadence or decline, etc.) and implement a political programme which will restore it to the glories of a supposed golden age via a drastic overhaul of the political and social status quo which recoups the nation's lost prestige by establishing a radically renovative social, political and cultural order. Understood in this way, the palingenetic myth essentially constitutes a form of creation myth in which the population rediscovers its true destiny as a people and commences a total restructuring of all aspects of life within that society in order to align with its authentic essence. For this rebirth to take place, every element of social, political and cultural life must be subordinated to the state, which is the sole agent capable of articulating and nourishing the innate spirit of the "people."¹⁰ Regarding the "populist ultranationalism" component of his definition of fascism, Griffin qualifies that it is when this palingenetic myth constitutes an element of "populist ultranationalist" ideology that the category of fascism acquires its explanatory value. "Populist" refers to a politics which

⁹ Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism...*, cit., p.26.

¹⁰ Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism...*, cit., p.32-36.

seeks to mobilise all levels of society and assert its legitimacy by claiming to embody the general population's values and articulate their desires, even when the movement itself is headed by an elite or vanguard of ideologues. “Ultrnationalism,” on the other hand, here refers to any form of nationalism which, in Griffin's words, “goes beyond” conventional nationalisms. Griffin expands on this decidedly vague formulation by way of comparison, arguing that ultrnationalism, in opposition to Weber's categories of “traditional” and “legal/rational” nationalism, which roughly approximates to the well-established dichotomy between “ethnic/cultural” and “civic” nationalisms, approaches the nation as a “higher... racial, historical, spiritual or organic reality which embraces all members of the ethical community who belong to it.” Presented in these terms, this “higher” reality is vulnerable to contamination and corruption from impure and outside influences, immigration, alien cultural values and inorganic and disruptive political models (international Marxism, individualist liberalism, feminism, consumerism and so on). This “natural order of things” is precarious, pure and in need of constant vigilance and spirited, even militant protection.¹¹

In sum, Griffin argues that for a political regime to qualify as “true fascist,” it must espouse an ideology founded on a palingenetic myth couched within a populist-nationalist ethos. Griffin goes on to propose several other characteristics of fascist ideology, the most relevant for this paper being that fascism is a) modern over antimodern; and b) revolutionary over reactionary.

2.1.2. Modernising over anti-modern

Even when fascism celebrates historical models of social organisation supposedly untouched by the ravages of the demoralising effects of modernity and champions the heroism and social honour which characterised an idealised glorious past, fascism is not advocating for a wholesale rejection of modernity, but rather of its allegedly degenerative and corrupt elements, such as an emphasis on individual freedom over social order and cohesion, a prioritisation of the material over the spiritual, the primacy of rationality over emotion, and so on.¹² What fascism thus proposes is an “alternative modernity,” rather than calling for a previous version of society simply to be replicated and implemented fully intact.

¹¹ Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism...*, cit., p.36-37.

¹² Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism...*, cit., p. 47.

2.1.3 Revolutionary over reactionary

Fascism must be considered *revolutionary* as opposed to reactionary, informed by a transformative idealism that genuinely sought radically new alternative political models to socialism, liberalism, monarchism, and so on.¹³ While, in practice, fascism colluded with traditional elites which essentially left capitalist structures and property relations intact, at the level of ideological intent, fascism professed a yearning to create whole new forms of society characterised by sweeping cultural, political and economic overhaul.

2.1.4. Para-fascism

A crucial aspect of Griffin's work is his distinction between fascism and what he terms "para-fascism."¹⁴ Para-fascism (which incorporates the categories "fascistised" as well as "neo-fascist") refers to regimes which assimilated the trappings of fascism to exploit its popularity as a viable alternative to both liberalism and communism, yet whose policies were lacking in, or at least ambivalent to, any substantive revolutionary intent to galvanise a genuinely populist ethos. This para-fascism, Griffin maintains, is opposed to genuine fascism, and although such a regime may align itself and collaborate with a genuinely fascist movement in pursuit of short-term political objectives, it will ultimately sever ties and seek to neutralise the fascist organisation as soon as is politically convenient.

Griffin identifies a list of "external requisites of Italian fascism," which he argues para-fascist regimes may incorporate into their ideological and institutional frameworks, without necessarily constituting an instance of genuine fascism.¹⁵ These prerequisites are: palingenetic rhetoric; terror apparatus; youth movements; paramilitary organisations; ritualistic politics; a leader cult; and a monolithic state party. A regime can present all of these external prerequisites, but unless this rhetoric and ideological posturing translates in practice into revolutionary and massified politics with the objective of forging a new national community predicated on new sources of power and modern models of social organisation, the regime remains a "para-fascist" one. Griffin cites 1930s Portugal as an example of a para-fascist state, yet claims the Estado

¹³ Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*..., cit., p. 47-48.

¹⁴ Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*..., cit., p. 120-124.

¹⁵ Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*..., cit., p. 123.

Novo constituted a “more thorough-going experiment in fascistisation” than occurred in Latvia or Greece, which he argues were instances of conservative dictatorships engaging in empty posturing with no genuine intent to awaken a revolutionary and populist movement.¹⁶

2.2. Temporality

Gauging the extent to which a regime or ideology can be described as revolutionary vs reactionary or modernising vs conservative and thus qualify as fascist requires a brief discussion of temporality, especially as it relates to nationalist discourse. According to Benedict Anderson, reconfigured notions of time in the Early Modern period were a necessary precondition for allowing the nation to be conceived as a mental construct and thus enabled the emergence of nationalism.¹⁷ For Anderson, nationalism could only emerge in the concept of modernity, once time had been reconceptualised as linear, as a historical chain of cause-and-effect relationships, as opposed to the sacred or spontaneous time that characterised pre-modern notions of temporality in an age dominated by Christian understandings of metaphysics. Anderson argues that the notion of historical progress would have made little sense within the deeply Christian worldview of medieval Europe, when earthly events were conceptualised as simultaneous expressions of the will of god. In this understanding, there was no radical separation between past and present and events were linked neither temporally nor causally, but rather vertically, as synchronous fulfilments of divine providence. In this conception, human life is merely a fleeting manifestation of something eternal and omnitemporal, anything that is has always been and anything that happens has already happened. Anderson contends that understanding the transition from the medieval conception of time as simultaneous, where events are linked synchronously with divine providence as prefigurations of destiny, to what Walter Benjamin termed “homogenous, empty time,” where time proceeds linearly and history is formed of discernible cause-and-effect and relationships in temporal connections to one another, is crucial to understanding the contextual history of the origins of modern nationalism. Anderson’s contention rests on his premise of the nation as an imagined community, a socio-historically specific mental construct, and he argues that the two most significant means of imagining the nation that emerged

¹⁶ Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism...*, cit., p.122.

¹⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, London, Verso, 2016.

in 18th-century Europe, the daily newspaper and the novel, are forms which allowed simultaneity to be represented in modern linear time.

Examining the specific case of Portugal, Fernando Rosas asserts that Salazarism, which he considers a fascistised ideology, rejected notions of progression or regression through linear time and instead articulated its palingenetic myths along a synchronous temporal axis and with recourse to themes and motifs from Catholic discourse, positing the Estado Novo as a “transtemporal” or “atemporal” expression of divine providence.¹⁸ In a similar vein, Luis Reis Torgal contends that Salazarist temporality was based on models of cyclical time and the notion of revolution as realignment with an eternal “political centre” specific to each nation, tracing a direct lineage from 18th-century anti-liberal and counter-revolutionary traditionalists such as José Gama e Castro and Joseph de Maistre to 20th-century ideologue João Ameal.¹⁹ Antonio Costa Pinto and Rita Almeida de Carvalho, for their part, seek to transcend the conventional dichotomy between fascism and authoritarianism by redefining the focus of analysis to the vision of the ideal citizen Estado Novo institutions and discourses sought to constitute, terming the Salazarist configuration of the fascist trope of the “new man” as the “everyman,” a “tired breadwinner” or “paterfamilias.”²⁰ The authors highlight how Salazarism sought to craft an ideal subject through its propaganda apparatus, educational policies, single-party structure, militia, and official youth movement. According to the authors, while influenced by modern institutional models inspired by fascism, the Estado Novo ultimately prioritized an “organic” vision of society rooted in traditionalist values and Catholic spirituality, although with recourse to modern methods and appropriation of fascist discourse and institutional infrastructure. During the early 1930s at least, Salazarism framed this supposedly organic society as a “new social order” installed via a revolutionary process of palingenetic rebirth. Trindade, meanwhile, maintains that, in the early 20th century, conservative Portuguese nationalists framed materialism, technological progress, urbanisation and massified culture and

¹⁸ Fernando Rosas, “O Salazarismo e o Homem Novo: ensaio sobre o Estado Novo e a questão do totalitarismo nos anos 30 e 40” in Luis Reis Torgal & Helosia Paulo (coord.), *Estados autoritários e totalitários e suas representações: propaganda, ideologia, historiografia e memória*, Coimbra, Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, p. 31-48.

¹⁹ Luis Reis Torgal, “Do tradicionalismo antiliberal ao ‘nacionalismo integral’ e à ‘terceira via’ dos ‘Estados Novos’”, *Historiæ*, 1, 1 (2011), p. 75-88.

²⁰ Rita Almeida de Carvalho and António Costa Pinto, “The ‘Everyman’ of the Portuguese New State during the fascist era” in Jorge Dagnino, Matthew Feldman and Paul Stoker (eds.), *The ‘New Man’ in Radical Right ideology 1919-45*, London, Bloomsbury, 2018, p. 131-148.

politics as stifling and suffocating the Portuguese people’s putative *zeitgeist*.²¹ Trindade explains how authors such as Alberto de Oliveira proclaimed that Portugal’s intrinsic essence, its national genius, resided in the countryside rather than the city, and could be discerned in the traditional customs and purportedly unaffected ways of life of rural communities, its character configured according to an altogether more spiritual and intuitive, rather than materialist and intellectual value system. This intellectual conception of Portugal as an innately spiritual, intuitive and unpretentious entity which constituted a refuge from the artificial aesthetic and social values imposed by rational modernity would come to constitute a fundamental nexus of Salazarist visions of Portuguese national identity.

All of the above considerations on the temporality of Salazarism enrich this article’s framework for interpreting Salazarist discourse in the *Diário da Manhã* and discerning with greater clarity its palingenetic dimensions.

2.3. Sacralisation of Politics

Emilio Gentile, another crucial theorist of fascism, coined the term “sacralisation of politics” to describe the process via which fascism sought to attribute to itself spiritual functions to elevate itself to the status of a political religion. According to Gentile, fascism, a revolutionary and nationalistic ideology, correlates religion with politics via a set of myths related to human concerns with meaning, mortality and morality which confer politics with sacred dimensions and afford the state the position of a supreme, semi-divine power and its leaders with messianic properties, thereby “sacralising” politics. The result is a blurring of the distinction between the religious and the political, with politics serving functions which were traditionally the preserve of religion.²²

According to Gentile, the originality of resources used to sacralise politics mattered less than their capacity to confer sacred legitimacy on the political order.²³ Thus, regimes do not necessarily need to create new political religions in order to sacralise themselves, but rather can do so by aligning themselves

²¹ Luis Trindade, “Dar espectáculo. A cultura em Portugal no Século XX” in Fernando Rosas (ed.), *Século XX Português. Política, economia, sociedade, cultura, império*, Lisbon, Tinta-da-China, 2020, p. 293-355.

²² Emilio Gentile, “Fascism, Totalitarianism and Political Religion: Definitions and Critical Reflections on Criticism of an Interpretation”, *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 5, 3 (2004); “Fascism as Political Religion”, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 25 (1990).

²³ Emilio Gentile, “Fascism as Political Religion...”, cit., p.242.

inseparably with deeply politicised configurations of traditional religions. Gentile's analysis of sacralised politics provides a critical framework that complements Roger Griffin's influential concept of the palingenetic myth. Synthesising these two approaches produces a theoretical framework which enables a richer analysis of the construction and content of fascist and para-fascist ideologies, shedding light on how their palingenetic and sacralising elements interacted with and reinforced one another to offer a more comprehensive interpretation of fascism's ideological content.

3. Empirical analysis — “Year X of the National Revolution

On 28 May 1936, the *Diário da Manhã* published a special edition to commemorate 10 years of the “National Revolution” that installed the military dictatorship. The issue was distributed free of charge as a supplement to its usual daily edition, the front page of which contained a transcription of Salazar's famous speech in Braga in which he proclaimed the “unquestionable truths” informing Estado Novo policy: God, family, the fatherland and work.²⁴ This section will now analyse the following sections of this commemorative supplement: 3.1. the front page; 3.2. the section on the state's vision of a corporatist economy; 3.3. the section on arts and culture; and 3.4. the section on state finances.

3.1. Front page

The headline itself overflows with palingenetic connotations and exhibits an express intent to locate the current political moment in the context of an audacious new revolutionary age: “Year X of the National Revolution.”²⁵ Here, the 1926 coup is constructed as the year zero from which Portugal's social reincarnation is measured. Nothing could constitute a more unequivocal attempt to narrate the Estado Novo as a regenerative programme and to posit an irreconcilable rupture with the pre-revolutionary past than positing the 28 May 1926 coup as the starting point of a new calendar and heralding a brave new era in the country's history — the coup symbolises an immutable point of no

²⁴ See also Ernesto Castro Leal, “The Political and Ideological Origins of the Estado Novo in Portugal”, *Portuguese Studies*, 32, 2 (2016), p. 130.

²⁵ “Ano X da Revolução Nacional”, *Diário da Manhã*, 1936, University of Coimbra General Library.

return against which time is now measured, marking an unassailable separation between before and after, past and future. This rhetorical strategy of representing the “Revolution” as the irrevocable inauguration of an audacious new era for Portugal inheres throughout this issue of the *Diário da Manhã* and is a narrative which constitutes the backdrop against which the recent developments in the country’s history are narrated. Furthermore, the characterisation of the coup as a “Revolution” communicates a tangible and explicit attempt to imbue the Estado Novo with the revolutionary and transformative ethos of fascism, while the modifier “National” clearly foregrounds the centrality of the nation and national identity as the organising principles and supreme values of the Estado Novo project, further reinforcing the fascistised quality of the rhetoric.

Another rhetorical strategy present on the first page and which recurs throughout the remainder of the issue is to associate the administrative functions of the Estado Novo with its moral ones, thus positing equivalence between the state’s political and spiritual responsibilities. From the opening paragraph of the introductory article, the paper’s intent to attach religious meanings to the state’s achievements and functions and to commemorate the coup in messianic, eschatological terms is apparent. The article places the moral achievements of the revolution on par with its material accomplishments (“We wanted this issue of *Diário da Manhã* to be the graphic expression of the country’s material and moral progress in recent years”), positing that politics is at least equally responsible for attending to the nation’s moral and spiritual hygiene as it is for its material upkeep and, conversely, that the success of a political regime must be measured in reference to its attainment of spiritual and moral objectives. We see, then, that in Estado Novo ideological discourse, there is symmetry between the regime’s spiritual and political responsibilities, and that the regime must attend equally to each of these aspects to produce a harmonious and functioning society.

The religious associations are strengthened by Christian motifs to depict the trajectory taken by the revolution — the regime’s endeavours are presented as an arduous, testing ordeal, replete with “difficulties” and “sacrifices.” Furthermore, the paper expresses its gratitude to the Estado Novo for its success as if appealing to a higher spiritual power (“We are grateful... to the official organisations”) and also cites the “faith” of its collaborators as a contributing factor to its survival. This introduction reserves its most laudatory praise for the final paragraph, which eulogises Salazar himself. Predictably, the tone is one of awed, semi-religious reverence, with Salazar referred to exclusively via epithets such as “His Excellency” or “*Senhor* President of the Republic” (capitalisation in original). This revered depiction of Salazar could be construed both as an attempt to construct a personality cult around a charismatic leader

and elevate the head of state to a deified, messianic status. There is a further explicit attempt to present the Estado Novo as a providential project and the “National Revolution” as a form of palingenetic renewal:

“His [Salazar’s] words of colourful faith in the destinies of the National Revolution will awaken in the souls of the Portuguese the love of the Homeland, confidence in the Estado Novo...”

The evocation of the concept of destiny serves to confer the regime’s political objectives with an intrinsically spiritual dimension, as the mission to realign Portuguese society with its innate and eternal spiritual essence. Discursively constructed as a prefigurement of divine providence, the Estado Novo thus presents itself as an omnitemporal entity, a synchronous expression of god’s will existing beyond linear time.

The article goes on to reinforce the notion of Portugal as the bastion of Christian morality and civilisation on the international stage, encumbered by the present political moment to assume the onerous burden of defending eternal and transcendent values in face of an existential threat:

Portugal’s membership of the League of Nations has forced it to assume painful responsibilities for legal and moral principles, which are indispensable to the existence of peace between nations and which are of the very spiritual essence of European civilisation.

Particularly telling here is the juxtaposition between “legal” and “moral,” which echoes the parallel drawn between “material” and “moral” in the opening section — once more, the administrative-political is being equated with the moral, reaffirming the inseparable connection between politics, even in its most concrete and mundane aspects, with religion and its spiritual and moral functions.

The sacralisation of Salazarism becomes charged with additional layers of meaning in the context of imminent civil war in Spain and potential victory for the Spanish Republicans — if the nation is being framed as a moral community and spiritual entity, then any conflict to maintain its integrity and protect its political unity transcends the purely political and enters the realm of the sacred.

The final paragraph of the front page offers an intriguing reflection on the temporality of Estado Novo discourse and the construction of the relation between past and future in the Salazarist reading of the political moment: “We enter Year XI of the National Revolution proud of the past and sure of the future.” Here, the discourse is clearly forward-facing and committed to a revolutionary ethos of advancement, while simultaneously asserting that this revolutionary advancement must be informed by Portugal’s national history, upholding the values and dignity

of the country’s past. There is thus a clear tension between past and present in the temporality on which Salazarist palingenetic myth is constructed. As we shall see, reconciling this tension was a central concern of Salazarist palingenetic discourse.

The front page of this issue exhibits the express intent to vindicate the supposed heroism and glory of the past, however — this objective necessitates innovation and transformation and is subordinated to the higher-order value of daring palingenetic rebirth and creation of a new social order. This hierarchy of values can be inferred from the rhetorical strategy of locating the political moment within “Year XI”, thus framing the Estado Novo as existing in isolation, beyond the confines of conventional models of temporality. This proposed escape from the linear time structuring enlightened rational modernity is an attempt to utilise modern institutional frameworks and fascistic discourse to install the “organic” society envisioned by Salazarism. Finally, the last line of the front page pays testament to the Estado Novo’s desire to fashion an ideology which reconciles a fascistised populist ethos with sacralising discourses — “We should all have Salazar’s faith: — Portugal can be, if we want it to be, a great and prosperous nation. It will be!” Salazar is presented as a man of faith, whose confidence in Portugal’s political and social potential resembles religious devotion, while every member of Portuguese society has a role to play in this process — this potential will only be realised if the Portuguese people can unite and express their will to manifest it as an active and cohesive national community.

3.2 Corporatist economy

The opening paragraph of the section on the “Corporatist Estado Novo” reads as follows:

In the midst of the victorious march towards a healthy and judicious collectivism — a noble and pure human aspiration — the high nationalist thinking that guided the men of the National Revolution founded the new social order in the Corporate State.

Once again, the state’s material function and economic activity are being ascribed a higher purpose in the pursuit of a “noble and pure human aspiration,” thus acquiring a spiritual dimension. Furthermore, Estado Novo economic policy is presented as the product of the “high nationalist thinking” of the revolution’s architect, an understanding which serves to further attribute a higher spiritual purpose to Estado Novo politics. Curiously, the wording here is at

pains to foreground the human face of the revolution (“the men of the National Revolution”), rather than presenting the revolution as some faceless, abstract entity. This subtle rhetorical flourish is a highly motivated attempt to suggest that, while the revolution itself is manifesting divine providence, those behind it are physical, flesh-and-blood humans, members of Portuguese society. By extension, the inference that the reader is being guided to draw is that daily life under the Estado Novo acquires a spiritual dimension, with social and political action embedded in a broader process of enacting god’s will on earth. There is a delicate interplay here between the secular and the religious, between human agency-centred understanding of historical development and divinely sanctioned vision of human progress — on the one hand, God wills it, and human existence in the mortal realm is merely a question of adhering to divine will and manifesting a pre-ordained destiny; on the other, to realise God’s will requires dedicated human effort and determination to fashion societies which align with God’s vision for mankind and produce subjects who embody Christian virtue. Furthermore, the phrase “the new social order in the Corporatist State” demonstrates a clear intent here to narrate the Estado Novo as a novel form of socio-political organisation, one dedicated to the corporatist economic model which characterises fascist societies.

The article continues:

In a safe, harmonious way, organisation is achieved through the formation of all the organs of the social body, correlating and delimiting the various spheres of activity by placing all the economic forces in groups of defined character and responsibility, each of which represents a factor of balance and responsible action — a force.

Here, society is being described as an organism, one that requires that each of its elements function correctly and cohesively with each other in order for the whole to be strong, healthy and harmonised. This demonstrates the Estado Novo’s commitment to espousing an “organic” vision of society, yet one that will require a human-directed palingenetic overhaul to become manifest. The same paragraph continues to develop the “society as organism” analogy by introducing a critique of individualism:

Thus, the establishment of organisations such as the one we are going to address here, at a time when individualism is giving way to corporatism, recognising its impotence against evils that only a collective effort based on morals and traditions can overcome, is a response to the reaction caused by the organic deficiency of commerce and its abuse, which is unfair competition, the constant increase in prices, the cheapening of products, etc.

The claim that “collective effort based on morals and traditions” is the only solution to contemporary political-economic challenges warrants further scrutiny. On the one hand, the evocation of the “moral” echoes and reinforces the earlier attempt to imbue Estado Novo economic policy with a higher spiritual purpose by positing that the material and the divine cannot be fully separated. The concept of “tradition,” however, evoked in this context, complicates the relationship between the past and the future, tradition and novelty, in the Estado Novo’s bid to elaborate a palingenetic mythology. In this conceptualisation, responding to the political-economic ills of the 1930s requires looking back to go forward and constructing a new economic model which reappraises the value of supposedly traditional corporatist principles, repurposed to respond to the socio-political contingencies of 1930s Europe. The ethos evidenced here would very much appear to conform to the Integralists’ call for an “updating of tradition”²⁶ — the principles of the “organic” corporatist model which supposedly characterised medieval society are here being renovated and applied in the context of modernity to reproduce an equally “organic” mode of economic organisation, yet one adapted to the needs of an economy with some degree of modernising aspirations, or at least motivated to present itself as such. Understood in this way, the intent is not to reinstate an earlier state of affairs or reconstitute in perfect one-on-one correspondence with a previous incarnation of Portuguese society. Rather, the rehabilitation of traditional values is a means of societal and spiritual renewal, to fashion a new form of national community capable of thriving in the context of modernity, yet one with a keen respect and deep continuity with the traditions which connect society to the putative spiritual essence it seeks to manifest. Crucially, as expressed in other parts of this issue of the *Diário da Manhã*, Salazarist palingenetic mythology envisages an “organic society,” but contends that a human-directed revolutionary regeneration must take place to manifest this organic society.

The article continues to demonise democratic liberalism as the evil from which the Estado Novo has been sent to deliver Portugal and further deepen the associations between economic policy and spiritual redemption:

Unused to the painful experience of many years, economic demo-liberalism is succumbing to the admirable manifestations of a belated but noble, cordial and true solidarity, uniting men in the defence of the sacred interests of the Homeland, the Collective and the Family.

²⁶ Fernando Rosas, *Salazar E Os Fascismos*, Lisbon, Tinta-da-China, 2019, p. 161.

A later section echoes the theme of imminent existential danger to Portugal's immortal soul and the integrity of its spiritual essence, but now reconfigures the threat facing Portugal in the current context to the approaching spectre of communism:

By bringing individuals together to work together in solidarity, corporatism opposes a magnificent barrier of well-being and social order to the tyrannical, depressing and amoral regime of the communist state — totalitarian and absorbing, annihilating even the most sacred acts of human conscience.

The corporatist model is posited as an organic entity, the “natural order of things,” sprouted from a “policy of truth” which merely gives expression to biological facts and objective realities:

Faithful to the ‘policy of truth’ that created them, Trade Unions and Guilds, living cells of the corporate organisation that... must act constantly and interdependently, in a fruitful system of collaboration.

According to the article, fair wages, hard work and harmonious relationships between workers and employers will form “national consciousness,” which, according to a Spanish thinker, is “an active and dynamic reality — not a passive and ecstatic existence, like a pile of stones on the side of a road.” This section seems to present a human-centred model of societal renovation, arguing for a mobilised populace to actively participate in the construction of “national consciousness,” posited here as a constant process of regeneration driven by the dynamic between various *economic groups* collaborating productively together (rather than antagonistic *social classes* engaged in perpetual class war to achieve predominance).

3.3. Art and culture

The headline of the section on art and culture claims that it is artists and cultural products who will truly confer the Estado Novo with sacred properties: “The apotheosis of the National Revolution — The Estado Novo and Portuguese artists...”.

This article focuses on the arts and culture exhibition held at the “Palace of National Reconstruction” to commemorate “10 years of constant struggle”:

The work initiated on 28 of May 1926, sought the reintegration of Portugal... Just as a painting, upon which men and time have inflicted damage and mutilations, is susceptible to restoration and restitution to its primitive

beauty, likewise nations, at the mercy of good faith and dedication of a group of people, large or small, can and must be restored and cleaned, or, to put it better: reintegrated. This was the thinking of the men of 28 May, and it is precisely this which animates and will continue to animate, if God wills it, the men of today and of tomorrow.

Via the analogy of Portugal as a painting in need of restoration to once more become a sacred and beautiful object, this passage echoes the vision of the Estado Novo as an active and energetic revolutionary project dedicated to constructing a new social order which manifests an "organic" society. This narrative is reinforced by the evocation of the "men of 28 of May," the human agents who will direct this societal rebirth, which is also an innately providential project and constitutes a society-wide spiritual awakening ("if God wills it..."). Furthermore, this spiritual awakening and societal rebirth take place in the context of modernity and seek to reproduce themselves via future generations of Portuguese "new men," who will fulfil the templates and models forged by the leaders of the revolution ("the men of today and tomorrow").

Later on in the piece, the Estado Novo seeks to present itself as a patron of the arts and a regime that promotes artistic production by offering shelter and support to artists in a way that previous regimes had failed to do so: "Until not long ago, artists lived unsheltered, delivered to themselves, without official stimulus to motivate them."

This must be interpreted as a discursive strategy to posit the Estado Novo as a political project intent on repealing the degenerative impact of enlightened modernity and liberal politics by re-enchanting society. The Estado Novo crafted an official aesthetic harmonised with state policy and ideology to imbue a sense of ceremony and spectacle to society, transforming everyday life into a constant enactment of political rituals in homage to the state and its leaders. This "staging" of public life, the elaboration of a set of aesthetic precepts to produce culture to turn society into a performance in celebration of the glory and grandeur of the state, constitutes an instance of what Benjamin the "aestheticization of politics" and complies with Griffin's criteria of ritualistic political ceremonies as a necessary prerequisite of a fascist regime.

The sacralising impulses of Salazarist discourse are also clearly evident in this section — from presenting the exposition as the "apotheosis of the National Revolution" to asserting that the success of the regime is a manifestation of divine providence ("if God wills it..."), there is an explicit intent here to attribute religious and spiritual dimensions to Estado Novo politics and ideology. The following passage attributes explicitly religious

dimensions to the regime's official aesthetic, describing how, in the main hall of the Palace of National Reconstruction, "Paulino Montez presents to us a bona fide miracle." This assessment is justified as follows: "We deem it so because the reader, on entering, will doubtless believe either in the dazzling effects of ancient magic or the resources of a Devil who could be a great artist."

Here, art and culture elaborated according to the Estado Novo's official aesthetic precepts become the means via which the state attains religious functions and imbues society with sacred dimensions, aligning it with a spiritual purpose. Estado Novo aesthetics thus become a religious dogma, a formula for producing sacred artefacts which re-enchant society and make manifest its spiritual destiny.

The temporality informing this discourse is ambiguous — the article exalts the glorious achievements of the "Revolution" of 28 May, yet contends that this revolution has sought the "restoration and restitution" of the nation's "primitive beauty," characterising the revolution's essential objective as national "reintegration." There seems to be a tension between this set of seemingly somewhat conservative values and objectives and the revolutionary ethos championed elsewhere in Salazarist narratives around the nature of the Estado Novo and its self-perception. Salazarism has a far more ambivalent relationship to the modernising and revolutionary impulses which characterise Italian Fascism and German Nazism, and triumphalist evocations of a radically new society existing in the context of an alternative modernity are far less unequivocal in Salazarist discourses, coexisting uneasily with antithetical impulses towards restoration and a rejection of modernity.

3.4. State Finances

The section dealing with state finances opens with the following paragraph:

The culminating points of the National Revolution are financial restoration and political reform... Both are the work of a man who embodied the aspirations of the Portuguese people and, through intelligence and virtue, mastered the serious problems of our time, not only those that concern the material issues that form the whole of our economic activity, but also those of the spiritual order which, in the midst of the ideological contradictions in which societies struggle, brings our country back to our moral unity that gave life to our historical formation, elevates us in the world's concept and reclaims for Lusitanian thought the superiority it once exhibited.

Once more, the discursive strategy to attribute spiritual dimensions to the state's political-economic functions is abundantly clear — there is an unequivocal attempt to embed Estado Novo economic policy within a broader framework of moral regeneration and subordinate the nation's material progress to its spiritual salvation. In Salazarist discourse, economics is a question of moral hygiene and redemption. Interestingly, this pursuit of “moral unity” is a question of recouping something lost or neglected which enabled the nation's grandeur and accomplishment of glorious feats in earlier historical contexts. Nevertheless, these responses are solutions to contemporary problems, rather than a full-scale retreat from and abandonment of modernity — recovering the grandeur and prestige of an earlier age is posited as a means of navigating and thriving in the modern context, of a way of giving expression to the heroism of the glorious past in an era of economic modernisation and political massification. The article diagnoses the economic shortcomings of previous regimes as the result of an “attachment to economic doctrines unsympathetic to national realities.” The wording here is telling — “unsympathetic” implies that the nation is a biological entity, a being requiring understanding, compassion and nurturing by agents sensitive to its specific needs. The phrase “national realities,” meanwhile, suggests that the nation is an objective and indisputable fact, rather than a discursive construct, thus masking the constructed dimensions of national identity and seeking to naturalise the Salazarist vision of Portuguese national identity. After giving a decidedly apocalyptical assessment of Portugal's economic situation prior to the coup and describing the League of Nations treatment of Portugal as “humiliating,” echoing the depiction of the League of Nations as an antagonistic external force seeking to usurp and undermine Portugal's moral integrity and spiritual autonomy, the article offers the wildly hyperbolic vision of Salazar as a Christ-like figure, rendered in unequivocally messianic terms:

In the seclusion of his office, a wise Portuguese man of the law meditated on the ills of his country. In his university lecture, he taught the methods of administrative prudence and in the press, he instilled the idea that the nation has the resources and means to rebuild itself. He was neither a demagogue nor ambitious for vain earthly glories. As in the most difficult hours of our national existence, he emerged as a “saviour”, in the prominence of an unmistakable personality. The Army honoured itself by choosing him; he gave the nation proof of its conscience or by instilling in it the utmost confidence.

This passage abounds with Catholic tropes and motifs. The image of Salazar as a “wise” man cloistered away “meditating” on solutions to Portugal's economic plight, posited here as a spiritual crisis, reinforces the associations

between the state's religious and political dimensions and imbues Estado Novo economic policy with a spiritual function — Salazar's economics reject the pursuit of "vain, earthly glories" and instead serve a higher providential purpose. Indeed, the description of Salazar's self-imposed solitude as an arduous sacrifice in service of a greater human good evokes the Biblical parable of The Temptation of Christ, from which Salazar returns as a "saviour."

Interestingly, this passage also evidences aspects of a personality cult and a charismatic form of politics around Salazar, framing Salazar himself as personally responsible for awakening the national consciousness via his economic policies. This aspect of the discourse is later reinforced by the evocation of Salazar's "personal prestige." These discursive strategies to erect a personality cult around Salazar further strengthen the parallels between Salazarism and fascism. Another intriguing dimension to this representation of Salazar is that Salazar is not portrayed as inventing and then imposing his vision for Portugal's future and the values which underpin it on a passive and malleable mass, but rather as tuned into and articulating the desires and aspirations of the Portuguese people. Salazarism is thus framed as something organic and intuitive, of which Salazar is merely the curator, rather than a construct he has elaborated. In this reading, the Estado Novo is the expression of the will and values of the nation, thereby positing a decidedly participatory and mobilised role for the masses in the Estado Novo political project — the legitimacy of Salazar's power resides in his capacity to articulate Portugal's essential national character. Understood in this way, Salazarism evidences a degree of populist rhetoric at this point, in line with fascist precepts that the state is the custodian of the national character, presided over by a charismatic personality endowed with a singular genius orchestrating a regime which manifests the national destiny and gives legal-political expression to the nation's spiritual essence. Estado Novo authority was legitimate insofar as it reflected the will of a mobilised populace who directly participated in their countries political processes.

4. Discussion

A synthesis of this issue of the *Diário da Manhã* reveals that its discourses are organised around the following three themes:

- 1) The palingenetic myth — the Estado Novo is narrated as an agent of palingenetic rebirth, sent to deliver Portugal from a period of national spiritual crisis.

The coup of 28 May 1926 was thus constructed as victory over the moral and cultural decay engendered by liberalism and the Estado Novo the triumphant manifestation of a reconfigured vision of the heroic social order and moral code which enabled the nation’s glorious achievements during its supposed golden age. In this sense, Salazarism exhibits a high degree of conformity with Griffin’s definition of a fascist ideology. There are, however, interesting complications — the societal rebirth posited by Salazarism is decidedly more ambivalent towards modernity than the palingenetic myths of Italian Fascism and Nazism and elaborated via discourses which abound with unmistakably nostalgic images and symbols. Furthermore, this palingenetic rebirth, while constructed as a revolutionary overhaul, is directed towards a new social order which manifests an “organic” model of social organisation, aligned with Portugal’s eternal essence.

2) The sacralisation of Salazarism — Salazarist palingenetic mythology is rendered via Christian tropes and motifs and elaborated within the discursive framework of Catholic morality and metaphysics to attribute sacred dimensions and spiritual function to the Estado Novo and blur the distinction between the political and religious.

Understood in this way, Salazarism is an example of sacralised politics, albeit with recourse to elements of traditional religion, in this instance a highly politicised configuration of Catholicism. Understood in this way, the process via which politics were sacralised in politics was one of alignment between Salazarism and Catholicism, of positing an inseparable connection between religious faith and political allegiance, thereby blurring the distinction between the political and spiritual and framing the Estado Novo as a providential project charged with the task of fulfilling Portugal’s spiritual destiny. Salazarist palingenetic rhetoric is thus an intrinsically sacralised discourse, narrating societal rebirth as a divinely ordained spiritual reawakening and realignment with the Catholic moral and ethical code intrinsic to Portuguese national identity.

3) Estado Novo as “atemporal” or “transtemporal” — Salazarist palingenetic mythology is articulated along a temporal axis which exists outside conventional models of linear time and frames the Estado Novo as the political-administrative expression of a timeless national destiny and synchronous manifestation of divine providence.

This reconceptualisation of temporality reorients historical and civilisational development from the horizontal plane to the vertical, positing the progress embodied by the Estado Novo as an ascension towards a higher spiritual purpose

rather than advancement along linear time. Thus, the “National Revolution” was not a question of looking forward to usher in a new stage of societal progression along a linear axis of historical time, but rather completing a cycle along a circular axis to realign with an eternal political centre existing in simultaneous time. Salazarist palingenetic myth was predicated on an understanding of revolution as the completion of a cycle, the return to an initial starting point and a centre of balance and state of equilibrium, where the nation’s innate spiritual essence is not suppressed by the mode of socio-political organisation imposed upon it and instate a social order that was a synchronous prefigurement of divine providence. The *Estado Novo* was less a question of either moving forward or going back, but rather coming full circle.

Salazarist palingenetic myth, then, seems to proceed from an ambiguous model of temporality in which civilisational and historical development is not linear. In this respect, Salazarism diverges from Griffin’s definition of fascism, which he maintains is an inherently modernising and forward-looking ideology with the goal of forging a radical alternative modernity. In this light, Salazarism can be seen as what Griffin terms a “para-fascist” ideology, or an essentially conservative authoritarian ideology that incorporated trappings of fascism, such as palingenetic myth, when the contingencies of 1930s Europe rendered it politically expedient to do so. Nevertheless, the ambivalence towards modernity and the rehabilitation of traditional sources of power in Salazarism do not diminish the palingenetic impulses of its ideology — Salazarism was a para-fascist ideology predicated on a specifically Portuguese configuration of palingenetic myth articulated along a non-linear temporal axis.

The ambiguous temporality informing Salazarist notions of history and progress can be seen as a pragmatic political strategy to appeal to groups across the political spectrum — by simultaneously presenting the *Estado Novo* as a radically audacious palingenetic rebirth of Portuguese society and a return to the eternal value system and moral code usurped by liberal and class politics, Salazar may well have been attempting to appease both the traditionalist and modernising forces operating in Portuguese politics.

Constructed as the rediscovery of an immutable socio-political order and the expression of divinely ordained providence in simultaneous time, the *Estado Novo* thus embodied both the old and the new and presented itself as the synchronous manifestation of an atemporal national destiny. This allowed Salazar to reconcile the fascist elements in Portuguese society who advocated for greater modernisation and novelty with the more conservative forces who saw a return to traditional values and sources of authority as the solution to the country’s ills. In a similar vein, the specific version of sacralisation demonstrated

by Salazarism, carried out with recourse to elements lifted from Catholic discourse and symbolism, could also be interpreted as a way to appeal to the traditional elements of Portuguese society while also satisfying the fascist desire to construct the state as an object of worship, thereby mobilising a broader support base for the Estado Novo.

These reflections open up a more complex discussion about pragmatism vs idealism in Salazar's political outlook and the extent to which he was genuinely committed to any ideology or merely adopting an instrumentalist approach informed by a logic of maximising social control and preserving his power in an exercise of value-free *realpolitik*.

Conclusion

In summary, the discourses in the *Diário da Manhã's* commemorative issue of the 28 May coup demonstrate that Salazarism underwent a process of fascistisation during the 1930s. The fascistisation of Salazarism, however, presents some interesting specificities and complications, selectively incorporating and adapting aspects of generic fascist discourse to the contingencies of the socio-historical context of 1930s Portugal. Interpreted within Griffin's framework, Salazarism can be characterised as a para-fascist ideology based on a specifically Portuguese configuration of a palingenetic myth articulated along a cyclical temporal axis which posited the Estado Novo as the institutionalisation of an atemporal national destiny and synchronous expression of divine providence. A further specificity of Salazarist palingenetic rhetoric is its vision of a revolutionary process of societal regeneration to manifest an "organic" society, a new social order which reconfigures medieval models of social, political and economic organisation, moral codes and value systems tailored to the contingencies present in the socio-historical context of 1930s Portugal. This supposedly "organic" society which embodied Portugal's eternal essence was to be achieved via modern institutions and narrated in a mythology composed of elements repurposed from fascist discourse.

The ambiguous temporality evidenced in Salazarist palingenetic discourse can be interpreted as a conscious political strategy to reconcile traditionalist elements of Portuguese society who nostalgically evoked an idealised golden age in the nation's history as the remedy to the perceived national decadence and the modernising impulses espoused by fascist forces in Portuguese politics who envisioned a radical new alternative modernity as the solution to the degenerative and debasing aspects of liberal and class politics. This reading of

Salazar's selective adoption of elements of fascist discourse and ideology as an essentially pragmatic decision is reinforced by his brutal suppression of the more unequivocally fascist National Syndicalism movement, suggesting that Salazar incorporated aspects of fascism when it was politically expedient to do so and abandoned fascism when it began to constitute a threat to his power or clash with his broader political objectives of maintaining a stable and firmly hierarchical society structured around traditional values.

A crucial characteristic of Salazarist palingenetic myth is its sacralising discourse which sought to confer upon Salazar and the Estado Novo sacred legitimacy via recourse to tropes and motifs borrowed from catholic discourse, attributing spiritual functions to the state and blurring the distinction between the religious and the political by irrevocably aligning Estado Novo politics with a highly politicised configuration of traditional Catholicism. Further research could examine in greater depth how culture in 1930s Portugal served to reproduce and naturalise Salazarist ideology and contributed to its fascistisation, as well as explore the debate surrounding pragmatism and idealism in Salazar's political decision-making and his motivations for his ambivalent and selective sympathies with aspects of fascist ideology, perhaps by analysing the apparent "de-fascistisation" of Salazarism during the 1940s.