

**HENRIQUE GALVÃO, 1895-1970:
ASPECTS OF A EURO-AFRICAN CRUSADE**

by

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I declare that **Henrique Galvão, 1895-1970: Aspects of a Euro-African Crusade** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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MARCH 2009

SUMMARY

This study deals with various aspects of the life of Henrique Galvão (1895-1970) but principally with the seizure of the liner *Santa Maria* (1961) in opposition to the regime of Dr Oliveira Salazar (1889-1970). It describes the ship's hijacking and explores its ramifications within the context of the 1961 Angolan nationalist uprising, Portuguese internal politics and Luso-American relations.

A brief discussion of Portuguese history from 1910 to 1933 provides the background to Galvão's affiliation to Salazar's regime and his subsequent apostasy.

The most salient features of Galvão's dissidence are discussed: his report on conditions in Portuguese Africa (1947-49); involvement in opposition politics (1951-59); the hijacking of an air liner for propaganda purposes (1961) and appearance before the United Nations (1963). These events are connected to the themes of colonial administration, anti-colonialism, African nationalism, anti-Salazarist politics and the African policy of the United States (1961-63).



Henrique Carlos Malta Galvão

Boletim Geral das Colônias July 1934

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ABBREVIATIONS

CADC	Centro Académico da Democracia Cristã (Academic Centre for Christian Democracy)
CCN	Companhia Colonial de Navegação (Colonial Navigation Company)
CPC	Centro Português Católico (Portuguese Catholic Centre)
DRIL	Directório Revolucionário Ibérico de Libertação (Iberian Revolutionary Directorate of Liberation)
EN	Emissora Nacional (National Radio)
FAPLE	Frente Antitotalitária dos Portugueses Livres Exilados (Antitotalitarian Front of Free Exiled Portuguese)
FPLN	Frente Patriótica de Libertação Nacional (Patriotic Front of National Liberation)
MNI	Movimento Nacional Independente (National Independent Movement)
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola)
OCN	Organização Cívica Nacional (National Civic Organisation)
PCP	Partido Comunista Português
PIDE	Policia Internacional de Defesa do Estado (International Police for the Defense of the State)
UN	United Nations
UPA	União das Populações de Angola

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PREFACE

Unexpected circumstances diverted me from my initial registered topic on Portuguese colonial policy (1961-62) of which Henrique Galvão and the seizure of the liner *Santa Maria* were a component. A detail of that abandoned project thus became the subject of this study.

Although intrigued by the maverick Portuguese rebel ever since childhood, I knew little about the man and his life. This study thus became a means to instruct myself on a matter that had a direct bearing on my personal experience. Some interesting memories of the *Santa Maria* incident remained from my formative years in Portuguese Africa (Mozambique, to be precise). The general (adult) perception of the assault, for example, as the work of a brilliant man whose mind had been tainted by insanity. This was someone driven by the quest for fame at all costs. “*Era louco*” (he was mad) was an expression often heard in reference to Galvão. People spoke of the hijacking as an antipatriotic event directly related to the 1961 uprising in Angola. That connection conjured up shocking photographic images of mutilated bodies strewn in Angolan plantations secretly witnessed in my parents’ library. All this may have subconsciously framed some of the central questions motivating this study: who was Galvão? What did he want? What was the *Santa Maria* all about? Was there a real link between the liner and the violent events in northern Angola? And so on.

It has taken a number of years to research and write this thesis. I am fully accountable for the protracted time frame. There were far too many instances of false starts, exploration of dead ends, writing paralysis and mental confusion to discuss here. Admittedly, Lewis Namier’s dictum that you need to be fifty before aspiring to be a good historian¹ has been a source of hope and consolation. Looking at my exercise book – yellowed with age – serving as a depository for ideas and insights regarding Galvão and the *Santa Maria* over the years, it occurs to me that in spite of its long gestation this

¹ Quoted in A.J.P. Taylor, *A Personal History* (London, 1984), p.331.

project has been most educational. The entries in the little frayed book chart my journey from an over-ambitious would-be writer – ignorant about the realities of writing - to the much more humble author of this study. That alone made it all worthwhile.

Working on a Portuguese topic in South Africa meant almost hermetic seclusion. Galvão, his antics at sea and for that matter Portuguese Africa, have largely exited public memory. But even a solitary pursuit would not be possible without the cooperation and friendship of a number of people. They are, of course, not accountable for any errors in this work; those remain my sole responsibility. I should like to register my gratitude to:

the late Maria del Carmen Solla Fernandes for the unconditional support, crucial assistance with Portuguese sources, the use of her private library and most of all for providing an example of tenacity;

Professor Alex Mouton whose enthusiasm for my work kept me at my desk;

Professor O.J.O. Ferreira for the ever-stimulating commentary;

Douglas L. Wheeler (Professor of History Emeritus, University of New Hampshire, USA) for the personal interest in my case and extreme kindness in providing unique source material as well as shedding light on some of the more intricate parts of my subject;

Jade Peres who, besides enduring my preoccupation with Henrique Galvão for a large part of her young life, provided many insightful opinions as well as valuable help with computer and microfilm aspects;

Irene Peres for the unflagging support, encouragement and all the years of listening to my ramblings on Galvão's crusade;

Professor Joaquim da Silva Cunha for a most elucidating interview;

Margarita Ledo Andfion, director of the *Santa Liberdade* documentary, for prompt assistance to a total stranger;

Eduardo Peres for the telephonic surveillance of the work-in-progress that, I suspect, was motivated by big brotherly love;

Kevin Garcia whose friendship, incisive historical mind and conversation have always been a source of inspiration;

Professor Greg Cuthbertson for the countless hours (and coffees) trying hard to ‘jump-start’ a hopeless student;

Hoover whose silent K9 company provided a shield from total isolation;

I also wish to thank the staffs of the various institutions that helped me during the course of researching this thesis.

In Portugal

at the *Arquivo Salazar*, and in particular Dr Jorge Borges de Macedo for providing the much treasured *cartão de leitor*;

at the archive and library of the *Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) where I was made to feel at home. I thoroughly enjoyed working there.

In South Africa

at Unisa Library ; Johannesburg Public Library and the Strange Library (Jhb).

L.M.S.A. Peres

JOHANNESBURG

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INTRODUCTION

Outside Portugal and Spain, Henrique Galvão and the *Santa Maria* incident are much forgotten now. And even in those two countries public memory has begun to wane. In 2004, for example, two Spanish newspapers referred to the seizure of the Portuguese liner as a “forgotten action”, an “unknown event” today.¹ In a sense this is understandable. It is the natural fate of those who have spent their brief moment of glory upon the world’s stage. Yet there is much reason not to allow the *Santa Maria* and her rebel skipper to vanish into oblivion.

Henrique Galvão was typical of a species once epitomized by the likes of Gabriele D’Annunzio and T.E. Lawrence.² These were men that rejected nihilism and, independent of conventional political organization, dared translate their romantic idealism into physical action. Galvão himself wrote admiringly of this personality type – the one simultaneously capable of thought and action - as the “complete man of Bergson”, an “*avis rara* among the Portuguese”.³ On another occasion he declared that visionaries like himself, not the bourgeois, made all revolutions.⁴ Yet elsewhere Galvão contradicted himself, writing disapprovingly of modern writers (precisely such as D’Annunzio) for embracing politics when they should be confining themselves to matters of the spirit.⁵ Like most idealists in politics, Galvão did not distinguish between personal and political goals, which he refused to compromise. For this he was ostracized (particularly after his testimony at the United Nations in 1963). His unswerving colonialism, his indictment of labour conditions in Portuguese Africa and his anti-communist stance illustrate this point.

¹ *Faro de Vigo*, January 22, 2004, p.44; *Santiago*, January 22, 2004, p.9.

² D’Annunzio (1863-1938) and Lawrence (1888-1936), intellectual idealists, represented a type of individual who, overtaken by the quixotic impulse, entered politics with mostly disastrous consequences. A quest for transcendence underpinned their political interventions, which was motivated by romanticism, nationalism and utopianism. Galvão’s experience places him in their ranks. Jeffrey Meyers, *A Fever at the Core* (London, 1976) provides a good account of the idealist in politics. For a more in depth look at this phenomenon see William Pfaff, *The Bullet’s Song: Romantic Violence and Utopia* (New York, 2004).

³ Henrique Galvão, ‘Um critério de povoamento europeu nas colónias Portuguesas’, *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, no.83, May 1932, p.5. The French philosopher Henri Louis Bergson (1859-1941), enjoyed cult status before 1914.

⁴ Tad Szulc, ‘Galvão promises fight will go on’, *New York Times*, February 5, 1961, p.24.

⁵ *Jogos Florais do Ano X* (Lisbon, 1936), pp.42-44.

Aware that he lived in a time when romanticism had become anachronistic, Galvão fought on indefatigably against the prevailing *Zeitgeist*. “I arrived late for the *Belle Époque*”; he was fond of saying.⁶ It was his way of acknowledging that he had missed the culmination of the western way of life (1890-1914) destroyed by the First World War. But neither inaction nor surrender were traits of his character. He responded to the challenges of the historical moment – the chaotic First Republic (1910-26); the threat of communism; the orientation of Salazar’s colonial policy and the rise of anti-colonialism after 1945 – with what I have called a “euro-African crusade”. Galvão perceived himself as euro-African at heart. And, indeed, his was a European life dominated by African matters. His opposition to Salazar stemmed primarily from issues related to colonial administration. The “crusade” in my title alludes to Galvão’s definition of Operation Dulcinea (codename for the seizure of the *Santa Maria*) as his “crusade for Portugal”.⁷ With commitment and determination he set out on a one-man struggle to - in the words of one book-reviewer - “restore a touch of romanticism and idealism to the twentieth-century”.⁸

Operation Dulcinea constitutes the climax of Galvão’s dissidence initiated in the 1940s. It is what the psychologist Erik Erikson called “The Event”, a “synthesis, culmination and turning point of a lifetime’s experience”.⁹ Operation Dulcinea was the zenith of Galvão’s campaign against the Salazar regime. For thirteen days he commanded the attention of the world, negotiating with emissaries from the United States and Brazil. He was a latter day Captain Misson, a nautical Quixote at the helm of the hijacked *Santa Maria*, on a journey as utopian as the former’s Libertalia¹⁰ or the latter’s travels in 17th century Spain. None of this, however, detracted from the significance of the act.

⁶ Rocha, ‘Os quixotes do mar’, p.26.

⁷ Galvão’s account of Operation Dulcinea is subtitled ‘my crusade for Portugal’. See *The Santa Maria: My crusade for Portugal* (London, 1961).

⁸ Tad Szulc, ‘Revolution on board’, *New York Times Book Review*, October 29, 1961, p.40.

⁹ Quoted in Meyers, *A Fever at the Core*, p.10.

¹⁰ An eighteenth-century French egalitarian filibuster who favoured democracy, Misson founded an utopian colony in northern Madagascar known as Libertalia; it had its own language and was run by a rudimentary parliament. It is not clear, however, whether Misson and Libertalia did in fact exist or were no more than a figment of Daniel Defoe’s literary imagination. All the same; a good parallel with Galvão’s floating piece of “liberated Iberia”. For Misson’s incredible story see Kevin Rushby, *Hunting Pirate Heaven: In Search of the Lost Pirate Utopias of the Indian Ocean* (London, 2002).

A particularly remarkable aspect of Operation Dulcinea was its successful use of nineteenth-century logic in the 1960s. Paradoxically, the seizure of the liner set the stage for the politically motivated terrorist hijacking in the present age. In a sense the *Santa Maria* paved the way for the skyjackings of the 1970s and 80s; the attacks on ships like the *Anzoategui* and the *Achille Lauro*¹¹; and numerous other instances of international terrorism. It established a dangerous diplomatic precedent as evidenced, for example, in the ambiguous attitude of the United States, Brazil and Britain. Their failure to condemn Galvão's actions at sea was one of the first expressions of moral relativism (and indeed of the politicization of all legal matters so thoroughly accomplished in the 1960s) as a predominant trend in the contemporary West. A Swiss editorial correctly stated that the issue was not whether the Salazar regime was "deserving of sympathy and assistance" but rather that "maritime discipline" had been breached.¹² This simple point seems to have been lost in the political game surrounding the seizure of the *Santa Maria*. Thus it could be argued that, by treating the hijacking as a political act, the western governments concerned opened the floodgates for subsequent similar attacks. In the future it would be difficult to interpret analogous situations in strict clear-cut terms. If the posts could be shifted for Galvão, why should the same not be done for others? The onus was now in defending any refusal to adjust the moral parameters.

Although the true motives for Operation Dulcinea are uncertain (and are likely to remain so), it is clear that it has considerable historical relevance. Apart from focusing international attention on the Salazar regime, the operation was a rare synthesis of abstract (romantic idealism) and concrete (physical action). Galvão may well have been, as pointed out by one journalist, "the last great romantic of our times".¹³ One could add a touch of nihilism to his romanticism considering that Dulcinea also helped destroy Portugal's colonial image, which Galvão had done so much to

¹¹ In February 1963 a Venezuelan terrorist organisation – Armed Forces of National Liberation - hijacked the cargo ship *Anzoategui* in an attempt to replicate operation Dulcinea. This act of "plagiarism" infuriated Galvão. See his *Da Minha Luta Contra o Salazarismo e o Comunismo em Portugal* (Lisbon, 1976), pp.39-40. The Italian cruise ship *Achille Lauro* made world news in 1985 when it was seized by Palestinian hijackers off the coast of Egypt. One hostage was killed in the attack. On a lighter note the *Star* newspaper reports that a group of suburban Parisians, fired by the example of the *Santa Maria* seized a bus, forcing the driver to take them to the city. The "rebels" complained that there were not enough buses on their route. See 'Rebel passengers take over bus', *The Star*, 2 February 1961, p.2.

¹² Quoted in B.Day, *Passage Perilous* (New York, 1962), p.141.

¹³ Tad Szulc, 'Revolution was on board', *New York Times Book Review*, October 29, 1961, p.40.

construct in his capacity as the New State's main Africanist. Ultimately Henrique Galvão's historical significance resides not so much in what he achieved (or destroyed) but in what he was and what he represented: the politically committed independent idealist.

II

In 1962, the author Warren Rogers suggested that somebody ought to write a "scholarly book" about Henrique Galvão and the *Santa Maria*.¹⁴ It has taken more than four decades for a writer to heed Rogers' appeal. In 2005, Eugénio Montoito, a Portuguese scholar, published *Henrique Galvão: ou a dissidência de um cadete do 28 de Maio 1927-1952*, a work based on his 1996 MA dissertation. It is the first and, thus far, only full-length book on Galvão. Montoito's detailed covering of his subject is, however, confined to the two dates in the subtitle. The book is particularly good in its explanation of Galvão's adherence to the New State in the thirties and his subsequent fate at the hands of a regime determined to eliminate him. Montoito makes effective use of his subject's fictional writings to clarify many aspects of a hitherto obscure political life. Although the text tilts in favour of Galvão (bordering on hagiography at places), it is a valuable work in that it reveals the depth and humanity of the man not fathomed before.

This study draws principally on Galvão's writings. A number of his books, reports, monographs and articles provided much of the primary information regarding his biography, political views and opposition activities. His account of the seizure of the *Santa Maria*¹⁵ deserves particular mention. This is an unusual work, a mixture of autobiography, maritime logbook and political ideology. Apart from telling the story of the assault on the *Santa Maria*, Galvão, with his usual flair for the turn of phrase, elaborates on his relation to Salazar's New State and on his views concerning social, economic and political conditions in Portugal and her overseas territories. This book proved particularly valuable regarding the early part of Galvão's life as well as the preparations and execution of Operation Dulcinea (code name for the hijacking of the liner).

¹⁴ W. Rogers, *The Floating Revolution* (New York, 1962), p.v.

¹⁵ *Santa Maria: My Crusade for Portugal* (London, 1961).

Two problematic elements are common to Galvão's writings after 1947. The first is a discernible tendency to stress certain aspects that enhance him as a liberal democrat oppositionist whilst shunning others less conducive to that image. His colonial outlook and his anti-communism are the exception. At no point does Galvão conceal his views on the future of Portuguese Africa or his animosity towards Marxism. Secondly, a preoccupation with premier Oliveira Salazar compromises the validity of many of his arguments. An obsessive anti-Salazarist stance translates into reductionism. Galvão repeatedly blames the Portuguese leader for just about every single problem affecting Portugal and her colonies. Nowhere is this more evident than in his 1959 vitriolic *Carta Aberta ao Dr Salazar* – a personal attack on the prime minister lasting the whole of 85 pages. Paradoxically, Galvão had accurately forecasted this attitude in a 1946 article. Writing for an Oporto newspaper, he had criticised the opposition for its failure to recognise the “slightest virtue” in the adversary regime. The opposition “condemns the good, the excellent, the bad and the worst”, Galvão wrote, “but purely because it is coming from the other side”.¹⁶ Keeping these shortcomings in mind, wherever possible I tested Galvão's evidence against other sources so as to minimize the possibility of untruth.

Various archival sources were used in this study. These consisted mainly of military and security police (PIDE) reports concerning the seizure of the *Santa Maria*; the *Directório Revolucionário Ibérico de Libertação* (DRIL); the hijacking of a TAP (Portuguese airlines) flight in 1961 and various other aspects of Galvão's subversive activities. Salazar's archive also contains numerous letters from civic associations and individual members of the public expressing their support for the premier during the *Santa Maria* affair. Although not quotable, these helped me grasp the (mostly patriotic) atmosphere of the time and how the general public actually understood the seizure. Among the scores of letters received by Salazar was one from a Portuguese businessman established in Brazil, which serves in the way of a representative sample. Referring to the seizure of the *Santa Maria* the writer comments: “What was the aim of that farce...his [Galvão's] uniform and that of his associates in crime looked fitting for circus artists!”¹⁷

¹⁶ Henrique Galvão, 'Oposição', *Jornal de Notícias*, March 1946.

¹⁷ AOS/CO/PC-63, p.19. (letter from Armando Rodrigues Pereira).

Apart from Galvão's own account, the *Santa Maria* spawned three books in English. These were all published at the time of the incident, presumably with the aim of capitalizing on the public interest generated by the case. Of the three, W. Rogers *The Floating Revolution* (New York, 1962) is the closest to an academic work. Although its contents and style tilt towards the popular reader, it is a well-researched and accurate text. It complements Galvão's *Santa Maria*, particularly on the subject of American involvement in the case. Published in 1962, Beth Day's *Passage Perilous* is good on the Portuguese side of the story. It explores the CCN (the ship owners) and Portuguese Government angles, taking a decided critical view of the hijackers. Henry Zeiger's version of the events in the Caribbean, *The Seizure of the Santa Maria*, is overtly sensationalist and not entirely dependable. Published within weeks of the attack on the liner, in March 1961, Zeiger's book is, nevertheless, useful in that it reflects the excitement of the incident at the time of its occurrence.

When dealing with the actual hijacking of the *Santa Maria* my thesis depends largely on Galvão's account as a crucial primary source. His book *The Santa Maria* tells the story of the seizure in logbook format, providing a detailed ringside view of the events aboard the liner. It is a remarkable document as much for what it reveals as for what it covers up or simply leaves out. Its flaws tell us much about its author's character, motivation and aims. One writer complained that Galvão's account did not always "jibe with the memory of others" nor did it completely tally with "what he said and wrote" at the time of the seizure.¹⁸ There is, for example, Galvão's tendency to pepper his text with romantic elements (the most extreme example being his reference to an amorous couple on the deck of the ship under the night sky, oblivious of the world in Galvão's floating democracy!)¹⁹. A constant affirmation of the hijackers' rectitude of purpose, bordering on propaganda, recurs throughout the book. Nevertheless, Galvão's account is indispensable to my thesis. This does not mean that his testimony was taken at face value. As mentioned above, whenever feasible his evidence was run against other sources.

¹⁸ Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.vi.

¹⁹ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.133.

The context of the *Santa Maria* case is broadened by the use of archival material pertaining to Lisbon's own view and response, as well as newspaper and magazine coverage. For instance, the 13-page journal of Edna Chubb, an American passenger on the hijacked liner, provided an interesting perspective from someone with no knowledge of the political implications of the seizure. Chubb's diary conveys what must have been very much the general experience of non-Portuguese passengers on the *Santa Maria*.²⁰ Moreover, works such as Dominique Lapierre's *A Thousand Suns*, published in 1999, supplied additional first hand information (Lapierre covered the hijacking for the French weekly *Paris Match*). All these sources both served to enhance my understanding of operation Dulcinea and to assist in the detection of possible inconsistencies in Galvão's version of the events.

"*Santa Liberdade*", a documentary film produced in 2004, deserves special mention.²¹ Directed by Margarita Ledo Andión, a Spanish academic specializing in audio-visual communication, it aims at redressing the balance between the Portuguese and Spanish (mainly Galician) contributions to the seizure of the liner.²² Public focus on Galvão and his political manifesto has led to a neglect of the Spanish participants. In addition, Ledo stresses the human facet of operation Dulcinea, drawing attention to the fact that the assailants came from widely diverse backgrounds and differed in political orientation. They were united not so much by politics than by a universal goal: freedom. Here, Ledo seems to borrow a leaf from Galvão's own romanticism. Elsewhere she points out that Dulcinea was done on low budget and with lots of imagination.²³ This is undoubtedly true, but as Jeffrey Meyers explains, political power is achieved by organization, not imagination.²⁴ In fairness, *Santa Liberdade* makes a valid point in its premise that this was a human story from a time when we could still dream and act politically as individuals. Ledo's documentary furnished an

²⁰ A copy of Edna Chubb's unpublished diary was kindly provided by Professor D.L.Wheeler.

²¹ There had been talk of translating the *Santa Maria* incident into film since 1961 when a German company revealed its intention to shoot "Pirates on the *Santa Maria*". Nothing came of this project. Ledo's documentary marks operation Dulcinea's first appearance on film. See 'Film producer acts swiftly', *The Star*, February 3, 1961, p.1.

²² Incidentally, a Portuguese newspaper reports that Ledo Andión was not able to obtain any cooperation from Portugal's radio and television broadcaster (RTP). The only way the director could gain access to RTP's archival material was by purchasing it. This inexplicable attitude makes one ponder what it tells us about current perceptions of Galvão and the *Santa Maria*. See 'RTP não se mostrou interessada em apoiar o projecto', *Jornal de Notícias*, February 8, 2004, p.39.

²³ *Galicia Hoxe*, January 21, 2004, p.49.

²⁴ Meyers, *A Fever at the Core*, p.10.

invaluable visual dimension to my work. Its interviews with three surviving hijackers and with Galvão's niece proved most illuminating. If putting a human face to the *Santa Maria* affair was Ledo's intention, the documentary certainly succeeded.

Apart from the sources already cited, a number of other works were consulted. Some merit special mention. This writer is much indebted to two very perceptive and lucid essays by D.L. Wheeler²⁵, which not only clarified but also deepened my understanding of Henrique Galvão and his intervention in the question of forced labour. Professor Wheeler's discussion of the 1947 Galvão Report is of great originality, presenting this important document in a whole new perspective. *Kennedy e Salazar: O Leão e a Raposa* (Lisbon, 1992), an in-depth study of Portuguese-American relations by Freire Antunes, is another work from which this thesis benefited immensely. Antunes's excellent book throws much light on Portuguese politics and historical events during the early 1960s. An entire section is devoted to the seizure of the *Santa Maria*, neatly placing it within the context of the time. Franco Nogueira's mammoth *Salazar*, published 1977-85, as well as his autobiographical and political writings²⁶ provided vital information on the New State, its creator and the problems confronting Portugal in Africa. Equally useful was Marcello Caetano's reminiscences of Salazar.²⁷ Besides the revealing references to Henrique Galvão, his subordinate at the colonial ministry (1945-47), Caetano's memoir also contains valuable information on the internal mechanism of Salazar's regime.

Numerous other works assisted in the construction of the current thesis. The political autobiography of Mário Soares,²⁸ for instance, supplied significant material on Galvão's character as well as on Humberto Delgado, contender to the 1958 presidential elections. Personally acquainted with Galvão and a legal representative of the Delgado family, Soares' account has primary importance. D.L. Raby, a British scholar, devotes a section of her *Fascism and Resistance in Portugal*, published in 1988, to Galvão. Raby's portrait of the Portuguese dissident is generally solid but slightly affected by a discernible Marxist bias.

²⁵ 'The Galvão Report on forced labor (1947); 'The forced labor 'system' in Angola, 1903-1947'

²⁶ See for example *Um Político Confessa-se: Diário 1960-68* (Porto, 1987) and *The United Nations and Portugal: A Study in Anti-colonialism* (London, 1963).

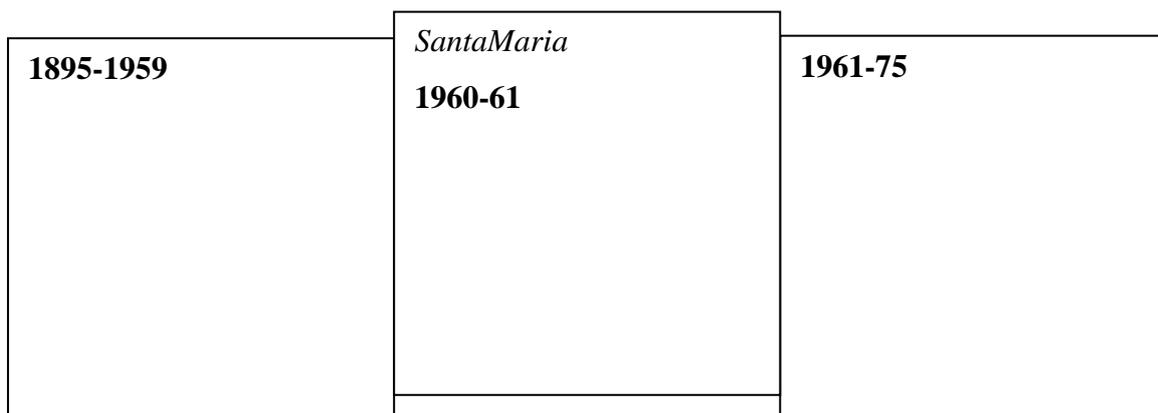
²⁷ *Minhas Memórias de Salazar* (Lisbon, 1977)

²⁸ *Portugal Amordaçado* (Lisbon, 1974).

The first chapter of the current study, dealing with the historical backdrop (1910-33), relies on general histories such as those of Stanley Payne, R.A.H. Robinson and Oliveira Marques.²⁹ On the period 1910-26, the work of the American historian Douglas Wheeler remains unsurpassed. Published in 1978, Wheeler's seminal *Republican Portugal: A Political History* has all the characteristics of a classic text. It is essential reading for an understanding of Portugal's First Republic. Another historiographical landmark, in this context, is Tom Gallagher's *Portugal: A Twentieth-century Interpretation*, published in 1983, a good overall interpretation of Portuguese history from 1900 to the 1980s.

III

My thesis is constructed in the form of an analogical triptych (see figure). It has the seizure of the *Santa Maria* as its central panel. The Portuguese historical background (1910-33), Galvão's early life and initial dissidence (1895-1959) constitute the topic of the smaller lateral left panel. The last component of my structure (1961-75), the right side panel, focuses on the impact and ramifications of the *Santa Maria* incident within the context of the nationalist uprising in Angola, Portuguese opposition politics and diplomatic relations between Portugal and the United States. Its central events, however, are the 1961 hijacking of a Portuguese commercial flight and, most importantly, Galvão's visit to the United Nations in 1963.



²⁹ S. Payne, *A History of Spain and Portugal* (Madison, 1973); R.A.H. Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal: A History* (London, 1979); A. Oliveira Marques, *History of Portugal* (New York, 1976).

The architectural design of this study therefore reflects the three main aspects of Henrique Galvão's 'crusade': his 1947 report on conditions in Portuguese Africa, the seizure of the *Santa Maria* in 1961 and his appearance before the United Nations in 1963.

The present dissertation sets out to explore the case of the *Santa Maria* as the single most important event of Henrique Galvão's political life. Although acknowledging the important role played by Spanish elements, my thesis views the seizure of the liner as being, above all, the expression of Galvão's personal determination in his fight against Salazar.

It is not part of our purpose here to produce a biography of Henrique Galvão, only an account of some aspects of his political activities. His writings and actions provided enough material to assemble the biographical sketch required to an understanding of his politics.

The core of the thesis tells the story of the seizure of the *Santa Maria*. Here the text tries to recreate the atmosphere of the event in journalistic style.³⁰ This part of the work is straightforward reportage. There is nothing necessarily new in terms of historical evidence; the emphasis is on re-animating Galvão's sea epic.

The present work aims to show that the *Santa Maria* incident was part of the broader process of Galvão's anti-Salazarism. To this end my thesis explores the genealogy of Galvão's dissidence (1945-50), his political behaviour while in prison (1952-59) and his final activism in the early 1960s. These aspects are discussed at some length with a view to widen the perception of Galvão and to show that the hijacking of the *Santa Maria* was more than an "oddball political demonstration".³¹ It was rather the ultimate expression of her rebel captain's original –albeit eccentric– personality.

³⁰ In the process of writing this thesis I came to grasp Jacques Barzun's dictum: "Simple English is no one's mother tongue. It has to be worked for." J. Barzun, *We Who Teach* (London, 1946), p.41.

³¹ *Life*, 3 February 1961, p.32.

Much of the historiography projects a simplistic image of Galvão. A recent example: “a former colonial administrator of uncertain politics”.³² To which most of the literature would gladly add: anti-fascist, liberal crusader, pirate, pioneer political hijacker, opportunist, madman, outdated colonialist or dissident fascist. Not that some of these terms are inapplicable but rather that Galvão’s complex personality cannot be so easily pinned down. Neither hagiographers nor critics seem to grasp this fact, often mistaking a facet of the man’s polyhedral character for the whole. Or, in some instances, misinterpreting him altogether as a “scoundrel” or “scalawag” as is the case in one publication.³³ My thesis makes an attempt to deconstruct this caricature of Galvão by presenting him in a wider context.

It was my initial intention to explore certain themes that were eventually abandoned due to unfeasibility. These included a discussion of Galvão’s literary work, a reappraisal of his colonial views and an assessment of African attitudes towards him. It was also my aim to discuss Henrique Galvão on comparative terms with other idealists in politics. His involvement in colonial exhibitions – a most interesting facet of imperialism - was yet another aspect that I would have liked to elaborate on. The absence of these elements limited the range of my profile of Galvão but did not detract from the main thrust of my study.

IV

Accessibility of sources was a recurring problem throughout the researching of this thesis. Some of the works that would have enhanced the present study proved unobtainable. Since, due to financial restrictions, a second trip to Portugal was ruled out (my first one had been used to consult archival material), I had to rely on local libraries as my only ‘sources for sources’.

³² N. MacQueen, *The Decolonisation of Portuguese Africa* (London, 1997), p.26.

³³ Reader’s Digest, *Scoundrels & Scalawags: 51 Stories of the Most Fascinating Characters of Hoax and Fraud* (London, 1970).

On the subject of Portuguese history, South African libraries (public and academic) tend to stock only older publications and even those contain considerable loopholes. Most of Henrique Galvão's titles, for example, are absent from the catalogues. The problem showed to be particularly acute regarding newer additions to the historiography.³⁴ The unavailability of a few specific sources must be noted. This was the case, for example, of the writings of Jorge Sottomayor and Velo Mosquera, key players in the seizure of the *Santa Maria*. This inability to access relevant material necessarily limited the scope of this thesis.

The Internet route was pursued. Several works on the *Santa Maria*, for example, were purchased online. Unfortunately many of the Portuguese publications are simply not available. There are various reasons for this. For instance, Portuguese books are generally published in small runs with the result that they reach the out-of-print stage within a short period; book owners in Portugal tend to hang on to their bibliophilic possessions for longer than their Anglo-Saxon counterparts; and so on. But the greatest obstacle encountered, when searching for sources on the Internet, was a limited personal budget.

Archival material on Galvão and the *Santa Maria* also proved difficult to track. Having done research in the Salazar archive, I was left with the impression that substantial documentation was missing, either because it has not been made available or simply never existed. The gaps are particularly noticeable where Salazar's personal views on Galvão are concerned. This may, of course, be a consequence of the Portuguese statesman's reluctance to commit sensitive information to paper.³⁵

While on the subject of source availability, I would like to mention here the kindness, immediacy and enthusiasm with which Professor Douglas Wheeler offered crucial assistance, not hesitating to share notes and other vital sources on Henrique Galvão.

³⁴ South African libraries seem to have lost either the funds for, or interest on, Portuguese history sometime in the 1970s. This is a curious in lieu of the importance of South Africa's lusophone neighbours. Angola and Mozambique have histories well worth exploring from a South African point of view.

³⁵ An understanding between Salazar and Jorge Jardim, for example, kept their dealings from being committed to paper. Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.141.

Equally prompt in her response to my e-mail inquiries regarding access to her work, was Ledo Andión, director of the “*Santa Liberdade*” documentary. Within days of my electronic “SOS”, I had received a copy of the documentary plus relevant newspaper clippings.

Professor Joaquim da Silva Cunha, former minister of colonies (1965-68) and defense (1973-74), displayed much the same spirit as Wheeler and Andión; kindly consenting to an interview that greatly amplified my grasp of Portuguese colonial policy in its last phase (1960-74). It also provided a good internal view of how Salazar’s government perceived President J.F. Kennedy and his African policy.

A NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS

As a rule the present study relies on existing English translations of Portuguese texts. Where this was not possible, my own translations were provided. Besides the contents I have also tried to transfer the full intention of the text by way of paraphrasing. Hilaire Belloc’s principle was followed: “What would an Englishman have said to express this?”³⁶

³⁶ Quoted in Jacques Barzun & Henry F Graff, *The Modern Researcher* (Boston, 1992), p.287.

Chapter 1

The historical context: Portugal 1910-33

To grasp Henrique Galvão's insurgency in the 1950s and 60s, it is important to have a basic understanding of Portuguese history between 1910 (First Republic) and 1933 (New State). The present chapter, therefore, aims at providing a brief account of the main historical themes spanning the period in question, particularly those linked to Galvão's personal experience. Hopefully, this will provide the reader with enough background to fully appreciate the seizure of the *Santa Maria* and other acts of dissidence by Galvão discussed in later chapters.

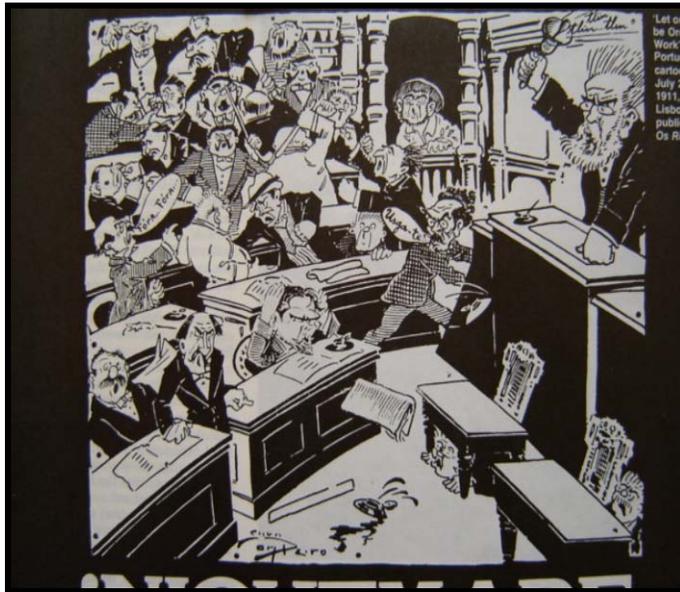
a) Portugal's First Republic, 1910-26

A triumphant revolution brought republicanism to power on 5 October 1910, making Portugal, after France and Switzerland, only the third republic in Western Europe. This was the climax of a republicanisation process initiated in the nineteenth-century and greatly accelerated by the assassination of King Carlos I (1863-1908) and his heir, Luis Filipe (1887-1908), in 1908.¹ The regicide placed the dead king's youngest son, the eighteen-year-old Manuel II (1889 -1932), on the throne.

For nearly three years Manuel strove to maintain the monarchy alive against deteriorating national conditions and an ever-growing republican movement. By 1910 when the revolution hit the streets, support for the monarchist government had reached its nadir. The regime - once described by King Carlos as a "monarchy without monarchists"² - faced inevitable collapse. Its hollowness could no longer be sustained. Republican

¹ For a scholarly account of Portuguese republicanism and reasons for monarchical collapse, see Douglas Wheeler, *Republican Portugal: A Political History 1910-1926* (Madison, 1978), pp. 21-47.

revolutionaries encountered little resistance, on what was to be an almost bloodless seizure of power. The 800 year-old monarchy was overthrown, the Bragança dynasty (1640-1910) expelled and the First Republic established.³



Business as usual: Portuguese Parliament in 1911 *Os Rídiculos*, 29 July 1911

For the sixteen years it lasted the Republic was a chaotic experiment. Instability was the keyword. It stemmed, primarily, from the regime's vague ideology and lack of a concrete program of action. A tendency towards radicalism and the inability to achieve unity among numerous political parties and factions resulted in violence, disorder and corruption. Consequently, Portugal lived in permanent anxiety.

Political uncertainty was directly rooted on the liberal-democrat Constitution of 1911, stressing the legislative branch of government over the executive. This imbalance in the

² Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, p.276. The King's depiction of a monarchy devoid of monarchists would be tragically confirmed by the widespread public indifference to his own murder. See J.D.Vincent-Smith, 'The Portuguese Republic and Britain, 1910-14', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 1975, p.709.

³ Douglas Wheeler, 'The Portuguese Revolution of 1910', *Journal of Modern History*, no.44, 1972, p.172.

political mechanism was a recipe for “short-lived government and long-term instability.”⁴ The excessive weight given to parliament – responsible for the election of the president of the republic and appointment of the prime minister and cabinet – enabled it to interfere with every aspect of the governmental process. Ministers were under constant pressure to justify their every move. Governments were, almost entirely, dependant on parliamentary coalitions for their maintenance in power.⁵ Personalism and factionalism thrived in this political set-up. Governments fell, one after the other, often on account of mere whimsical actions or petty disputes among parliament members.⁶ At the end of its sixteen-year lifespan, the Republic’s electoral record was a clear indication of its inherent volatility: forty-five governments, eight presidential elections and seven parliaments of which four were dismissed by military intervention. By 1926 more than five hundred persons had held ministerial posts; one president had been assassinated in office and four others forcibly removed by military action.⁷

Political confusion translated into an ailing economy. Corruption and general fiscal mismanagement led to spiraling deficits and severe inflation. Between 1911 and 1924 Portuguese currency inflated 2800 percent⁸, while the *escudo* dropped to an all-time low of 5c to the American dollar.⁹ The national debt, exacerbated by Portugal’s intervention in the First World War, nearly tripled during 1910-20.¹⁰ Lisbon’s debt to Britain, alone, reached £28,000,00 in 1927.¹¹

Portugal’s economic difficulties were compounded by widespread labour unrest. Workers sought better wages by exercising their newly acquired right to strike. In the first year of its existence, the Republic experienced at least 141 strikes.¹² This presented a

⁴ T.Gallagher, *Portugal: A Twentieth-century Interpretation* (Manchester, 1983), p.22.

⁵ A.H. de Oliveira Marques, *History of Portugal: From Empire to Corporate State* (New York, 1976), p.159; 162-63.

⁶ Gallagher, *Portugal*, p.24.

⁷ Marques, *History of Portugal*, p.162; Douglas Wheeler, ‘Nightmare Republic: Portugal 1910-1926’, *History Today*, September 1981, p.6.

⁸ Stanley Payne, *A History of Spain and Portugal vol.2* (Madison, 1973), pp.571;576.

⁹ Charles E. Nowell, *Portugal* (New Jersey, 1973), p.140.

¹⁰ Payne, *Spain and Portugal*, p.576.

¹¹ Wheeler, ‘Nightmare Republic’, p.6

¹² *Ibid.*, p.7.

serious problem considering that organised labour was mainly controlled by anarcho-syndicalists in whose view the republican regime was merely another expression of the “bourgeois state,” their archenemy. Strikes were used, therefore, as a political weapon against the Republic.¹³

Failure to industrialise the country precluded the economic growth levels required to nurture a democracy. Portugal’s economy remained essentially agrarian and archaic. The republican system could not afford to break away from conservative economics lest it would alienate its mainstay support from the middle classes. As a consequence, Republican governments were unable to meet neither the material demands of organised labour nor those of the recently politicised urban citizenry.¹⁴



Afonso Costa

Hutchinson’s History of the Nations, vol. 3 (London, n.d.)



Anticlericalism: nuns protected by republican troops

Hutchinson’s History of the Nations, vol. 3 (London, n.d.)

¹³ Payne, *Spain and Portugal*, p.562.

¹⁴ Gallagher, *Portugal*, p.28.

The economic conservatism of the Republic was offset by a radical policy toward the Catholic Church. Anticlericalism had featured prominently in the Republican movement as a response to Catholic revival in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Following the anticlerical onslaught of the marquês de Pombal (1699-1782), the Church had gone into decline.¹⁵ But in the 1850s that trend was reversed. As the Catholic revival gained momentum, the fires of anticlericalism were rekindled. By 1910 the religious question had become the most important political issue. In power the republicans quickly set about the implementation of their anticlerical program. Afonso Costa (1871-1937), minister of justice and aspirant new Pombal, blamed the Roman Church for Portugal's backwardness and deemed it incompatible with liberal democracy. The Church was the very "enemy of civilisation".¹⁶ In 1910-11 a barrage of anticlerical legislation expelled the Jesuits; abolished all other Orders and confiscated their property; prohibited the wearing of religious clothing in public; terminated Catholic education in schools; reduced the number of seminaries from 13 to 5; and so on. There was, however, a carrot in the bargain: priests who apostatised were given preference in state employment.¹⁷

Carried out with fanatical dedication, the anticlerical program soon turned into little more than a euphemism for religious persecution that included physical violence against members of the clergy. In a predominantly Catholic society, as the Portuguese was, such an assault inevitably alienated large numbers of the population. With papal support (*lex injusta, nulla lex*), Catholics opposed the Law. Resistance to anticlericalism was mainly non-violent and more pronounced in the north of the country, particularly among women. Religious grievances were mobilised in organisations such as the *Centro Católico Português* (Portuguese Catholic Centre) (CCP), founded in 1915, and the older *Centro Académico da Democracia Cristã* (Academic Centre for Christian Democracy) (CADC),

¹⁵ Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, the marquis of Pombal, is a controversial figure. A modernist but also a vindictive anticlerical tyrant, Pombal virtually ruled Portugal as prime minister to King José I (1714 -1777). For an account of his career see Anthony Rhodes, 'The Marquis of Pombal: A Dictator of Portugal', *Encounter*, July 1976, pp.18-24.

¹⁶ R.A.H. Robinson, 'The religious question and the Catholic church in Portugal, 1900-30', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol.12, no.2, 1977, pp.347; 351; Vincent-Smith, 'The Portuguese Republic' p.712.

¹⁷ Robinson, 'The religious question', pp. 351-52; Payne, *Spain and Portugal*, pp.559-60.

established in 1901.¹⁸ Both were to play a significant role in the formation of the Salazar regime.

The campaign against Catholicism proved a pyrrhic victory. Afonso Costa and his supporters had clearly underestimated the strength of the Catholic creed in Portuguese society. They had succeeded only in temporarily weakening the Church at the cost of antagonising a huge portion of the rural population and urban middle class. The anticlerical legislation of 1910-11 would be one of the main causes for the Republic's failure.

Portugal's participation in the First World War was to bring further instability. Relations between the military and the civilian regime were strained as an ill-prepared army was sent into battle. Lacking in training and equipment, Portuguese troops were not ready for the harsh conditions in the western front. Of the 200,000 men mobilised, 2, 288 would die of battle wounds and many others severely injured in 32 months of war.¹⁹ These were significant figures in a population of less than six million.²⁰



Sidónio Pais, the president-king.

S.G. Payne, *A History of Spain and Portugal* (Madison, 1973)

¹⁸ Robinson, 'The religious question', pp.353; 356; 360.

¹⁹ *Dicionário Ilustrado da História de Portugal* (Lisbon, 1986), p.347; Gallagher, *Portugal*, p.25; Payne, *Spain and Portugal*, p.567.

²⁰ According to the 1920 census Portugal had 5 621 977 inhabitants. Joel Serrão, *Cronologia Geral da História de Portugal* (Lisbon, 1986), p.217.

On 5 December 1917 a conservative civil-military insurgency, headed by Major Sidónio Pais (1872-1918), went into the streets. For three days the 1500 rebels engaged forces loyal to the government in what was hitherto the bloodiest military uprising. The Pais' revolution incurred a minimum of 350 dead and 1000 wounded.²¹ On 8 December the government was ousted.

Influenced by the American presidential system of executive power, Pais sought to redress the imbalance between the legislative and executive branches of government. This would clear the way for national stability, his ultimate goal. He proposed to achieve his aim through a mixture of presidentialism and semi-authoritarianism. In April 1918, Pais was elected president of the New Republic, Europe's first modern republican dictatorship.²²

Support for sidonism came mainly, but not only, from university students and junior officers, the "cadets of Sidónio," too young to remember the failings of monarchical rule and impatient to resolve the Republic's stalemate. Pais, a charismatic former professor of mathematics at the University of Coimbra and envoy to Germany (1912-16), had enormous appeal with the youth element and large sections of the broader population (e.g. women).

The sidonist regime was unable to accomplish much. Lacking a clear and fully articulated program, it could not break the national impasse. Moreover, the conservatives' failure to unite and rally around the president pushed him increasingly towards the extreme Right. Pais' rightist leanings cost him the support of moderate republicans, already concerned that the president might install a semi-monarchical administration.²³ Fears of crypto Bonapartism, however, were short-lived. On the night of 14 December 1918, two bullets fired by twenty-four-year-old ex-serviceman, José Júlio da Costa, killed Sidónio Pais, as he was about to board a train at Lisbon's Rossio station. The lone

²¹ Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, p.137.

²² T.Gallagher, 'From Hegemony to Opposition: The Ultra Right before and after 1974' in L.S.Graham & D.L.Wheeler (eds), *In Search of Modern Portugal: the Revolution and Its Consequences* (Madison, 1983), p.83.

²³ Marques, *History of Portugal*, p.169; Gallagher, *Portugal*, p.26.

assassin, an admirer of Afonso Costa, claimed that the murder of Pais was meant to put an end to “absolutism” and to restore “freedom”.²⁴

Fernando Pessoa (1888-1935), Portugal’s foremost modern poet and one of the finest exponents of western literature, described Sidónio Pais as the *presidente-rei* (president-king), the absolute leader in his conception of an ideal “aristocratic republic”.²⁵ In December 1918 the regime could not survive the loss of this central figure. Bereft of ideology and organisational basis; the sidonists were unable to prevent the return of the parliamentary factions. Portugal relapsed into political internecine. At the president’s funeral, the crowds mourned more than a dead leader; they grieved for a shattered dream of national unity, peace and stability.²⁶

Despite its failings, sidonism survived the New Republic’s demise and left an indelible memory; one that is best interpreted within the framework of sebastianism. This refers to a cult among the Portuguese, which centered on the mythological return of King Sebastian (1554-78), killed in battle in Morocco and whose death led to the occupation of Portugal by Spain (1580-1640). Sebastianism is essentially a messianic belief in the coming of a hero who shall resolve any major problems affecting Portugal. Sidónio Pais was largely interpreted as a sebastianist figure.²⁷

The Pais presidency is significant not for what it accomplished but for what it stood for. Its ideas and plans were to remain a powerful inspiration for the Right, a harbinger of Salazar’s regime. Much of the early support for the New State would derive precisely

²⁴ Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, p.153.

²⁵ For a stimulating description of the pessoan *Republica Aristocrática*, see Gilbert R. Cavaco, ‘Pessoa and Portuguese Politics’, in George Monteiro (ed), *The Man Who Never Was: Essays on Fernando Pessoa* (Providence, 1982), pp.69-70. Also see H. Bloom, *The Western Cannon* (London, 1995) for an appraisal of Pessoa as a world literary figure.

²⁶ Franco Nogueira, *Salazar: A Mocidade e os Princípios* (Coimbra, 1977), p.186. Significantly, as a twelve-year-old, General Humberto Delgado, Galvão’s associate during the *Santa Maria* incident, was part of a group of children guarding over the slain President’s coffin. See H.Delgado, *Memoirs* (London, 1964), p.22.

²⁷ For a discussion of metaphysical sebastianism see F. Pessoa, *Portugal, Sebastianismo e Quinto Império* (Lisbon, 1986), pp.150-55.

from young sidonists who saw in Salazar the return of the hero-saviour once incarnated by Sidónio Pais.

After the Pais interval the Republic plummeted. Stability continued to elude the country as governments succeeded one another at lightning speed. There were four cabinets in 1919, nine in 1920.²⁸ Political violence - which by 1920 included twenty-nine assassinations²⁹ - reached new heights in October 1921 when five prominent politicians, including António Granjo (born in 1881), the prime minister, were murdered.

New challenges, brought on by the postwar period, aggravated the Republic's difficulties. Higher inflation and further currency devaluation now threatened to erode living standards completely. Concern for survival, made certain sections of the public susceptible to communism and fascism. The examples of Mussolini's Italy (1922), Primo de Rivera's Spain (1923-30) and the Soviet Union (1917) exerted a strong influence on the growing opposition to the Republic, particularly on the military.

Disillusioned by the Republic's failure to provide national order and safeguard living standards, large numbers of previous supporters now turned away from the parliamentary system. After 1920 elections were affected by massive abstentionism³⁰ symptomatic of widespread political fatigue in the electorate. People longed, in vain, for a government capable and willing to restore order and tranquility.³¹ Disappointed, the public now sought a solution outside the republican structure.

In general, the middle classes leaned towards a rightist solution; a return to the safety of traditional values. Anti-parliamentary groups such as the neo-royalist Lusitanian Integralists seemed to have the correct answers for the national problem. Integralism, a political trend, had first appeared in 1914 and soon caught fire among army officers and elite university youth. It was strongly influenced by the French theorist Charles Maurras

²⁸ Gallagher, *Portugal*, p.28.

²⁹ Wheeler, 'Nightmare Republic', p.7.

³⁰ Gallagher, *Portugal*, p.29.

³¹ Marques, *History of Portugal*, p.174.

(1868-1952), founder and main leader of the rightist *Action Française*. Maurras' opposition to liberalism, democracy and the parliamentary system as well as his glorification of power and violence were to anticipate some of the main characteristics of Fascism. Although Lusitanian Integralism sought to create a Portuguese variant of the *Action Française*,³² its ideology contained much originality. Its message of traditionalism, Catholicism, authority and nationalism underpinned by its royalist affiliation stood in clear contrast to other political doctrines prevailing in Portugal at the time.³³ As the Republic became increasingly discredited, the Integralist manifesto attracted substantial support among social elites. Despite the premature death of António Sardinha (1888-1925), the movement's foremost theorist, Integralism was to be instrumental in the demise of the Republic and in the formation of the regime that followed it.

Integralism was not the only alternative to the liberal ideology of the Republic. As mentioned earlier the CADC and the CCP were crucial components of the opposition to the Republic. Like Lusitanian Integralism these two catholic organisations were defined by Maurrassian authoritarianism, corporatism and nationalism.³⁴ They rejected, however, the French philosopher's ideas on monarchism and violence. Both movements originated at the University of Coimbra, partly as a response to anticlericalism, and were devoted to the idea of a Christian state in accordance with the social teachings of Pope Leo XIII (1810-1903).³⁵

The middle-class swing towards the Right was facilitated by the failure, in 1919, of the Monarchy of the North, the last serious attempt to restore monarchical rule.³⁶ Ever since the inception of the Republic, conservatives had been divided over the monarchist issue.

³² Carmen Callil, 'Action Man', *New Statesman*, April 9, 2001, p.40; Stanley Payne, *A History of Fascism* (Madison, 1995), p.40; F L Carsten, *The Rise of Fascism* (London, 1970), p.17.

³³ Douglas Porch, *The Portuguese Armed Forces and the Revolution* (Stanford, 1977), p.19.

³⁴ Martins, "Portugal", p.306.

³⁵ Marques, *Portugal*, p.157. See the encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum* (1891) for Leo XIII's most relevant social ideas.

³⁶ Led by Henrique Paiva Couceiro (1861-1944), a man much admired by Henrique Galvão, the monarchists triggered a small scale civil war during which they occupied the northern city of Porto from January 19 to February 13, 1919.

After 1919 most rightist groups abandoned the restoration of the monarchy as a political objective. This made their cause acceptable to moderate republicans hitherto troubled by the prospect of the King's return.

By the mid 1920s most Portuguese looked upon the army as the only institution capable of halting the disintegration of their country. Calls for military intervention came from all points of the political spectrum. The armed forces were willing to oblige, but not only for altruistic reasons.

From the start, professional grievances marred relations between the military and the Republic. Funding of the army had been curtailed by republican governments causing a general impoverishment in the number and quality of effective personnel and equipment. This had a direct bearing on the army's poor performance during the First World War discussed earlier on. The republicanisation of the ranks, moreover, had led to widespread indiscipline, insubordination and mutiny in the military.³⁷ At any rate, the general misconduct of republican politicians, their lack of direction and the resultant national instability and disorder made the army reluctant to provide the Republic with its full support.³⁸ Yet, no matter how much the military disapproved of the situation, it did not have the "internal cohesion" to intervene forcefully in politics. Subsequent to the Pais presidency, however, the army's influence in the government steadily increased.³⁹ Prior to 1918, military presence at governmental level had been small; only fifteen per cent of the cabinets were presided over by military men. After Pais that figure escalated to forty six per cent, indicating an increase in the army's interest and ability in manoeuvring the political system.⁴⁰

³⁷ Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, p.113.

³⁸ Marques, *History of Portugal*, p.163. For a discussion of military discontent under the Republic, see D.L.Wheeler, 'The Military and the Portuguese Dictatorship, 1926-1974: "The Honor of the Army"', in L.S.Graham and H.M.Makler (eds), *Contemporary Portugal: The Revolution and Its Antecedents* (Austin, 1979), pp.193-197.

³⁹ Porch, *Portuguese Armed Forces*, pp.18-19.

⁴⁰ Marques, *History of Portugal*, p.172; Porch, *Portuguese Armed Forces*, p.19.

b) Military Dictatorship, 1926-32

A bloodless military uprising, on 28 May 1926, brought the parliamentary Republic to an end. Under the leadership of General Gomes da Costa (1863-1929), Commander José Mendes Cabeçadas (1883-1965) and General Óscar Carmona (1869-1951) the armed forces assumed control of the country. There was hardly any resistance to the takeover. Civilians welcomed military rule as a transitional formula. It was generally assumed the army would restore public order, stamp out corruption, nurse the ailing economy and midwife the re-deliverance of democracy. Once those goals were accomplished, the soldiers were expected to vacate the political arena. Many felt that it was not the parliamentary system that was at fault, but the politicians who had subverted it.



Triumvirate, May 1926: General Gomes da Costa, Commander Mendes Cabeçadas, General Carmona

30 Anos de Estado Novo (Lisbon, 1957).

Within two years the Military Dictatorship, under General Carmona, had partially accomplished its minimum program. Draconian measures, such as the dissolution of parliament and the outlawing of strikes, had restored general order to the country. The economy, persistent in its downward trend, presented an altogether more serious

challenge. State expenditure, for example, had risen by 40 per cent while the budget deficit had increased 38 per cent between 1926 and 1927.⁴¹ Lack of financial expertise crippled the military administration. Desperate to prevent economic collapse, the Carmona government applied to the League of Nations for a loan of £12 000 000.⁴² Geneva's harsh terms - amounting to international control of Portuguese finances - dealt a sobering blow to Lisbon. Seeking international help had been tantamount to a public "confession of financial incompetence"⁴³, causing much dissatisfaction in Portugal. In order to avoid further loss of public support, Carmona had to find a quick exit from the financial quagmire. In April 1928 he appointed Dr. Salazar, of Coimbra University, as Finance Minister.

c) The Rise of Salazar, 1928-32

Born in 1889, in the hamlet of Vimieiro, near the university town of Coimbra, António de Oliveira Salazar was the son of rural lower-middle class parents. As a youth he attended a seminary but did not take Holy Orders, opting, instead, to study law and economics at the University of Coimbra. At twenty-nine, he was a professor of Political Economy.⁴⁴ An orthodox Catholic, a bachelor, ascetic, extremely reserved, non-materialistic and highly intellectual, Salazar lived the solitary life of a bookish monk. Totally devoted to his work, he expected the same level of commitment from his associates. At times, his single-minded approach made him also intolerant of views that clashed with his certainties.⁴⁵

At Coimbra, Salazar was a leading member of the CADC and the CCP. A frequent contributor to newspapers, he gradually built up a reputation. His critical articles on Portugal's finances were widely read. The young academic was generally regarded as a

⁴¹ R.A.H. Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal: A History* (London, 1979), p.43.

⁴² Luis Araquistain, 'Dictatorship in Portugal', *Foreign Affairs*, October 1928, p.48.

⁴³ Tom Gallagher, 'The Mystery Train: Portugal's Military Dictatorship 1926-32', *European Studies Review*, vol.2, 1981, p.339.

⁴⁴ Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, p.45.

⁴⁵ Hugh Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal* (London, 1970), pp.78-9.

“competent, authoritative, clear thinking financial expert.”⁴⁶ He was the economic Sebastian the country had been waiting for.

The recluse Salazar was not exactly a newcomer to politics. In 1921 he was elected to parliament as a CADC deputy for the town of Guimarães. Disgusted with parliamentary corruption and ineptitude, he resigned after one sitting.⁴⁷ Again, in 1926, he was appointed finance minister. This time his tenure lasted five days. Refused full power over financial measures, Salazar found it unacceptable to work under conditions whereby he could be “blamed for what he could not control.”⁴⁸ Once more, the discontented professor returned to his university post. Two years later the military were desperate enough to grant him full veto powers over the expenditure of all government departments.⁴⁹ Armed with such sweeping powers, Salazar now set about reconstructing the economy.

The finance minister’s inaugural speech was at once direct and honest. In a key section the ministerial novice declared:

I know quite well what I want and where I am going, but let no one insist that the goal should be reached in a few months. For the rest, let the country study, let it suggest, let it object, and let it discuss, but when the time comes for me to give orders, I shall expect it to obey.⁵⁰

Portugal, adrift since 1910, had found her helmsman.

Salazar attained financial success within the first year in office. He began by rejecting the economic aid offer from the League of Nations, undertaking to achieve, by his own

⁴⁶ Nogueira, *Salazar: A Mocidade e os Princípios*, pp.330-33.

⁴⁷ Payne, *Spain and Portugal*, p.665.

⁴⁸ António Ferro, *Salazar* (Lisbon, 1933), p.36; Kay, *Salazar*, p.40.

⁴⁹ Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, p.43.

⁵⁰ Kay, *Salazar*, pp.42-3.

initiative, the very aims of the Geneva loan.⁵¹ Backed by public opinion and the military, the minister pursued his program with little opposition.⁵² A new taxation system together with the curbing of public expenditure enabled Salazar to liquidate the floating debt, stabilise the *escudo* and achieve (for the first time in 14 years) a budget surplus.⁵³ The new finance minister had accomplished in one year, what a committee from the League of Nations had calculated to require a minimum of three years “in even the most concentrated effort.”⁵⁴



Salazar, the miraculous finance minister
Sempre Fixe, 31 January 1935

⁵¹ Franco Nogueira, *Salazar: Os Tempos Áureos* (Coimbra, 1977), p.12.

⁵² Payne, *Spain and Portugal*, p.666.

⁵³ Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, p.43.

⁵⁴ W. Leon Smyser, ‘General Carmona: Dictatorship Without a Dictator in Portugal’, *Contemporary Review*, September 1930, p.333.

d) The birth of the New State, 1930 –33

The Military Dictatorship was an uneasy marriage of Integralist and republican interests. Differences were temporarily buried so that its program could be achieved. Once law, order and financial efficiency had been restored to acceptable levels, the military were confronted with uncertainty regarding the long-term direction of the regime.⁵⁵ A return to parliamentary democracy, favoured by the republican element in the army and much of the public, was perceived by conservatives, in general, as a regression into chaos and, therefore, not feasible. The latter view was to prevail.

A gradual civilianisation of the Dictatorship began in 1928. Headed by Salazar, a group of academics was gradually brought in to replace the military officers who, having performed their political role, willingly returned to their barracks.⁵⁶ This was the beginning of a transformation process whereby the Military Dictatorship would eventually metamorphose into the civilian New State.

Since his nomination as finance minister, Salazar had become the dominant figure in the government, towering over his colleagues. His ideas exerted an influence well beyond the scope of his portfolio.⁵⁷ When it came to the regime's future, Salazar's political vision was the only source of illumination. "Now that we have some money", he told a close friend, "we can engage in politics."⁵⁸ Indeed, the time was right.

The solution to the Portuguese problem, according to Salazar, transcended finances. Economic efficiency was a mere basis upon which a new national policy could be developed. Such a policy would aim at the reformulation of the state and all national institutions. This was to be accomplished by way of a new spirit in public affairs and a

⁵⁵ Gallagher, 'Mystery Train', p.344.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.349.

⁵⁷ Kay, *Salazar*, p.48.

⁵⁸ Nogueira, *Salazar: Os Tempos Áureos*, p.48.

new form of civic tutelage.⁵⁹ Salazar's primary objective was nothing less than the complete regeneration of social, economic and political life through the rehabilitation of Christian, Latin and Western values, weakened by the debacle of the First Republic.⁶⁰ Such an ambitious project was consistent with the dominant influences on the Coimbra professor's thought: the Christian democracy of Leo XIII and Pius XI (1857-1939); the socio-economic doctrines of Frederic Le Play (1806-1882); the psychological theories of Gustave Le Bon (1841–1931); and the “organising empiricism” of Charles Maurras.⁶¹

Two seminal speeches, in 1930, marked the emergence of Salazar as the national leader. In these the professor outlined the institutional form of the New State as an “authoritarian corporate republic.”⁶² The future regime was to be based on a state so strong as to dispense with violence. It would be grounded on patriotic unity with the family, not the individual, as the foundation of sovereignty. The Portuguese nation was unitary rather than pluralist. There was to be no room for compromise over conflicting interests.⁶³ Social stratification was to be reduced to one class: that of the most able.⁶⁴ A new constitution would incorporate the nation within the state, correlating the latter with the family unit and the various corporations comprising society.⁶⁵ These were, briefly, the basic principles, which the future Portugal was to follow.

Some concrete steps had already been taken towards the consolidation of the future dispensation. Political parties and trade unions had been abolished; censorship introduced; and political power restricted to a narrow executive.⁶⁶ The *União Nacional* (National Union), a state-backed political organisation, was formed in order to fill the void created by the dismantlement of the party system. Essentially amorphous, the *União Nacional* was designed to bind the nation into a corporative movement and to generate

⁵⁹ Payne, *Spain and Portugal*, p.665.

⁶⁰ Nogueira, *Salazar: Os Tempos Áureos*, p.39.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.59 ; Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, p.46.

⁶² Hermínio Martins, “Portugal”, in S.J.Woolf, ed., *European Fascism* (London, 1970), p.314.

⁶³ Kay, *Salazar*, p.51.

⁶⁴ Nogueira, *Salazar: Os Tempos Áureos*, pp.80-1.

⁶⁵ The Portuguese Constitution (1933) defined corporation as an association of individuals exercising the same profession or activity. A. Martins, *Princípios Fundamentais de Organização Política e Administrativa da Nação* (Lisbon, n.d.), p.69.

⁶⁶ Gallagher, ‘Mystery Train’, p.345.

citizen support for the regime.⁶⁷ It was to be also the only political group allowed to operate in the country.

The Colonial Act, promulgated in 1930, introduced another corner stone of the future New State. Conceived by Salazar and Armindo Monteiro (1896-1955), colonial minister during 1931-1935, the new charter restructured and formalised Portuguese imperial policy. Article 2 declares the possessing and colonising of overseas dominions as well as the “civilising” of the native populations therein contained as in keeping with the “organic nature of the Portuguese nation.”⁶⁸ This was a re-affirmation of Portugal’s self-proclaimed historical mission, sidetracked by the policy of colonial autonomy pursued during the Republican era. In more tangible terms, the Colonial Act organised relations between metropolitan Portugal and her overseas territories by asserting the control of the central government in Lisbon.⁶⁹

The genealogy of the New State neared completion in 1932 with the appointment of Salazar as prime minister, an official recognition of the professor’s tutelage of the government.⁷⁰ His competence and superior leadership qualities were undeniable. In four years as finance minister, Salazar had transformed a “limping dictatorship” into a stable administration.⁷¹ He had shown the way out of the economic morass. Not surprisingly, Carmona’s decision to nominate him premier met with general approval. Thus, the man who once confessed his true calling was to be “prime minister of an absolute monarch”⁷², now assumed a position close to realising his vocation. From 1932 to 1968, Oliveira Salazar would be prime minister of a regime described as “absolutist statist.”⁷³

The legal foundations of the New State were finalised in 1933 by a new constitution, incorporating the Colonial Act and the National Labour Statute.⁷⁴ A legal framework was

⁶⁷ Kay, *Salazar*, p.48; Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, p.249; Payne, *Spain and Portugal*, p.666.

⁶⁸ Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, p.97; F.C.C.Egerton, *Salazar: Rebuilder of Portugal* (London, 1943), pp.259-60.

⁶⁹ Malyn Newitt, *Portugal in Africa: the Last Hundred Years* (London, 1981), p.186.

⁷⁰ Payne, *Spain and Portugal*, pp.666-67.

⁷¹ Gallagher, ‘Mystery Train’, p.349.

⁷² Nogueira, *Salazar: Os Tempos Áureos*, p.3.

⁷³ Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, p.251.

⁷⁴ Promulgated in 1933, the National Labour Statute contained the legal basis for the corporative organisation of the regime. For a discussion of its implications see Egerton, *Salazar*, pp.205-08.

now established through which the political, social and economic life was to be regulated.⁷⁵ In this way, military rule expired and the New State began its 40-year existence.

Largely the brainchild of Salazar, the new constitution was at once anti-liberal, anti-parliamentary and anti-democratic.⁷⁶ An admirer of Anglo-Saxon political culture, Salazar felt, however, that English democracy was unsuitable for the Portuguese temperament. Besides, non-democratic regimes in continental Europe, he reasoned, had succeeded where democratic rule had failed.⁷⁷ Hence, Portugal's constitution represented, above all, its creator's concept of order and stability within a Portuguese context. It was geared towards the fostering of national interests without falling in the "omnipotence and divination" of the state.⁷⁸ It rested on five "great certainties": authority, God, motherland, family and work.⁷⁹ In spite of its overt authoritarianism, the document was still a compromise with "demo-liberal" principles⁸⁰, an attempt to heed Alexis de Tocqueville's warning that democracy could not be stopped only guided.⁸¹

The 1933 Constitution defined the Portuguese state as a unitary and corporative republic with a bicephalic executive power structure consisting of a president and a premier. The president, elected by universal suffrage for a seven-year term, held the authority to appoint and dismiss the prime minister at will and to approve the nomination of the members of the cabinet (Council of Ministers). The government was directly responsible to the president not to Parliament, a bi-cameral structure comprising a National Assembly and a Corporative Chamber. Consisting of 120 deputies, elected by direct suffrage for a period of four years, the National Assembly's main functions were to legislate and to act

⁷⁵ Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, p.48.

⁷⁶ Salazar was, however, assisted by others in the task of writing the constitution. Marcelo Caetano, for example, had a significant input. See Paul H. Lewis, 'Salazar's Ministerial Elite', *The Journal of Politics*, no.3, August 1978, p.643.

⁷⁷ Egerton, *Salazar*, p.182.

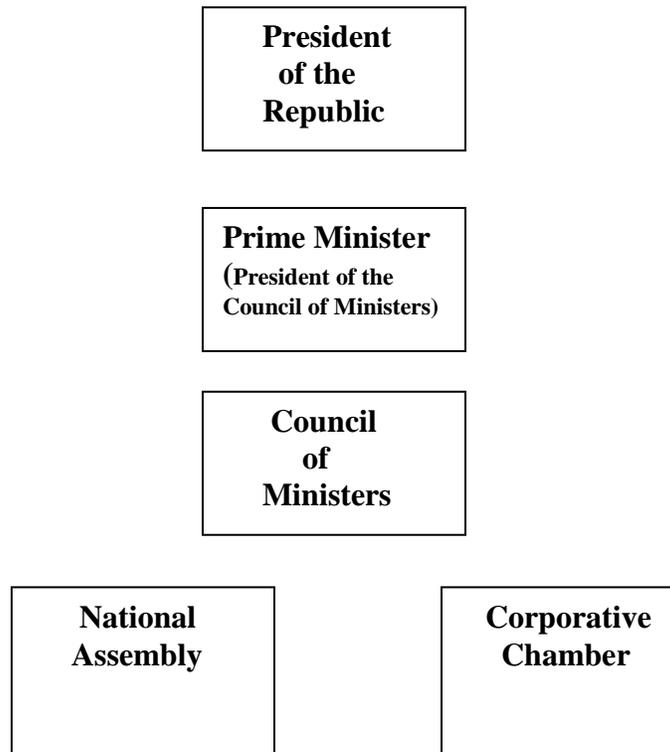
⁷⁸ Nogueira, *Salazar: Os Tempos Áureos*, p.80.

⁷⁹ Jorge Campinos, *Ideologia Política do Estado Salazarista* (Lisbon, 1975), p.48.

⁸⁰ Martins, "Portugal", p.315.

⁸¹ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America vol.1* (New York, 1945), p.7; José Freire Antunes, *Salazar e Caetano: Cartas Secretas 1932-1968* (Lisbon, 1993), p.12.

as a “watchdog”.⁸² It could not, however, initiate any measures requiring public expenditure. The Corporative Chamber contained representatives of major functions and corporative interests such as industry, commerce, agriculture, the Church, the military and the universities.



Organisational structure of the New State (1933-1974)

Supported by its own constitution the New State was now fully established, with Salazar as its pivotal element. Whereas the president of the Republic was the nation’s “ceremonial leader”, the premier ran the administration via the Council of Ministers.⁸³ An American scholar aptly described this arrangement as one where the president

⁸² Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, p.49.

⁸³ Lewis, ‘Salazar’s Ministerial Elite’, p.628.

“reigned” while the premier “ruled.”⁸⁴ From 1933 until its demise in 1974, the New State was to remain essentially unaltered and consistent with the spirit of its architect.

This, then, was the background to Henrique Galvão’s formative years. Only thirty-seven when Salazar became premier, Galvão was one of the professor’s early supporters. His career as New State official and subsequent anti-Salazarism form the subject of the next chapter.

⁸⁴ Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, p. 250.

Chapter 2

Henrique Galvão: From Sidonist to Salazarist and beyond 1895-1959

a) The Earlier Years, 1895 - 1929

Born on 4 February 1895 in the town of Barreiro, in the district of Lisbon, Henrique Carlos Malta Galvão showed from an early age signs of a polyhedral personality. He was as keen on sports as on “all the sciences, arts and letters”; equally at home in Philosophy as in the football field. A kind of juvenile intellectual Spartan whose outstanding academic record was often marred by misconduct, which he blamed on a personal intolerance towards superiors whom he found lacking in “moral authority.”¹

After completing high school, Galvão pursued further studies at the Polytechnic. Blessed with “excellent health and an iron constitution” he had, nevertheless, no idea what to do with his future. Overwhelmingly diverse personal interests made the prospect of a single career a daunting one. The youth recoiled in horror from a “single function for an entire lifetime”; a racial trait discerned by the poet Fernando Pessoa: to be Portuguese is to be everything.²

Family financial constraints nudged Galvão towards joining the Army in 1914. His choice was not motivated by “love” or “enthusiasm” for a military career but simply by the fact that it offered the quickest route to financial independence. His performance in the Army showed the same combination of high grades and penalties for insubordination that had been the hallmark of his previous school records.

On concluding the infantry officer course in 1917, the young man still harboured no affection for the soldier’s life. His temperament was incompatible with a career that placed “matters of form” before “matters of substance.” He found army life to be

¹ Galvão, *Santa Maria: My Crusade for Portugal* (London, 1961), p.38.

² *Ibid.*; Fernando Pessoa, *Análise da Vida Mental Portuguesa* (Porto, 1950), p.3.

constraining and unable to quench the thirst of his protean mind. For a budding renaissance man, the “lack-lustre duties of the garrison” and the bureaucratic essence of military daily routine were stifling.³ Galvão would throughout his life sarcastically refer to his 1924 graduation from the Joinville-le Point School of Gymnastics (France), with eighty five per cent, as the zenith of his military career.⁴

Galvão’s Army career was to reflect his lukewarm attitude towards military life. Although he quickly rose to the ranks of 2nd and 1st Lieutenant (1917; 1921), it would take him a further thirteen years of service before being promoted to Captain (1934), a rank he maintained until his retirement in 1947. The causes for his failure to be promoted beyond a relatively low rank are not clear. One historian cites a number of possible reasons including Galvão’s “unorthodox, mercurial even surrealistic, personality”, his chronic defiance of military discipline and Salazar’s preference for lower-ranking officers as his associates.⁵

Quixotic tendencies are revealed in the early stages of Galvão’s life. He partially attributed his disillusionment with the military to the demise of the romantic concept of warfare brought on by the First World War. The prospect of action in the battlefield had been an incentive to join the army. Although he never served in the front, Galvão concluded that 1914 had released the “beauty” of war from the classical limitations imposed on it by “morality and gallantry”, replacing romanticism with inhumanity. The novice officer was certainly not keen on the mechanised carnage that was modern warfare.⁶

The young romantic was at odds with the time in which he lived. “The twentieth-century”, he wrote, began with the “suicide of romanticism” in 1914. A world that was “far from beautiful” followed the demise of the *Belle Époque*, generally perceived as the golden era of the western way of life (1890-1914).⁷ The chaotic

³ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.39.

⁴ Eugénio Montoito, *Henrique Galvão: Ou a Dissidência de um Cadete do 28 de Maio (1927-1952)* (Lisbon, 2005), p.13.

⁵ D. Wheeler, “The Galvão report on forced labor (1947) in historical context and perspective: trouble-shooter who was “trouble” (paper presented at the African Studies Association annual meeting, November 16-19, 2006, San Francisco), p.10.

⁶ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.39.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p.37.

situation of his country under the First Republic (1910-26) bore testimony to this. Galvão responded by actively engaging in military political interventions intended to overthrow the republican regime and thus prevent the nation from impending collapse.

A close friend and keen admirer of Sidónio Pais, Galvão took part in the coup that installed the semi-authoritarian New Republic. In October 1918, the 23-year-old “cadet of Sidónio” was appointed administrator of the council of Montemor-o-Novo in the Alentejo province, a post he held until January 1919.⁸

Galvão’s fascination with the president-king ran deep and lasted a lifetime. Recalling Pais, he described him as a mystical rebel whose short tenure in power was a “lesson in generosity, bravery, gentleness, goodwill and patriotism”. Sidónio Pais had been “as irresistible as the Portuguese sun”.⁹

On 28 May 1926 Lt Galvão adhered to the revolution that ended Portugal’s First Republic. Like many of his contemporaries, he disapproved of the way in which the experiment with parliamentary democracy had been conducted. For him the 1910-26 period was an anarchical exercise dominated by “bloody ideologies” that reduced politics to an “instrument of wickedness”.¹⁰ Years later he defended his participation in the ousting of the parliamentary system with the argument that political inexperience, typical of his young age, had led him to believe in the transitory nature of the military dictatorship as well as in the sincerity of its leaders. “I fell in love with idols made of clay,” he wrote, “ and ingenuously served some ambitious politicians.”¹¹

During 1927, Galvão was involved in two military uprisings. In February, the lieutenant joined government troops in their suppression of an attempt by ‘democratic’ units under General Adalberto Sousa e Dias (1865-1934) to restore parliamentary rule. Six months later, the malcontent Galvão adhered to the abortive

⁸ *Grande Enciclopédia Portuguesa e Brasileira* (vol. 12) (Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro, 1924-60), p.102; Montoito, *Galvão*, p. 13.

⁹ Quoted in Montoito, *Galvão*, p.176.

¹⁰ ‘Discurso do sr. Henrique Galvão’, *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, no.109, July 1934, p.222.

¹¹ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.41; Henrique Galvão, *Por Angola: Quatro Anos de Actividade Parlamentar 1945-1949* (Lisbon, 1949), p.227.

golpe dos fifis, an Integralist insurrection headed by a former Governor-General of Angola (1918-19) Commander Filomeno da Câmara (1873-1934) and Fidelino de Figueiredo (1889-1967).¹² Galvão was arrested as a consequence of his participation in the *fifis* fiasco. He benefited, however, from the regime's tactical leniency in its treatment of the insurgents. In a bid to prevent further trouble at home the military government banished most of the dissentious rebels to Africa.¹³ As a result, in November 1927 Galvão was deported to Luanda. Once in Angola, he was soon named *chefe de gabinete* (chief of staff) of Filomeno da Câmara, his fellow *fifis* conspirator and newly appointed High Commissioner.¹⁴

In April 1929, Galvão was appointed governor of the district of Huíla in southern Angola, a post he held for only three months. On 26 June he was discharged – without an explanation – by order of High Commissioner Filomeno da Câmara. The reasons for the sudden exoneration remain obscure. Archival evidence suggests that the dismissal was motivated by “disloyalties” and irregularities concerning Galvão's conduct. His relationship with Teodósio Cabral, an ivory smuggler linked to the Boer community in southern Angola, seems to have been the main cause of Câmara's decision to fire the district governor¹⁵. Despite various fruitless attempts to ascertain the motives for his dismissal, Galvão concluded that it had been triggered by a “personal grudge” on the part of Câmara. Be that as it may, in September the High Commissioner revoked the praise he had officially bestowed on his former chief of staff only six months earlier. Câmara claimed to have recognised that Galvão was “not worthy of it”.¹⁶

¹² The label *fifis* is a combination of the first two words in the names of the chief conspirators: (Fi)lomeno and (Fi)delino.

¹³ T. Gallagher, *Portugal: A Twentieth Century Interpretation* (Manchester, 1983), p.45.

¹⁴ Franco Nogueira, *Salazar: A Mocidade e os Princípios* (Coimbra, 1977), p.324; Henrique Galvão, *Huíla: Relatório de Governo* (V.N. de Famalicão, 1929), pp.301-02.

¹⁵ Arquivo Histórico Militar /Henrique Carlos Malta Galvão/ Caixa 1321.

¹⁶ Galvão, *Huíla*, pp.301; 304.

b) New State Africanist: theoretician and organiser of colonialism, 1930-45

The brief stay in Angola during 1927-29 released latent multifarious talents and passions in Henrique Galvão, giving birth to the euro-African writer, propagandist, explorer and hunter of big game. It also laid the foundation stone of his future career as the Salazarist regime's principal Africanist.

Since his service in Angola, Galvão had established himself as something of an authority on African and especially Angolan matters. Beginning in 1929 the prolific Africanist published various books and monographs on colonial topics ranging from policy, administration, fairs for the promotion of imperial products to packaging in the colonial trade. By 1952, Galvão's vast literary output would also include a considerable number of original fiction works (plays, novels, short stories and poetry), mostly on colonial themes, as well as translations into Portuguese of the plays of American playwright Eugene O'Neill (1888-1953). Two of his novels and a volume of short stories were actually awarded the *Prémio de Literatura Colonial* (Colonial Literary Prize). Galvão's impressive literary oeuvre bore testimony to his creative energy and propped up his reputation as Portugal's foremost amateur Africanist-Angolanist in the 1930s and 40s,¹⁷ an accolade that requires caution since little has been done to assess Galvão's work in the context of other contemporary Portuguese Africanists.

On his return from Angola, in July 1929, Galvão began showing signs of discontentment with the Military Dictatorship. Possibly embittered by his dismissal from Huíla, he accused the government of betraying the aims of the 28 May revolution. The *Ditadura*, he argued, showed signs of the very malaise responsible for bringing parliamentary rule to an end: factionalism, personalism and corruption. The way Galvão saw it, an emerging oligarchy was about to "devour the country."¹⁸

Along with many of his compatriots, Galvão turned to Salazar as the Man of Providence, the one capable of delivering "sound, clean government."¹⁹ Even more

¹⁷ Wheeler, 'The Galvão report', p.26.

¹⁸ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.41.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* In an earlier account, written in the 1950s, it is to the Coimbra professor whom Galvão

significantly, he saw Salazarian political reforms, rehabilitation of order and organisation as the basis of a national resurgence at the centre of which was the rediscovery, in Galvão's memorable phrase, of the "*rumo do Império*"²⁰ (the course of the empire). With Salazar at the rudder Portugal had resumed the imperial course disrupted by the 1820 liberal revolution whose foreign ideas had subverted Portuguese identity leading to the neglect of the nation's historical "colonising mission", its reason to exist.²¹

Galvão's African experience and adherence to Salazar opened the gates of the nascent Salazarist state.²² Parallel to his literary activities, the rising Africanist initiated an association with the New State in the early 1930s when he was made Director of *Portugal Colonial*, a monthly magazine published by the regime and aimed at the dissemination of imperial propaganda. Galvão remained in that role for six years (1931-37). In the meantime the enterprising Armindo Monteiro, Minister of Colonies, employed him as organiser of colonial fairs and exhibitions for the emerging New State. Beginning in 1931 he was Portugal's Representative at the Colonial Congress in Paris and the following year he was named Director of the Luanda and Lourenço Marques colonial fairs.²³ However, it was his appointment as technical director of the *Exposição Colonial Portuguesa* (Portuguese Colonial Exhibition) in Oporto (June-October 1934) that marked his *de facto* arrival as the regime's chief colonialist.

The *Exposição Colonial* propagated the notion of a united and indivisible multi-continental Portugal.²⁴ The event was to be a "lesson in colonialism" delivered in the *linguagem do povo* (popular vernacular) and aimed primarily at educating the largely apathetic population in the mother country.²⁵ The *Exposição* formed part of a drive to

attributes the subversion of the objectives of the 28 May. See Henrique Galvão, *Carta Aberta ao Dr Salazar* (Lisbon, 1975), pp.19-22.

²⁰ 'Discurso do sr. Henrique Galvão', p.228.

²¹ Montoito, *Galvão*, pp.66-7.

²² *Ibid.*, p.75.

²³ *Grande Enciclopédia Portuguesa e Brasileira* (vol. 12), p.101; Douglas Wheeler, 'The Galvão report on forced labor (1947) in historical context and perspective: the trouble-shooter who was "trouble"' (paper presented at the African Studies Association annual meeting, November 16-19, 2006, San Francisco), p.11.

²⁴ Heriberto Cairo, 'Portugal is not a Small Country: Maps and Propaganda in the Salazar Regime', *Geopolitics*, vol 11, 2006, p.374.

²⁵ 'Discurso do sr. Henrique Galvão', p.233.

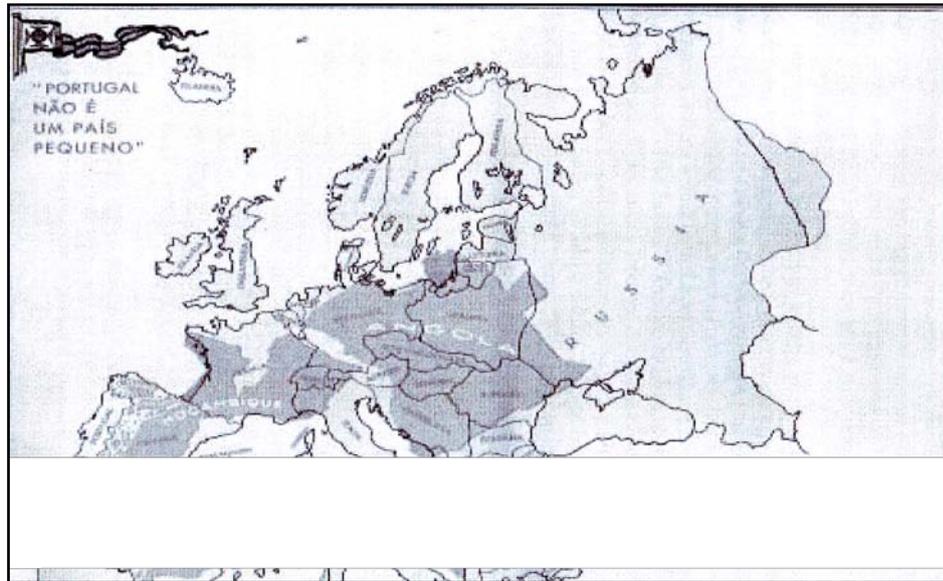
reawaken the *pensamento imperial* (imperial spirit) among the Portuguese, the disappearance of which had been noted by lusophonist Aubrey Bell (1882-1950) in his book *Portugal of Portuguese*.²⁶ The event aimed to create, at popular level, a sense of imperial identity based on awareness of the cultural, moral, spiritual, political and economic realities of transoceanic Portugal. Galvão saw the event as a milestone in the resurgence of Portuguese colonialism initiated by Salazar's policies.

The exhibition's urgency to rekindle Portuguese interest in the colonies reflected Galvão's concern with the threat to Portugal's permanence in Africa presented by the prevailing post-1918 international perception of colonialism as a transient system. Thus the Oporto event's understated aim was to send a message to the world that Portugal took her colonial mission seriously. Portuguese rule was therefore projected as progressive, educational and in line with the general requirements of a process leading to eventual self-rule.

Among its most salient features the Oporto *Exposição* included a number of reconstructed native villages from different areas of the empire as well as a "typical Macao street." The main thrust of the event was encapsulated by the slogan *Portugal não é um país pequeno* (Portugal is not a small country), coined by Henrique Galvão. An ingenious cartographic construction, also by Galvão, illustrated the motto by super-imposing the outlines of Angola and Mozambique over the map of Western Europe (see figure below). According to the map's legend, Portugal and her overseas territories occupied a geographic area (2,168,077 Km²) larger than that of Spain, France, England, Italy and Germany combined (2, 091,639 Km²).²⁷

²⁶ Aubrey Bell, *Portugal of Portuguese* (London, 1915).

²⁷ Cairo, 'Portugal is not a Small Country', p.379.



“Portugal is not a small country”: Map designed by Henrique Galvão for the 1934 Oporto Colonial Exhibition

Henrique Galvão, *No Rumo do Império* (Porto, 1934)

Registering 1.3 million visitors through its gates, the *Exposição Colonial* was a resounding success.²⁸ Its chief organiser was noticed for his dynamic dedication and knowledge of African matters. Armindo Monteiro praised Galvão as the “true centre of the *Exposição*”, adding that no one could have done a better job. The Technical Director, according to the minister, fully deserved the trust placed upon him by the regime.²⁹ Salazar himself seems to have been equally impressed by Galvão with whom he had a long conversation on the occasion of the premier’s visit to the Exhibition.

There was, apparently, a darker side to Galvão’s organisational skills. In his speech during the *Exposição*’s inauguration, Galvão repeatedly referred to the low budget on which the event had been accomplished.³⁰ Yet it is reported that the expenses incurred in the setting up of the exhibition were never accounted for; an opportune fire obliterated the premises in which the relevant documentation had been stored.³¹ However, this does not appear to have hindered Galvão’s ascending New State career.

²⁸ David Corkill and José Carlos Almeida, ‘Commemoration and propaganda in Salazar’s Portugal: the Portuguese World Exhibition of 1940’ (<http://hdl.handle.net/2173/14342>) (2007), pp.15-16.

²⁹ Montoito, *Galvão*, p.181.

³⁰ ‘Discurso do sr. Henrique Galvão’, p.234.

³¹ Marcello Caetano, *Minhas Memórias de Salazar* (Lisbon, 1977), p.191.



From left to right: Salazar, Monteiro and Galvão at the 1934 Colonial Exhibition in Oporto.

Boletim Geral das Colónias, July 1934

In yet another indication of the regime's trust in his abilities and loyalty, Henrique Galvão was named director of the newly launched *Emissora Nacional* (national radio broadcasting service) (EN). Under Galvão's management (1935-41) the EN extended its broadcasting to all Portuguese territories, connecting the far flung populations of transoceanic Portugal to the gravitational centre in Lisbon. Displaying his characteristic foresight and initiative Galvão envisaged the national broadcaster as a "decisive instrument in the spiritual unification of all Portuguese".³²

In the mid 1930s Henrique Galvão's star rose steadily in the New State firmament. In the same year that he took over the EN, Galvão was also elected a deputy in the National Assembly, resigning shortly after to concentrate on his duties at the Colonial Ministry³³ to which he was appointed in 1936 as *Inspector Superior da Administração Colonial* (senior inspector of colonial administration).³⁴

³² Montoito, *Galvão*, pp.70-71.

³³ Wheeler, 'The Galvão Report', p.11; Henrique Galvão, *O Assalto ao Santa Maria* (Lisbon, 1974), p.80.

³⁴ Montoito, *Galvão*, p.75.



The Prince of Wales and Galvão at the 1934 Oporto exhibition

E.Montoito, *Henrique Galvão* (Lisbon, 2005)

As a colonial inspector, Galvão travelled extensively in all Portuguese overseas territories. In 1937, for example, he spent six months in Angola, studying white settlement in that colony.³⁵ On that occasion he undertook a 1000 Km reconnaissance journey in the Cuando in southeast Angola, an area neglected by the colonial administration. Officialdom described the trip as *maluquice* (foolishness).³⁶ The following year, the inspector was in Portuguese India and Macau.³⁷ Galvão used these imperial missions to build a bank of detailed information concerning the native question, which later formed the basis of his alienation from the New State.

³⁵ D.L.Raby, *Fascism and Resistance in Portugal* (Manchester, 1988), p.153.

³⁶ *Grande Enciclopédia Portuguesa e Brasileira* (vol. 12), p.101; Henrique Galvão, *Exposição do Deputado Henrique Galvão à Comissão de Colónias da Assembleia Nacional em Janeiro de 1947*, (Assembleia da Republica archives, Lisbon), p.45.

³⁷ Raby, *Fascism and Resistance*, p.153.

Six years after the successful Oporto *Exposição*, the regime called again on its Africanist whiz kid to organise the colonial section of the 1940 *Exposição do Mundo Português* (Portuguese World Exhibition) commemorating Portugal's eight centuries of nationhood (1140) and 300 years of regained independence from Spain (1640). Held in Lisbon (June-December), the *Mundo Português* exhibition, like its Oporto predecessor, was meant to be educational, a "living lesson" in Portuguese history (*uma lição viva da História de Portugal*).³⁸ It sought to disseminate an historical continuity (1140-1940) that was evolutionary (but excluded change) and in accordance with the ideology and values of the New State. The 1940 event, however, played a more pronounced political role than the *Exposição Colonial*, endeavouring to diffuse and legitimise the regime's ideological precepts whilst showing that Portugal had fully recovered from the 'disastrous' First Republic. Although partly geared towards a domestic audience, the *Mundo Português* project was clearly designed to cater for a wider international public. Thus its emphasis on "how the Portuguese saw themselves and how they viewed the world".³⁹ Registering three million visitors, the *Mundo Português* exhibition proved a bigger success than its Oporto forerunner, marking the supreme moment in the ideological construction of the New State.⁴⁰ Once again Henrique Galvão was acclaimed for a sterling job. Augusto Castro, the exhibition's director, referred to him as "a colonialist" whose spirit had become part of the Portuguese Empire; someone who was "not just an organiser but a creator".⁴¹

c) The independent Salazarist 1945-49

i. Into politics: deputy for Angola

In 1945, Galvão was invited by the government to run for the National Assembly elections as *União Nacional*'s candidate from Angola.⁴² Lists of candidates had to be signed by at least two hundred electors and submitted to the government. On Election

³⁸ Corkill and Almeida, 'Commemoration and propaganda', p.11.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.11.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.8-9.

⁴¹ Quoted in Montoito, *Galvão*, p.181.

⁴² Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.43.

Day voters would make their choice from those lists. The state reserved the right, however, to reject any candidate deemed ineligible.⁴³

Galvão agreed to run for the deputyship on condition that he was presented to the public as an independent candidate albeit sponsored by the *União Nacional*.⁴⁴ The matter of his election is not entirely clear. He first described the electoral process as “absolutely free and correct” but later recanted, claiming that he had been appointed rather than elected.⁴⁵ In any case, in January 1946 Galvão reported for work at the National Assembly.

It was Galvão’s aim to interpret and defend Angolan interests from a platform of personal political independence. He sought to carry out his term at the National Assembly as an autonomous Salazarist. On the eve of his election Galvão defined his political position, which amounted to a continuity of the regime born of the 28 May – to his mind the best political dispensation “in the last two hundred years”.⁴⁶ Any faults of the Salazarist state were those of certain individuals who, for personal reasons, had betrayed the program and principles of the regime. “I have fought them in the past”, Galvão warned these corrupt officials, “I shall be against them in the future”⁴⁷. His support for the New State was, however, not to be taken for granted. It was dependant on the regime’s willingness to correct its mistakes and defects.⁴⁸

Galvão’s electoral manifesto made some concrete promises to his supporters concerning political, administrative and social changes. These included:

1. The decentralisation of government and services
2. Resolution of the labour shortage
3. A more determined defence of the African citizen
4. Reconstruction of settler and African societies aimed at greater financial viability and better social conditions
5. Improved assistance to workers

⁴³ Michael Derrick, *The Portugal of Salazar* (London, 1938), pp.116-17.

⁴⁴ Galvão, *Por Angola*, p.8.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.27.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.20.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.24.

6. Practical application of the rights of Africans, assimilated and settlers to housing, health and subsistence⁴⁹

Galvão extended an invitation to all in Angola – from the African population to opposition members - to bury their differences and work together with him towards the implementation of his program. He pointed out that the opposition contained in its ranks talented men that Angola was very much in need of. To illustrate the benefits of transcending partisan divisions, Galvão referred to the examples set by the monarchist Henrique Paiva Couceiro (1861-1944) and republican-democrat José Norton de Matos (1867-1955), two of the colony's greatest governors.⁵⁰ These men had placed the interests of Angola above those of their respective parties, something Galvão hoped oppositionists would now emulate. "Us and them also, altogether we shall be too few!" (*Nós e eles também porque todos seremos ainda poucos!*⁵¹) was the Angolan candidate's election cry.

Firmly convinced of his political independence, Galvão was determined to deliver on the promises he had made to his electors. For the next four years (1945-49) he would take seriously his role as Angolan representative. His insistence on political autonomy, however, gradually alienated him from the regime culminating in his final break with Salazar, which we shall have occasion to discuss later in the text.

ii. On the edge of apostasy, 1947-49

Ever since his Huíla governorship, Galvão had vigorously campaigned for reforms in the colonial apparatus aimed at greater economic development and improved social integration.⁵² For years he had tried to draw governmental attention to the deficiencies in the administration of the African territories by way of speeches, reports, monographs and books. From 1937 onwards his warnings to Lisbon became more pronounced and urgent.⁵³ Thus far the colonial inspector had not received any active

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.25.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p.23.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.22.

⁵² Raby, *Fascism and Resistance*, p.154.

⁵³ Wheeler, 'The Galvão Report', p.12.

response to his criticisms and suggestions, a situation that made him increasingly despondent. Now, as a member of the National Assembly, Galvão had the political means to bring the problems regarding the African territories to the knowledge of the central government. Portugal's national interests, he argued, depended on their solution.⁵⁴

In 1945 Galvão was sent on a "special mission" to Angola and Mozambique. His task was to investigate the degree to which native legislation was being ignored in the two territories. Marcello Caetano (1906-80), colonial minister during 1944-47 and future successor to Salazar (1968-74), explained that economic demands during the Second World War led to abusive practices of forced labour in the colonies. These had to be stopped lest they became consolidated. Caetano expected Galvão – whose reports he deemed "elucidating"⁵⁵ - to provide him with the factual evidence required to correct the situation.⁵⁶ But the latter had other plans. The colonial inspector chose not to report back to his superior with the information he had gathered in Africa. He would, instead, go directly to parliament with the material meant for Caetano's desk.

On 22 January 1947, Galvão submitted to the president of the National Assembly a controversial 52-page report on conditions in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau (known as *indigenato* colonies). Labelled *Exposição* (exposition)⁵⁷, the document was discussed at a "secret session" of the 17-member *Comissão das Colónias* (Committee of Colonies) on Galvão's request.⁵⁸ As a scathing attack on the deficiencies of Portuguese colonial administration, the report was suppressed. A year later, in an interpellation to the government, the Angolan deputy repeated the main themes of his report in a speech at a public session of the Assembly, the first occasion that the regime had been openly confronted in parliament.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, pp.44 -5.

⁵⁵ Antunes, J. F. (ed), *Salazar/Caetano: Cartas Secretas 1932-1968* (Lisbon, 1993), p141.

⁵⁶ Caetano, *Minhas Memórias de Salazar*, p.193.

⁵⁷ The original manuscript of the report is stored in the *Assembleia da Republica* archives in Lisbon. This writer is greatly indebted to Professor D.L.Wheeler for kindly providing a copy of this unpublished document.

⁵⁸ Wheeler, 'The Galvão report', p.17.

⁵⁹ 'Obituary: Captain Henrique Galvão', *The Times*, June 26, 1970, p.10.

The exposition presented by Galvão was largely the product of extensive travelling in Portugal's main colonies (1927-47) in which a wide range of people – from colonial officials, settlers and missionaries to African workers themselves – were consulted. Since at least 1932 that Galvão had been gathering factual information on the problems brewing in the African territories, especially Angola.⁶⁰ However, from 1935, as a high colonial inspector, he carried out various African missions for the New State that broadened his access to the realities on the ground. A secret report sent by Galvão to colonial minister Francisco Vieira Machado (1898-1972), as early as 1938, already contained the seeds of some of the criticisms that would later feature in his *exposição*.⁶¹ By 1947, Galvão was able to compile a detailed and comprehensive report exposing the underbelly of Portuguese colonialism in Africa, an urgent appeal to the government to act on what he viewed as the most serious threat to the political and economic structures of the *indigenato* colonies.⁶²

Galvão's thesis dealt with a plethora of social, economic and administrative problems directly related to a chronic shortage of labour that threatened to paralyse Angola's economy. The native question had reached such proportions that, if not urgently addressed, would lead to the "tragic failure" of Portugal's colonial mission "after five centuries of glory".⁶³ The report identified seven key problems:

1. Heavy demographic losses caused by growing illegal emigration to neighbouring colonies since the early 1930s. Mass emigration was stimulated by various factors such as the prospect of better working conditions, higher salaries, lower taxes and a better organised African commerce in the adjacent territories.
2. Depletion of the African populations of Angola and Mozambique due to what Galvão named "physical decadence". This was linked to poor medical assistance, deficient diet, high mortality rates among infants and workers, low birth rates and so on
3. A disastrous labour situation that could not be sustained indefinitely
4. Disruption of the moral political, social and economic structures of traditional African societies

⁶⁰ Wheeler, 'The Galvão report', p.12

⁶¹ Montoito, *Galvão*, pp.101-02.

⁶² Galvão, *Exposição*, p. 5.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p.1.

5. The danger presented by the infiltration of subversive agents from adjacent colonies, especially the Belgian Congo where riots in Leopoldville in 1945 had provided an inkling of the decolonisation tide ahead
6. Abandonment of border areas by the Portuguese colonial administration
7. The colonial administration's inability or unwillingness to solve the problems mentioned above⁶⁴

Central to Galvão's report is its discussion of the labour question in the *indigenato* colonies, especially in Angola where it was more acute. Galvão identifies shortage of labour as the key problem upon which all others rested. Without a mass of African workers the colonial economy could not function. In Angola the shrinking availability of labour had reached critical proportions. The report states that the colony's current levels of production and development could not be maintained due to a deficit of fifteen thousand workers.⁶⁵

Scarcity of African labour had been a problem with which the Portuguese had grappled since the outset of their colonising efforts. As a response to the labour issue, an exploitative "contract system" - a euphemism for neo-slavery - had developed with the active participation of the colonial administration. Galvão himself had earlier been an apologist of carefully regulated compelled labour as a temporary solution.⁶⁶ Efforts such as those by Governor-General Norton de Matos (1912-15; 1921-23) to end the nefarious labour set-up proved ineffectual. From 1921 onwards the contract system firmly entrenched itself, reaching a peak between the 1930s and 1950s.⁶⁷ Galvão rated it as the single most significant cause for what he termed a "demographic haemorrhage" in which Africans emigrated at yearly rates of a hundred thousand⁶⁸ to the neighbouring colonies in an attempt to escape the shackles of forced labour. If unchecked, this emigrational drive would lead to the total depopulation of Angola within thirty years.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ Galvão, *Exposição*, p.9.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.23; 26.

⁶⁶ Galvão, *Huíla*, pp.160-61.

⁶⁷ Douglas Wheeler, 'The Forced Labor 'system' in Angola, 1903-1947: reassessing origins and persistence in the context of colonial consolidation , economic growth and reform failures' (paper presented at II Colóquio Internacional "Trabalho Forçado Africano", Centro de Estudos Africanos, Universidade do Porto, Portugal, November 18, 2005), pp.2; 5.

⁶⁸ Galvão, *Exposição*, pp.10; 13.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p.10.

The report explains how, within the contract system, Africans were recruited – Galvão prefers the term “herded”⁷⁰ - by the authorities and “supplied” on demand to the private sector as “merchandise”.⁷¹ “Contract” workers were subjected to appalling conditions including corporal punishment, inadequate feeding and low wages. Galvão rated this system as worse than slavery for a slave was better taken care of as a possession than the contract labourer who was fully disposable since he was on loan from the state and could be promptly replaced at a mere request. It mattered little that the mortality rate among contract workers could reach a staggering thirty five percent.⁷²

Apart from “supplying” the private sector, the state also “contracted” labour for its own public projects (roads, ports, railways, docks and other enterprises).⁷³ No one escaped the “contract” dragnet: the independent and self-employed workers, women, children, the old, the sick were all caught. “Only the dead”, in Galvão’s famous phrase, “were really exempted”.⁷⁴

The contract system and mass emigration were not the only causes for the scarcity of labour. The physical decadence of the native population – directly related to political and administrative action – was a significant contributor. Under nourishment, declining births, high infant mortality rates, widespread disease (e.g. bilharzias) and deaths from abusive working conditions, all played a crucial role in the depopulation process. The problem was aggravated by ineffective, virtually “non-existent”⁷⁵, health services. Crippled by bureaucracy and lack of financial funding these services failed to assist the African population. All was reduced to a “facade”⁷⁶ in which the letter of the law was not applied.

Other negative aspects such as, for example, the state’s interference in native agriculture added fuel to the fire. Small independent African farmers were urged to

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.28.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.26.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p.27.

⁷³ João Cabral, ‘Forced Labour in the Portuguese Colonies’, *Portuguese and Colonial Bulletin*, vol.1, April 1961, p.23.

⁷⁴ Galvão, *Exposição*, p.26.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.20.

⁷⁶ Galvão, *Exposição*, p.20.

concentrate on profitable products like cotton for the benefit of the large concessionaries. This compromised their subsistence. Unable to grow their food, African populations were afflicted by famine.⁷⁷

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of Galvão's report was his indictment of the colonial administration's willingness to condone this modern-day slavery and, above all, to participate in it via the recruitment and supply of forced labour. By granting the private sector's requests for workers, the state tacitly recognised the idea that it was its "duty" to do so.⁷⁸ In fact, the state was the main force behind the contract system in flagrant violation of the principles laid out in the Colonial Act (1930). Article 15 of the Act, for instance, guaranteed "the protection and defence" of Africans "in accordance with the principles of humanity". It also declared the prevention and legal punishment of "all abuses against the person and property of the natives"⁷⁹.

In addition, Galvão criticised Lisbon's "bookish" colonialism, which translated in administrative incompetence and ignorance. The state, Galvão opined, would not admit that its "native policy" was a failure.⁸⁰ Since at least 1937 that the authorities had known about the magnitude of the colonial problem yet nothing had been done besides the proclamation of rhetorical "formulas and provisions" aimed at "delaying the disease in the hope that by chance it would cure itself".⁸¹ The report went as far as a masked criticism of Salazar's "ignorance" of colonial matters.⁸² Galvão concluded that the present administration was incapable of reform due to its lack of means, mediocrity of personnel and some inherent weaknesses.⁸³

In its final section, the report urges a number of emergency measures to be immediately implemented with a view to solve the labour problem. Three main steps are suggested:

⁷⁷ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, pp.49; 56-8.

⁷⁸ Galvão, *Exposição*, p.27.

⁷⁹ Quoted in F.C.C.Egerton, *Salazar, Rebuilder of Portugal* (London, 1943), p.261.

⁸⁰ Wheeler, 'The Galvão report', p.15.

⁸¹ Galvão, *Exposição*, p.35.

⁸² *Ibid*, p.43.

⁸³ Galvão, *Exposição*, p.48.

1. Create in Lisbon the post of High Commissioner for Native Affairs reporting directly to the Colonial Minister. The High Commissioner would oversee a proposed new “colonisation” by Portuguese and Africans
2. Set up a Directorate of Native Services and Affairs based in Angola and Mozambique
3. A Fund for Repeopling or Colonisation financed by the introduction of new fiscal measures such as the Patronal tax (on all those employing African workers) and a Colonisation tax (on all Portuguese taxpayers who benefited from the colonial enterprise).⁸⁴

In addition, Galvão compiled a list of seventeen priority actions to be carried out by the High Commissioner and aimed at the problems diagnosed in his exposition. These included the revision of the Natives Labour Code and of the Natives Civil and Criminal Statute, fixing a “just wage”, emphasising volunteer labour, reorganising of indigenous communities, supervising native labour and so on.⁸⁵

In its conclusion, the report assumes a hopeful tone. Attempting to stimulate the government to act, Galvão claims that Africans who emigrated from the Portuguese territories would return, “if conditions there would be changed”.⁸⁶ He appeals to the innate Portuguese “genius as empire-builders”⁸⁷ to inspire the ruling group in seeking a solution to the African question.

The conditions described by Galvão’s exposition, although officially denied, were common knowledge in Lisbon political circles and among colonial administrators.⁸⁸ His denunciations, to quote James Duffy, “contained little that had not been said before”.⁸⁹ From as early as 1929 Galvão’s own reports and other publications had repeatedly addressed the problems of administration, forced labour, emigration and so on. Prior to the First World War English humanitarians of the Anti-Slavery Society had conducted a vigorous campaign against Portuguese ‘contract’ labour practices in

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p.50; Wheeler, ‘The Galvão report’, p.16.

⁸⁵ Galvão, *Exposição*, p.51; Wheeler, ‘The Galvão report’, p.16.

⁸⁶ Galvão, *Exposição*, p.49.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.52.

⁸⁸ Mário Soares, *Portugal Amordaçado* (Lisbon, 1974), p.439; Wheeler, ‘Forced Labor’, p.9.

⁸⁹ James Duffy, *Portugal in Africa* (Harmondsworth, 1962), p.186.

Africa. Henry W. Nevinson, George Cadbury, the Reverend John Harris and others had condemned the ‘contract’ practice as outright slavery - although that institution had been officially abolished in 1878. Their books and articles fuelled a controversy that came to involve the British and Portuguese governments, subsiding only when Lisbon had partially corrected its practices in the employment of native labour.⁹⁰ This adjustment turned out to be largely cosmetic. The contract system appears to have simply metamorphosed into a different shape of forced labour. In 1925, an American sociologist from the University of Wisconsin, Edward A. Ross, revived the controversy over working conditions in Angola and Mozambique. His *Report on Employment of Native Labor in Portuguese Africa* told much the same story that had been told by the Anti-Slavery Society militants earlier on. Ross submitted his findings to the League of Nations but failed to draw enough international attention.⁹¹

The Ross Report does not seem to have had much of a corrective impact on Angolan conditions. “Alarm bells” continued ringing throughout the 1930s, 40s and even 50s as the system of compelled labour increased its grip on the Angolan economy.⁹² Various reports, predating Galvão’s, expressed concern over mass native emigration and dreadful working conditions in the Portuguese African territories. In 1939, for example, Alberto Carlos Martins e Menezes Macedo Margaride compiled a report, “*Viagem de Estudo a Angola em 1939*”, outlining a crisis whose demographic, economic and labour features were remarkably similar to the ones described by Galvão in the late 1940s. The Angolan crisis, according to Margaride, was the result of the prevailing forced labour system and a taxation structure more demanding than that in the colonies adjacent to the Portuguese territories.⁹³

Labour conditions in Angola were again criticised in a report compiled by two Protestant missionaries in 1944. John T. Tucker, the main author, a self-declared opponent of forced labour, had lived in Angola since 1912. Tucker accused colonial

⁹⁰ The campaign against slavery in Portuguese Africa is extensively dealt with in J.Duffy, *A Question of Slavery* (Oxford, 1967).

⁹¹ For a Portuguese rebuttal of the Ross report see ‘Algumas Observações ao Relatório do Professor Ross’, *Boletim da Agência Geral das Colónias*, no.6, Dec. 1925, pp. 179-90; *Boletim da Agência Geral das Colónias*, no.7, Jan. 1926, pp.149-62; *Boletim da Agência Geral das Colónias*, no.8, Feb. 1926, pp.152-64.

⁹² Wheeler, ‘Forced Labor’, p.9.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.10.

officials and settlers of disregarding legislation aimed at protecting Africans and blatantly violating the spirit of the 1930 Colonial Act.⁹⁴ Unlike Galvão's report, the Tucker document did not reach the public. Instead it was classified as strictly confidential and stored in the British Public Record Office (Kew) until it was finally released in the 1970s.⁹⁵

A year after the Tucker report, Hortênsio de Sousa and José Augusto Pires, two high-ranking colonial officials in Mozambique, produced equally critical documents focussing on high native emigration levels in the eastern African colony.⁹⁶ Marcello Caetano himself had, in 1945, carried out a four-month study mission in the African territories, drawing conclusions not much different to those reached by Galvão. For instance, Caetano partially attributed native migration to the "blind selfishness" of employers; he condemned the contract labour system for using Africans "like pieces of equipment without any concern for their yearning, interests or desires." Reporting on his African tour, the Colonial Minister complained in *galvãoesque* terms that settlers often approached him demanding to be "given Blacks; as if Blacks were something to be given!"⁹⁷

In the broader context of literature criticising Angolan labour conditions, the 1947 text was in fact a late arrival.⁹⁸ But if Galvão had not been the first to speak out against abusive labour practices in Portuguese Africa, he was not the last either. During the 1950s various other critics added their voices to the issue of Portugal's treatment of the indigenous populations in her custody. Basil Davidson, an English journalist, rekindled the torch previously held by Nevinson, Cadbury and Harris. In *The African Awakening*, published in 1955, Davidson painted a picture of Angolan conditions almost identical to that produced by Nevinson's *A Modern Slavery* (1906).⁹⁹ In his opinion, little had changed in the half a century since his predecessor's visit to Angola. Davidson equated contract labour ("the economic

⁹⁴ Wheeler, 'The Galvão report', pp.6-7.

⁹⁵ Wheeler, 'Forced Labor', p.12.

⁹⁶ Malyn Newitt, *A History of Mozambique* (Johannesburg, 1995), pp.514-16.

⁹⁷ Gerald Bender, *Angola under the Portuguese: The Myth and the Reality* (Berkeley, 1978), pp.142-43.

⁹⁸ Wheeler, 'Forced labour', p.8.

⁹⁹ In 1954 Davidson was commissioned by *Harper's Magazine* to write an article commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of Nevinson's visit to Angola.

flywheel in Angola”) with slavery.¹⁰⁰ Terminology had changed but the system continued unabated. He drew attention to Henrique Galvão’s report as “an indispensable sequel” to Nevinson’s book.¹⁰¹



Marcello Caetano in 1945.

J. Freire Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar* (Lisbon, 1992)

Two other writers merit mention. Marvin Harris, an anthropologist from Columbia University whose pamphlet on Mozambique, *Portugal’s African “Wards”* (1958), concluded that Portuguese policy in that colony was a “variety of apartheid” operating on “personal relations left over from slavery”.¹⁰² And Augusto Casimiro, a former governor of the Congo district in Angola. Writing in the late 1950s, Casimiro argued that forced labour continued to be a major problem. He stressed the need for the state to protect the African worker from abusive employers and that the labour problem should be looked into with emphasis on health and the general well-being of the native.¹⁰³ Casimiro echoed some of Galvão’s accusations but carefully veiled his language.

¹⁰⁰ B. Davidson, ‘Africa’s Modern Slavery’, *Harper’s Magazine*, July, 1954, p.57.

¹⁰¹ B. Davidson in the introduction to G.W. Nevinson, *A Modern Slavery* (Castle Hedingham, 1963), p.xiv.

¹⁰² Marvin Harris, *Portugal’s African “Wards”* (New York, 1960), pp.34-35.

¹⁰³ Augusto Casimiro, *Angola e o Futuro: Alguns Problemas Fundamentais* (Lisbon, 1957), pp.289-321.

Considering that Galvão's report had not tread new ground, what, then, set it apart as the "classic indictment of Portuguese colonialism"¹⁰⁴? There are a number of reasons for the near-mythical status attained by the document in the 1950s and 60s. Firstly, there were the author's credentials. Widely rated as one of his generation's best Angolanists¹⁰⁵, Henrique Galvão was also an administration official intimately acquainted with the Portuguese colonial system. His criticisms, emanating straight from the horse's mouth, were therefore generally taken as accurate. Secondly, there was the element of language. Galvão's style, panache and vivid phraseology distinguished him from other officials whose writings tended towards dense technical jargon. In addition, Galvão's text projected a convincingly clear and unselfish concern with the humane facet of his topic, which placed it far above the clinical level of common bureaucracy literature. Thirdly, and most significantly, there was the thoroughness and analytical detail of the document reflecting the author's exhaustive research and unquestionable grasp of his subject (at various points in the report Galvão offers to produce further detailed evidence that might be required to corroborate any of his observations and criticisms).

Despite the report's exceptional credentials, some of its aspects are questionable. On the native emigration issue, for example, it has been pointed out that Galvão may have misinterpreted its causes, extent and significance. Migration movements in colonial Africa were common and multi-faceted.¹⁰⁶ Their causes transcended a simplistic reflex response to the spectre of forced labour. A quest for maximum freedom and economic advantage lay at the root of these population shifts. Africans immigrated to neighbouring states for a multitude of reasons: the prospect of cheaper goods; lower rates of tax; better working conditions; higher salaries; and so on.¹⁰⁷ All this, of course, does not imply that the inhumane realities of contract labour did not constitute a decisive motive for leaving Angola or Mozambique; only that Galvão's approach was reductionist. The dimensions and importance of the "demographic haemorrhage" is another questionable facet of the report, considering that Portuguese Africa experienced a population growth similar to other African territories. Moreover, the

¹⁰⁴ António de Figueiredo, *Portugal: Fifty Years of Dictatorship* (Harmondsworth, 1975), p.190.

¹⁰⁵ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, pp. 122-3.

¹⁰⁶ For a description of the various types of migration and their causes see M. Caetano, *Os Nativos na Economia Africana*, pp.26-39.

¹⁰⁷ Newitt, *Portugal in Africa*, p.120.

outflow of population from Angola and Mozambique was partly offset by incoming migrations from Belgian and British territories.¹⁰⁸

Finally, the picture of an obsolete and corrupt colonial service projected by Galvão appears to have been not entirely accurate. Archival evidence suggests that by the 1940s Portuguese administration in Africa had improved its efficiency and the “all pervasive nature of its activities.”¹⁰⁹

It is, nevertheless, probable that Galvão’s report was deliberately overdrawn in places as exemplified in its doomsday prediction of a deserted Angola by 1977. This may have been done for effect and to create a sense of urgency. But the veracity of its main charges is unlikely to be challenged. In the early 1960s, for example, Adriano Moreira, a former colonial minister, investigated the report’s principal allegations and found them to be true.¹¹⁰

What were the motivation and aims of the *Exposição*? Firstly, the report is the work of a loyal member of the regime whose concerns are reformist, constructive, political and humanitarian. Galvão aims to “agitate” the African question in order to draw the regime’s attention to its urgency.¹¹¹ His sympathy lay with the African masses but he refrains from pressing the humanitarian scandal inherent in his criticisms to avoid alienating his superiors.¹¹² This is a desperate attempt by a concerned official whose previous reports had been either ignored or destined to go no further than a “bureaucratic puff” would carry them¹¹³. If nothing is done about it, the 1947 text argues, Angola’s economy will implode and with it Portugal’s imperial existence.¹¹⁴

Although Galvão denied any personal motives in the writing of the report¹¹⁵, it has been suggested that this may not be the case. In 1947 Henrique Galvão still entertained the prospect of a promotion. Evidence suggests that, as a reward for his

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*; Caetano, *Os Nativos na Economia Africana*, p.27.

¹⁰⁹ Newitt, *Portugal in Africa*, pp.187-88.

¹¹⁰ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.123.

¹¹¹ Galvão, *Exposição*, p.3.

¹¹² Wheeler, ‘The forced labour system’, p.14.

¹¹³ Galvão, *Exposição*, p.3.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.2.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.2; 52.

brave outcry on African conditions, he may have expected to be named Minister of Colonies, Governor General of Angola or even High Commissioner for Native Affairs.¹¹⁶ Thus far he had held important but second tier posts in the New State hierarchy.¹¹⁷ Some observers have added other personal reasons: frustration caused by the apathy with which the government treated his reports over the years; patriotic concern or a feeling of solidarity with the African populations under Portuguese rule.¹¹⁸

Galvão himself explained his critical attitude as an act of conscience. He felt it his duty to run “all the risks” for a cause that he had pledged to defend as Angola’s deputy.¹¹⁹ Regardless of what his personal motives were, it is clear that Galvão’s criticism of labour conditions was part of a wider concern with the survival of Portuguese colonialism. For Galvão, as for many of his generation, colonialism and nationalism were intertwined. The African possessions were Portugal’s *raison d’être* as an independent country in Europe.¹²⁰ Metropolitan Portugal and its overseas territories constituted one body. To let go of the colonies would amount to multiple amputations that would reduce Portugal to European insignificance. This blend of nationalism and colonialism informs Galvão’s report, as it does all his political views.

In his writings Galvão consistently argued that neither Portugal’s secular doctrines of colonisation nor the fundamentals of its African policy were in question.¹²¹ There was no need for more legislation. He pointed out that the *ressurgimento colonial* (colonial resurgence) experienced between 1891 and 1910 had not been based on new legislation but rather on the application of what the existing laws enunciated. The architects of modern Portuguese colonialism - figures such as Antonio Enes (1848-1901), Paiva Couceiro, Caldas Xavier (1853-1896) and Norton de Matos - had merely coordinated the institutions and their ends. Their success was primarily due to a combination of thought and action.¹²²

¹¹⁶ Wheeler, ‘The Galvão report’, pp.19-20.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.11.

¹¹⁸ Peter Fryer & Patricia McGowan Pinheiro, *Oldest Ally: A Portrait of Salazar’s Portugal* (London, 1961), p.192; Franco Nogueira, *Salazar: O Ataque* (Coimbra, 1980), p.168.

¹¹⁹ Galvão, *Por Angola*, pp.222-23.

¹²⁰ ‘Discurso do Sr. Henrique Galvão’, p.16.

¹²¹ See, for example, *Por Angola*, p.185.

¹²² Henrique Galvão, ‘Um critério de povoamento Europeu nas colónias Portuguesas’, *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, no.83. May 1932, p.7.

Galvão identified three main circumstances as responsible for the weak current governmental structure in Angola: disorganised production, shortage of labour and administrative crisis. Of the three, the issue of administration was the most serious since it affected all others.¹²³ However sound the doctrines and policy, they were ultimately dependent on the administration mechanism for delivery. Here lay the crux of the matter. Methods and norms of colonial administration, effective at the turn of the century, had become outdated. Angola, as an example, had turned into a bureaucratised colony; incapable of the pragmatic flexibility required to correct its socio-economic flaws. He vividly diagnosed the predicament in three words, “*A máquina emperrou*” (the machine jammed).¹²⁴

It is within this imagery of broken machinery that the 1947 report should be considered, as an effort to fix the machine, not to dismantle it. The author’s aims were those of a colonialist concerned that his government had deviated from the principles and doctrines laid down by the founders of modern Portuguese colonialism. Economic stagnation, stemming primarily from corrupt, immoral and bureaucratic administration, threatened the very fabric of the Portuguese Empire. Nowhere was this more patent than in the inhumane conditions under which Africans toiled. Galvão, therefore, did what any good mechanic would have done: address the cause not the symptom. He insisted, however, that the problem be solved within the framework of Portuguese colonialism’s “civilising mission”.¹²⁵

It took the regime four years to respond to Galvão’s exposition. In July 1951, the Ministry of Overseas (formerly Ministry of Colonies) appointed judge Dr Manuel Pinheiro da Costa to head an official inquiry into the report’s allegations. Costa’s findings were compiled in a 26-volume ‘report on the report’ and submitted to the Superior Disciplinary Council of the Ministry of Overseas. At least sixteen colonial officials were investigated for misconduct but it is not known whether any punitive

¹²³ Henrique Galvão and Carlos Selvagem, *Império Ultramarino Português: Angola* (Lisbon, 1952), pp.298-9; 302.

¹²⁴ Galvão, *Por Angola*, pp. 218; 231-34.

¹²⁵ Galvão, *Huíla*, p.133.

measures were actually applied.¹²⁶ According to Galvão, however, the only one punished was Dr Costa whose career was barred from further promotion.¹²⁷

The 1947 report does not seem to have had much of an impact on Angola and Mozambique, considering that systematic use of African forced labour continued until 1961 when it was finally abolished. Most of the reform suggestions put forward by the report were not implemented. Increased European colonisation in the 1950s and 60s appears to be the only measure adopted by the regime that might have been partly related to some of Galvão's proposals. This was, at any rate, an idea propagated earlier by general Norton de Matos.¹²⁸

It is nevertheless difficult to ascertain the report's influence upon the behaviour of a considerable number of colonial officials who were acquainted with its main theses.¹²⁹ In other words, the officialdom's awareness of Galvão's criticisms might have acted subconsciously as a moderating agent in the application of the forced labour system. Such an influence would be virtually impossible to gauge.

iii. The break with the regime

Galvão's *exposição* carried some personal consequences for its author. For example, on the same day that he found out about Galvão's denunciations at the National Assembly in January 1947, Marcello Caetano wrote a "harsh" letter to his subordinate reprimanding his disloyalty and mishandling of state information. The minister accused Galvão of making public a delicate matter, which he knew could well expose Portugal to serious international criticisms. Thenceforth the relationship between the two men practically ceased to be.¹³⁰ At any rate, such private setbacks did not end Galvão's career as a state official.

¹²⁶ *Diário de Notícias*, July 11, 1951, p.2.

¹²⁷ Galvão, *Carta Aberta*, p.39.

¹²⁸ Wheeler, 'The Galvão report', p.22.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.21.

¹³⁰ Caetano, *Minhas Memórias de Salazar*, p.257.

The *exposição* certainly contributed to Galvão's break with the regime but it was not its *causa sine qua non*. For three years (1947-49) after submitting his report, he remained a National Assembly deputy and a colonial inspector whose books and articles continued to be published. The formal split with the Salazarist state would only take place in 1949.

Henrique Galvão's alienation from the regime was "progressive and accumulative", based on gathered information relating to the colonial question and expressed politically in the National Assembly.¹³¹ The colonial inspector's investigations (1935-48) and the disregard with which the government received his ideas and proposals over the years translated in loss of faith in Salazar. The Angola question, he wrote, enabled him to see the premier in "plain nudity". It convinced him that Salazar was unwilling to correct the weaknesses of his colonial administration.¹³² Galvão concluded he had believed in "a man that did not exist".¹³³ The New State had turned into an oligarchy of professors, bankers and bureaucrats who ruled over a country riddled with corruption and in which the population took refuge in *fado* and football.¹³⁴

Elsewhere, Galvão claimed that he had "expelled himself" from the New State "in the manner of one who jumps out of a mud puddle". "I cut my career short", he added, "because I felt repugnance at the advantages and enormous opportunities that I could enjoy in the shade of the corrupt state" created by Salazar.¹³⁵ Be that as it may, the real motives for his actions during 1947-49 have never been reliably determined. António de Figueiredo, an ardent anti-Salazarist journalist exiled in Britain, thought that despite his "liberal tendencies, artistic tastes and humane feelings," Galvão was "also an opportunist" whose association with Salazar had lasted a "considerable length of time."¹³⁶ Marcello Caetano's opinion on the character of his former colonial official was equally harsh: Galvão "lied with extraordinary facility", held "grudges" and did not hesitate to "make up whatever he did not know".¹³⁷ Perhaps such a

¹³¹ Montoito, *Galvão*, p.87.

¹³² Galvão, *Carta Aberta*, p.14.

¹³³ Montoito, *Galvão*, p.179.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.175.

¹³⁵ Galvão, *Carta Aberta*, pp.17-18.

¹³⁶ Figueiredo, *Fifty Years*, pp.191-92.

¹³⁷ Caetano, *Minhas Memórias de Salazar*, p.245.

judgement is unfair or at least partly so. Whatever his faults, Henrique Galvão was a man of indisputable courage whose dissidence exacted a personal price that not many would be willing to pay. He could have remained comfortably a cog in the New State machinery and yet opted for a path that would inevitably lead to exile and isolation.

There were, however, more reasons for Galvão's break with Salazar than just personal disenchantment. The regime itself felt alienated by the Angolan deputy's insistence on political autonomy and his increasingly defiant attitude towards the government. In 1948, for instance, Galvão appeared as a defence witness on behalf of his friend and co-author Col. Carlos Selvagem (1890-1973)¹³⁸ being tried for his involvement in a coup attempt in April 1947. This event brought Galvão to the attention of PIDE (*Policia Internacional de Defesa do Estado*) (International Police for the Defence of the State). Thereafter the security police closely watched the troublesome deputy.

From December 1948 to April 1949, Galvão fought his last battle as a member of the regime. His interventions in the National Assembly became increasingly aggressive, requesting information on specific individuals and on sensitive details of Angola's economic administration.¹³⁹ In an intervention in the National Assembly on 24 February 1949 (*aviso prévio sobre a administração de Angola*), Galvão called the Luanda administration a "colossal lie" attempting to hide its "mediocrity and incompetence" from Lisbon.¹⁴⁰ The gloves are off. From now on matters will rush headlong towards a breaking point. In Luanda, public protests followed Galvão's "colossal lie" intervention. These, according to the deputy, are staged by the administration. He tells the National Assembly: "I know (...) how these things are set up in Angola to impose the lie I referred to in my *aviso prévio*".¹⁴¹ In any case, the protests and newspaper coverage they received had placed Galvão and the Angola question in the public arena.

¹³⁸ Carlos Selvagem was the *nom de plum* of Carlos Tavares de Andrade Afonso dos Santos, former governor of Inhambane (Mozambique) and Huíla (Angola).

¹³⁹ See, for example, Galvão's *aviso-prévio* of December 1948. Galvão, *Por Angola*, pp.213-14.

¹⁴⁰ Galvão, *Por Angola*, p.219. Galvão borrowed the "colossal lie" expression from a 1929 Salazar speech and repeatedly uses it in his works: see *Por Angola*, p.218; *Nacionalização de Angola* (Lisbon, 1930), p.3; 'Um critério de povoamento europeu nas colónias Portuguesas', p.6; *Angola: Para uma Nova Política* (Lisbon, 1937), p.210.

¹⁴¹ Galvão, *Por Angola*, p.220

The “colossal lie” debate in the National Assembly lasted from February to April 1949 when it was officially ended by a motion presented by Mário de Figueiredo (1891-1969), a leading member of the regime and close associate of Salazar from Coimbra days. Supported by all deputies (except Galvão) Figueiredo’s motion required an investigation into Galvão’s allegations. But four days later the restless Angola representative reopened the issue on account of the media’s coverage of information related to his accusations in the National Assembly.¹⁴² Figueiredo was annoyed, arguing that Galvão could not simply restart a debate that had been formally concluded. In response the Angola deputy reminded the Assembly that he had not voted in favour of Figueiredo’s motion.¹⁴³

In the meanwhile, having served his four-year term as deputy for Angola, Galvão received an unexpected invitation to run again for the National Assembly as *União Nacional*’s candidate for the city of Setúbal. Although the invitation had come from Ulisses Cortez (1900-75), a prominent member of the *União Nacional*’s executive, it most certainly had the approval of Salazar himself.¹⁴⁴ Galvão accepted the offer but days later he published an article in an Oporto daily (*Jornal de Notícias*) criticising Mário de Figueiredo and the National Assembly over the Angola question. In view of these criticisms, Cortez withdrew his initial invitation. In a letter to Galvão, the *União Nacional* representative chided him for his treatment of Figueiredo whom he praised as one of the “highest intellectual and moral figures” of the regime.¹⁴⁵

An irate Figueiredo demanded that action be taken against the “*garoto*” (ill-mannered person). Not even an appeasing letter from Salazar could calm him down.¹⁴⁶ As a result, disciplinary proceedings were instituted against the recalcitrant Galvão. It is this episode, according to Franco Nogueira, that signals the dissident’s transition to the opposition camp.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p.323.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp.325-26.

¹⁴⁴ Montoito, *Galvão*, p.123; Nogueira, *Salazar: O Ataque*, p.167.

¹⁴⁵ Quoted in Montoito, *Galvão*, p.123-24.

¹⁴⁶ In a letter to Figueiredo (November 1949) Salazar tried to convince his friend not to take Galvão’s article too seriously. Nogueira, *Salazar: O Ataque*, p.168.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.167-8.

d) Apostate, 1951-59

i. Political outlook

Galvão once wrote that Africa determined his fate.¹⁴⁸ It certainly did. His idealistic colonialism, an idiosyncratic personality and involvement in attempts to oust the government had changed him from Salazar's *menino bonito* (pretty boy) in the 1930s to public enemy in the 1950s. Had it not been for Africa, this metamorphosis might not have occurred and, what is more, he might not have become the "Portuguese-African at heart" whose affection for the colonies invigorated his patriotic sentiments.¹⁴⁹ Galvão's emotional attachment to the African territories and their significance to Portugal loomed large both in his adherence to Salazar's regime and later in his break with it. It was primarily as a Portuguese-African that he joined the opposition ranks. He had come to view Salazar's administration as a threat to the survival of the empire, which, in his mind, constituted Portugal's *raison d'être*.¹⁵⁰

The political outlook of Henrique Galvão had always been defined by his colonialism and anti-communism. After 1951, a third decisive element was added: anti-Salazarism. An increasingly obsessive preoccupation with Salazar came to dominate Galvão's thinking. He now directed his "rhetorical fury", in the words of one writer¹⁵¹, at the premier and his regime, which he blamed for virtually all the problems affecting Portugal. In Africa, the New State had turned the clock back by reversing the enlightened colonial policy of development and autonomy pursued by the likes of Paiva Couceiro and Norton de Matos in the early part of the twentieth century. Without Salazar, Galvão reasoned, Portugal could have been a "euro-African federal republic of Portuguese states". Instead, thanks to a corrupt and inefficient African administration, Portugal trailed behind all the other colonial powers.¹⁵² The

¹⁴⁸ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.40.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.40-1.

¹⁵⁰ 'Discurso do Sr. Henrique Galvão', p.227.

¹⁵¹ Raby, *Fascism and Resistance*, p.157.

¹⁵² Galvão, *Carta Aberta*, p.65. This is a fallacious reading of Salazar's colonial administration.

Galvão takes an idealist view of African policy prior to 1928. In fact the Republican administration's emphasis on colonial decentralization and growth was directly linked to high levels of corruption, a trend only reversed when Salazar reaffirmed the central power of the colonial office in the 1930s. For an interesting discussion of this topic see Smith, A.K., 'António Salazar and the reversal of Portuguese colonial policy', *Journal of African History*, vol.15, no.4,

spread of communism was also attributed to Salazar whose “blind McCarthyism” was geared towards projecting the New State as the only alternative to communism. Portuguese communists should, therefore, thank the prime minister for swelling their numbers in a profoundly Christian country inimical to Marxism.¹⁵³ They should also be grateful to the United States whose support of Salazar and its reluctance to back the non-communist liberal opposition had created a general state of *americanofobia* and distrust toward the West in Portugal. These were conditions ideally suited to communist designs.¹⁵⁴

ii. First steps as a declared anti-Salazarist

Galvão inaugurated his active anti-Salazarism during the presidential elections held in 1951, following the death in office of President Marshall Carmona. As mentioned above, the 1933 Constitution stipulated that the president of the Republic was to be elected by direct suffrage for a seven-year term. The electoral process was, however, subject to several conditions. It was, for instance, restricted to property holders, taxpayers and literates while the female vote was limited to certain categories. Furthermore, opposition candidates had to be officially approved.¹⁵⁵ Therefore out of a European population of eight million only one tenth qualified to vote.

In the colonial territories, Africans who enjoyed *assimilado* status – in 1950 there were approximately 35 000 in Angola and Mozambique – were allowed to vote provided they met the conditions referred to above. According to Portuguese colonial legislation a certificate was issued to those who satisfied official criteria used to define a “civilised” person. Non-Europeans classified as “civilised” or “assimilated” had the same rights and duties as any other Portuguese citizen.¹⁵⁶ Therefore, a number of Africans would have been able to participate in Portugal’s presidential elections.

pp.653-67.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp.32-33; Henrique Galvão, *Da Minha Luta Contra o Salazarismo e o Comunismo em Portugal* (Lisbon, 1976), p.252.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.251-52.

¹⁵⁵ Tom Gallagher, *Portugal: A Twentieth-century Interpretation* (Manchester, 1986), p.146; Hugh Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal* (London, 1970), p.349.

¹⁵⁶ Malyn Newitt, *Portugal in Africa: the Last Hundred Years* (London, 1981), pp. 100-01; 138.

For the 1951 election the opposition presented two candidates: Dr Ruy Luis Gomes (1905-84), representing the Left, including the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP)¹⁵⁷; and Admiral Manuel Carlos Quintão Meireles (1880-1962), standing for the moderate oppositionists. Meireles, a former Foreign Affairs minister (1928-29) and supporter of the New State now blamed Salazar for betraying the ideals of 28 May.¹⁵⁸ He contended that Portugal's present situation was akin to that of 1910-26. Salazar had merely replaced a one-party rule with another.¹⁵⁹ At any rate, Meireles did not want to dismantle the Salazarist state. He merely sought evolution within the regime with an emphasis on the protection of religious freedom and a decided stance against Communism.¹⁶⁰ Galvão, engaged as the presidential candidate's public relations manager, was one of the "prime movers" of the admiral's campaign.¹⁶¹ On the eve of the election, Meireles withdrew his candidacy, leaving the path wide open for General Higinio Craveiro Lopes (1894-1964) to become Portugal's next President. Two reasons had led to Meireles' withdrawal from the presidential race. He felt that the New State's postwar promises of democracy and fair electoral conditions were fraudulent and that it was impossible to contest an election within a context of censorship and inaccessibility to the media in what he called a "simulated" democratic scenario¹⁶². The admiral simply refused to bestow legitimacy on the regime's "democratic" ruse.

Lasting only 15 days, the Meireles campaign caused considerable damage to the Salazarist state. The fact that most, if not all, key elements in the admiral's camp were either former New State members or 28 May prominent figures demonstrated that the regime's unity was, at least, partly illusory¹⁶³.

Participation in the 1951 electoral race convinced Galvão that the regime could not be challenged democratically. Change, he now realised, would only be achieved through revolutionary means¹⁶⁴. His next step, therefore, was to get further involved

¹⁵⁷ Gomes was eventually disqualified as ineligible due to his links with the PCP.

¹⁵⁸ Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, pp.71-2.

¹⁵⁹ Montoito, *Galvão*, pp.130; 132.

¹⁶⁰ Figueiredo, *Fifty Years*, p197.

¹⁶¹ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.62; Raby, *Fascism and Resistance*, p.155.

¹⁶² Montoito, *Galvão*, p.139.

¹⁶³ Soares, *Portugal Amordaçado*, p.190; Montoito, *Galvão*, p.129.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

in organised opposition politics. Mindful to stay within the legal norms set up by the 1933 constitution, Galvão and a number of disgruntled military men and First Republic politicians founded the *Organização Cívica Nacional* (National Civic Organisation) (OCN).¹⁶⁵ Ideologically based on the 28 May manifesto (e.g. return to full legitimate democratic rule, anti-communism, religious freedom and so on) the OCN was meant to be a movement of “consciences” uniting all Portuguese democrats against the regime’s sophistic arguments and mystifications designed to debase democracy and spiritually enslave the masses.¹⁶⁶

iii. Arrest, trials and imprisonment

On 7 January 1952, PIDE raided an OCN meeting at 42 *Rua da Assunção*, Lisbon, arresting Henrique Galvão and several others under the accusation of subversion and conspiracy against the state. According to the security police, it was OCN’s intention to create “disorder in the streets” during a high profile NATO meeting scheduled to take place in Lisbon in the coming weeks.¹⁶⁷ Such an action, security officials contended, would seriously compromise Portugal’s international image as a stable country.

Between January and December, Galvão remained in custody while PIDE, using legal provision for detention without trial, prepared a criminal proceeding against him. On 9 December 1952, the accused finally went on trial before a three-judge panel comprising two generals (Leonel Vieira and Henrique Pereira do Vale) and a civilian magistrate (Dr. Oliveira Correia)¹⁶⁸ in what became known as the *intentona da Rua da Assunção* (the Assunção Street conspiracy).

Galvão was charged primarily with being the author, organiser and mentor of a revolutionary movement intent on overthrowing the government.¹⁶⁹ The prosecution argued that notes found in his personal files were the actual blueprints for a projected

¹⁶⁵ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.62; Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, p.72.

¹⁶⁶ Montoito, *Galvão*, pp.140-41.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p.142.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.156.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.155.

coup. In his typical impish humour, the accused - whose mistress was present in the court¹⁷⁰ - denied the bulky “blueprint” file contained anything either than an outline for a play he was working on.

At the end of a nine-day trial, on 17 December 1952, Galvão was found guilty as charged and sentenced to three years in prison or four years and six months in exile.¹⁷¹ That same year he was stripped of his rank as a captain and expelled from the Army reserves where he had been since 1947.¹⁷²

Upon being sentenced, Galvão wrote to judge Leonel Vieira complaining that the verdict was directly related to his denunciations in the National Assembly. “Had I been one of the thieves of Angola”, he fulminated, “I would still be free”.¹⁷³ In his reply Vieira denied any link between Galvão’s interventions in the National Assembly and his conviction: “Can you sincerely say that you were tried as a vengeance for your request for an investigation of the Angola question?” Vieira added that Galvão’s appeal for an inquiry into Angolan conditions was generally supported and “even praised”. “Why, then” - he asks in reference to the contents of the military plans found in Galvão’s apartment - “organise shock troops to launch violent assaults? Did you consider the people you planned to attack?” At the end of his letter Vieira compliments his addressee as “a person possessing great resources of intelligence”. In a reply oozing sarcasm, Galvão sent the judge a copy of Molière’s comic play *Tartuffe*, a study in hypocrisy written in 1664, as a “modest souvenir” of his own trial. He made the offer not as “a condemned prisoner” but as “a playwright”.¹⁷⁴

On appeal, the Supreme Military Court annulled the December trial. Part of the reason for the annulment being the fact that only two - Galvão and Col. Luis Gonzaga Tadeu - out of eight accused were actually convicted in 1952. Such an outcome did not lend much credibility to the large scale revolutionary operation described in

¹⁷⁰ Wheeler, ‘The Galvão report’, p.18. Galvão had been married to Maria de Lurdes Lucena Rosa since 1919.

¹⁷¹ Montoito, *Galvão*, pp.162-63.

¹⁷² ‘A Defiant Portuguese’, *New York Times*, Dec.10, 1963, p.2; Wheeler, ‘The Galvão report’, p.18.

¹⁷³ Henrique Galvão, *O Assalto ao “Santa Maria”* (Lisbon, 1974), p.116.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.122;125.

PIDE's case against Galvão and his co-accused. Therefore a new trial was set for March 1953 aimed at correcting this situation.¹⁷⁵

Interspersed with the main court case against him, Galvão faced a secret military trial in which he was charged with injurious behaviour, defamation and insubordination related to the letters he had addressed to judges Leonel Vieira and Pereira do Vale in December 1952.¹⁷⁶ At any rate, on 31 March his previous sentence was upheld: three years in prison or four years and six months in exile plus loss of political rights for fifteen years.¹⁷⁷ In passing the sentence the court had considered Galvão's previous political and social services to the nation as well as his medals and decorations (these included the *Grande Official da Ordem Militar de Cristo*, the *Knighthood of Leopold II* (Belgium) and the *Official Dignity of the Republic* (Spain))¹⁷⁸

On 22 June 1953, Henrique Galvão began serving his sentence at the Peniche prison. The years in jail were not uneventful. Described as a "wild beast in a cage", Galvão was in constant rebellion against his situation. His refusal to surrender found expression in an aggressive attitude regarding the prison authorities (escape attempts, violence towards guards and hunger strikes) but most of all in his incessant scurrilous political writings. Galvão made a conscious decision to make use of the last weapon available to him: the pen. He wrote as a way of attacking the government, denouncing corruption and inciting civil disobedience. Connivant elements of Lisbon Penitentiary staff assisted him in the printing and smuggling of propaganda pamphlets known as "Moreanto" (Movement of Antitotalitarian Resistance) that were subsequently distributed countrywide.¹⁷⁹ Also, the Brazilian magazine *Anhembi* published a number of Galvão's inflammatory articles. In the meantime, the author circulated copies of *Vagô*, a banned political satire he had written in prison.¹⁸⁰ In short, the irrepressible convict had launched his own micro literary campaign against the state.

¹⁷⁵ Montoito, *Galvão*, p.165. In the re-trial only one out of nine accused was absolved.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.165-66.

¹⁷⁷ Arquivo Histórico Militar /Henrique Carlos Malta Galvão/ Caixa 1321.

¹⁷⁸ *Grande Enciclopédia Portuguesa e Brasileira*, p.101.

¹⁷⁹ Raby, *Fascism and Resistance*, p.156; Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.66.

¹⁸⁰ Montoito, *Galvão*, p188.

On the day that he was to be released, 8 October 1954, Galvão was again arrested by PIDE on charges of defamation of government officials and publishing subversive propaganda while in detention.¹⁸¹ PIDE's case was almost entirely based on the contents of Galvão's prison writings (1952-54). The fact that the security police, aware that other elements were involved in the publication of Moreanto, did not charge anyone else besides Galvão is indisputable proof that it had been the state's intention from the start (1952) to control Henrique Galvão by way of imprisonment. Only the link with the *Assunção* conspiracy prevented the state from realising its designs in 1952/53¹⁸². Now that Galvão could be dealt with in total isolation, the door would be locked and the key hurled into oblivion.

For the next three and a half years the imprisoned Galvão waited for PIDE to finalise its case against him. In March 1958, the accused went on trial for defamation of government officials and publishing of subversive literature. Claiming illness, Galvão did not attend the proceedings. The court's verdict, as expected, was particularly harsh: sixteen years in prison plus two years for accumulated fines and suspension of political rights for twenty years¹⁸³. Three months later, an appeal against the sentence was dismissed¹⁸⁴. The condemned was sixty-three and looking at what was effectively a life sentence.

Basil Davidson's writings of the mid-1950s in conjunction with various articles published by English newspapers (especially the *Observer* and the *Guardian*) had introduced the 1947 report and its author to the Anglophone public. Besides featuring in the British liberal press, Galvão's case had also drawn the attention of legal and humanitarian groups.¹⁸⁵ By the late 1950s, however, British interest on the Portuguese rebel seemed no longer confined to the left of the political spectrum. On the occasion of his 1958 trial, for example, Henrique Galvão was the subject of an interesting article in the conservative *Economist*, critical of the Salazar regime's handling of his case. Galvão was appraised as a "martyr" with a "shabby halo", worn "with dignity". Among Portugal's 75 political prisoners, he stood out as the mysterious "prisoner in

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, pp.188-89.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.189.

¹⁸⁴ 'Portuguese Loses Appeal', *New York Times*, April 19, 1958, p.9.

¹⁸⁵ Wheeler, 'The Galvão report', p.18.

the tower”, an “unforgotten symbol” of “stubborn resistance” against the New State. His revolutionary ideals may have been symptomatic of “some literary mania”; he may indeed be no more than a pamphleteer; but at the end of the day, it was the Lisbon government that propped up Galvão’s “shabby” aureole by taking him seriously.¹⁸⁶ What the *Economist* writer failed to grasp was that the regime could not afford to underestimate the threat presented by Henrique Galvão, a highly intelligent and enterprising insider who raised public doubts concerning the levels of integrity, administrative ability and indeed the very unity of the Salazarist state. He was not the sort of man to be bought or ignored. The intimidated officialdom’s realisation that Galvão could not be swept under the rug must partly explain the severity with which his political interventions were punished.

iv. The Delgado presidential campaign, May-June 1958

While Galvão languished behind bars, Portugal went to the polls for a septennial presidential election. The 1958 presidential campaign hit Portugal like a “populist whirlwind”, in D.L. Raby’s arresting expression.¹⁸⁷ Its axis was General Humberto da Silva Delgado (1906-1965). A supporter of the New State, Delgado had held various prestigious posts including that of Military Attaché in Washington and Portugal’s representative at NATO. During the Second World War he had been instrumental in the acquisition of the Azores as an air base for the United States and Britain. For his services, Delgado was awarded the U.S. Legion of Merit and Britain’s C.B.E. This, according to one writer, had the equivalent effect of “handing honeycomb to a bear”.¹⁸⁸ Delgado would never waver in his overt pro-Americanism. Portuguese communists nicknamed him “Coca-Cola General”, a stooge of the United States.¹⁸⁹ Salazar saw him as “enamoured of certain aspects of the American way of life” that should not be imported.¹⁹⁰ Yet it was precisely his contact with American democracy

¹⁸⁶ ‘A Much-Tried Portuguese’, *The Economist*, Feb.15, 1958, p.59

¹⁸⁷ Raby, *Fascism and Resistance*, p.177.

¹⁸⁸ Warren Rogers, *The Floating Revolution* (New York, 1962), p.26.

¹⁸⁹ Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, p.73.

¹⁹⁰ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.79.

that inspired Delgado to get actively involved in Portuguese politics, blaming Portugal's backwardness on Salazar's slow-tempo policies.¹⁹¹

Although they seldom met¹⁹², Henrique Galvão and Humberto Delgado had long been acquainted. The two men established a closer relationship when, from 1952 onwards, Delgado periodically called on Galvão at the Caxias and Peniche prisons and later at the Santa Maria Hospital.¹⁹³ In one of these visits, in 1957, Galvão revealed his plan to oust Salazar: he suggested Delgado should run for the Presidency - an idea the General was keen on.¹⁹⁴

In April 1958, Delgado announced his candidature for the Presidency as a moderate democrat. He had the support of all the sections of the opposition. His program, however, was virtually non-existent. To fire Salazar and dismantle the regime's "repressive apparatus" seemed the only points on the General's manifesto. But if he lacked a plan he was not short on ability and enthusiasm.¹⁹⁵

In a blitz two-month campaign, Delgado managed to stir up a massive support. Wherever he went in the country, the 'fearless General', as he became known, was received by large crowds. His direct populist style made his message easy to grasp and captivated the audiences. "It's time for them to go", he told the public, "We are sick of them. Out with them. Out with them! Throw them out!"¹⁹⁶ No great rhetoric, but effective nonetheless. Delgado projected himself as a symbol of change, and Portugal had not known change for thirty years. Political and economic stability had created a yearning for the new. People rallied to this eccentric Sebastian. "It's not for me that they come", Delgado said, "They want change. We all want change."¹⁹⁷

¹⁹¹ Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, p.73 ; Porch, *Portuguese Armed Forces*, p.24 ; Kay, *Salazar*, p.343.

¹⁹² Delgado, *Memoirs*, p.168.

¹⁹³ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.68; Caetano, *Minhas Memórias de Salazar*, p.544; Soares, *Portugal Amordaçado*, p.204; Nogueira, *Salazar: O Ataque*, p.450.

¹⁹⁴ Delgado, *Memoirs*, p.88.

¹⁹⁵ Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, p.73; Kay, *Salazar*, p.343.

¹⁹⁶ Quoted in Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, p.74.

¹⁹⁷ Quoted in Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.27.

On Election Day General Delgado polled 236,258 votes against 758,998 received by Admiral Américo Tomás (1894-1987), the *União Nacional* candidate.¹⁹⁸ Considering the restrictions of the electoral process and the possibility that it had been rigged¹⁹⁹, Delgado had done astonishingly well. Salazar told his incredulous listeners that had the General's campaign gone a while longer, he would have been elected: "He would have won, I tell you", the premier asserted.²⁰⁰

The Delgado candidacy had shaken the regime's foundations. To ensure there was no repeat, the constitution was amended. Henceforth an electoral college, not popular vote, would decide the choice of a president.²⁰¹

The defeated Delgado paid a personal price. Brought before a military tribunal on charges of defamation concerning the president and the government, he was dismissed from the armed forces on 7 January.²⁰² Five days later, fearing further punitive action from the authorities, the General requested political asylum in the Brazilian Embassy. After ninety-eight days as a guest of the South Americans, Delgado was permitted to leave the country. He flew to Brazil on 21 April 1959.²⁰³

v. Escape and asylum

While the Delgado storm raged across the country, Henrique Galvão was kept *incommunicado* in the Peniche gaol.²⁰⁴ Prison authorities were not taking any chances with the troublesome inmate. Later, in October 1958, he was transferred to the Santa Maria Hospital. Galvão, perennially frail throughout his prison years, was to suffer various nervous breakdowns.²⁰⁵

¹⁹⁸ Porch, *Portuguese Armed Forces*, p.24.

¹⁹⁹ See Delgado's *Memoirs*, pp.116-30 for his protest against the regime's behaviour during the electoral process.

²⁰⁰ Quoted in Nogueira, *Salazar: A Resistência* (Porto, 1984), p.22.

²⁰¹ Figueiredo, *Fifty Years*, p.201.

²⁰² Delgado, *Memoirs*, p.161.

²⁰³ For an insider's account of the Delgado asylum negotiations see Álvaro Lins, *Missão em Portugal*. Lins was Brazilian Ambassador to Portugal in 1959.

²⁰⁴ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.70.

²⁰⁵ 'Political Prisoner Escapes in Portugal', *New York Times*, Jan.17, 1959, p.5; Raby, *Fascism and Resistance*, p.156.

Contemplating his future, the prisoner concluded that escape was the most logical route to follow. At his age he did not have another two decades to spare. On the night of 15 January 1959, wearing an overcoat and a false moustache, Galvão climbed out of the bathroom window on the seventh floor of the prison hospital. Using his “immunity from dizziness caused by height” he walked along the sills outside, making his way to the main entrance of the building. The doorman, mistaking the escapee for a member of the medical staff, said, “Good night, doctor”, to which Galvão replied, “And a very good night to you, my friend.”²⁰⁶ With that he disappeared into the night. Free again.

There was no official comment on the escape. Yet several questions were asked in government circles. Did Galvão enjoy any protection? Was there a link between him and Delgado? Were the two cases the prelude of something bigger? And were the military involved?²⁰⁷ No one could provide answers.

Meanwhile, hiding in a friend’s house, Galvão eluded PIDE’s nationwide manhunt. For a month the fugitive’s whereabouts remained unknown.²⁰⁸ Detection, however, could not be evaded indefinitely. To retain his freedom, Galvão had to leave the country. Asylum in one of the South American embassies seemed the only viable course.

The Brazilian Embassy was a first choice. But the Brazilians already had their hands full with Humberto Delgado who had been in the building since early January. His case had provoked much controversy, including attacks on the Ambassador, Álvaro Lins, by the local press. It would not be wise to present Lins with an extra burden. Galvão faced another difficulty. In response to Delgado’s defection, PIDE had placed all South American embassies under surveillance.²⁰⁹ Access to any of the diplomatic buildings would be dangerous. After doing his own reconnaissance, Galvão opted for the Argentine Embassy as the most suitable for his plan. Although watched by the security police, it offered the best chance of success. Disguised as a porter, with two

²⁰⁶ *The Times*, Jun.26, 1970, p.10; Galvão, *Santa Maria*, pp.73-4.

²⁰⁷ Nogueira, *Salazar: A Resistência*, p.48.

²⁰⁸ Raby, *Fascism and Resistance*, p.157; ‘Political Prisoner Escapes in Portugal’, *New York Times*, Jan.17, 1959, p.5.

²⁰⁹ Lins, *Missão em Portugal*, p.259; Galvão, *Santa Maria*, pp.75-6.

pistols in his pockets, Galvão turned up at the Embassy on 16 February, walking right into the building without having to “even caress the butts” of his weapons. Political asylum was granted immediately.²¹⁰ He was now in the hands of diplomacy.

For three months the Embassy would be home to Henrique Galvão while the Portuguese Government and Argentinean officials disputed his situation. Lisbon refused to recognise asylum status granted to “a common criminal sentenced by a regular court”.²¹¹ Portugal’s political and social conditions in no way threatened the life and possessions of the citizenry, a prerequisite for political asylum. Therefore, the Government concluded, the diplomatic protection given to Galvão was not a defence of human rights but interference in a matter of Portuguese jurisdiction. The Argentineans countered that their diplomatic tradition required only that the asylum seeker “felt threatened” to be eligible. However sound the conditions in Portugal, Galvão qualified for political asylum.²¹²

Salazar opposed a compromise on the case. He thought that the fugitive should be left indefinitely as a guest of the Argentineans. That way, the problem would simply cease to exist for the government. Most in the cabinet disagreed with the premier. If left in the Embassy, Galvão might create a conspirational centre with Argentinean support. It would be difficult to deal with such a scenario. Besides, there were international repercussions to consider; negative press against the regime; conflict with the South Americans. All this could be avoided if Galvão was permitted to leave the country. Salazar relented. Still, certain conditions applied. There was to be no official recognition of asylum status nor would a safe-conduct be issued. Galvão was authorised to leave. That was all. On their part, the South Americans undertook to prevent Galvão from engaging in anti-Lisbon activities in Argentina.²¹³

In the first hours of 13 May 1959, Henrique Galvão left the Argentine Embassy and boarded a flight to Buenos Aires. His escape was finally consummated.

²¹⁰ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.76; Lins, *Missão em Portugal*, p.255.

²¹¹ Lins, *Missão em Portugal*, p.256.

²¹² Nogueira, *Salazar: A Resistência*, p.53.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, pp.73-4.

Salazar, who never believed the Argentineans were going to keep their promises, remained sceptical about Galvão's departure: "We shall regret it a thousand times. He [Galvão] is far more dangerous than Delgado".²¹⁴ Prophetic words from a seasoned statesman.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.194; 77.

Chapter 3

Operation Dulcinea: conception and shoestring preparations

a) The Iberian Revolutionary Directorate of Liberation (DRIL)

Henrique Galvão arrived in Venezuela in November 1959. In Caracas he soon realised that the various Portuguese and Spanish exile groups there, in opposition to the regimes of Salazar (Portugal) and Franco (Spain), required coordination under a single organisation if effective political action was to be achieved. There was much rhetorical talk of “propaganda and bombings and assassinations”¹ but very little actually being done.

The idea of an alliance among Iberian political exiles made sense in view of the similarities between the regimes in Lisbon and Madrid as well as the financial and manpower difficulties faced by both groups. Such a union would also constitute a vehicle of expression for “every current of democratic thought on the Iberian Peninsula.”²

The Portuguese exiles were loosely gathered in the *Junta Patriótica Portuguesa* (Portuguese Patriotic Council), which enjoyed a degree of support from *Accion Democratica*, the party of Venezuela’s president Rómulo Betancourt. Following the lead of Galvão some of the members of the *Junta Patriótica* broke away and assembled around the *Movimento Nacional Independente* (Independent National Movement) (MNI) led by General Humberto Delgado in Brazil and represented in Venezuela by Galvão. Of the Spanish exiles only the *Union of Spanish Combatants* – under the leadership of Jorge Sotomayor, an ex-navy officer and veteran of the Spanish Civil War (1936-39) – answered Galvão’s call for unification. Sotomayor’s group was, according to Galvão, “the least numerous and the poorest but with active

¹ Warren Rogers, *The Floating Revolution* (New York, 1962), p.31.

² Henrique Galvão, *Santa Maria: My Crusade for Portugal* (London, 1961), p.86.

connections in Europe.”³ The alliance of the two groups led to the formation of the *Directório Revolucionário Ibérico de Libertação* (Iberian Revolutionary Directorate of Liberation) (DRIL) in January 1960.

Galvão – a decided anti-Marxist – was opposed to the admission of communists to DRIL. This caused immediate tension since some of its members either had direct links with Communism or were inspired by Fidel Castro’s revolution in Cuba. The latter, for example, was the case of Jose Velo Mosquera, DRIL’s main ideologist and personally acquainted with Latin America’s foremost Marxist, Ernesto “Che” Guevara.⁴ Galvão seems to have had his way. According to one of his associates, Camilo Mortágua, at least in its first year of existence DRIL had no links with the Castro government⁵ or any other Marxist regime.

DRIL contained a double command structure: a general management and a general operational command. The former never actually materialised whilst the latter was co-headed by Galvão and Sotomayor. The two men were responsible for any action over Portuguese and Spanish territories including ships and airplanes.

During 1960 DRIL, associated with the Basque separatist organisation ETA, carried out various bombings in Madrid and other Spanish cities that led the CIA to classify it as a terrorist organisation.⁶ This sort of action, regarded by Delgado as “isolated terrorist activities”⁷, did not appear effective against the Iberian regimes. It reflected the absence of a practical plan suited to the particular circumstances inherent in the opposition to Salazar and Franco.

Two major obstacles confronted DRIL: lack of financial means and manpower. In addition there was the geographic distance separating the organisation from its targets (an ocean between them). These three factors required the conception of an armed rebellion that was original, cost effective, and capable of taking the fight to the Lisbon-Madrid alliance.

³ *Ibid.*, p.87.

⁴ José Freire Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar: o Leão e a Raposa* (Lisbon, 1992), p.126.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.126.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Humberto Delgado, *Memoirs* (London, 1964), p.187.

b) The Salazar – Franco Alliance

Luso-Hispanic relations, under Salazar and Franco, befitted the former's famous depiction of Portugal and Spain as "two brothers, each possessing his own home in the Peninsula."⁸ Age-old cultural, geographic and historical ties were complemented by fundamental similarities between the regimes in Lisbon and Madrid. Both were authoritarian, corporative, strongly influenced by Catholicism, bureaucratic and imperialist in their foreign policies.⁹ All this made for a natural alliance.

The Salazar government had supported Franco's Nationalists from the outset of the Spanish Civil War, stopping short of "actual participation" in the conflict.¹⁰ It appears the Portuguese had calculated that, whether by "Spanish intervention or contagion", the New State "would not survive a Republican victory".¹¹ It was vital, therefore, that Nationalist forces gained power in the neighbouring country so as to arrest the spread of Iberian communism¹² that, if left unchecked, would certainly consume the smaller country in the Peninsula.

In 1938 Portugal officially recognised the Franco government.¹³ A year later the relationship between the two Iberian regimes was consolidated in the Treaty of Friendship and Non-Aggression (commonly known as the Iberian Pact). Both countries pledged themselves "to protect each other's territory and frontiers" and to refrain from joining "any fact or alliance involving aggression against each other."¹⁴ This agreement was verbally reinforced in 1942 with the formation of the Iberian Bloc, which aimed at the coordination of Portuguese and Spanish foreign policies. In 1956 the Salazar-Franco association was expanded into a formal mutual defence treaty.¹⁵

⁸ R. A. H. Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal: A History* (London, 1979), p.86.

⁹ Stanley G. Payne, *The Franco Regime: 1936 -1975* (Madison, 1987), p.632.

¹⁰ Herminio Martins, 'Portugal', in Woolf, S.J. (ed), *European Fascism* (London, 1968), p.322.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.323.

¹² Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, p.86.

¹³ Tom Gallagher, *Portugal: A Twentieth-Century Interpretation* (Manchester, 1983), p.86.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.87.

¹⁵ Payne, *Franco Regime*, p.298; Stanley G. Payne, *Franco's Spain* (London, 1976) p.31.

World criticism of the Spanish and Portuguese governments, in the 1950s, had isolated them. The Iberian regimes were perceived as “fascist” relics from the 1930s, out of context with the current times. Franco – never forgiven for his defeat of the Republican forces - faced the opprobrium of postwar international opinion, heavily tilted towards the Left, whilst Salazar’s refusal to grant independence to Portugal’s overseas territories incurred severe worldwide criticism. Ostracism of the two regimes may have tightened the bond between them. Iberian relations were as solid in 1961 as they had been in 1939 in spite of Madrid’s dissociation from its neighbour’s unpopular colonial policy.¹⁶ DRIL was to be a microcosmic reflection of the broader Salazar-Franco association, a sort of response to the Iberian Pact.¹⁷

c) Conception of Operation Dulcinea

In Galvão’s opinion¹⁸, opposition to Salazar and Franco would have to operate at two levels. At home, through surprise military action that would trigger a popular revolt. Internationally, by engaging, a hitherto indifferent international public opinion towards Iberian politics. Here the emphasis was on the attention of western democracies that Galvão had unsuccessfully tried to draw through newspaper articles¹⁹, and which he felt was crucial to DRIL’s mission. A meeting with Jânio Quadros – candidate for the presidency in Brazil – in April 1960 was to stimulate Galvão in his search for a way to initiate hostilities against Salazar. During this encounter Quadros had promised Galvão – should he win the presidential election in October – the support of Brazil in “all that might be necessary”²⁰ in the fight against Salazar. This promise was to prove a crucial factor in the months ahead after Quadros did indeed become Brazil’s next president. But for now, uppermost in Galvão’s mind was the search for a form of action with enough political and emotional power to pierce the apparent invulnerability of the Salazar/Franco apparatus.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.40.

¹⁷ Margarita Ledo, dir. *Santa Liberdade*. 2004.

¹⁸ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.88.

¹⁹ See, for example, his highly critical article on *The Nation*, January 9, 1960. Here Galvão aims hard to draw American attention to what he perceives as the negative aspects of Salazar’s colonial and continental policies.

²⁰ R Rocha ‘Os Quixotes do Mar: *Santa Maria*, 30 Anos Depois’, *A Revista/Expresso*, Jan. 9, 1991, p.28.

In June 1960 an article in the morning paper, that Galvão was reading, triggered the conception of an audacious idea. It reported the arrival at La Guaira – the port for Caracas – of the Portuguese luxury liner *Santa Maria* as part of her monthly trip from Lisbon to Port Everglades in Florida. In legal terms a ship is considered a territorial part of its country of registry. An attack on the vessel was therefore tantamount to an attack on any geographical location in Portugal. The rationale was simple: since DRIL could not go to Iberia let it come floating to DRIL. What is more an operation of this kind was bound to draw international attention. Galvão let the idea germinate in his mind for a few weeks before communicating it to his Spanish counterpart at DRIL.

The concept was uncomplicated, radical, and aimed at placing opposition to Salazar and Franco on the front page of the world's press. It consisted in seizing either a Portuguese or Spanish ship, calling at La Guaira, using the age-old piracy method only for political instead of financial gain. Violence would be restricted to a minimum. Once in rebel hands the ship would serve as an instrument for a political action as yet undefined. This was to be known as Operation Dulcinea – after Dulcinea del Toboso, Quixote's fair lady in Miguel de Cervantes' seventeenth century classic work. Galvão's choice of code name was meant to be emblematic of the romantic dimension of the operation and does indeed, as shall be seen later, reveal the quixotic nature of the entire project. But for now there was the question of singling out the most suitable conveyance for the operation.

d) The *Santa Maria*: chosen target

Initially the plan involved the seizure of three passenger ships flying Portuguese and Spanish flags. This ambitious idea was abandoned, ostensibly, due to lack of funds. DRIL did not possess the necessary – according to Galvão – fifty thousand dollars to execute an operation of such dimensions. Once agreed on the seizure of a single vessel the Portuguese liner *Santa Maria* became the obvious choice. She was luxurious, faster than average, likely to carry a substantial number of American passengers (which should induce US involvement), and state-owned. In addition, the ship called regularly at La Guaira on a monthly basis, making her availability an extra

reason for the enterprise. It has also been suggested – most plausibly since more Spanish ships called at La Guaira than Portuguese - that the choice of the *Santa Maria* reflected the option to challenge Salazar, instead of Franco, fearing the response of the latter might involve military violence.²¹ This may be partially true.

What is certain is that the choice of a Portuguese ship reveals the predominance of Galvão within DRIL. His assertive personality, coupled with an intense preoccupation with Salazar, was to tilt Dulcinea away from its Spanish element. For him the real target was never Franco but Salazar. Opting for a Portuguese liner was, after all, equivalent to an attack on Portugal not Spain.

The *Santa Maria*, built by Cockerill-Ougree Shipyard (Belgium), had been introduced in September 1953 and was property of the state sponsored *Companhia Colonial de Navegação* (Colonial Navigation Company) (CCN). The ship's main service took her from Lisbon to the Caribbean and on to Port Everglades in Florida. With a crew of 370 and capacity for 1078 passengers, the 20 906-ton vessel was air-conditioned and had an impressive service speed of 20 knots.²² The *Santa Maria* and her sister *Vera Cruz* were part of a new generation of liners constituting the pride of CCN's transatlantic fleet. They were luxurious, fast, and trying to compete with the ever-growing numbers of commercial airlines flying across the Atlantic.

²¹ Beth Day, *Passage Perilous* (New York, 1962), p.73.

²² William H. Miller, *Transatlantic Liners 1945–1980* (London, 1981), p.52.



The Santa Maria (1953 -73)

W.H. Miller, *Transatlantic Liners 1945-1980* (London, 1981)

e) Operation Dulcinea: a two-phase plan

Operation Dulcinea was structured in two phases. The first entailed the seizure and occupation of the *Santa Maria*. Galvão and his men were to board the liner – as paying passengers – at La Guaira and Curaçao, and seize her the moment she entered the international waters of the Caribbean. Once in control of the ship the insurrectionists would cease communications with the outside world and secretly sail towards the Spanish-held island of Fernando Pó – off the West African coast – initiating the next phase of the operation. This second half of the enterprise was by far the most ambitious and, despite the insistence of Galvão on its feasibility²³, hard to view as more than a theoretical exercise. It consisted in the capture of Fernando Pó from where the rebels would – with the support of local populations – take over Spanish Guinea and from there gain a foothold in Angola. Once occupying a portion of Portuguese territory the rebels were to form a government and unleash a general uprising in Angola, Mozambique, and Portugal itself (with the cooperation of opposition forces sympathetic to DRIL).

²³ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.95.

The weakness of the second half of the operation is striking. It relied heavily on a generalised support of the majority of the local populations as well as on abstract factors such as “surprise” and “audacity”. Galvão was aware of how pivotal this reliance on outside elements was but claims the viability of the project was borne out by thorough study and organisation.²⁴ Yet scant attention was given to the possibility of resolute military resistance on the part of Lisbon or Madrid. Subsequent events during the nationalist uprising in Angola, in March 1961 – discussed in chapter ten – revealed widespread military and civilian loyalty to Salazar’s New State. Had it reached Africa, Operation Dulcinea would have little, if any, chance of success.

Crossing the Atlantic required 8 days of absolute secrecy. The *Santa Maria* was expected in Miami within 3 days of leaving Curacao. Galvão estimated two extra days of undetected sailing could be gained by claiming engine trouble (to the ship’s agents in Florida) and false rumours concerning the *Santa Maria*’s whereabouts. When, on the sixth day into the south Atlantic, a general search were launched the rebels should be within striking distance of their African objective.

f) Operation Dulcinea: aims

Dulcinea had various goals. With the seizure of the *Santa Maria* the rebels expected to capture world attention and thus expose the Iberian regimes to “the searing glare of unfavourable publicity.”²⁶ The sheer originality and audacity of the operation was certain to galvanise international media and provide DRIL with a platform from which to disseminate their message globally. By directing world attention to the negative aspects of Salazar and Franco rule a public awareness would be created – particularly in America, Britain, France, and Germany – that might disrupt any support given to Lisbon /Madrid. Dulcinea would thus train the international spotlight not only on Salazar and Franco but also on those western governments contributing to their political survival.²⁷ Hence the plight of the Portuguese and Spanish opposition,

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.95

²⁶ Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.47.

²⁷ This was the case, for example, of the outgoing Eisenhower administration whose tacit support of Salazar/Franco had been consistent with Cold War conditions. Throughout the 1950’s American policy towards the Iberian peninsula had been based on preference for the strongly anti-communist

once within the public conscience, would translate into a situation whereby governments would have to account – before their own constituencies – for any links with the Iberian regimes.

Operation Dulcinea also aimed at rekindling the hopes of the Portuguese and Spanish peoples and to prepare them for the impending democratic uprising. The notion of vulnerability, created by the damage inflicted on the Salazar/ Franco regimes would revitalise the despondent Iberian masses and motivate them into united action. Galvão seems to have believed that Dulcinea could overcome the deep differences among the various opposition groups. A rather ambitious proposition in the face of, for example, a decided rejection of DRIL by the Portuguese and Spanish Communist parties.

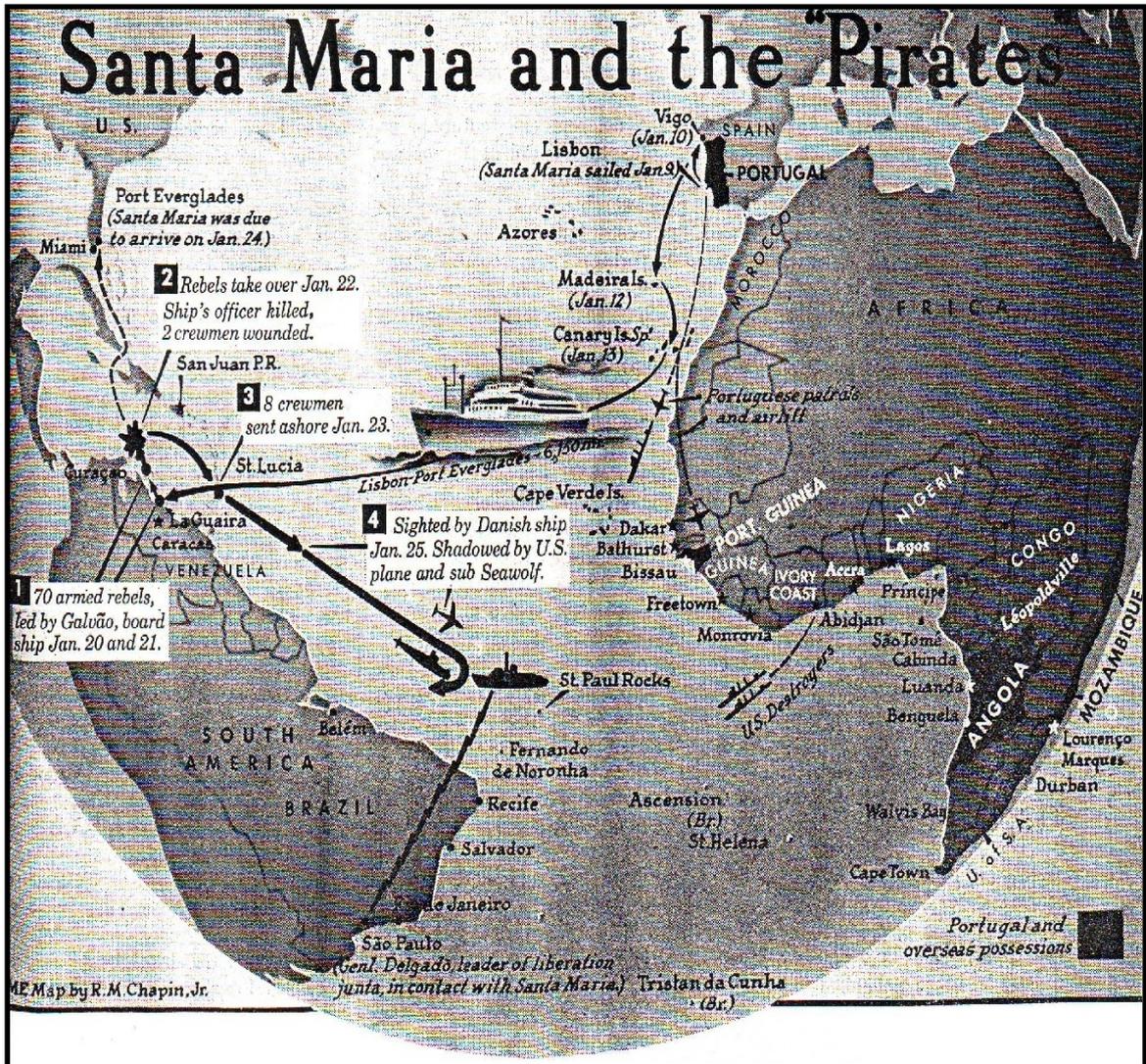
g) Activating Dulcinea

Having completed the plan for the operation DRIL now had to find the means to implement it. The activation of Dulcinea required the gathering of information and its study; procurement of financial backing; and the recruitment of operational personnel. Galvão and his companions began by searching for detailed information on the topography and functionality of the *Santa Maria*.

H.L.Boulton & Co. (agents in Caracas for the *Santa Maria*) had unknowingly facilitated DRIL's work by supplying plans of the ship – which were closely studied – and visitors' passes giving access to the liner. Hence on each of her monthly stops at La Guaira Galvão and other members of DRIL visited the *Santa Maria*. Through these visits it was established that the ship did not store any arms nor carry PIDE agents (International Police for the Defense of the State). More significantly Galvão came away convinced that whoever controlled the uppermost deck controlled the *Santa*

regimes of Franco and Salazar. In the case of Portugal, a member of NATO, Eisenhower extended US support to the maintenance of her colonial empire. The election of John F. Kennedy to the presidency in 1960 raised the possibility of change in US policy towards Spain and Portugal. Non-Marxist opposition groups in those countries became hopeful that the new administration in Washington would be sympathetic to their cause.

Maria since it was accessed by only six ladders which could be easily defended should a counter attack by the crew take place.



The *Santa Maria*'s journey viewed by *Time* magazine

Time, 3 February 1961

CCN agencies throughout the world placed exact scale models of their ships in their display windows. Caracas was no exception. Late at night Galvão and his companions would examine the miniature *Santa Maria* in her agents' show window. In addition, during December 1960 a woman²⁸ was infiltrated into the *Santa Maria* as a telephone operator providing information concerning the communication system of the ship and the positions of the crew. With the gathering of information and its study concluded it was time to move on to the next step of the operation: the recruitment of personnel.

Initially Galvão estimated that a hundred men were required to carry out Dulcinea. Once on African soil these would constitute the "officer corps" in the "Army of liberation"²⁹ which would overthrow the regime in Lisbon. However, financial difficulties did not permit such high numbers of personnel. In effect twenty-six people were ultimately recruited of which twenty-four boarded the *Santa Maria* on 20 January 1961.

A training camp was set up in the Venezuelan countryside about 130 kilometers from the capital. Here the recruits received the necessary training in the utmost secrecy. Of the 24 personnel only 10 were fully aware of the scope of the operation. The remaining fourteen were kept in the dark. In fact even General Delgado – contrary to his 1964 autobiography³⁰ as well as press reports at the time of the hijacking – was kept only partially informed. According to Camilo Mortágua³¹, Delgado was only told about Dulcinea by means of a telegram sent from Curaçao before Galvão boarded the *Santa Maria*. It is evident that the relationship between the two men was not the idyllic association projected at the time Dulcinea was carried out. This aspect calls for further investigation since it illuminates the personalities of Galvão and Delgado as well as their involvement in the assault on the *Santa Maria*. We shall thus return to this topic at a later juncture.

²⁸ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.73. Incidentally, she was the daughter of a Portuguese exile in Caracas named Júlio Costa da Mota mentioned in a PIDE report (Informação no.581/60–GU), sent to Salazar in October 1960, as a suspect in subversive activities against the regime in Lisbon.

²⁹ Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.38

³⁰ Delgado, *Memoirs*, p.187. The general claims to have known about the operation since April 1960 but was left out of its first phase on account of the risk of both himself and Galvão being lost in action. This appears a convenient excuse for his absence and lends credibility to Mortágua's version (see next footnote). It is more probable that Delgado was not in the *Santa Maria* simply because he was not told about it.

³¹ Rocha, 'Santa Maria 30 Anos Depois', p.27.

The Spaniard Jorge Sotomayor (52) was selected as chief-of-staff. His contribution was vital since no one else – out of the twenty-six men – had naval experience and thus the capability of running a ship. Other Spaniards involved were José Velo Mosquera (a.k.a. “Professor Velo”) (45); Vitor Velo Perez (son of Velo Mosquera) (17); Augustin Romara Rojo (nephew of the Republican General Rojo, one of the main figures of the Spanish Civil war) (40); Fermin Suarez Fernandez (46); Francisco Rico Leal (44); Luis Fernandez Ackerman (21); Manuel Perez Rodriguez (38); Basilio Losada (29); José Perez Martinez (44); Manuel Mazo Bravo (30) and Junqueira de Ambia (45).

The Portuguese contingent included – besides Galvão – José da Cunha Ramos (18); Camilo Tavares Mortágua (27); Luis Manuel Mota de Oliveira (35); António de Almeida Frutuoso (26); Graciano Marques Esparrinha (?); Jorge Pestana de Barros (?); Filipe Aleixo Viegas (45); José Frias de Oliveira (?); Júlio Ferreira de Andrade (34); Joaquim Manuel da Silva Paiva (35); Júlio Rodrigues (19); Miguel Urbano Rodrigues (?); Leonardo (33); Vitor da Cunha Rego (?); Júlio Rodrigues (19) and the Venezuelan Rafael Ojeda Henriques (?).³²

Of the four basic advantages of Dulcinea – surprise, shock, originality and financial viability – the last one proved to be a major hurdle. An estimated minimum budget of \$30 000 was to be scaled down to a mere \$6 000. This was due to various factors: the – already mentioned – divisions among Portuguese and Spanish exiles; the general superficial nature of opposition politics which opted for talk rather than action and thus did not translate into financial support; and the fact that Galvão’s anti-communism prevented him from accepting any financial aid from the Soviet Union. Rocha³³ refers to Galvão’s position as a refusal to contract any debts carrying ideological interest. In the end a skeletal budget was raised with contributions from Portuguese and Spanish immigrants as well as from DRIL members.

Galvão’s steadfast refusal to compromise with Moscow and its agents translated not only in a heavily reduced budget but most probably jeopardised any possibility of a revolution in Portugal. Concurrently with financial difficulties DRIL also faced

³² Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.100.

³³ *Ibid.*, p.26

opposition from other political organisations. This was the case, particularly, of the PCP's disapproval of any form of "opposition by direct action"³⁴ which, it argued, would serve only to bring further oppression from the Salazar regime. Since the Communist network were the best suited for an uprising in Portugal it is doubtful that, without PCP cooperation, Dulcinea could attain any level of success in its revolutionary aims.

The inception of the operation was first set for 14 October 1960. It would be postponed three times mainly owing to lack of financial backing. According to Galvão just four days before the first set date they were still short of \$2000.³⁵ Again, on 15 November and 20 December, Dulcinea would be delayed for much the same reasons as before. Finally, on 20 January 1961, Galvão and his men were ready to board the *Santa Maria*.

³⁴ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.93.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.96.

Chapter 4

The Santa Maria vanishes

a) The hijacking of the *Santa Maria*

The *Santa Maria* sailed from Venezuela on Friday, January 20, carrying twenty members of DRIL, and arrived at Curaçao (Dutch West Indies) on the next day. It was here that Galvão boarded the liner with three of his men. His face being familiar to many Portuguese made it imperative that he did not spend much time on board before the ship was seized, lest he be recognised. All twenty-four conspirators were now waiting for half-hour (01:30) to strike.

At 19:00 the liner left port and headed out to sea en route to Port Everglades in America's southeastern coast. She carried 612 passengers and a crew of 356. About two thirds of her steerage and Third class passengers were Portuguese and Spanish immigrants returning home from South America, while First class was taken mainly by American (38) and Dutch passengers.¹

The rebels were to divide into three groups. Sotomayor would lead the attack on the bridge and the pilothouse; Galvão and his crew would take over the second deck where the cabins of the captain and other senior officers were located. A third, autonomous group, would seize the radio room.²

¹ Warren Rogers, *The Floating Revolution* (New York, 1962), p.2.

² Henrique Galvão, *Santa Maria: My Crusade for Portugal* (London, 1961), p. 109; Rui Rocha, 'Os Quixotes do Mar: *Santa Maria*, 30 Anos Depois', *A Revista/Expresso*, Jan. 19, 1991, p.28.

In his book Galvão describes the takeover of the ship as having gone strictly according to plan. In short, at 01: 45 the three assault groups hit the areas assigned to them. This view, however, appears to omit an incident as revealed by Camilo Mortágua – a close associate of Galvão - in 1991.³ This concerns a quarrel between Galvão and Sotomayor regarding the takeover of the bridge. Sotomayor thought that his group should split in two, and enter the navigation bridge at different points. Whereas Galvão felt that due to low illumination⁴ in the area under attack, the teams ran the risk of firing on each other. The two leaders clashed, dampening the enthusiasm of the group.

By 01: 00, when they gathered in the upper deck, no agreement had been reached. In the manner of two schoolboys, Galvão and Sotomayor lean against the balustrade and refuse to speak to each other. The men wait to go into action. An hour and thirty minutes goes by. Eventually Galvão orders the attack, leaving the question unresolved.⁵ But the damage had been done.

Ninety minutes navigating in the opposite direction (north west) would require three hours to recover. This meant the rebels were unable to leave the Caribbean during nighttime – with the ship’s lights switched off - as was originally planned. Sailing in daylight increased the possibility of detection, and secrecy was crucial to the success of *Dulcinea*. Should the *Santa Maria*’s location be found out, the rebels would lose the time advantage needed to reach their destination across the south Atlantic. In view of later events, it could well be argued that the operation had been irreversibly compromised by the negative attitude assumed by Galvão and Sotomayor. At any rate, sometime between 01:45 and 02:45 a group of armed khaki-clad men, led by Sotomayor, burst into the

³ Rocha, ‘Os Quixotes do Mar’, p.28.

⁴ It is interesting to note that, although Galvão never mentioned the clash with Sotomayor, his account of the takeover of the bridge seems to corroborate Mortágua by way of a subtle hint : “A brief exchange of shots *in the darkness of the bridge ...*” (my own italics). Henrique Galvão, *Santa Maria: My Crusade for Portugal* (London, 1961), p.109.

⁵ Mortágua’s version of events on the top deck contrasts sharply with Galvão’s almost idyllic account: “We waited there a few minutes, conversing in little groups, some seated by the pool, others leaning against the rail...” *ibid*, p.109.

bridge. Third pilot Joao do Nascimento Costa (27) - in charge of the bridge - is hit by rebel bullets in the lower abdomen and left arm before he could reach the telephone. Staggering, the officer manages to alert navigator João de Souza in the chartroom. As Souza tries to run for help, he too is cut down, collapsing on the deck floor with three gunshot wounds.⁶ Meanwhile, the crewman at the wheel of the ship is shoved aside and replaced by one of the hijackers.⁷



The takeover of the *Santa Maria*'s wheelhouse as viewed by *Life* magazine.

Life, 3 February 1961

⁶ Rogers, *The Floating Revolution*, p.4.

⁷ Henry A. Zeiger, *The Seizing of the Santa Maria* (New York, 1962), p.9.

The commotion had awakened Dr Cicero Leite, a physician with the Portuguese Immigration Services. As he stepped out of his cabin to investigate, rebel fire struck him on the neck. The injured doctor managed to retract and shut the door.⁸

Meanwhile, having ensured that the ship's officers were confined to their quarters, Galvão went to the top deck to assess the reasons for the fusillade. There he found the areas assigned to Sotomayor, already occupied.⁹

Two seamen reporting that passengers were “taking hostile action on the bridge” and that two officers were down had awakened Captain Mário Simões Maia.¹⁰ Alerted by this information, Maia decided to go to the bridge but was confronted by armed rebels. Forced to retreat into his cabin, the captain telephoned the engine room and ordered the engines halted. He then dialed the bridge and spoke to Galvão. Maia wanted to know what was happening. Having introduced himself, the rebel leader responds: “Captain, nothing is going on except that I have just taken over your ship. Resistance is quite impossible and I invite you to surrender.”¹¹ The skipper reasons that he cannot take any decision until he has consulted his officers. Galvão agrees to wait for a decision from Maia and his men.¹²

b) Surrender

Gathered in their captain's cabin, the *Santa Maria's* officers quickly realised the hopelessness of their situation. Without weapons, uncertain as to how many men Galvão commanded, and the fact that the ship's strategic points were already controlled by the rebels, made resistance futile. Besides, the hijackers had shown the willingness to use

⁸ Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.5.

⁹ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.110.

¹⁰ Zeiger, *Santa Maria*, p.12.

¹¹ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.110.

¹² Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.8.

maximum violence to achieve their end. All aspects considered, surrender seemed the most sensible option for the safety of the passengers and crew.

The captain called the bridge and asked Galvão to come down alone and unarmed. A short while later the rebel leader arrived at Maia's door accompanied by Sotomayor, Velo Mosquera, Velo Perez, and Cunha Ramos. All five were armed with pistols and submachine guns.¹³

Galvão describes the *Santa Maria's* officers, gathered in Maia's cabin, in denigrating terms: "defeated sub-humans" "in pajamas", "typical products" of Salazar's regime.¹⁴ Maia opened the talks by accusing Galvão of common piracy. A quarrel ensued in which the latter argued that the ship's seizure was a case of political insurgency. Galvão claimed to be acting in the name of General Humberto Delgado. The real pirate, he charged, was Salazar, who had robbed Delgado of the presidency.¹⁵ Maia insisted on the piracy charge. Eventually, Velo Mosquera intervened, telling both men to stop the bickering and "get on with the business at hand."¹⁶

The *Santa Maria* crew was offered three alternatives of surrender. Firstly, they could join DRIL, which would make them companions. Secondly, as men overcome by force, they would be allowed to continue performing their duties under guard, provided they pledged loyalty and zeal in the carrying out of orders. Thirdly, they were given the option of prisoner-of-war status, 'performing forced labour and subject to imprisonment'.¹⁷ Maia and his officers decided on the second choice as the most sensible. They certainly did not wish to join DRIL, nor did they want to legitimise the seizure of the ship, as political insurgency, by accepting prisoner-of-war terms.

¹³ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.50.

¹⁴ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, pp. 110-11.

¹⁵ W Rogers, *The Floating Revolution* (New York, 1962), p.9. Delgado had been the Opposition's main candidate in Portugal's 1958 presidential elections. Defeated, the general would claim that the voting had been rigged. Henceforth he considered himself the 'real' winner and, therefore, the elected president of Portugal.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.10. Jose dos Reis – the *Santa Maria's* assistant purser – would state later that it was the general impression among the ship's crew that Galvão took orders from Velo Mosquera. Zeiger, *Seizing of the Santa Maria*, p.18.

¹⁷ B Day, *Passage Perilous* (New York, 1962), p.51.

Expecting Maia would surrender as prisoner-of-war, Galvão was disappointed by the captain's choice. He regarded the position assumed by the ship's officers as an indication of a 'baseness of character that made their word of honour worthless'.¹⁸ Such criticism seems harsh and unjustified. After all, it is difficult to discern what is 'base' about considering the safety of the passengers and crew as paramount. At any rate, it is a moot point as to whether the hijackers would have been able to sail the ship, at all, without the collaboration of her crew. Galvão does concede, however, that cooperation from the crew made matters easier for himself and his men.¹⁹

The *Santa Maria*'s senior crew handed over their ship, undertaking to continue normal duties in return for a public statement from Galvão. Maia wanted it clear that himself and his team were now operating under force, with no allegiance to DRIL, and without condoning the violence used in the takeover of the liner. Galvão agreed to draw up a surrender document satisfying Maia's requirements. Afterwards the rebel leader would claim that this document had been produced to allay the crew's fears of PIDE reprisals once they returned home: 'I finally promised to defend them [Maia and his men], in whatever statements I would issue, by saying that they had submitted only because forced to do so.'²⁰ Had Galvão really been concerned about PIDE reprisals, would he have published this in 1961, barely months after the seizure? Did he not consider the personal consequences this might have for the ship's crew in Portugal?

c) Destination unknown

Once surrender had been accomplished, the technical command of the ship was entrusted to Jorge Sotomayor. The engines were restarted. A ninety-degree turn was ordered, pointing the *Santa Maria* southeastward at the channel between Martinique and St Lucia. She was now sailing away from Port Everglades en route to the African west

¹⁸ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.111.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*,

²⁰ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.112.

coast. At 7:20 a.m. Third officer Nascimento Costa, described by Galvão as “the only brave and manly individual”²¹ in the ship’s crew, was pronounced dead.

Most of the passengers had slept through the takeover of the ship. Some were awakened by the noise coming from the top deck, but no one – with the exception of Caroline Boyce - was perturbed enough to investigate further. It was only the next morning that they were told about the events of the night before.

Boyce, an American amateur astronomer, was an interesting exception. Awoken in the middle of the night, by strange noises, she noticed the ship had changed course in relation to the stars. They were now sailing southeast instead of northwest. She thought it odd but assumed the skipper was negotiating his way through the various islands in the area and went back to sleep.²²

After breakfast, passengers were assembled in the first class lounge. Tchaikovsky’s *1812 Overture* and the Portuguese national anthem were played through the PA system. Captain Maia spoke first. He told his audience that he was no longer in command since Henrique Galvão had seized the ship. Then, Velo Mosquera addressed the assembly in political tones. Condemning the regimes of Salazar and Franco, Velo declared their overthrowing to be the rebels’ main goal. Galvão was next. Dressed in military attire and sporting giant epaulets – displaying a rank created by him ²³– he made his first public appearance. In a brief speech, he told the passengers the ship had changed course, they were no longer going to Florida, but would instead be disembarked at an undisclosed destination within four days. Galvão apologised profusely for the inconvenience caused but assured everyone that no effort would be spared to guarantee their safety and comfort.²⁴ However, certain conditions would apply: food and water were to be restricted, and passengers were henceforth not allowed in the pool area (due to its proximity to the bridge). In spite of all the promises voiced by Galvão and Velo Mosquera, the passengers were unsettled by the fact that the point of debarkation

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.109.

²² Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, pp.52-3; Zeiger, *Seizing of the Santa Maria*, pp.23-4.

²³ Day translates this, in American terms, as the equivalent of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.92.

²⁴ ‘Last Tense Days on the *Santa Maria*’, *Life*, Feb.10, 1961, p.35.

remained undisclosed. They were, indeed, sailing into the unknown.

d) Evacuation of the wounded

In the ship's hospital the wounded Joao de Souza was hemorrhaging continually, but refused to die. However, the *Santa Maria's* infirmary was not equipped to provide the medical assistance necessary to save the navigator's life. Captain Maia and Dr Theodomiro Borges (the ship's physician) approached Sotomayor requesting that Souza be put ashore at either St Lucia or Martinique. The Spaniard turned down the proposal, arguing that it would compromise the entire operation. If Souza was landed the alarm would be raised and the secret of the *Santa Maria* given away. The hijackers ran the risk of losing all the advantage gained thus far. Maia and Borges persisted in their appeal. Eventually Sotomayor agreed to put the matter before Galvão.²⁵

It was an ethical problem at the crux of which was some stark questions: was the success of *Dulcinea* worth the life of this young man? Was one death not bad enough? How would the crew and passengers react to another casualty? But perhaps even more disturbing - what were the real chances of *Dulcinea* attaining the ambitious objectives of its second phase? Was it, realistically speaking, feasible to cross the Atlantic undetected? These, one surmises, must have been some of the most pressing thoughts in Galvão's mind as he balanced Souza's life against the secrecy of *Dulcinea*. In the end he decided in favour of the evacuation of the wounded, thus abandoning the cover required in the initial phase of the operation. Galvão was fully aware that, once the injured went ashore, the alarm would be raised and the next stage of the enterprise would be seriously compromised. They needed to cross the Atlantic without being detected in order to launch the African phase of *Dulcinea*.

²⁵ Day, *Passage Perilous*, pp.103-4.

Galvão's decision is generally perceived as an act of compassion²⁶, yet it can also be viewed differently. If - as Mortágua affirms - the operation had already been jeopardised by the delay in the takeover of the ship, then it is reasonable to conclude that there was no motive to not disembark Souza and the other injured.²⁷ This is a pivotal aspect of the *Santa Maria* affair that has never been properly addressed, and might never be, due to its personal nature. Galvão took the crucial decision unilaterally, confining the real motives to his mind. It is, however, a nagging aspect. Allowing the wounded men ashore could well have been an escape route from the excessively ambitious second phase of *Dulcinea*. Did Galvão scuttle the operation? Did he really intend to sail to Africa? Or was publicity his only goal? There are a substantial number of questions one could ask, for which adequate answers have yet to be provided. We will, nevertheless, return to this topic at a later stage.

Whatever the motives, Galvão prevailed over Sotomayor and the Spanish faction for whom the success of the operation took precedence over everything else. Early on the morning of 23 January Maia was given permission to disembark the wounded men.²⁸

A light rain fell as Lifeboat No.3 carrying eight people, under the command of Second Purser José dos Reis, was lowered into the sea. With her engines stopped, the *Santa Maria* stood motionless two miles away from the port of Castries at St Lucia. Galvão describes his feelings, at this moment, as those of an artist witnessing the mutilation of his work.²⁹ Once the launch was away, the liner put to sea at high speed before the local authorities could investigate.³⁰ As they resumed their southeast journey toward Africa, Galvão - aware that operational secrecy had been lost - consoles himself with the notion of a 'spiritual victory' over the methods of more ruthless revolutionaries for whom the ends justify all means. By sacrificing the greater aims of *Dulcinea* - for the sake of

²⁶ Delgado, for example, regards the disembarkation of the injured men as an act of "kind-heartedness", but adds, mysteriously, that it could also be attributed to "some reasons unknown". Humberto Delgado, *Memoirs* (London, 1964), p.193.

²⁷ Rocha, 'Santa Maria 30 Anos Depois', p.28.

²⁸ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.106.

²⁹ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.119.

³⁰ *Keesing's Archives*, 1961-2, p.17951.

saving two lives³¹ - they, at least, could consider themselves ‘civilised human beings’.³²

e) The alarm is raised

Unknown to the hijackers, a British frigate (the *Rothesay*) had been in port at Castries. Reis requested right away to see her captain and relayed to him the events aboard the *Santa Maria*. The Portuguese officer pleaded with *Rothesay*’s captain to put out to sea immediately in pursuit of the hijacked liner. Finding Reis’ account hard to believe, the British captain assured him that no ship had been pirated in the Caribbean in a hundred and eighty years.³³ Still, Lord Oxford (Administrator of the island) was called in. He had been having breakfast that morning when a large white ship came briefly in sight, a short distance from St Lucia, and then moved away at top speed. On hearing Reis’s account of the hijacking, Lord Oxford had no doubt as to its veracity. They alerted the Admiralty and sat waiting for instructions on what to do about the Portuguese liner.

Meanwhile, Reis managed to send a telegram, informing the CCN office in Lisbon, that a group had attacked the *Santa Maria* on the high seas – he estimated – of seventy men led by Henrique Galvão. On Monday, January 23, at 21:00, Dr. Soares Fonseca (director of CCN) opened the telegram from St Lucia and read Reis’ disturbing message:

“Santa Maria attacked on high seas at 22 hours by group estimate 70 men directed by captain henrique galvão they boarded curacao and la guaira killed third mate costa and gravely wounded apprentice navigator sousa and portuguese immigration doctor stop debarked st lucia eight am with injured men immediately contacted english warship rothesay despite being told that if I speak they shall sink ship they all have guns stop arrange send me financial assistance stop entire crew loyal

³¹ In addition to Souza, there was another man aboard in desperate need of medical attention on account of a severe liver ailment. His life, too, depended on whether he was put ashore for treatment. Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.116.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 117-119.

³³ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.113.

to captain and in great shape.”³⁴

Fonseca contacted the other members of CCN's board of directors, and managed to get through to the Minister of the Presidency, Pedro Teotónio Pereira, second in command to Salazar. The minister found it difficult to believe what he was hearing (Fonseca read him Reis' cable). Pereira was perplexed by the fact that such important news did not come directly from the *Santa Maria*, but had instead been relayed through St Lucia. Nonetheless, he went ahead setting 'the wheels of international maritime action into motion'.³⁵

That night (23 January) CCN cabled the funds requested by Reis. The ship owners also appealed to the purser to provide them with any information he might have on the *Santa Maria*'s objective. This presented Reis with a problem since Rothesay's captain had told him not to divulge any evidence pertaining to the hijacked liner. Given permission to send a cable to Lisbon, Reis inserted a clue in the text certain to reveal the *Santa Maria*'s destination to his employers (and unlikely to be spotted by the British). It read:

‘I can't give details because you understand that we are in a naval war
...you make your own conclusion considering they made provisions for
a long trip perhaps twelve days. Please advise Salvador Correia.’³⁶

The tip was Salvador Correia³⁷, a Portuguese colonial administrator, responsible for the expulsion of the Dutch from Angola in the seventeenth century. On reading the telegram CCN officials knew the British assumed the ship was headed to Portuguese West Africa.³⁸

³⁴ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.19.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.22.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.127.

³⁷ Salvador Correia de Sá e Benevides (1602-81). A polyhedric figure – not unlike Henrique Galvão – in Portuguese history. Correia de Sá was an explorer, colonial administrator, military man, and politician. In 1648 he led a Portuguese military expedition, expelling the Dutch from Luanda and restoring Portugal's hegemony in Angola. *Dicionário Ilustrado da História de Portugal vol.2* (Lisbon, 1986), p.195.

³⁸ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.127.

Soon the world's attention would focus on the *Santa Maria* as international media reported on this astonishing act of modern 'piracy'. The ship's mysterious disappearance at the hands of 'pirates', and the subsequent search for her in the Atlantic, contained some of the basic elements of a riveting story that - in the course of the next two weeks - unfolded into one of the strangest episodes in maritime history.

Chapter 6

Operation Dulcinea: 26-28 January

a) Pirates or rebels?

Were the *Santa Maria*'s assailants pirates or revolutionaries? This was the judicial dilemma facing Washington and London. At first it seemed that piracy had indeed been committed. After all the liner had been seized by force in peacetime, Galvão found in possession of a ship he did not own. All this in an area previously terrorised by such eighteenth century pirate legends as Edward Teach (Blackbeard) and Captain John Avery (Long Ben). Galvão could easily be taken for their modern day version. But this interpretation was soon shattered by the hijackers' revelation that political ends solely motivated their actions.

If the seizure was piracy then the ship must be stopped and returned to her owners. If, however, Galvão was leading a political revolt then to capture the *Santa Maria* might represent interference in Portuguese internal affairs.¹ American, British, and Portuguese legal experts delved into their law texts in search of an answer to the challenge presented by Galvão. It soon became evident that there were no clear answers to be found in the textbooks. Piracy cases had become so rare in modern times that the law had turned "a little rusty"² In short; there were various definitions as to what constitute piracy but few actual precedents. Instead of clarifying the issue the law increased the confusion by defining piratical activity in terms broad enough to allow the simultaneous construction of cases in favour of and against piracy.

¹ H. Zeiger, *The Seizing of the Santa Maria* (New York, 1961), p.90.

² 'Thin Man on the Main', *The Economist*, January 28, 1961, p.332.



Three rebels: Jorge Sotomayor, Henrique Galvão, Augustin Rojo.

B.Day, *Passage Perilous* (New York, 1962)

b) Defining piracy: the Geneva Convention on High Seas and other standard reference works

The Geneva Convention on High Seas (1958) represented an international attempt at codifying all the laws of the sea. The U.N. Secretary General, Trygve Lie, had first suggested it in 1949.³ Despite its good intentions the Convention was not considered to be in effect due to an insufficient number of signatories.⁴ In any event, the United States, Britain and Portugal were among the official subscribers, and chose to view the *Santa Maria* incident largely in accordance with Geneva's definition of piracy as set in article 15:

- (1) Any illegal acts of violence, detention or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by the crew or the passengers of a private ship or private aircraft, and directed :
 - (a) On the high seas, against another ship or aircraft, or against persons or property on board such ship or aircraft ;

³ 'Adventure at Sea: a Parable', *Life*, February 3, 1961, p.34.

⁴ J. Raymond, 'Navy is Ordered to Board Vessel', *New York Times*, January 25, 1961, p.12.

- (b) Against a ship, aircraft, persons or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any State;
- (2) Any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or of an aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft;
- (3) Any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in sub-paragraph 1 or sub-paragraph 2 of this article.⁵

The key words in the above definition are, no doubt, “for private ends”. This point was also stressed by Green H. Hackworth’s *Digest of International Law*, a standard reference work, consulted by the State Department and Galvão himself.⁶ According to Hackworth piracy consists ‘in sailing the seas for private ends without authorisation from the government or any state with the object of committing depredations upon property or acts of violence against persons’.⁷ H.A. Smith – a legal expert – adds “some personal advantage” as a requirement in his definition of piracy.⁸

The question, then, was whether the seizure was motivated by private ends or whether it was an act of political insurrection against the regime in Lisbon. Since no one had suggested seriously that Galvão had captured the *Santa Maria* for private gain,⁹ it would appear that no piracy had taken place. However, the case was not as clear-cut as that.

Thus most legal authorities are in accord that a clear distinction between personal and political ends is essential for a definition of piracy. But to distinguish the two we need first to determine what is political and what is personal. And that is where the problem arises. No one seems to have taken the trouble to analyse Galvão’s motives for the seizure of the *Santa Maria*; how much political credibility he did really have; whether his personal and political aims could indeed be separated.

⁵ <http://www.un.org/law/ilc/texts/hseas.htm>

⁶ Henrique Galvão, *Santa Maria: My Crusade for Portugal* (London, 1961), p.128.

⁷ Raymond, ‘Navy is Ordered to Board Vessel’, *New York Times*, January 25, 1961, p.12.

⁸ H.A. Smith, *The Law and Custom of the Sea* (London, 1948), p.49.

⁹ Charles Grutzner, ‘Charge of Piracy on Liner Doubted’, *New York Times*, February 3, 1961, p.2.

Let us first look at Galvão's political support. Besides the twenty-three hijackers aboard how much more of a following did he have? The Salazar regime's doubts regarding the existence of any links between the seizure of the liner and the opposition circles in Portugal¹⁰ seem to be, at least partially, substantiated. After all, if Delgado himself was told about Dulcinea only at the last minute, how much more involved could the rest of the Portuguese opposition be? It is doubtful that Galvão had enough political support to justify the status of belligerent.

It is never easy, or even feasible, to isolate the political from the personal. In Galvão's case this is perhaps more so due to an intense private antagonism towards Salazar, and a definite craving for popularity. These two factors – anti-Salazarism and popularity via publicity – appear to have been the driving force behind his political activism. It could be argued, as indeed it was by Portuguese officials, that the hijacking of the liner was essentially “an attempt to dramatise” Galvão's “hostility to the Salazar regime before the world”.¹¹ In the process Galvão realised his private ambition to attain fame. That should have been enough to satisfy Geneva's requirement of “private ends”. Here we should refer to an interesting detail. The legal commission involved in the Geneva Convention project had produced a report in 1956 elaborating on some controversial aspects pertaining to piracy. One of the points made was that “acts of piracy can be inspired not only by gain or profit, but also by sentiments of hatred or revenge”.¹² But, of course, there were other factors to be considered in the *Santa Maria* case. Despite being told by the State Department that a contention that piracy had occurred was feasible¹³, Kennedy opted not to view Galvão as a pirate.

Washington chose to follow Hackworth's definition. There was no piracy if Galvão's revolt was aimed at his own country's government and confined to national territory (the *Santa Maria* qualified as Portuguese territory). The ship was free to sail without interference provided Galvão was recognised as a belligerent by any state.¹⁴

¹⁰ Zeiger, *Seizing of the Santa Maria*, p.90.

¹¹ ‘Lisbon Accuses ‘Pirates’; Denies Motive is Political’, *New York Times*, January 25, 1961, p.13.

¹² AOS/CO/PC – 63, p.2 ‘Report Sent by Captain E.H.Serra Brandão to “Subchefe do Estado-Maior da Armada”, January 24, 1961.

¹³ W. Rogers, *The Floating Revolution* (New York, 1962), pp.123-4.

¹⁴ José Freire Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar: o Leão e a Raposa* (Lisbon, 1992), p.130.

Furthermore, by rejecting the charge of piracy both the United States and Britain were able to apply the principle of non-intervention.

One of the reasons for initial American and British hesitation concerning the piracy issue was the lack of a clear precedent in international law. The seizure of the *Santa Maria* was indeed “unparalleled in peacetime maritime history”.¹⁵ However, two cases from the American Civil war were resurrected by legal practitioners and the press as a way of illuminating the legal labyrinth confronting Washington and London. The 1863 seizure of the *Chesapeake* by pro-Confederacy hijackers; and the capture, also in the same year, of the U.S. steamer *Joseph L. Gerrity* by “persons posing as passengers including some escaped Confederate prisoners”. Attempts by the Federal government to have the assailants extradited from Canada and England were dismissed on the grounds that they were not pirates but belligerents.¹⁶ It was obvious that the *Chesapeake* and the *Joseph L. Gerrity* were being used to support the view of Galvão as a rebel.

The press recalled also that during the nineteenth-century the U.S. government repeatedly denied requests by Latin American states that rebel ships be considered as pirates. Washington’s reasoning then being very much the same as in 1961: “no matter how vehement the decrees of foreign governments declaring insurgents to be traitors and pirates” it should not be for the United States to execute them.¹⁷

But there was a sort of legal precedent too for Salazar’s reaction. Upon the outbreak of the American Revolution in 1776 the British Parliament declared “all ships operating in the service of the rebels to be pirates”. This set a precedent that has been repeatedly followed by governments engaged in resisting rebellions in which the rebels show considerable force at sea.¹⁸ Now in 1961 Lisbon assumed very much the same position London had assumed towards American revolutionaries: resisting rebellion by outlawing the rebel actions.

¹⁵ Raymond, ‘Navy is Ordered to Board Vessel’, *New York Times*, January 25, 1961, p.12.

¹⁶ ‘Exiles Open Drive to Oust Salazar’, *New York Times*, January 27, 1961, p.2.

¹⁷ ‘The Law of Piracy’, *New York Times*, January 29, 1961, p.4

¹⁸ Smith, *Law and Custom of the Sea*, pp.49-50.

c) Jefferson “law” and “Jeffersonian rebels”

Thomas Jefferson’s principle, the right to “alter or abolish” an oppressive government, constituted an interesting aspect of the piracy debate. Jefferson’s maxim enjoyed quasi-legal status, and became almost indistinguishable from the law texts. Both Galvão and Delgado were projected as Jeffersonian rebels¹⁹ by large sections of world opinion, some observers going as far as justifying events aboard the *Santa Maria* in terms of the absence of free expression in Portugal.²⁰ Clearly, this was going beyond the parameters of the law and into the abstract field of political principles.

The trouble with Jefferson’s rule is one of definition. Who determines what an oppressive government is? And if a group of people (e.g. Galvão and his men) label a regime oppressive, do they automatically qualify as legal political opposition? In any event, the information available was not sufficient to either define the *Santa Maria*’s assailants as pirates or belligerents. However, the image of Galvão as a Jeffersonian warrior struck a sympathetic chord with the American public. The type of quixotic daring displayed by the Portuguese rebel formed an integral element of classic American mythology.²¹ The seizure of the *Santa Maria* contained some of the basic components in a typical Western film plot: a righteous loner (Galvão) fighting evil forces (Salazar regime) against the odds. This was a scenario that Americans could easily identify with.

d) Questionable methods of political expression

In the final analysis, even if the seizure could not be defined as piracy, the use of unacceptable means placed Galvão’s actions well beyond the pale of legitimate political expression. A letter to the *Times* put it succinctly: “However sincere and disinterested” Galvão and Delgado may have been “there should be no condoning murder, the seizure by force of a merchant vessel on the high seas in time of peace

¹⁹ ‘Adventure at Sea’, *Life*, February 3, 1961, p.34.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.131.

and the virtual kidnapping of some hundreds of passengers”.¹ These were not permissible methods of political expression “even in the middle of the twentieth century.”

When all is said and done it is doubtful the legitimacy of the hijacking was the decisive factor. What really mattered was whether the United States and Britain – on whom Salazar relied as NATO allies - possessed the political will to intercept the seized liner²⁴, and that was directly related to how far Washington and London were prepared to support an unpopular and undemocratic regime such as Salazar’s. This was the crux of the matter. In the end the scales tipped towards Galvão, away from Lisbon. Understandably, from an American or British perspective, siding with the Portuguese government against the forces of ‘democracy’ brought little political advantage and much risk. Besides, the destabilisation of Salazar’s Portugal by non-communist elements appealed to the Kennedy Administration.²⁵ At the end of the day these political considerations played a decisive role behind the confused technicalities²⁶ of the *Santa Maria*’s seizure.

d) The Portuguese response

If the *Santa Maria* incident was confusing to Washington and London, to Portuguese officials it was quite the opposite. From the outset Salazar considered Galvão and his crew to be plain outlaws.²⁷ The official line was consistent in its view of the hijacking as the work of criminal, publicity-seeking madmen whose aims were to create an international scandal in order to draw attention to their personal vendettas against Salazar.

Attempts to link Galvão and Delgado with a communist plot would not work. Delgado’s pro-American profile and Galvão’s anti-Communism were too well known outside Portugal. Moreover, it was not in the interest of the Salazarist regime to

¹ ‘Pirates - or what?’, *The Times*, January 31, 1961, p.11.

²⁴ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.130.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.134.

²⁶ ‘Not Piracy but a Political Rebellion’, *Rand Daily Mail*, January 28, 1961, p.6.

²⁷ Zeiger, *Seizing of the Santa Maria*, p.90.

publicise two of its ex-members as Communists. At any rate, Salazar knew his enemies better than is generally assumed.

When, on 23 January, Teotónio Pereira telephoned the premier with the news of the hijacking Salazar was in the company of Luis Supico Pinto (1909-1986), a close friend and adviser. They had been discussing Galvão and Delgado. Salazar had expressed concern over the recent inaction of the two men. “If I were them” the prime minister rationalised “I would have tried some kind of coup. For example, an attack on Cabinda or on one of the undefended Cape Verde islands and establish there, for at least a few hours, a type of government. It would be a great international scandal. Why are they so quiet?” Then, on hearing about the events in the Caribbean, Salazar told Supico Pinto that Galvão was “an enterprising man” who could not stand still for long, he “had to do something.”²⁸

Knowing just how ‘enterprising’ Galvão could be Salazar set up an emergency cabinet. The premier did not wish to take chances. His main concern was that the rebel ship might reach one of Portugal’s West African territories – Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau or Angola – and once there establish a ‘government in exile’. Such a regime might receive immediate recognition from the communist and Afro-Asian blocs at the UN, which would exacerbate Portugal’s precarious position in New York. For sometime now, Portuguese colonial policy had been under severe criticism at the world body. Hence Salazar’s top priority was to prevent Galvão from stepping ashore anywhere in Portuguese Africa. To this end military, civil and religious institutions in Portugal’s colonies were mobilised²⁹ while Portuguese military authorities dispatched the frigate *Pêro Escobar* and two patrol aircraft to Ilha do Sal. They expected the *Santa Maria* there by 28 January.³⁰

Commodore Laurindo dos Santos was appointed to coordinate the search for the rebel liner. His orders were to intercept and stop the ship without sinking her, and to avoid loss of lives aboard.³¹ Santos was given a two-part set of instructions on how to carry out his mission. First, to let the American navy execute the interception of the

²⁸ Franco Nogueira, *Salazar: A Resistência* (Lisbon, 1977), pp.193-4.

²⁹ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.135.

³⁰ aos/co/pc- 63, file 19, 2.9.

³¹ *Ibid.*

Santa Maria (the rebels were more likely to obey orders from U.S. warships). Should Portuguese vessels carry out the detention of the ship then Santos must adhere to the following:

- a) Inform *Santa Maria* that violent means will be used if she does not surrender.
- b) Hit the rudder with small calibre artillery.
- c) Hit the bridge to neutralise the controls of the ship.³²

Clearly the Portuguese took the piracy thesis seriously. General Belezza Ferraz's instructions to Commodore Santos were detailed and excluded any space for compromise. The 'pirates' had to be stopped; their utopian revolution prevented from landing on any part of the Portuguese colonial empire.

By Thursday, 26 January, the *Santa Maria* still sailed towards Africa albeit under constant American surveillance. Washington kept Lisbon informed of the ship's every move. Still, no one could be certain as to what Galvão's ultimate destination was.

e) Aboard the *Santa Liberdade*: recruiting for DRIL

Once in control of the ship the rebels engaged in a publicity campaign of their own. They rechristened the liner: *Santa Liberdade* (Holy Liberty). Her new name was painted in red letters on a pennant hung in front of the bridge.³³ Although cosmetic in essence, the change of name was effective. Soon the words *Santa Liberdade* would feature in countless photographs and newsreels all over the world.

A story told by one of the reporters is worthwhile mentioning here. A deck-boy walking past the men in fatigues busy painting the ship's new designation noticed

³² aos/co/pc-63, file 19, 2.9, 'top secret : J. Belezza Ferraz to Commodore Laurindo dos Santos', pp.21-2.

³³ B.Day, *Passage Perilous* (New York, 1962), p.89.

they had spelt ‘liverdade’ instead of ‘liberdade’.³⁴ The youth stopped and pointed out the error: “you can’t even spell “liberty”³⁵

One of Galvão’s most pressing problems was the lack of manpower to take Dulcinea to its fruition. He had counted on successful recruitment among the *Santa Maria*’s crew and third class passengers to swell the rebel ranks enough to consolidate their control of the hundreds of hostages.³⁶ But despite daily indoctrination sessions neither crew nor passengers responded at all favourably. For example, not a single person from the twenty Africans in the crew chose to join DRIL. This was particularly galling for Galvão who had been certain these natives of Angola, Mozambique and São Tomé would defect *en masse* to his camp.

In the end, notwithstanding Velo and Galvão’s best efforts, only five crewmembers opted to throw their lot with the rebels. All five, ranging in age from 18 to 37, were unmarried Portuguese nationals.³⁷ Of the five only one – Joaquim Gonçalves, an electrician – could be classified as a true political convert³⁸. Thus, with a conversion rate of 0.8%, Galvão could hardly claim success in his recruitment drive. What is more, the low adherence figure could be interpreted as an indication of his own lack of popularity. The rebel captain was winning the publicity war in the world’s media, but was he popular among his own people?

f) Dancing rebels: capturing American attention

No effort was made to recruit First and Cabin class travelers, although Galvão and Velo did not spare them the occasional anti-Salazar harangue. As a whole the mostly American and Dutch passengers in the upper decks were left alone and well provided for. There were, however, some dashing ways of gaining their sympathy.

³⁴ Confusing a “v” for a “b” is commonly associated with people from the north of Portugal. It is also perceived as an indication of lack of refinement.

³⁵ aos/co/pc-63. ‘Report from Recife to Diário de Notícias’ nota 170, dc 174, file 19, 17 –9.

³⁶ Day, *Passage Perilous*, pp. 95-6.

³⁷ Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.145.

³⁸ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.99.

On Friday night, 27 January, Galvão's men turned up at the dance being held in the ship's lounge. Gone were the drab khaki uniforms and red-green national armbands. Instead the rebels wore tropical business suits or sports shirts and slacks.³⁹ They were an instant success with the female attendants. Before long, American women, enchanted by their captors' Latin courtliness, found themselves in the arms of history's strangest "pirates"⁴⁰ as they danced the night away. Such was the surrealist atmosphere aboard the *Santa Maria*.

Galvão tried hard to win the approval of the American passengers. They were his greatest assets in this political game. As long as they were on the ship the rebels were guaranteed to receive Washington's attention, which is exactly what Galvão wanted. The rebel captain sought to steer American support away from Salazar to Portugal's non-Communist opposition bloc. He knew that as long as Lisbon had the sympathy of the world's most powerful democracy there was little hope for revolutionaries like him. Hence attention must be drawn to the democratic, non-Marxist nature of his movement. Washington must be made aware that there existed an opposition to Salazar that did not come from the Left but from the moderate centre. This is the message Galvão repeatedly communicated to Americans aboard the ship whenever the opportunity arose to elucidate them on the reasons and aims of Dulcinea. An internal communique⁴¹ addressed to all passengers serves as a typical example. Written in Portuguese, Spanish and English it begins by explaining why the liner had been seized: "in order to give freedom to the Portuguese People from the Dictatorship which rules for more than thirty years". Then the passengers are told Galvão and his men are doing their best to treat them "with all consideration" and will "take them to safe port as soon as possible". It proceeds to a reiteration of revolutionary fervour: "we are fighting for a good purpose and therefore we do not give up even if we have to sacrifice our lives, families and future". Finally, Galvão thanks his hostages for their understanding and reassures them that he will make life aboard as pleasant as he can. With slight variations this is essentially what passengers were told time and again by their captors.

³⁹ Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.148.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Junta Nacional Independente de Libertação, *Comunicado interno*, January 24, 1961.



“Pirates” enjoy a meal in the *Santa Maria*’s second-class dining room.

B.Day, *Passage Perilous* (New York, 1962)

g) Resistance aboard: Captain Maia and his “maquis”

Captain Maia and his crew had agreed to cooperate with the assailants but this did not stop them from engaging in sabotage. They focused on three main areas: fuel and fresh water supplies, and information relayed by the ship’s radio operators to the outside world.

The rebel commandos had located the liner’s reserve fuel tanks, containing six hundred tons of diesel oil. However, Maia managed to convince Sotomayor that the reserve fuel acted as ballast. Should they consume the reserve diesel, the vessel ran the risk of capsizing.⁴² In the meantime the ship’s mechanics tinkered with the engines so as to reduce their effectiveness whilst increasing fuel consumption.⁴³

Fresh water was a major concern for the hijackers. Unaware that the *Santa Maria* carried four reserve tanks holding 306 tons of water, Galvão rationed the use of water to a few hours a day. This led to Maia to reason that Galvão was not certain as to how

⁴² Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.144.

⁴³ Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.155.

much water he had. Thus, if the rebel skipper could be led to believe the water supplies were running low he would not dare crossing the Atlantic and risk “running out completely”.⁴⁴ Without hesitation Maia told his crew to leave water taps running whenever they saw fit to do so. In some instances taps were left running all night. In this way the ship’s waning supply of the precious liquid would be all the more convincing to Galvão and Sotomayor. In the meanwhile Maia warned the rebels the amount of water on board may prove inadequate “not only for purposes of food and hygiene but also for navigation”⁴⁵ Without an additional water supply they have a maximum of 5 days of sailing left.

There was a way around the shortage of fresh water. The *Santa Maria* could convert salt water through generator-driven evaporators. Maia made sure this alternative was made inaccessible by advising Sotomayor to reduce speed on account of conserving fuel. What Maia did not tell the rebel chief was that the ship’s evaporators required a certain velocity in order to function properly.⁴⁶ At low speed salt water could not be converted.

The radio room was an area of much sabotage. Here the operators Garcia, Ferraz and Belchior played a vital role. Under constant watch the three men took risks on a daily basis. For example, they reported the ship’s position to CCN’s Lisbon office without their captors realising it. Crewmembers on the bridge passed on the ship’s coordinates via cigarette packs ‘caressly’ left lying around in the radio room.⁴⁷

Operator Carlos Garcia’s critical moment came when he was asked by Galvão to transmit a cable requesting asylum from the governments of Ghana, Guinea and Senegal. Garcia immediately realised that an affirmative reply from any of the three African states would provide the rebels with a destination port. In almost cinematic action the operator managed to slip Galvão’s request into a drawer without being noticed by the guard. Later it was retrieved by Operator Gaston Ferraz and passed on to Captain Maia.⁴⁸ Had the African cables reached their destination the *Santa Maria*

⁴⁴ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.144.

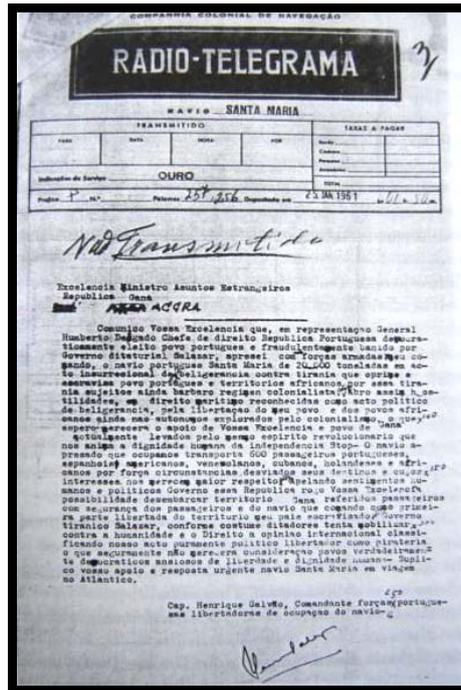
⁴⁵ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.136.

⁴⁶ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.145.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.149.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 146-52.

incident might have gained an extra international dimension. African asylum for the rebels could increase Afro-Asian involvement in the case. But then it might not. According to Franco Nogueira⁴⁹ an offer of assistance from Senegal had been sent to Delgado in Brazil. Dakar promised 5000 troops - transported by Soviet fishing trawlers - to liberate Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde.



Galvão's request for asylum which Garcia never sent.

B. Day, *Passage Perilous* (New York, 1962)

There was, of course, little chance of the hijackers getting past Portuguese, American and Spanish warships patrolling the West African coast in wait of the rebel liner. At any rate, it was a brave instance of internal resistance by Operators Garcia and Ferraz.

⁴⁹ Nogueira, *Salazar: A Resistência*, p.197.

h) U.S. protection against Salazar's "phantom" fleet

The prow of the *Santa Maria* still pointed towards Africa but Galvão was fully aware of the impossibility of crossing the Atlantic without being intercepted by Portuguese or American warships. Notwithstanding his claims that Salazar's fleet was imaginary Galvão knows the *Pêro Escobar* and the *Canárias* (a Spanish cruiser dispatched by General Franco) are very much real and intent on stopping him. He also knows that Washington is keeping Lisbon informed of the *Santa Maria*'s every move, and that adds to Galvão's worries.

In his book Galvão tells his readers the vessels sent by Portugal were no more than "phantom ships of Salazar's manufacture"⁵⁰ and that he is absolutely certain no Portuguese warship will come after the *Santa Maria*.⁵¹ Yet, he considers 'disturbing'⁵² the fact that American aircraft are relaying information concerning his whereabouts to Salazar's 'phantom' ships. In short, Galvão is troubled by ghost warships that he is sure will not come! Then, on 27 January, the rebel captain delved deeper into surrealism by accepting U.S. navy protection "against action of Portuguese warships."⁵³ The *Santa Maria* was now being escorted by four American destroyers.

i) Looking for a neutral port: debarkation of passengers under Galvão's conditions

The hijackers face an increasingly more difficult situation. Waning water and fuel supplies make it urgent that passengers be put ashore. But under no circumstances will the rebels consider surrender. Galvão's conditions for the debarkation of passengers are clear: once the passengers are off the ship, the *Santa Maria* is to be refueled and the water as well as food supplies replenished; then it's back to sea towards Dulcinea's ultimate aim.

⁵⁰ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.169.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.141.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p.139

⁵³ Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.138

Brazil is the most logical point at which to conduct the offloading of the passengers, but authorities in Rio de Janeiro remain vague regarding the Portuguese liner putting in at a Brazilian port. Galvão feels he cannot trust President Juscelino Kubitschek, who has denied him a previous request for asylum⁵⁴, and is most likely to order the *Santa Maria* confiscated if she enters Brazilian waters. Kubitschek's mandate expires on 31 January when Jânio Quadros is to be inaugurated as Brazil's next president. Galvão would rather wait for friendly Quadros than take chances with Kubitschek.

American concern for the passengers is increasing. The U.S. pressurises for their release yet Galvão does not give in. Retaining the passengers aboard is vital, they are his only bargaining chip. Thus Galvão ties their release to Brazilian acceptance of his debarkation terms. He was pressing the United States into persuading Rio to allow the *Santa Maria* entering a Brazilian port. It works. John Moors Cabot, U.S. ambassador to Brazil, is instructed to convince the Kubitschek government to permit the debarkation manoeuvre on a basis of "humanitarian reasons".⁵⁵

j) Portugal upset by U.S. handling of the case

In the meantime officials in Lisbon are perturbed by Washington's omission of the ship's crew in their dealings with the rebels. Marcello Mathias, Foreign Affairs Minister, asks the American Ambassador C. Burke Elbrick to seek the release, on humanitarian grounds, of Maia's 370 personnel. Mathias conveys to Elbrick that the Portuguese Government is not pleased with the way the U.S is handling the *Santa Maria*: "The United States is proceeding as if Galvão were some honored old friend, not a pirate and a refugee from Portuguese justice."⁵⁶ Lisbon understands American concern for their nationals aboard but feels the crew are just as deserving of attention. Portugal wants the release of all the passengers and all the crew, and it wants the ship returned to CCN.

⁵⁴ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.139.

⁵⁵ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.137.

⁵⁶ Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, pp. 140-1.

The Portuguese Government's emphasis on the release of the crew was based on more than just humanitarian concern. The possibility of Galvão using the crew as an instrument of negotiation was highly disturbing to Salazar.⁵⁷ With the passengers out of the ship the *Santa Maria* would become an exclusively Portuguese problem. Galvão would be free of the constraints imposed by the presence of American, Dutch and Spanish nationals. He would be free to radicalise the situation to any degree he wished to.

k) A meeting in international waters

If Brazil does not agree with Galvão's terms the only other alternative is to conduct the debarkation at sea in international waters.⁵⁸ This is exactly what Admiral Dennison wants to avoid. The transfer of passengers at sea is always a risky operation. It can easily lead to casualties, even in calm weather conditions. The U.S Navy must try its utmost to avert having to execute a transference manoeuvre out at sea hence Dennison assures Galvão the U.S. will not interfere with the *Santa Maria*'s movements after the passengers have been put ashore. Secretary of State Dean Rusk has personally approved this guarantee.

On 27 January Galvão sent Admiral Dennison an urgent request for a meeting on board the *Santa Maria* to work out the details concerning the offloading of the passengers.⁵⁹ A meeting is set up between the two men (Dennison is to be represented by Admiral Allen Smith) to take place in international waters some fifty miles off the Brazilian port of Recife.⁶⁰ At noon, 28 January, the rebel liner changes course, instead of Africa she now sails towards Recife⁶¹ and a rendezvous with U.S. Navy officials.

⁵⁷ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.135.

⁵⁸ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.144.

⁵⁹ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.138.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p.143.

⁶¹ 'U.S.and Rio Study Way to Land 560 from *Santa Maria*', *New York Times*, January 29, 1961, p.14.

Chapter 8

Debarkation

a) “Perhaps it’s over”

A plot was brewing below the ostensibly calm decks. Third-class passengers appointed an action committee and fixed a deadline. If they were not disembarked by noon, an attempt would be made to recapture the ship from the outnumbered hijackers.¹ Their intention was to be communicated by way of a demonstration in the First-class area set to take place two hours² before midday.

At around 10:00, on 2 February, a crowd of over a hundred third-class passengers and crew assembled on deck A. Led by António Garcia Cabrera, a Spaniard, they stood outside the ship’s main lounge shouting “freedom for all” just as the Brazilian officials arrived on board for another round of talks. The crowd turned to Admiral Fernandes and his team: “Save us. Save us.” While this was happening Galvão’s men stood guard before the lounge’s plate-glass doors, weapons drawn and ready to fire. The rebellious gathering forced its way. One of the hijackers was pushed through a door. Shattered glass injured a man who had been in the front line.³ No shooting. The crowd hesitated briefly. By now a line of marines added their strength to the rebel force. A Brazilian Navy officer intervened: “Get back! You will all get off.”⁴ The rioters retreated, still angry, but prepared to wait until noon for Galvão to make up his mind. An American passenger claimed later that “anything could have happened” had the riot “gone on for another five minutes”.⁵ At any rate, the message was explicitly delivered and Galvão understood it well.

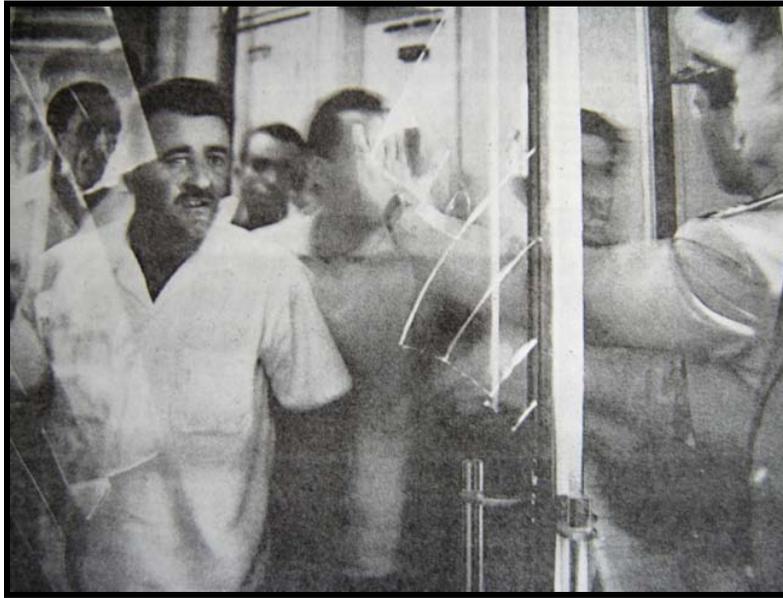
¹ David Snell, ‘A Secret Night Visit to Rebel Ship...’, *Life*, February 10, 1961, p.34.

² *Ibid.*

³ Beth Day, *Passage Perilous* (New York, 1962), p.199.

⁴ William Rogers, *The Floating Revolution* (New York, 1962), pp.193-7.

⁵ Tad Szulc, ‘607 Put Ashore by Cruise Ship’, *New York Times*, February 3, 1961, p.3



Third-class passengers riot (notice the shattered glass door) *Life*, Feb. 10, 1961

Negotiations between Alves, Admiral Dias Fernandes and Galvão were resumed. There were three main issues to resolve: to work out the technicalities of the passengers' debarkation; what to do about the crew; and possession of the ship.

The situation did not look good for the rebels. Galvão admitted that supplies were running low and that the *Santa Maria* was "far from shipshape".⁶ There was also the possibility of losing all the crew. In addition, the naval units now concentrated just outside Brazilian waters blocked access to sea. Galvão's choices were narrowing down to very little.

The Brazilians suggested the immediate release of the passengers. They could then negotiate a solution for the remaining two issues: the crew's discharge and disposition of the ship. Dário Alves proposed, most sensibly, that a plebiscite⁷ be held among the crew to ascertain who wanted to remain aboard and who did not.

Having considered the Brazilian proposals, Galvão accepted their logic. "Perhaps it's over", he said to Alves and Fernandes, "we will anchor at the harbour entrance where

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Rui Rocha, 'Os Quixotes do Mar: *Santa Maria*, Trinta Anos Depois', *Expresso*, January 19, 1991, p.31.

the water is calm. There you may effect the transfer. All those who wish to leave may do so. My men and those of the crew who elect to stay shall stay aboard. And we shall see what happens next.”⁸ It was the most sensible option to take.

The plan was that, after the debarkation of the passengers and crew, the *Santa Maria* would return to her three-mile limit anchorage. There, the ship’s future would finally be decided.⁹ Galvão was adamant that in no case would the rebels abandon the vessel to “Salazarist forces” or “do anything that could imply surrender”.¹⁰ But he did not explain how they expected to extricate themselves from their encirclement.¹¹ A document was drawn up stipulating the conditions for the release of the ship. However, Galvão delayed signing it until the next day, on the grounds that he needed to consult his people before making a decision.

One reason for Galvão agreeing to this formula was that it did not prejudge the rebel’s juridical status. But most importantly Galvão realised that “the psychological and morale condition of the passengers”¹² did not permit any more debarkation delays and magnified the danger of violence aboard.

The crew was assembled on one of the decks and Alves conducted a plebiscite over the microphone. More than 98 percent voted in favour of debarkation. In other words, 351 crewmen and women opted to go ashore while a mere 5 chose to stay on board. This represented a staggering defeat for Galvão. Without the essential technicians and mechanics the liner could not sail. *Dulcinea* was immobilised.

In the meanwhile Galvão’s troubles gained a new addition. CCN, the ship’s owners, filed a restoration order in the Pernambuco state court in Recife.¹³ This meant that once the *Santa Maria* entered territorial waters the Brazilian Navy might be forced – by way of a court order – to apprehend and return her to her proprietors. Dário Alves came up with a solution. The liner was to be placed under the direct jurisdiction of the

⁸ Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.197.

⁹ Szulc, ‘607 Put Ashore’, *New York Times*, February 3, 1961, p.3.

¹⁰ Henrique Galvão, *Santa Maria: My Crusade for Portugal* (London, 1961), p.171.

¹¹ Szulc, ‘607 Put Ashore’, *New York Times*, February 3, 1961, p.1.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ ‘*Santa Maria* Boarded by Marines’, *The Times*, February 3, 1961, p.10.

President.¹⁴ In this way a restoration order would have to be processed through the Supreme Court, creating enough delay to allow for a diplomatic solution to the case.

Bedecked from stern to bow, flags flapping in the breeze and blaring martial music, the *Santa Maria* entered Recife's harbour (Lameirão) still on the morning of 2 February. Dock space at Number 3 quay had been allocated to the liner. However, Galvão had other intentions. Instead of docking the *Santa Maria* dropped anchor about three hundred and fifty yards from the pier. There she waited for the tugboats to ferry the passengers and crew ashore. Galvão's decision not to dock was more than a gesture of authority; he wanted to avoid any physical contact between the vessel and land. The sea, surrounding the liner, defined his utopian revolutionary island. If the ship were moored, his independence and freedom of movement would be endangered.



The rebel liner enters Recife harbour, February 2, 1961.

H.Delgado, *The Memoirs of General Delgado* (London, 1964)

b) Recife

Referred to as the “Venice of America” because of its numerous waterways Recife had, in 1961, a population of 788 569.¹⁵ Besides being the capital of the state of Pernambuco, it is also one of Brazil's most important ports due to its proximity to

¹⁴ Rocha, ‘Quixotes do Mar’, *Expresso*, January 19, 1991, p.31.

¹⁵ This is according to the 1960 census. See *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol.19 (Chicago, 1971), p.23.

Europe (it is located at the mouth of the Capiberibe river near the easternmost point of South America). Recife was settled in 1535 by the Portuguese, and became a town in 1709. Until the end of the eighteenth-century it was Brazil's second city. Galvão would not be the first "pirate" to arrive in its shore. The city had been captured and plundered in 1595 by James Lancaster, an English privateer.¹⁶

c) Passengers and crew ashore

Around 12:00 the first tug, carrying sixty Brazilian marines and a contingent of newsmen, pulled alongside the *Santa Maria*. The stairway was lowered and the troops came aboard in order to facilitate the debarkation process.

Galvão stood at the top of the gangway personally signing the passports of the departing passengers. A small gesture to remind those who had been aboard, during *Dulcinea*, that they had "participated in a history-making event".¹⁷

Three tugboats ferried the passengers and crew, in successive trips, across the mile and a half separating the liner from the pier. The crewmembers, including captain Maia, were the last ones to leave. By nightfall the operation was completed.

Notwithstanding Galvão's claim that debarkation had come off "without the slightest incident"¹⁸, there were in fact some tense moments. Shouts and imprecations from the ship's crew were directed at Galvão and other fellow rebel officers. Two stewards, for example, shouting their hatred, raced towards one of the tugs only to be ordered back aboard by Brazilian officers.¹⁹ At least three crewmen, who could not wait any longer, jumped overboard and were fished out by boats clustered around the *Santa Maria*.

¹⁶ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol.19 (Chicago, 1962), pp.12-3.

¹⁷ Day, *Passage Perilous*, pp.206-7.

¹⁸ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.169.

¹⁹ Szulc, '607 Put Ashore', *New York Times*, February 3, 1961, p.3.



For them the revolution is over: passengers coming down the stairway.

L. van Hofwijk, *De Dertien Dagen van de Santa Maria* (Utrecht, n.d.)

Recife harbour was closed to the public while passengers and crew were landed. To prevent mobs from getting through to the released passengers and crew, marines and police cordoned off an area stretching two miles along the shore.²⁰ Crowds lined the dockside to cheer the hostages as they came ashore. From the wharf, passengers and crew were taken by bus to Recife's Portuguese Club, which was to operate as a central clearing-house, where they spent about an hour before being driven to various private homes for the night.²¹ They would be leaving for their destinations within the next three days. CCN offered all passengers free transportation, by air to the United States and by sea to Europe.²² In the meanwhile, Brazilian and Portuguese families offered accommodation to 640 crewmen and passengers.

d) Hostages relate their experiences

While at the Portuguese Club the passengers spoke to the press about their experiences during their twelve days in captivity. There were few complaints from the first-class travelers. Some even viewed the seizure as an exciting adventure albeit aware that the rebels' weapons were real. They were, however, relieved to be back on

²⁰ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.207.

²¹ Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.201.

²² *Ibid.*

terra firma. Most agreed that Galvão was a man of high ideals, but a “visionary”²³, whose behaviour towards his hostages had been courteous and considerate.²⁴

In general, American passengers described their trip as one where normal routine prevailed, except they were constantly reminded, by the guns in the insurgents’ holsters, that this was not the sort of cruise advertised in traveling agencies’ brochures. Some, like Dr Irene Dunn, of California, were aware of the plight of the third-class passengers and how serious the situation really was.²⁵ Others, such as Delbert Smith, of Pennsylvania, displayed considerable powers of imagination. Smith told reporters that he had seen “Galvão thrown through a window and emerge bloodied” and “it was pretty terrible”.²⁶ One of the best accounts of the seizure was that of June Preston, from Lawrence, Kansas. There was “too much comic opera about it all for it to be taken seriously”.²⁷ Preston illustrated her argument with an example. The cheap leather hip holsters worn by the hijackers – bought in a Caracas bargain store – were the same as her children had for their toy pistols.²⁸ Of course the rebels’ guns were real enough, but she could not suppress a sense that the whole episode was more humorous than revolutionary.

Naturally, most complaints came from the 447 third-class passengers, subjected to unhygienic conditions, excessively high heat levels in their below-deck cabins and, ultimately, reduced to a diet of potatoes and beans.²⁹ The situation was so absurd, said one of the passengers, “I would not have believed it had I not lived through it”.³⁰

There was one aspect which was common to virtually all experiences related and that was indifference to the revolutionary aims of the captors. Contrary to Galvão’s claims, very few people saw the seizure through his political prism. No one really cared about the insurgents’ manifesto. They were mainly concerned with their

²³ Szulc, ‘607 Put Ashore’, *New York Times*, February 3, 1961, p.3.

²⁴ *Keessing’s Contemporary Archives*, February 25 – March 4, 1961, p.17952.

²⁵ Max Frankel, ‘Babel of Cheers and Tears Marks Debarkation’, *New York Times*, February 3, 1961, p.3.

²⁶ ‘Passengers Relate Adventure’, *New York Times*, February 3, 1961, p.3. Galvão was, of course, never personally involved in any act of physical violence.

²⁷ Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.133.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Time*, February 10, 1961, p.23.

³⁰ Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.201.

personal safety and too preoccupied with the uncertainty of their fate to engage in the parochial politics of the distant Iberian Peninsula. Eleven days at sea with Galvão's microcosmic democracy was about as much as they could endure. Had it gone any longer the outcome might have been entirely different.

e) Dulcinea's last night

At nightfall the *Santa Maria's* decks were deserted. Her only occupants were Galvão's men, sixty Brazilian marines and a few journalists. She lay ablaze in lights "like any fun-loving cruise ship in port".³¹ But her fate and that of her rebel masters remained undecided. Brazilian officials were expected again the next day for a final round of negotiations. The adventure was not yet over.

Admiral Dias Fernandes had promised to provide the insurgents with a tugboat to enable the *Santa Maria* to sail back to sea, after the passengers and crew were disembarked. Yet, once the hostages were ashore, the Brazilians told Galvão they could not supply a tug.³² The rebels were trapped. The freedom to return to sea, guaranteed by the Brazilians, had become as utopian as Dulcinea's second phase.

Nevertheless, the authorisation to leave harbour promised by Dias Fernandes was, in Galvão's view, enough proof of political and moral victory.³³ Moreover, the rebel leader identified a number of factors that rendered a return to sea impracticable. It was not possible to raise enough funds to re-supply the liner or to recruit a new crew. Besides, the *Santa Maria* had ceased to interest the rebels. She was "enormous, heavy" and "costly".³⁴ Possession of the ship had now become as burdensome to the rebels as it had been useful in the operation's first phase.³⁵ It was time to discard the *Santa Maria*. She had served her purpose.

³¹ Frankel, 'Babel of Cheers', *New York Times*, February 3, 1961, p.3.

³² Dominique Lapierre, *A Thousand Suns: Witness to History* (London, 1999), p.25.

³³ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.171.

³⁴ *Ibid.* The liner had been just as enormous, heavy and costly when the rebels conceived Dulcinea.

It seems odd that did they not realise this then.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

Knowing that a return to sea was now definitely out of the question, Galvão grappled with a dilemma. Should he sign the document, proposed by Dias Fernandes, handing over the ship to the Brazilian authorities? Or should he scuttle her with himself and Sotomayor on board? He was inclined towards the latter solution. To sink the liner appealed to the rebel skipper as the “most dignified conclusion” to Dulcinea, and one that would extend international interest, drawn by the seizure, to the fight against the regimes of Salazar and Franco.³⁶ On the other hand, the destruction of the ship seemed “excessively romantic” and “to place a definitive stop to a struggle that had barely begun”.³⁷ At any rate, Galvão had the whole night to make his decision.



Dulcinea's last night: Brazilian marines resting on the ship's empty decks.

L. van Hofwijk, *De Dertien Dagen van de Santa Maria* (Utrecht, n.d.)

In a Recife hotel room Dário Alves could not sleep that night. The young diplomat was aware of the rumours that the Santa Maria had been rigged with explosives, and that Galvão intended to scuttle her as a final act. He also knew that the Brazilian Government was responsible for the liner since she was in national territory. Moreover, Alves had witnessed Admiral Dias Fernandes' instructions to the marines going aboard the vessel. They were to prevent, by all possible means, any act that might put the ship at risk. To this end the troops were given carte blanche concerning

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.175.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

the use of military force.³⁸ A potentially dangerous situation had thus been set up. From his window Alves looked at the *Santa Maria* in the distance and prayed that she be spared.³⁹

While Dário Alves spent the night agonising over the possible sabotage of the *Santa Maria*, Galvão was in a Recife hotel being interviewed by Dominique Lapierre. The Frenchman, working for *Paris Match*, had managed to obtain the rebel leader's exclusive story of the ship's seizure.

Disguised as a fireman, Lapierre gained access to the liner. He offered the insurgent Captain \$2000 for his story. Galvão agreed, on the condition that the interview was conducted somewhere other than the ship.⁴⁰ Both men decided that Lapierre's hotel room would be a good location in which to talk. Galvão was spirited away "in the bottom of a covered dinghy"⁴¹ and taken to a modest hotel some 15 miles from Recife's centre. On entering his room Lapierre could hardly believe that he had actually "kidnapped" "one of history's most celebrated pirates".⁴²

By 05:00 in the morning Galvão's personal odyssey had filled forty pages of his interviewer's notebook. All the while Lapierre had been concerned that PIDE agents might burst into the room. He conveyed his fears to Galvão. "If Salazar were to have me assassinated, he would seriously embarrass Brazil"- replied the Captain - "he's too intelligent to make that sort of blunder."⁴³

The interview over, the two men headed to a tavern for a meal. On leaving the room Lapierre first made sure no one was waiting for them in the hotel corridor. Noticing the Frenchman's anxiety, Galvão assured him that PIDE personnel "kept banking hours", by now they would have "gone to bed".⁴⁴ Later, Lapierre telephoned Sotomayor, from a cafe-restaurant on the seafront, to come collect his superior, which the Spaniard duly did.

³⁸ Rocha, 'Os Quixotes do Mar', *Expresso*, January 1, 1991, p.31.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Lapierre, *A Thousand Suns*, p.11.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.12.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.26.

On his return to the *Santa Maria* Galvão had a visitor waiting. His friend Álvaro Lins, former Brazilian ambassador to Portugal and political adviser to the rebels,⁴⁵ had come on board. Lins' aim was to dissuade Galvão from sinking the liner. The Brazilian had supported the insurgents throughout the operation but now felt that they should call a halt. Lins tried vigorously to convince his friend that scuttling the vessel was definitely not the right option.

“It is only the glory of living that really makes history”⁴⁶, Galvão wrote. That would be his decision: to go on living. He was ready to sign the release of the ship proposed by Dias Fernandes, and really make history.

⁴⁵ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.175.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

Chapter 9

The End of the Affair

a) Surrender

Without the shield provided by the passengers and crew Galvão had hardly any bargaining currency. What is more, the possibility of an attack by Portuguese and Spanish warships became all the more probable. In short, the insurgents had been cornered by the sequence of events. There really was little to negotiate between Galvão and Admiral Dias Fernandes. However, the Brazilians – under orders from President Quadros not to be harsh with the rebel captain – played the game. They would return aboard for a final round of discussions.

For thirteen days Galvão had been in control of the situation. Now it was the right moment to let go. If he carried the adventure beyond this point he might be devoured by the very tiger whose tail he so successfully held since 21 January.

From 10:00 onwards, on 3 February, the leader of the insurgents met with a Brazilian team of negotiators comprising Dias Fernandes, Dário Alves, Álvaro Lins, Governor Pelópidas and Commander Aristides. The proposal for the delivery of the ship – initially put forward by Fernandes and Alves – was finalised to suit all concerned. At 13:00 Galvão signed the agreement handing over the *Santa Maria* to Dias Fernandes. The Brazilians were now responsible for the disposal of the vessel. In this way Galvão was allowed to save face since he would not be turning the ship over to Portuguese officials but rather to “friendly Brazilians”.¹ Moreover, the rebels had bought enough time to delay legal proceedings initiated by the *Santa Maria*’s owners in Recife.²

¹ Beth Day, *Passage Perilous* (New York, 1962), p.204.

² The fact that 2 February was a Friday must have favoured Galvão. It is unlikely that any legal action would be taken during the course of the weekend.

A surrender ceremony was set for 18:00. Galvão's men stacked their weapons in the ship's library and lined up on the promenade deck opposite the Brazilian marines. Dias Fernandes addressed the gathering that included over a hundred pressmen. The admiral explained that the insurgents were not considered prisoners but political refugees.³ He added that Galvão and his companions deserved "respect and cordiality" and that, as rebels, they were eligible for the political asylum being offered to them. Finally, Fernandes expressed satisfaction "over the spirit of conciliation" that had prevailed among all the parties concerned.⁴

When it was Galvão's turn to speak he voiced his regret that the operation had been interrupted, but assured the audience that the fight would go on.⁵ The termination of *Dulcinea* was merely an end that marked a beginning. The way Galvão saw it, the *Santa Maria*'s seizure was the opening act in the fight against Salazar's regime.

After reading aloud the surrender terms, Admiral Dias Fernandes asked Galvão: "Do you agree to turn this ship over to the Brazilian command?" "I do"⁶, replied the rebel captain. The floating republic had come to an end. The time was 18:22.⁷

The "*Santa Liberdade*" and DRIL banners were hauled down.⁸ Galvão and his crew gathered up their possessions and prepared to leave the ship. They were ready for a new life in Brazilian exile.

About 19:00 the rebels, in the company of General Delgado, were transported ashore in a tugboat. Just before he left the *Santa Maria* Galvão stopped for a moment and "bowed his head as if in prayer."⁹ An outstanding photograph – reproduced below - captured that instant as the insurgent leader, in deep thought, waits his turn to board the tug.

³ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.214.

⁴ Henry Zeiger, *The Seizing of the Santa Maria* (New York, 1961), p.121.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ William Rogers, *The Floating Revolution* (New York, 1962), p.207.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.215.

⁹ Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.207.



A pensive Henrique Galvão waits to leave the ship. *Life*, Feb. 10, 1961

Galvão's poetic description of his feelings, on the trip ashore, is worth recalling here: "It was with heavy melancholy that we saw the distance increase between us and the beautiful ship."¹⁰ In retrospective, this observation is all the more relevant. *Dulcinea* was certainly the zenith of Henrique Galvão's adventurous life. Nothing could ever match those exhilarating two weeks in January 1961. The increasing distance between the narrator and the ship becomes the gulf between the dreamer and the dream, between anonymity and fame. Galvão had climbed the summit. Now he faced the prospect of a descent back to obscurity.

On the wharf the Mayor of Recife and a crowd of sympathizers greeted the insurgents. Two buses carried the insurgents to the headquarters of the military police in Recife where they had been invited to stay under the protection of the Ministry of

¹⁰ Henrique Galvão, *Santa Maria: My Crusade for Portugal* (London, 1961), p.178.

Security.¹¹ This was a temporary arrangement until the men had decided where to settle in Brazil.

Late on the night of 3 February, Galvão was interviewed at his new lodging. Describing the scene around a table in the police headquarters, Tad Szulc, a *New York Times* reporter, said that there was a touch of incongruity about it similar to the “wild incongruity” that permeated the entire seizure of the *Santa Maria*.¹² Looking at Galvão and his men, Szulc found it hard to believe that this small band of “elderly men”, “middle-aged intellectuals” and youths with “hands hardened by manual labour” had captured the world’s attention for two weeks.¹³ But he was not the only one in disbelief. The ship’s owners and Maia’s crew were, at this stage, still not convinced that the seizure had been carried out by only twenty-four elements. CCN maintained that many more people had participated in the plot.¹⁴

In the interview Galvão asserted that the handing over of the liner was not so much a surrender – in the strict sense of the word – but rather the completion of the initial phase of “offensive operations” against the regime in Lisbon.¹⁵ There were plans to continue the fight to topple Salazar and Franco, but these could not be disclosed for obvious reasons. Although the insurgents must now shed their uniforms – in accordance with the rules of political asylum – this did not mean they would cease to be a military organisation. “The habit does not make the monk”¹⁶ Galvão said.

The rebel leader also emphasised that Brazil’s asylum offer was unconditional. Him and his men were free to move about at will.¹⁷ However, as was pointed out in the *Times*¹⁸, it was expected that the insurgents would live inconspicuously, at least for a while, so as to avoid creating embarrassment to Jânio Quadros’ Administration.

¹¹ ‘*Santa Maria* Handed Over to the Portuguese’, *The Times*, February 4, 1961, p.8.

¹² Tad Szulc, ‘Galvão Promises Fight Will Go On’, *New York Times*, February 5, 1961, p.24.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Max Frankel, ‘Seized Ship Returned to Owners and Reboarded by Original Crew’, *New York Times*, February 5, 1961, p.25.

¹⁵ Szulc, ‘Galvão Promises Fight Will Go On’, *New York Times*, February 5, 1961, p.24.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ ‘*Santa Maria* Given Back to Owners’, *The Times*, February 6, 1961, p.9.

Galvão and his people would, hopefully, join the rest of Latin America's "quiet exiles"¹⁹ in Brazil.

But if it was obscurity that the Brazilian authorities expected from the new exiles, they certainly expressed it in a peculiar way. On 4 February, Galvão was triumphantly received in the Pernambuco State Legislative Assembly in "an unforgettable tribute of solidarity".²⁰ A socialist motion, declaring the rebel leader an honorary citizen of the State, was put forward for consideration by the city council.²¹

b) *Santa Maria* returned to owners

Brazil's international lawyers arranged for the ship to be transferred to a Portuguese military attaché. It was felt that, by handing the liner directly to the Lisbon Government, instead of CCN, no further legal action was likely to be taken against Galvão seeing that the transfer would be executed within a political rather than judicial framework. This way, the insurgents would avert criminal charges, in Brazilian courts, that later might become problematic under political refugee status.²² As for the ship's owners attempt to prosecute in Brazil, the Foreign Ministry in Rio de Janeiro was of the opinion that it was unlikely to succeed.²³ CCN lawyers had filed a suit accusing Galvão and his men of "homicide, robbery, injuries, depriving passengers and crew of their liberty" and damages to the vessel.²⁴

At 11:00²⁵, 4 February, the *Santa Maria* was officially handed over to a military attaché from the Portuguese embassy in Rio who promptly passed the control of the liner to CCN representative João do Amaral. In less than twenty-four hours the ship had gone through a quadruple change of hands. Galvão was not pleased with the rapidity of the process that effectively terminated Dulcinea. He counted on a longer

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.179.

²¹ 'Leader of Rebels May be Made Honorary Citizen', *The Star*, February 4, 1961, p.1.

²² Tad Szulc, 'Rebels Yield *Santa Maria* : Brazil Gives Ship to Lisbon', *New York Times*, February 4, 1961, p.1.

²³ Frankel, 'Seized Ship Returned to Owners', *New York Times*, February 5, 1961, p.25.

²⁴ Rogers, *Floating Revolution*, p.208.

²⁵ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.216.

delay in the transference of the vessel to her owners. This would have increased the impact of the operation by creating more difficulties for the Portuguese authorities. A spokesman for the insurgents told the press: “We are shocked at the attitude of the Brazilian Government, since it signed a document with us guaranteeing that the *Santa Maria* would stay under the Brazilian flag.”²⁶ This was unreasonable. Galvão must have been aware, when he signed the final agreement with Fernandes, that President Quadros could not retain possession of the ship for long.

Having regained ownership of the vessel CCN sent Captain Maia back to the bridge. By nightfall, 4 February, the original crew of 350 had resumed their duties.²⁷ On regaining command of the *Santa Maria* Maia had her thoroughly inspected for any signs of sabotage. There were none.²⁸ It was now obvious that the hijackers had bluffed when they threatened to blast the liner. But neither CCN nor the Portuguese Government were about to take chances.

On 29 January, an undercover paramilitary group selected from the Naval Brigade of the Portuguese Legion²⁹ was sent to Recife. Jorge Pereira Jardim (1920-82)³⁰, a close friend and trusted associate of Dr Salazar, headed the group. Jardim’s mission was twofold: to keep Lisbon informed of events on the ground; and to protect the liner *Vera Cruz*,³¹ which was due to transport most of the *Santa Maria*’s passengers back to Europe.

²⁶ ‘Galvão: Lisbon Will Not Act’, *Rand Daily Mail*, February 6, 1961, p.3.

²⁷ Frankel, ‘Seized Ship Returned to Owners’, *New York Times*, February 5, 1961, p.25.

²⁸ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.219.

²⁹ An elite paramilitary civil organisation founded in 1936 and aimed at combating all subversive doctrines, particularly those of a communist or anarchist type. Membership of the *Legião Portuguesa* was voluntary. It was dissolved in April 1974. See *Dicionário Ilustrado da História de Portugal vol.1* (Lisbon, 1986), pp.375-6.

³⁰ A multifarious figure, Jardim is certainly one of the central personalities of Portuguese colonialism in its last phase between the early 1950s and 1970s. An agronomist, soldier, diplomat, businessman hunter of big game, journalist, aviator, adventurer, Jardim settled in Mozambique in 1952. He had the full trust of Premier Salazar for whom he carried many a delicate secret mission in the *milieu* of international diplomacy. He was chairman of a bank in Gabon at the time of his death at 62. Jorge Jardim, *Moçambique: Terra Queimada* (Lisbon, 1976), pp.7-8; José Freire Antunes (ed), *Cartas Particulares a Marcello Caetano* (Lisbon, 1985), p.11.

³¹ José Freire Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar* (Lisbon, 1992), p. 140.

c) Passengers resume trip

On 5 February, about 450 Spanish and Portuguese *Santa Maria* passengers set sail from Recife. They traveled on the hijacked liner's sister ship, the *Vera Cruz*, headed to Lisbon via the Cape Verde Islands, Tenerife in the Canary Islands, Madeira, and Vigo, Spain. Within ten days they reached their final port of destination in the Tagus River, Lisbon.³²

The Dutch and American passengers were to be flown out at the expense of CCN. Forty-four Dutch travelers left Brazil on a chartered KLM flight on 5 February.³³ By 7 February, most of the "travel-strained" Americans had been flown into Miami, Florida, from Brazil.³⁴

d) Lisbon will not act

On Monday, 5 February, the Portuguese Government issued an official 8-point statement. Without mentioning Henrique Galvão, the regime explained its position regarding the various aspects of the *Santa Maria* incident. No steps would be taken to gain custody of the hijackers. Lisbon left it up to "the conscience" of the international community, particularly of those governments that were in a position to act against "those responsible for the crimes of robbery, murder, bodily offenses, falsification of passports, clandestine transport of arms and the privation of liberty of hundreds of people."³⁵

The clear tone of Lisbon's statement was consistent with the attitude assumed by the regime from the outset of the seizure. The Portuguese Government had not deviated an inch from its original stance, neatly encapsulated by an official who declared that

³² Day, *Passage Perilous*, pp.225-7.

³³ 'O Pacote *Vera Cruz* Largou do Recife Trazendo a Bordo os Passageiros do *Santa Maria*', *Jornal do Comércio*, February 6, 1961, p.1.

³⁴ '30 Tired U.S. Tourists Back from Seized Ship', *New York Times*, February 8, 1961, p.12.

³⁵ 'Santa Maria Rebels Renounced by Lisbon', *New York Times*, February 5, 1961, p.22 ; 'Nota Oficial da Presidência do Conselho', *Jornal do Comércio*, February 6, 1961, p.8.

should the United States capture Galvão they could “try him for piracy”, adding that Galvão was “not wanted” back home.³⁶

Not wanting Galvão back in a Portuguese jail was, of course, not so much the decision of Lisbon as that of the Quadros Government in Brazil. In fact, Salazar had expressed regret at having allowed the rebel captain to leave the Argentinean embassy where he had sought refuge after escaping from police custody in 1959. The Premier told one of his ministers that he had thought it foolish to let Galvão leave Portugal because he “would not stand still.” But there had been pressure and fears from certain elements in the Government that had permitted Galvão’s exit from Portugal.³⁷ At the end of the day Salazar’s insight proved to be true: the troublesome captain had certainly not been inactive in his South American sojourn.

But if Lisbon was hard on the insurgents, it had not lost its diplomatic touch. Point 6 of the statement expressed official appreciation for the “efficient cooperation” of the U.S. navy and air force, and Brazil’s correct, as well as, “extremely friendly” attitude³⁸ throughout the ordeal. Pragmatism had certainly won the day.

e) The *Santa Maria* sails home

Once the *Santa Maria* was seaworthy again, Captain Maia had 400 tons of fuel and 2500 tons of water taken on. All her original crew was back on board. She was ready for the voyage home.

On the morning of 5 February a mass was held for the slain Third Mate, Nascimento Costa, on the open deck of the liner. Attendance included the ship’s crew, Portuguese officials, members of the Recife Portuguese community and representatives of CCN. After the service the casket was returned to the ship’s chapel where it would remain – draped in the Portuguese flag – for the duration of the return trip to Lisbon.³⁹

³⁶ Zeiger, *The Seizing of the Santa Maria*, p.91.

³⁷ Franco Nogueira, *Salazar: A Resistência* (Lisbon, 1977), p.194.

³⁸ ‘Nota Oficiosa da Presidencia do Conselho’, *Jornal do Comércio*, February 6, 1961, p.8.

³⁹ ‘Missa por Alma do Terceiro Piloto Nascimento Costa’, *Jornal do Comércio*, February 6, 1961, p.8; Day, *Passage Perilous*, pp.224-5.

The *Santa Maria* finally sailed out to sea on Tuesday, 7 February. Besides her crew, the only other passengers aboard were four Brazilian reporters, Mateus Costa, brother of the deceased Nascimento Costa, and an American citizen.⁴⁰ It took the liner eight days to reach her final destination. She entered Lisbon harbour on 17 February. A flotilla of yachts, tugs, fishing boats and other sorts of vessels⁴¹ escorted the vessel into the harbour. 300 000⁴² people gathered in the dock area to welcome home the *Santa Maria*.



The *Santa Maria* arrives home.

O Jornal Ilustrado, Jan. 4, 1991

Shouts of “Long live Salazar” and “Long live Portugal” greeted Premier Salazar as he made a surprise appearance at the harbour to welcome the ship and her crew. This was to be “one of the biggest ovations” in the Portuguese leader’s “long political career.”⁴³ Without any police escort the seventy-one-year-old head of state made his way through the crowd of well-wishers. Accompanied by Teotónio Pereira, Dr Soares

⁴⁰ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.226.

⁴¹ ‘300 000 in Lisbon Hail *Santa Maria*’s Return’, *New York Times*, February 17, 1961, p.7.

⁴² *Ibid.* Estimates regarding the size of the welcoming crowd vary. For example, *Time* magazine placed the figure at 80 000 whereas Portuguese news sources counted 150 000. See ‘Portugal: Evening of Empire’, *Time*, February 24, 1961, p.24; Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.230.

⁴³ ‘300 000 in Lisbon Hail *Santa Maria*’s Return’, *New York Times*, February 17, 1961, p.7.

da Fonseca of the Colonial Navigation Company, and Rear-Admiral Fernando Quintanilha Dias, Minister of the Navy, Salazar climbed the gangway to the ship.

The prime minister spent two hours on board the *Santa Maria*, during which he “personally welcomed, and shook hands”⁴⁴ with each crew member. Salazar heard, first hand, from Captain Simões Maia, about the events during the two-week seizure. He also visited the ship’s chapel where he prayed at the casket of Nascimento Costa.⁴⁵



Salazar and Captain Maia aboard the *Santa Maria*.
Vista Books: Portugal (London, n.d.)

Asked to make a public statement, Salazar initially declined. However his ministers insisted that their leader should say, at least, a few words to the nation.⁴⁶ Salazar acquiesced. On his way out of the liner the Prime Minister addressed the crowd in what has been described as the briefest speech of his entire career: “We have again the *Santa Maria* with us. Thank-you, Portuguese.”⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.231.

⁴⁵ ‘Portugal: Evening of Empire’, *Time*, February 24, 1961, p.24.

⁴⁶ Nogueira, *Salazar: A Resistência*, p.208.

⁴⁷ João Paulo Guerra, ‘A Batalha Naval do *Santa Maria*’, *O Jornal Ilustrado*, January 4, 1991, p.10.

The next day Third Mate João Nascimento Costa received a funeral service at Basilica da Estrêla, built by Queen Maria I in 1789 and one of Lisbon's most prestigious monuments. President Américo Tomás placed a posthumous *Torre e Espada* – the country's highest decoration of honour – on the officer's casket.⁴⁸ Costa had made the supreme sacrifice and this, besides being a token of gratitude and recognition, was the regime's way of stating its position. Just as the young officer had confronted the *Santa Maria*'s assailants, so would the Portuguese Government resist those who opposed it? Any changes would be evolutionary and regulated by the regime. There was no place for rebellion or compromise when the very foundations of Salazar's New State were perceived to be threatened. This was Lisbon's message when it awarded the *Torre e Espada* to Costa: noble death rather than surrender or compromise.

For the dead seaman the fight was over, but the same could not be said for Galvão, Salazar, Delgado and many others. For them, the *Santa Maria* incident marked the irreversible beginning of a turbulent decade defined by the colonial wars that would afflict Portugal between 1961 and 1974.

⁴⁸ Day, *Passage Perilous*, p.232.

Chapter 10

Impact and implications

a) Dulcinea and Portugal's internal situation

To the regime in Lisbon the seizure of the *Santa Maria* was a disturbing experience. Despite official denials, the Portuguese government had suffered considerable damage. Dulcinea never really was the revolutionary threat claimed by Galvão and Delgado in their orotund communiqués. But, as a successful publicity exercise, it struck hard at the New State.

Portugal's insularity, nurtured by Salazar over three decades, was partially shattered in the international excitement caused by the hijacking. For two weeks the Portuguese regime received the type of publicity that for years it had successfully avoided.¹ This experience highlighted Salazar's record at home and in Africa, supplying his enemies with a medium to disseminate their views on a wider scale.

In general Dulcinea functioned as a magnifying glass, enabling the world to get a closer view of Portuguese internal politics. The application of such an amplifying device, however, exaggerated both the weaknesses of the regime and the strength of the opposition forces. In reality, the assault on the *Santa Maria* created a sense of national vulnerability that led to a patriotic closing of ranks behind the prime minister. International intrusion, in what was considered an internal matter, led most Portuguese to rally in support of Salazar as defender of Portugal's integrity.²

Dulcinea's impact in metropolitan Portugal has to be analysed within the context of the crisis affecting the New State between 1958 and 1962. There were three main aspects to this.³ Firstly, there was a drive from within the ruling elite to oust Salazar from power - clearly illustrated by General Botelho Moniz's failed coup in April

¹ A. Marshall, 'Portugal: A Determined Empire', *The World Today*, vol.17, no.3, March 1961, p.95.

² Hugh Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal* (London, 1970), p.397; James Duffy, *Portugal's African Territories: Present Realities* (New York, 1962), p.25.

³ Malyn Newitt, *Portugal in Africa: the Last Hundred Years* (London, 1981), p.221.

1961. Secondly, some sections of the liberal opposition sought to bring about political change through a combination of constitutional and unconstitutional means. Humberto Delgado's 1958 bid for the presidency and the hijacking of the *Santa Maria* embodied this duality. Thirdly, the regime was confronted with worldwide hostility on account of Salazar's resolve to remain in Africa despite the prevailing trend towards decolonisation then sweeping the world. By 1960 Portugal was under constant attack at the United Nations (UN) and pressure against Portuguese African policy had gradually translated into international isolation.

The three components of the 1958-62 crisis, however, were interwoven and tended to react on one another.⁴ Dulcinea, for instance, fits in the second and third aspects of the crisis. The operation may have advanced the fight against Salazar but it too served, as we shall see later, the purposes of the anti-Portugal lobby at the UN.

The *Santa Maria* incident affected the New State at various levels. Salazar's invulnerability, for one, was pierced. The Portuguese prime minister's reputation for being almost unchallengeable in the political arena was shown to be not true. Galvão had delivered a blow with serious implications for the regime and its leader. Dulcinea had shown Salazar to possess an Achilles heel. In fact, some of the premier's supporters – perhaps hastily - considered the damage to his personal prestige to be so serious as to require his resignation for the sake of the regime's survival.⁵

Dulcinea's indisputable success in the publicity arena administered a shot in the arm of the "hitherto dispersed, suppressed, and dispirited" liberal opposition movement in Portugal.⁶ On 31 January 1961, a group of prominent Republican and Socialist oppositionists presented their *Programme for the Democratization of the Republic* to the government, calling for the restoration of multi-party democracy as well as the abolition of PIDE and the political courts.⁷ The timing of the *Programme* was possibly influenced by the *Santa Maria*. Galvão's exposure of Salazar's vulnerability and Washington's willingness to negotiate with him, no doubt, stimulated the liberal opposition forces into action.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.222.

⁵ José Freire Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar: o Leão e a Raposa* (Lisbon, 1992), pp. 143-4.

⁶ 'Ripples from Recife', *The Times*, February 4, 1961, p.440.

⁷ Kay, *Salazar*, p.386.

It seemed, therefore, that the moment was right for action against the regime. Why, then, did the fuse lit by Galvão and Delgado not activate any action against Salazar? There were various reasons for this failure.

In the first place conditions in Portugal were not generally conducive to insurrection. There was, for instance, not enough popular discontent and the regime showed no signs of structural weakness. The New State was too robust and stable to be defied on a revolutionary level. Two editorials in the *New York Times* captured the futility of the situation. The first argued that “seizing a passenger ship on the high seas, and sailing away with it” was “unlikely to change anything”⁸; a second editorial observed that “the reconquest of Portugal, let alone of Spain,” would “not start in the harbour of Recife.”⁹

The opposition’s inaction reflected its internal divisions and flaws. Most of the resistance to Salazar came from the middle classes - organised in democratic groupings with a Masonic core – and the small, highly efficient PCP. The latter was, by far, the best geared to challenge the regime. From 1960, however, the PCP opted for a strategy of “national uprising” through an alliance of proletariat, peasantry and the peoples of the colonies.¹⁰ Armed action was to be avoided since conditions in Portugal were not ripe for insurrection. The party was to avert the “spectacular” initiatives borne out of the “despair” of certain radical middle class elements¹¹ (e.g. the seizure of the *Santa Maria*). All this clashed with the kind of overt action favoured by Galvão whose anti-communism was as intense as Salazar’s. Not surprisingly, the PCP dissociated itself from the rebel captain whom Álvaro Cunhal, the party’s chairman, called a “dissident fascist”.¹²

The communists were not the only ones to distance themselves from the *Santa Maria* rebels. Moderate Portuguese democrats – grouped as the Third Force – made it clear that they did not approve of Galvão’s actions. The American ambassador in

⁸ ‘Politics and the Ship’, *New York Times*, January 26, 1961, p.28.

⁹ ‘Senhor Galvão’s Revolution’, *New York Times*, February 3, 1961, p.24.

¹⁰ D.L Raby, *Fascism and Resistance in Portugal: Communists, Liberals and Military Dissidents in the Opposition to Salazar, 1941-74* (Manchester, 1988), p.132.

¹¹ Álvaro Cunhal, *Rumo à Vitória: As Tarefas do Partido na Revolução Democrática e Nacional* (Porto, 1974), pp. 167,182.

¹² Quoted in Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.125.

Lisbon regarded this repudiation as a way of avoiding the possible “counter-productive” effects of the *Santa Maria* episode and reflective of the Third Force’s reservations concerning Galvão and Delgado.¹³

If the non-cooperation of the PCP and the Third Force was debilitating to Dulcinea, then, the absence of military support was terminal. The army was, as pointed out by an American reporter, “key to everything in Portugal.”¹⁴ This basic truth was amply substantiated by the fact that all major revolutionary interventions in Portuguese history, in the twentieth century, had been carried out by the military.¹⁵

In January 1961 the Portuguese Armed Forces did not endorse the revolutionary schemes of Galvão and Delgado. Neither of the two men was trusted by the military who, at that stage, were divided in two major factions: those supporting Salazar, and the strongly pro-American Atlanticists led by the minister of defense, General Júlio Botelho Moniz (1900-1970).

Botelho Moniz’s opposition to Salazar had been latent since, at least, 1959 when he admitted to wanting to “take over the Government”.¹⁶ Two years later the general’s insurrectionist ambitions had the support of a large section of Portugal’s defense mechanism.¹⁷ This entailed the collaboration of the minister of the army (Lt Colonel Almeida Fernandes), the Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force (General Albuquerque de Freitas) and the under-minister of the army (Colonel Costa Gomes).¹⁸

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.139.

¹⁴ ‘Salazar’s Rivals File Lisbon Plea’, *New York Times*, January 29, 1961, p.14.

¹⁵ The most important ones being the May 1926 military coup which ultimately brought Salazar to power and the April 1974 revolution that effectively terminated 46 years of Salazar-Caetano rule. Numerous failed military uprisings took place in the interim. For a comprehensive list of military attempts against the Salazar-Caetano regime see L.S.Graham and H.M. Makler (eds), *Contemporary Portugal: The Revolution and its Antecedents* (Austin, 1979), pp. 210-15.

¹⁶ Quoted in Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.92.

¹⁷ For a detailed account of the Botelho Moniz affair see, for example, Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, pp.207-229 ; Tom Gallagher, *Portugal: A Twentieth-century Interpretation* (Manchester, 1983), pp.150-3 ; Richard D. Mahoney, *JFK : Ordeal in Africa* (New York, 1983), pp.191-3.

¹⁸ Gallagher, *Portugal*, p.150.

The damage incurred to Portugal's image by the seizure of the *Santa Maria* and the realisation that Portuguese isolation now extended even to NATO, convinced Botelho Moniz and his supporters that the time had come for intervention in the political process.

Botelho Moniz's ideas concerning the introduction of liberal democracy in Portugal were similar to Galvão's. It was in their vision of Portuguese Africa that the two men differed. Galvão, seasoned by years of experience as a colonial official, viewed Portugal's presence in Africa as non-negotiable. Moniz, on the other hand, favoured a decolonisation process over a period of ten to twelve years.¹⁹ The Defence Minister's position on African policy made him, paradoxically, more of a revolutionary than Henrique Galvão whose ideas regarding the future of the Portuguese territories were evolutionary.²⁰

The dissident element in the Portuguese military would not consider supporting an abstract Dulcinea when Botelho Moniz, an insider, was ideally placed to strike at the core of Salazar's regime. Besides, Galvão was perceived as a "quixotic" figure, an outcast whose inclination towards direct action tended to hinder rather than help the opposition to the government. Dulcinea's futility, as an agent of political change, was evident to the military. If Salazar were to be removed, it would have to be done from within the regime's leadership. The conspirational discussions at the home of Botelho Moniz were far more likely to have an impact on the regime than any directives from the bridge of the *Santa Liberdade*. In short, the minister was the real threat to the New State, and the military knew it. This was a clear indication that Salazar's supporters were much more of a danger to his own political survival than "manifest opponents",²¹ such as Galvão and Delgado.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.152.

²⁰ Galvão elaborated on his opinions concerning Africa in his 1963 speech at the United Nations. We shall discuss this topic in a later chapter.

²¹ Gallagher, *Portugal*, p.151.

The Botelho Moniz coup was neutralised on 13 April 1961, hours before the army was to have seized all key government offices.²² It was indeed the closest Salazar ever came to be removed from power.²³ The attempt's failure - mainly due to the prime minister's excellent manoeuvring skills and the support of loyal officers - was evidence that even the military had difficulty in challenging the much-experienced premier. It was also an indication of how starry-eyed Dulcinea's prospects had been. If someone as strategically well located, as Botelho Moniz, could not topple Salazar, it seemed unrealistic to expect Galvão to accomplish the very task from a ship in the Caribbean.

Portugal's refusal to disengage from her African territories, during the 1950s, had made the Portuguese regime internationally unpopular. Critics considered Salazar's overseas policy to be anachronistic, out of tune with the spirit of an age when Europe's empires were being decolonised in wholesale fashion. Portugal had thus become a pariah; inconvenient even to her own allies whose reaction to the *Santa Maria* episode highlighted Lisbon's international predicament, revealing just how ostracised the Portuguese regime had become. Britain's virtual silence, once it had called off searching for the ship; the passive attitude of France and the Netherlands; Brazil's virtual complicity with the hijackers and America's highly pragmatic stance, were all clear indications that association with Lisbon, in the current political climate, was perceived as a liability.

American and Brazilian response to the *Santa Maria* had been the most disturbing. Unfavourable new administrations in Washington and Rio de Janeiro arrived - in January 1961 - at a most inopportune moment for the Portuguese government. Both Brazil and the United States, close allies of Portugal, were vital within the framework of Lisbon's foreign policy. Yet, instead of backing their ally, Kennedy and Quadros reacted to the *Santa Maria* incident in an ambiguous way. Portugal was made aware that neither the United States nor Brazil could be counted on for automatic support.

²² 'The Atlantic Report: Portugal', *The Atlantic*, October 1961, p.34.

²³ R.A.H. Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal: A History* (London, 1979), p.77.

b) Dulcinea and Portuguese Africa

i. Angolan events, February-March 1961

On the night of 3-4 February 1961, Luanda burst into violence. Several groups of Africans assaulted the capital city's civil and military prisons, a police station and the main radio station resulting in the death of seven Portuguese policemen and twenty-four rioters.²⁴ Further disturbances occurred on 13 February. An angry mob, of mainly Portuguese civilians, attending the funeral service of the murdered policemen, killed thirteen Africans.²⁵ Five weeks later, on 15 March, a full-scale rebellion broke out in rural northern Angola. White settlers, along with Africans sympathetic to them, were systematically massacred – often in orgies of rape and mutilation – as part of a terror campaign organised by the Union of Angolan Peoples (UPA) and aimed at driving the Portuguese out of the country.²⁶ White and mestizo militias along with police and army units retaliated with a degree of violence often matching that meted out by UPA terrorists. The final death toll: 1200 whites and 6000 Africans.²⁷ Thus begun a thirteen-year war against Portuguese rule in Angola.

ii. Lisbon thesis: *Santa Maria* as part of Angolan revolt

Because the seizure of the *Santa Maria* and the revolt in Angola had been concomitant the Portuguese government - followed by much of the world media -

²⁴ James Duffy, *Portuguese Africa* (Harmondsworth, 1962), p.215.

²⁵ Luis Nuno Rodrigues 'About-face: The United States and Portuguese Colonialism', *e-JPH*, vol 2, no.1, summer 2004, p.3.

²⁶ A British observer in Angola described the 1961 UPA terrorist campaign as "the biggest slaughter of Europeans in Africa" in the twentieth-century, adding that it had "passed almost unnoticed in the world press." Ronald Waring, 'The Case for Portugal', in P Mason (ed) *Angola: A Symposium, Views of a Revolt* (London, 1962), p.31; World famous novelist Robert Ruark expressed a similar sentiment: the massacres of March 15 had been "worse than the combined atrocities of the Portuguese in 500 years of colonisation." See Bernardo Teixeira, *The Fabric of Terror* (Cape Town, 1965), p.viii.

²⁷ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.189. A controversial statistic. Estimates range from 6000 to 50 000 African and 300 to 1300 European dead. See, for example, D.L.Wheeler and R.Pelissier (eds), *Angola* (London, 1971), p.191 ; David W.Wainhouse, *Remnants of Empire: the United Nations and the End of Colonialism* (New York, 1964), p.38.

interpreted the African uprisings as part of a sequential plan activated by Dulcinea. Lisbon's official thesis held that the Luanda disturbances were meant to coincide with the arrival in Angola of the hijacked ship. According to Adriano Moreira, under secretary for the overseas territories, a number of Luanda rioters had been found in possession of DRIL propaganda leaflets that were taken as proof of Galvão and Delgado's involvement.²⁸ Reliance on such flimsy evidence could be attributed to Lisbon's anxiousness to make credible its contention that Angolan violence originated from external sources.

There was, however, another way of looking at the connection between the seized liner and the Angolan events - one that Portuguese officials found most disturbing. Lisbon had grown suspicious that Galvão's actions and the African uprisings were part of an international plan designed to evict Portugal from her overseas territories. Portuguese misgivings were neatly encapsulated by Franco Nogueira: "Galvão, *Santa Maria*, Angola: there is a connection here, a strange chain of events."²⁹ Alarming, the connective tissue was not a Communist plot but Washington's new pro-African stance. The *Santa Maria* and the Angolan disturbances had provided John Kennedy with an opportunity to test his anti-colonialist policy. Hence was formed the notion that the United States had interests that were as anti-Portuguese as those of the Soviet Union and the Afro-Asian nations.

iii. The antecedents of the Angolan revolt

To view the *Santa Maria* as a component of an external plan to oust Portugal from Angola is a facile interpretation that overlooks the root causes of the Luanda occurrences. Rather than a pivotal event, Dulcinea was a mere, albeit significant, additional element to the complex genealogy of Angolan insurrection. It is therefore important that we consider, briefly, the antecedents of the violent outbursts of February and March 1961, in order to place the seizure of the liner in context. Only then can we ascertain Dulcinea's real significance to the uprisings in Portuguese Africa.

²⁸ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.148.

²⁹ Franco Nogueira, *Um Politico Confessa-se* (Porto, 1987), p.11.

Angola was ripe for rebellion in January 1961. During the preceding decade various aspects had developed, creating a situation highly propitious for armed action. The formation of Angolan nationalist parties in the mid 1950s; the ever growing worldwide anti-colonialist trend vociferously expressed by the Afro-Asian and Communist blocs at the UN; and Belgian withdrawal from the Congo between 1959 and 1960, constituted the cardinal points in the genesis of Angolan revolt. There were, to be sure, other elements contributing to rebellion, but they fit within the parameters established by the three factors just mentioned. American and Soviet policies regarding colonialism, for example, were mainly articulated through the UN; the socio-economic, cultural and political grievances of the Angolan people found expression in the liberation movement led by the nationalist parties; and so on.

The founding of UPA and MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), in 1954 and 1956, introduced organised opposition to Portuguese rule. Although both parties sought negotiations with Lisbon, these had proved fruitless. Their demands, which included self-determination for Angola and withdrawal of all Portuguese military, were rejected by Portugal³⁰ whose resolve to stay in Africa was unshakable.

Influenced by the international postwar trend towards independence and supported by the Soviet Union and newly independent Afro-Asian countries, the MPLA and UPA launched propaganda and indoctrination campaigns that paved the way for an armed struggle against Lisbon rule.

In an attempt to combat the nationalist threat, PIDE detained scores of individuals perceived as dangerous. MPLA leaders António Agostinho Neto (1922-79) and Mário de Andrade (1928-90) were among those taken into custody during 1960. Neto's arrest led to protests, culminating in the shooting of 30 people by Portuguese troops.³¹

June 1960 was a difficult month for the Portuguese authorities. With independence looming in the neighbouring Belgian Congo, Lisbon was apprehensive of its

³⁰ Mário Soares, *Portugal Amordaçado: Depoimento Sobre os Anos do Fascismo* (Lisbon, 1974), p.445.

³¹ Lawrence W. Henderson, *Angola: Five Centuries of Conflict* (Ithaca, 1979), p.168.

consequences for Angola. The tribal links between Angolan and Congolese natives³² meant that whatever happened in the Congo was likely to spill over into Portuguese territory. Belgian willingness to make concessions to African nationalists, after the January 1959 Leopoldville riots, set a dangerous example. Many wondered if the Portuguese, like the Belgians, would “bow before the storm and yield independence” - even when all the signs indicated that Portugal would not.³³ Predictably, the departure of Belgium from the Congo was to have substantial influence on Angola’s tragic events eight months later.

Once the Congo became independent, UPA had a safe base from which to operate.³⁴ Drawing support mainly from the thousands of Angolan émigrés in the Congo,³⁵ UPA leader, Holden Roberto (1923-2007), now intensified his subversive activities with the full approval of Patrice Lumumba (1925-61), the Congolese prime minister. UPA was given access to Leopoldville’s radio station from where it broadcast a virulent campaign against Portugal. The party was also allowed to publish a newspaper.³⁶ In this way the Angolan nationalists were able to disseminate their revolutionary message to fellow countrymen in Angola thus creating a climate conducive to armed revolt.

Revolutionary conditions in Angola were related to a third element: the UN. Between 1956 and 1960 the case of Portuguese Africa had been internationalised by Communist and Afro-Asian criticism of Portugal’s African policy. Salazar’s refusal to comply with Article 73 of the UN charter – according to which Lisbon was expected to transmit, to the Secretary-General, information concerning economic, social and educational conditions in its overseas territories – crystallised anti-colonialist criticism of Portugal. Technically, Portugal’s African possessions were not colonies

³² The Bakongo, inhabiting the northern parts of Angola, are a case in point. Their traditional territory straddles the border with the Congo. According to the 1960 census 500 000 Bakongo lived under Portuguese rule. Their brethren across the border had significant influence in the Leopoldville political establishment. See David M. Abshire and Michael A. Samuels, *Portuguese Africa: A Handbook* (New York, 1969), p.118 ; Robinson, *Contemporary Portugal*, p.109.

³³ ‘A Portuguese Plan for Africa’, *Contact*, March 19, 1960, p.9.

³⁴ The MPLA was based in Guinea-Conakry and was supported by that country’s president, Sekou Touré.

³⁵ There were, in 1960, between 80 000 to 200 000 Angolans in the ex-Belgian Congo where they had emigrated before 1950. See, Hélio Felgas, *Guerra em Angola* (Lisbon, 1962), pp.45,57 ; João Cabral, ‘Portuguese Colonial Policy’, *Africa Quarterly*, vol 5, no 4, 1966, p.287.

³⁶ Felgas, *Guerra em Angola*, pp.57–8.

but provinces of the national territory. Discussion of Angola, or any of the other territories, would therefore be tantamount to meddling in Lisbon's internal affairs, which was contrary to the UN charter. This definition of Portugal as a transoceanic unitary state constituted the essence of Lisbon's argument for its continued sovereignty overseas.

By 1960 the campaign against Portugal in Africa had reached fever-pitch level. During that year Afro-Asian and Communist countries obtained numerical majority in the UN. In September, the MPLA requested the world body to discuss the case of Angola. On 14 December, Resolution 1514 – referred to as the Declaration on Colonialism and targeted at Portugal³⁷ – was adopted by the General Assembly. Its central purpose: that “immediate steps” be taken by countries responsible for non-self-governing territories “to transfer all powers to the peoples”³⁸ of the territories concerned. This was followed by Resolution 1542, dealing specifically with Portuguese Africa and concluding that Portugal's possessions were non-self-governing territories within the meaning of the UN charter. The world body thus reaffirmed Lisbon's obligation to transmit information according to the terms of Article 73. This information, the resolution added, was to be “discharged without further delay.”³⁹

By brushing aside Portugal's defense argument the UN sent out a clear message to Salazar's government: independence or political autonomy must be Lisbon's ultimate goal for its territories. In other words, “any ideas of perpetuating the colonial phenomenon or integrating the colonial territory in the colonising state were ruled out in principle”.⁴⁰

Angolan nationalists did not fail to realise the significance of the position assumed by the UN. They were fully aware that the world body was expected to act in the wake of the anti-colonial resolutions recently adopted as well as in response to their

³⁷ Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr, *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (London, 1965), p.447.

³⁸ Wainhouse, *Remnants of Empire*, pp.148-9.

³⁹ Franco Nogueira, *The United Nations and Portugal: A Study of Anti-Colonialism* (London, 1963), p.136.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p.23.

own 1960 appeal for an investigation of the Angolan situation.⁴¹ The tide was on their side, they needed to capitalise on it. Contrary to claims made by the MPLA at the time, none of the nationalist parties had much to do with the planning of the February events. The Luanda attacks were essentially a sporadic populist expression of enragement directed at PIDE arrests. The rioters included isolated cells of the two main nationalist parties and various Christian movements, as well as individuals whose relatives had been incarcerated for political reasons.⁴² According to a report, the Portuguese authorities had transported thousands of rural people to Luanda for a manifestation repudiating the seizure of the *Santa Maria*. Instead, hundreds of these people were re-directed to the Luanda jails where the attacks took place.⁴³

iv. Dulcinea and the Angolan uprising: connecting points

By January 1961 Angola was indeed a “black powder keg with a ready fuse” waiting to be lit.⁴⁴ Then, out of the blue, Henrique Galvão sailed the *Santa Maria* straight into the lull before the storm; causing enough ripples to help trigger the looming nationalist uprising.

Dulcinea’s impact on Angolan events is difficult to gauge. There are, nevertheless, discernible, intersecting points establishing a definite relation between the liner and disturbances in Portuguese Africa.

Galvão’s initial aim to sail to Angola drew substantial international attention to that territory. As a result, a large contingent of the world media had hustled to Luanda, hoping to cover the *Santa Maria*’s arrival there. When the hijackers had gone ashore in Brazil, most journalists left Angola. A handful, however, decided to stay on “to see what they could see”.⁴⁵ Their presence was to act as an incentive for Angolan nationalists to revolt and thus further internationalise the case against Portugal. By

⁴¹ W. S. Van der Waals, *Portugal’s War in Angola, 1961-1974* (Rivonia, 1993), p.53.

⁴² Fred Bridgland, *Jonas Savimbi: A Key to Africa* (London, 1988), pp.65-6.

⁴³ Angela Caires, ‘Era Uma Vez em Angola’, *O Jornal Ilustrado*, January 4, 1991, p. 11.

⁴⁴ John Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution: Anatomy of an Explosion (1950-62)* (Cambridge Mass., 1978), p.123.

⁴⁵ ‘Land of Brotherly Love’, *Time*, February 17, 1961, p.26.

providing world publicity Dulcinea indirectly contributed to sparking off the events of 3-4 February.

As expected, once the disturbances began, foreign journalists wanted to report on the rioting and shooting. This led the Portuguese authorities to activate strict censorship measures. Some reporters were arrested and deported; cameras, films and news dispatches were seized; telephone calls were monitored in an attempt to forestall unfavourable reporting.⁴⁶ All in vain. News reports still found their way out of Luanda reinforcing the request, made by African and Asian states at the United Nations, that the Security Council hold a special meeting on Angola.⁴⁷

It must be emphasised that the Galvão-Delgado group and the Angolan nationalist parties had, possibly, only one interest in common: to internationalise their opposition to Salazar. Beyond that, Portuguese and Angolan rebels had decidedly different political aims and were in no way connected. Galvão sought the return of Portugal to a regime of representative democracy before self-determination for Africa was to be considered.⁴⁸ In contrast, the MPLA and UPA wanted immediate and total independence for Angola. This fundamental difference led to the failure of various attempts made during 1960-61, by Galvão and Delgado, to establish some kind of rapport with Angolan nationalists.⁴⁹ As late as 27 January 1961 Mário Pinto de Andrade, president of the MPLA, stressed that the African nationalist struggle was independent from Delgado's anti-Salazar movement. "Should the *Santa Maria* arrive in Angola", he said, "we hope that captain Galvão defines his position regarding the Angolan liberation movement, and the self-determination of the peoples colonised by Portugal".⁵⁰

At any rate, had Galvão joined the African nationalists, he would have jeopardised whatever support base he had in Portugal and certainly alienated the majority of

⁴⁶ 'Angola: Ripening Whirlwind', *The Economist*, February 11, 1961, p.543.

⁴⁷ Henderson, *Angola*, p.20.

⁴⁸ George Martelli, 'The Issues Internationalized', in Abshire, Samuels, *Portuguese Africa*, p.430.

⁴⁹ See, Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.149; Duffy, *Portugal's African Territories*, p.32; Ehnmark, A., Wastberg, P., *Angola and Mozambique: the Case Against Portugal* (London, 1963), p.16.

⁵⁰ João Paulo Guerra, 'A Batalha Naval do *Santa Maria*', *O Jornal Ilustrado*, January 4, 1991, pp.9-10.

settlers in Angola and Mozambique.⁵¹ Most dissident Portuguese, in Europe and Africa, were primarily concerned with solving their own political problems before they tackled those of Africans.⁵²

Galvão's contacts in Angola were confined to an anti-Salazarist white minority who ultimately rejected his call for revolution. Angolan whites opposed Salazar more on a basis of economics than political or social issues. Their main grievances were related to the slow pace of economic development and the high cost of living which was blamed on Lisbon's "milking" the country of foreign exchange earned by exports. Moreover, some of them felt that the use of violence, in the seizure of the *Santa Maria*, had actually done a disservice to the anti-Salazar movement, while others took Dulcinea as more of a joke than a serious challenge to the regime in Lisbon.⁵³

Delgado's expectations of a "100 per cent" white uprising in Portuguese Africa proved to be hyperbolic. Angola and Mozambique settlers showed little inclination towards revolution, particularly one led by Delgado and Galvão. They would rather side with Lisbon - even if they disagreed with some of its African policy - than throw their lot with the *Santa Maria*'s hijackers. Whatever "rebellious spirit" Angolan Portuguese may have had "dissolved in chatter", while scarcely a ripple from Dulcinea reached Mozambique.⁵⁴

But if Portuguese settlers rejected the opportunity presented by Dulcinea to express their opposition to the regime, Angolan nationalists did not hesitate to capitalise on it. In a strange way, they heeded Galvão's call for rebellion. An American missionary in Angola captured the irony of the situation: "It is interesting", he wrote, "that the impetus for the first outward action" of the Angolan nationalist movement "should have as its point of departure the desire of Portuguese whites for a more liberal government."⁵⁵ He was, of course, referring to the seizure of the *Santa Maria*.

⁵¹ 'Portugal in Africa', *The Economist*, February 18, 1961, p.664.

⁵² Duffy, *Portugal's African Territories*, p.32.

⁵³ 'Angolans Feel Galvão Harmed Anti-Salazar Cause', *The Star*, February 4, 1961, p.1.

⁵⁴ Carel Birkby, 'Sunday Times Talks to General Delgado', *Sunday Times*, January 29, 1961, p.1.

⁵⁵ M. McVeigh, 'The Bullets of Civilisation', *Africa Today*, September, 1961, p.6.

Dulcinea had suggested that there was division among the Portuguese. This notion was only really dismissed in the weeks following the seizure, when it became apparent that instead of dividing, the *Santa Maria* episode had actually unified Portuguese society as was made clear by the reception given to the liner on her arrival in Lisbon. Angolans, however, could have read the situation differently, taking the assault on the liner to be symptomatic of a fracture on the New State's edifice. If that was the case, then, they might have been prompted into action by the age-old "divide and conquer" principle.

In the final analysis most writers tend to agree that the *Santa Maria* incident catalysed Angolan events in early 1961. Ronald Chilcote, an exponent of this view, regarded the violent outbursts of February and March as having been "precipitated" by Galvão.⁵⁶ The conspiratorial Botelho Moniz was of the opinion that Galvão had indeed facilitated the rebellion in Angola.⁵⁷ Some, however, showed reservation in attributing such a central role to the hijacking. That was the case of Tom Gallagher, a British historian, who doubted whether Dulcinea had been "that much of a catalyst".⁵⁸ Others, such as Mário Soares, the socialist leader, rejected any connection between the *Santa Maria* and the events in Angola. Soares argued that it was not possible to synchronise people and movements as geographically and ideologically apart as were Galvão and the Angolan nationalist parties.⁵⁹

It would be fair to conclude that the role played by Dulcinea in Angola's insurrection was essentially accidental. It cannot be denied, however, that the ship's seizure facilitated and even stimulated the eruption of the armed struggle against Portuguese rule in Angola.

⁵⁶ Ronald H. Chilcote, *Portuguese Africa* (Englewood Cliffs, 1967), p.2.

⁵⁷ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.149.

⁵⁸ Gallagher, *Portugal*, p.150.

⁵⁹ Soares, *Portugal Amordaçado*, p.295.

c) Dulcinea and the U.S.

To the newly inaugurated Kennedy administration the *Santa Maria* provided an ideal medium to test the policy changes, concerning Portugal, it intended to implement. Washington's pragmatic handling of Galvão, however, not only alerted Lisbon to America's shift in attitude – as was intended - but also strained Luso-American relations. Kennedy's response to the hijacking had been a clear signal that he was discarding Dwight Eisenhower's friendly and non-critical relations with the Salazar regime in favour of closer alignment with emerging Third World nations.

The *Santa Maria* episode presented the Kennedy administration with a critical test. First, there was the difficulty of having to deal with the element of surprise. Dulcinea had caught everyone unaware. Washington had to muddle through the initial stages of the affair practically in the dark, which explains its opening move labeling the seizure piracy. Gradually, as American officials learned more about the rebels and the international implications of the case, it became evident that the situation was more complicated than initially thought.

Secondly, a swirl of conflicts beset the U.S. government. There was the risk, for example, that America would be perceived as supporting an authoritarian regime at the expense of elements purporting to be pro-democratic. This would not only be damaging to America's international image as a beacon of liberal principles but would also place the new President in an awkward position. During his presidential campaign Kennedy had repeatedly criticised Eisenhower's willingness to tolerate regimes precisely as that of Salazar's New State.⁶⁰

American interests had another side. Portugal was a partner in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) whose relations with the U.S. had been friendly. The association between Washington and Lisbon was firmly anchored on the Azores islands where, since 1944, the United States had a military base. The Azores' installations were considered vital⁶¹ within a cold war scenario. They were, according

⁶⁰ Russel Baker, 'Luck Ran with the Administration in Handling the *Santa Maria* Case', *New York Times*, February 6, 1961, p.6.

⁶¹ Thomas J. Noer, 'New Frontiers and Old Priorities in Africa' in Thomas G. Paterson (ed),

to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, “indispensable in an emergency build-up of Western forces in Europe or the Middle East.”⁶²

Washington had to be cautious in its approach to the *Santa Maria*. There was the danger of Portugal being pushed too far, leading to a disruption in NATO relations and the loss of the bases in the Azores. Besides, Kennedy was about to alter the direction of America’s African policy that was certain to antagonise the Portuguese government.

Throughout the 1950s John Kennedy had been aware of the importance of emerging African nationalism and its implications for American foreign policy. Eisenhower’s administration had been “slow and ambivalent” in responding to the new situation in Africa due to a close alliance with the European powers.⁶³ As Kennedy saw it, the Soviet Union had – mainly by means of ideological sympathy towards African nationalism - gained advantageous influence in that continent whilst the United States lost terrain. By 1960, at any rate, anti-colonialism was at its peak and Africa had become a major Cold War issue. America, Kennedy thought, could no longer afford to remain neutral and allow further Soviet encroachment in the continent. It was time for the United States to assume leadership of the African nationalist drive and, as he put it in 1957, “give it hope”.⁶⁴

A Task Force appointed by the president-elect, in December 1960, to look into the African situation, concluded that the United States should abandon “its traditional fence-sitting (...) in favour of support for African nationalism.”⁶⁵ It was also critical of Eisenhower for having created the impression that Portuguese colonialism was backed by America. The Task Force recommended that the new administration should “cease to accept Portugal’s refusal to report to the UN on its non-self-governing territories” and pressure the Portuguese to decolonise.⁶⁶

Kennedy’s Quest for Victory: American Foreign Policy, 1961- 1963 (New York, 1989), p.273.

⁶² Mahoney, *JFK*, p.209.

⁶³ Rodrigues, ‘About-face’, p.2.

⁶⁴ Mahoney, *JFK*, p.22.

⁶⁵ Rodrigues, ‘About-face’, p.2.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.3.

Most of the proposals put forth by the African Task Force were to form the basis of Kennedy's future African policy. Their implementation amounted to an abrupt about-face and Portugal, the power "most impervious to the winds of change",⁶⁷ was first in line for a clash with Washington's new orientation.

Kennedy realised that his active support for African emancipation was most likely to be unacceptable to America's European allies, some of who had colonial possessions. As early as 1956 he had predicted that American endorsement of decolonisation in Africa would be "condemned" by the United States' "most trusted friends" who would feel they had been deserted. "But", Kennedy added, "half measures" would "not do".⁶⁸ Lisbon and Washington were, in this way, set on a collision course.

In January 1961, Washington was ready to activate its policy changes towards Portugal. The seizure of the *Santa Maria* came, therefore, at a propitious time. Once the complexities of the case were grasped – and support for Lisbon's piracy thesis was abandoned – Kennedy realised that here was an opportunity to test his intended break with past policy and to prepare the Lisbon government for America's impending *volte face*. The reversal of Eisenhower's Portuguese policy was thus rehearsed in the *Santa Maria*. The Kennedy administration's near acrobatic flexibility, in its dealings with the hijackers, was meant to disabuse the Salazar regime of any expectations concerning unreserved American support. It was also aimed at ingratiating the new administration with Third World nations.

Washington's approach to the seizure was multi-pronged. It attempted to balance a pro-Portuguese policy (NATO; Azores) with a pro-democracy orientation (non-Communist opposition to Salazar inside Portugal; African nationalism; anti-colonialism). This was a microcosmic representation of America's future position regarding Portugal during the Kennedy years: an ally in Europe and an enemy in Africa, according to Salazar.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, p.447.

⁶⁸ Mahoney, *JFK*, p.202. It is interesting to note that, under Kennedy, American policy towards Portugal was to be characterised precisely by "half-measures". The anti-colonialist fervour of 1961 soon abated in the face of Salazar's unswerving position and broader Cold War political/military implications. By 1962 Washington had become much more sympathetic to the Portuguese point of view. The realities of office had tempered - what an American historian calls - Kennedy's "souped-up Wilsonian ideas". John Lukacs, *Remembered Past: A Reader* (Wilmington, 2005), p.84.

⁶⁹ Rodrigues, 'About-Face', p.5.

In the end, the United States came out of the *Santa Maria* episode only partially successful. Kennedy had managed not to outrage “ the world’s large body of anti-dictatorial opinion”, and relations with Portugal seemed unharmed.⁷⁰ Yet the president’s handling of the incident had contributed to the growing crisis in Luso-American relations. It made the Portuguese distrustful of Kennedy whose role, in the seizure of the liner, came to be viewed as connected to the escalating attacks on Portugal. Not surprisingly the government in Lisbon concluded that the United States had been animated by the same antagonism towards Portugal that drove the Afro-Asian and Communist blocs at the UN. Subsequent events, during 1961, seemed to vindicate this interpretation.

Kennedy’s handling of the *Santa Maria* irked the Portuguese government. His switch from support of Lisbon’s piracy interpretation to subsequent negotiations with the rebels had left the Portuguese decidedly unhappy. Kennedy had implicitly bestowed legitimacy status on Galvão, convicted by the Portuguese judicial system of subversive activities against the state. It followed, therefore, that Washington had recognised, and even supported, anti-Salazar forces. There could be no doubt in the minds of Portugal’s leaders: the new American administration was unsympathetic to its ally regime in Lisbon. Instead of providing succour, in a difficult hour such as this, the White House had actually used the opportunity, provided by the seizure, to exert pressure on Salazar. In short, Portugal felt that it had been let down by the United States.

At first, Salazar and his government were befuddled by Kennedy’s *laissez faire* response to the *Santa Maria*. They had expected unqualified backing from a NATO ally. As far as they were concerned the attack on the liner was an attempt, either by Communists or fellow travelers, to disrupt Portugal’s stability and further the aims of international Communism. Such an attack had to be considered as part of the Cold War. Ensuing American hostility towards Portugal at the United Nations, however, finally made Kennedy’s handling of the *Santa Maria* intelligible to Portuguese officials. Franco Nogueira’s diary entry for 19 March 1961 reads: “*Santa Maria*;

⁷⁰ Baker, ‘Luck Ran with the Administration’, p.6.

Galvão protected by the American navy; (...) hostile vote by the new American President – I’ll be damned if this isn’t a huge trap”.⁷¹



Franco Nogueira and John F. Kennedy

J. F. Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar* (Lisbon, 1992)

The crisis in Luso-American relations reached a critical stage in March 1961. On 20 February, Liberia, considered by the Portuguese as a pawn of the United States, requested that Angola be placed on the agenda of the Security Council at the UN so as to prevent “further deterioration and abuse of human rights” in Angola.⁷² Lisbon counteracted: Liberia’s request was part of a plan to evict Portugal from its overseas territories and to destroy “the positions of the West in Africa”.⁷³ Portuguese attempts to convince Washington not to support Liberia’s proposal failed. Kennedy had made up his mind. An affirmative vote on the Liberian request was ideal “to intimate a change in American policy”.⁷⁴

On 7 March, Elbrick informed Salazar of the United States’ intention to back Liberia.⁷⁵ The ambassador’s meeting with the Portuguese leader marked a turning point in the relations between Portugal and the United States. Washington used this

⁷¹ Nogueira, *Um Politico Confessa-se*, p.12.

⁷² Rodrigues, ‘About-Face’, p.3.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, p.447.

⁷⁵ The day before, March 6, Elbrick briefed Botelho Moniz about Washington’s decision to “call for self-determination” in Portuguese Africa; an indication of intimacy that would have contributed to Salazar’s distrust of Kennedy’s intentions. Mahoney, *JFK*, p.191.

occasion to formally announce to Salazar that it had changed its policy in Africa and its position regarding Portuguese colonialism.⁷⁶

On 15 March, despite American and Soviet support, Liberia's request did not acquire enough votes for adoption by the Security Council. On the same day large scale violence erupted in Northern Angola which Portuguese officials blamed on the proceedings at the UN.⁷⁷

The crisis in Portuguese-American relations now spilled into the streets. Anti-American riots broke out in Angola and metropolitan Portugal in direct reaction to Kennedy's policy at the UN. In Luanda, rioters hurled the U.S. Consul's car into the bay. Twenty thousand protesters marched on the American Embassy in Lisbon, smashing windows and splashing black paint across the front of the building. Among the placards carried by the demonstrators one stood out: "Get Out of the Azores".⁷⁸



Anti-American demonstration in Lisbon, 1961.

J. F. Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar* (Lisbon, 1992)

America's supportive vote on the Angola resolution may have released the United States from "its position of systematic deference to the old colonial powers"⁷⁹ but it did not eliminate Washington's dependence on the Azorean bases. This was a thorny

⁷⁶ Rodrigues, 'About-Face', p.5.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.6.

⁷⁸ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, pp.193-4.

⁷⁹ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, p.488.

issue. Kennedy's ambitious African policy and his capacity to implement it were indeed compromised by "a few acres of asphalt" in the Azores.⁸⁰ In exasperation, the president pondered: "What would they say if there was a tidal wave and the Azores disappeared?" "Are they all that vital?"⁸¹ They were. And the Portuguese were not about to let the U.S. Government forget it.

During the *Santa Maria* episode there had been reports of Portuguese threats not to renew America's lease on the Azores, due to expire in 1962. These were officially denied.⁸² Yet, once it ran out, the Azores lease was not renegotiated. Henceforth the United States were allowed to use the installations only "on a day-to-day basis",⁸³ a reflection of how precarious Portuguese-American relations had become since the Kennedy administration had taken office.

To reiterate, the crisis between Lisbon and Washington stemmed from the incompatible African policies of Kennedy and Salazar. It is within this context that the *Santa Maria*'s impact must be viewed. Galvão did not cause the Portuguese-American rift but he certainly contributed to it. His wooing of the United States and Kennedy's response to it had certainly annoyed Portugal. How this impacted on Luso-American relations became evident in the light of subsequent occurrences in Angola and the UN. The consequences of the incident grew larger in retrospective. Again, the perceptive Franco Nogueira, reacting to the news of the *Santa Maria* on 22 January 1961: "This episode (...) shall have repercussions in the future".⁸⁴

As the political conflict between Washington and Lisbon intensified in the coming months, the Portuguese looked back on the *Santa Maria*, as a turning point, and drew sustenance for their animosity towards the Kennedy administration. The incident became a nagging reminder of the new American government's methods and aims that the Portuguese found so abhorrent. In this way Dulcinea continued to have a negative effect on Portugal's relations with the United States long after Galvão had gone ashore.

⁸⁰ J Kenneth Galbraith, *A Life in Our Times: Memoirs* (London, 1983), p.416.

⁸¹ Noer, 'New Frontiers', p.273.

⁸² Baker, 'Luck Ran with the Administration', p.6.

⁸³ Mahoney, *JFK*, p.222.

⁸⁴ Nogueira, *Um Politico Confessa-se*, p.11.

Chapter 11

In the Wake of the Santa Maria 1961-75

a) Galvão: ejected from DRIL, clashes with Delgado

The waves caused by the *Santa Maria* had hardly subsided when Henrique Galvão became the target of harsh criticism by his associates. On 20 July 1961, the captain, Velo Mosquera and Jorge Sotomayor were ejected from DRIL. All three were accused of “having made spectacles of themselves” during *Dulcinea*, without achieving any “political or revolutionary ends.”¹

Three months later Humberto Delgado, from his new headquarters in Rabat, Morocco, announced the dismissal of Galvão as secretary general of the National Independent Movement (founded in 1958) on charges of “exhibitionism” and “theatrical propaganda” that was “harmful to the cause”. “When you want to make a revolution”, Delgado said, “you do not announce it on rooftops.”² The *Santa Maria* had been a “crazy enterprise” which the general, as a “military man”, disapproved of. Delgado had assumed responsibility for the seizure simply to “provide cover for the Opposition”.³

By November 1961, the rupture between the two men was complete. Personality and ideological differences were key factors in the breach. Galvão’s cold and cerebral temperament was diametrically opposed to Delgado’s mercurial and emotional character.⁴ Despite common characteristics – former supporters of the New State, men of action and professional soldiers – they had grown apart ideologically. Galvão remained consistent in his conservatism, expressed in unswerving anti-communism and a personal commitment to colonialism. Delgado, on the other hand, was more pragmatic, moving closer to the PCP and accepting the principle of self-determination

¹ Warren Rogers, *The Floating Revolution* (New York, 1962), p.209.

² ‘Galvão Loses Post’, *New York Times*, October 31, 1961, p.10

³ D.L. Raby, *Fascism and Resistance in Portugal* (Manchester, 1988), p.218.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.173.

for the overseas territories. At the end of the day the two men were incompatible; two potential caudillos, intolerant of opinions contradicting their own.⁵

Galvão blamed the changed perception of Dulcinea primarily on the communists who, for example, stood diametrically opposed to his orthodox colonial views. A campaign was launched by the PCP to “sink the memory of the *Santa Maria*” and that of her rebel captain on account of the latter’s insistence that Angola was not ready for independence.⁶

Of course the main reason for communist antagonism had to do with Álvaro Cunhal fearing the success of dissidents, such as Galvão, whose anti-communism was even more pronounced than Salazar’s.⁷ In addition, the captain’s tendency towards radical tactics and ideological eclecticism made him unpredictable and “difficult to monitor.” For the purist PCP, the “adventurous” Galvão was “unreliable and politically suspect.”⁸

Delgado’s volte-face provoked a vitriolic response from Galvão. He now referred to his former associate as a “brainless” general who “hysterically” claimed “intellectual authorship” for Dulcinea, declaring himself the operation’s “*deus ex machina*”. Delgado was the “master in possession of imaginary powers” who turned on his comrades once the *Santa Maria* stage, upon which he had been standing, crumbled under PCP attack.⁹ The general was kowtowing to the communists lest he be left out of the limelight.

The relationship Galvão-Delgado was unrepairable. From now on they would follow separate ways, locked in a competition for leadership that sapped the strength of the

⁵ David Raby, ‘Transatlantic Intrigues: Humberto Delgado, Henrique Galvão and the Portuguese Exiles in Brazil and Morocco, 1961-62’, *Portuguese Journal of Social Science*, vol.3, no.3, 2004, pp.145-46 ; Dawn Linda Raby, ‘Portuguese Exile Politics: The “Frente Patriótica de Libertação Nacional,” 1962-1973’, *Luso-Brazilian Review*, vol.31, no.1, 1994, p. 80.

⁶ Henrique Galvão, *Da Minha Luta Contra o Salazarismo e o Comunismo em Portugal* (Lisbon, 1976), pp.28-9.

⁷ José Freire Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar: O Leão e a Raposa* (Lisbon, 1992), p.285.

⁸ Raby, ‘Transatlantic Intrigues’, p.150.

⁹ Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.29.

non-communist opposition. Much time and energy was consumed in the pursuit of parallel strategies that mostly floundered due to the weaknesses inherent in disunity.

b) Operation Vagô: leaflets from the sky

In October 1961 Henrique Galvão¹⁰ and Humberto Delgado went to Morocco. Both were independently engaged in the preparation of new armed actions against the Lisbon regime. Delgado explained his move to North Africa as a way to be “nearer his family”, denying any revolutionary intentions.¹¹ But, as subsequent events were to show, there was more to Delgado’s relocation. The general was planning a civilian-military uprising at Beja, in southern Portugal, scheduled for New Years Eve 1961-62. Galvão, too, had a well-defined plan on his mind: operation Vagô.¹²

Described as “a pioneer venture into the field of aircraft hijacking”,¹³ Vagô aimed at doing in the sky what Dulcinea had done in the sea. The operation was to be carried out under the banner of the Antitotalitarian Front of Exiled Free Portuguese, (FAPLE) (*Frente Antitotalitária dos Portugueses Livres Exilados*). Formed by Galvão, in Brazil, FAPLE aimed at distancing the democratic opposition from the PCP,¹⁴ which explains the “antitotalitarian” in the name.

The operation took seven weeks to plan.¹⁵ It was at once a simple and ambitious project consisting in the seizure of a Portuguese commercial airliner on a flight from Casablanca to Lisbon. Once in control of the aircraft the rebels would drop anti-Salazar propaganda leaflets over the capital and other southern Portuguese cities before returning to Morocco.

¹⁰ Galvão had applied for a visa to enter Italy and South Africa on September 25, 1961. Both were denied. AOS/CO/PC-81/SECRETO, Informação no.1.443/61-GU, September 27, 1961.

¹¹ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.288.

¹² D. L. Raby, ‘Portuguese Exile Politics’, p.80. Interestingly, the operation seems to have been named after the last volume in Galvão’s trilogy of political satire, *Romance dos Bichos do Mato: Vagô* (Lisbon, 1952).

¹³ Raby, *Fascism and Resistance*, p.210.

¹⁴ Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.53.

¹⁵ Raby, *Fascism and Resistance*, p.210.

Vagô was originally planned as an integral part of a general uprising that included Delgado's Beja revolt. Both Galvão and Delgado were to enter Portugal aboard the hijacked aircraft. Eventually the operation was executed as a mere propaganda raid without any connection to opposition elements inside Portugal, a direct consequence of the collapse of the Galvão-Delgado partnership.¹⁶

Operation Vagô entailed two simultaneous phases. One was to be a smokescreen aimed at convincing the Portuguese and Spanish intelligence services that an armed strike was to take place in the south of Portugal. With the real intentions of the operation thus concealed Galvão and his crew could set about the secret implementation of the operation *per se*.¹⁷ Morocco was the chosen location. It was geographically close to Portugal and its government was willing to receive Salazar's political opponents.¹⁸

A group of six 'commandos' was recruited: five men and a woman. Hermínio de Palma Inácio, described as "more romantic than violent",¹⁹ was to lead the operation aboard the aircraft; Camilo Mortágua, a *Santa Maria* veteran, was to be second in command; José Martins, Amândio Silva, Fernando Vasconcelos and Helena Vidal constituted the rest of the rebel crew.²⁰ Vasconcelos and Vidal, newly married, had fled Portugal by boat and were picked up by a cargo ship in the Gibraltar strait.²¹

Galvão was excluded from physical participation. After the *Santa Maria* his face was familiar to millions across the world, making it almost impossible for him to board the plane without being recognised. Besides, the aging captain had to remain in Tangiers to ensure the return of his confederates was cleared with the Moroccan authorities.²²

¹⁶ Raby, 'Transatlantic Intrigues', p.152-55; Raby, 'Portuguese Exile Politics', p.80.

¹⁷ Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, pp.54;56.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.55.

¹⁹ Felícia Cabrita, 'O Aventureiro da Revolução', *Revista/Expresso*, September 29, 1995, p.38. Palma Inácio would become well-known for his involvement in the 1969 robbery of the Bank of Portugal, the proceedings of which were used to finance the anti-Salazar forces in exile.

²⁰ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, pp.289-90; Raby, *Fascism and Resistance*, p. 210.

²¹ Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.57.

²² *Ibid.*, p.57-8.

A regular Casablanca-Lisbon flight by the Portuguese national airline (TAP) was selected as Vagô's target. A "Moroccan friend" in Casablanca provided the skyjackers with technical information regarding the flight.²³

Operation Vagô was set for 10 November, two days before the National Assembly elections in Lisbon. On 7 November, all 58 candidates from the liberal-democratic opposition withdrew from the elections in protest against the government's failure to implement any of the reforms suggested earlier by members of the Democratic Opposition.²⁴ In the end only the candidates from the National Union, the official party, were to contest the elections for the National Assembly.

In late October Galvão accepted an invitation by the Swedish press to visit various Scandinavian cities for a series of conferences on the *Santa Maria*. The trip would also serve to deflect attention from Vagô's preparations in Morocco since PIDE would most certainly follow the captain to northern Europe.²⁵ Galvão played the ruse well, creating the impression that an armed action was about to take place somewhere in Portugal. Talking to the Swedish press, for example, he stated that Salazar was to be ousted by a revolution "maybe tomorrow, maybe within a month or perhaps a year." Lisbon took the bait. Security in southern Portugal was put on alert; all ships entering Lisbon harbour were searched by PIDE.²⁶

While in Sweden Galvão learned that Delgado, speaking to the press in Casablanca, had accused him of "preparing a revolutionary coup from Morocco". This "brainless" public accusation had alerted the Moroccan authorities as well as the Portuguese police. Vagô was jeopardised.²⁷ Hence Galvão returned to Tangier, on 3 November, with only seven days to put right what had so carelessly been "compromised" by Delgado.²⁸

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 1961-62, p.18546.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.56.

²⁶ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.289.

²⁷ Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, pp.56-7.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

Finally, on 10 November, the six commandos took their seats aboard TAP's "*Mousinho de Albuquerque*", a Lockheed L-1049, best known as Super Constellation. Palma Inácio and Mortágua sat nearest to the cockpit, Vasconcelos and Silva in the mid section, Martins and Vidal at the tail end of the aircraft. Thirty-five minutes before landing, Palma Inácio and Mortágua stood up and pointed a 32mm pistol at the captain, Sequeira Marcelino. "Do not resist, we're from the opposition and we just want to drop some leaflets over Lisbon", Palma Inácio told the pilot.²⁹ The skyjackers had assumed control of the airplane, its crew of seven and twelve passengers, five of which were Americans.³⁰

Flying over the Portuguese capital, at an altitude of 80 metres, leaflets were dropped. The text contained an appeal for the people "to tear electoral lists' and to protest against "Salazar's electoral farce". It also proclaimed that another year of Salazarism would lead to a "collapse into total poverty or communism."³¹ The operation was repeated over the towns of Barreiro, Beja and Faro.³² Having discharged its cargo of 100,000 leaflets, the *Mousinho de Albuquerque* landed at Casablanca at 12:30.³³ Mission accomplished in less than three hours.

The most difficult part for the skyjackers came afterwards. In the aftermath of the operation they – Galvão excluded - were placed under house arrest for a few weeks and later deported to Brazil by the Rabat government, under international pressure not to condone aerial piracy.³⁴ On their way to South America the rebels, now joined by Galvão, had to make a stop in Senegal. Since they were not issued Brazilian visas they were unable to board a plane. After three days at Dakar airport Galvão and his group were put on a flight to Brazil, deported by the Senegalese. Their troubles were not over yet. Arrested on arrival in Brazil, they were detained for over a month as 'suspicious terrorists who had entered the country without proper documentation.'³⁵ When released the rebels were given asylum by Brazil on condition that they should

²⁹ Cabrita, 'O Aventureiro da Revolução', p.36.

³⁰ AOS/CO/PC-81/ SECRETO, Informação no.1.624/61-GU, November 11, 1961.

³¹ Raby, 'Transatlantic Intrigues', p.154.

³² Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, pp.59-60; 62.

³³ Cabrita, 'O Aventureiro da Revolução', p.38; Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.60.

³⁴ Raby, 'Transatlantic Intrigues', p.152; Raby, 'Portuguese Exile Politics', p. 81.

³⁵ Raby, 'Transatlantic Intrigues', p.152.

live in the city of Belo Horizonte and refrain from subversive activities. Should these conditions be breached they faced expulsion from the country.³⁶

On 12 October 1963 a Lisbon court tried Galvão, in absentia, for his involvement in the “theft” of the TAP airliner. He was found guilty and sentenced to eight years in prison.³⁷

Like Dulcinea, but on a smaller scale, Vagô was a successful publicity exercise, considering that in 1961 aerial piracy had yet to become the serious terrorist threat confronting western travelers in the 1970s. Its impact on Portugal, however, was minimal. The leaflet raid was indeed a “marketing success without consequences”.³⁸ It also marked Galvão’s last physical action against the Salazar regime.

c) Trial, 1962

Between 7 and 11 February 1962 a Portuguese court tried Galvão and his associates, in absentia, for their involvement in the seizure of the *Santa Maria*. Thirty-three men were charged with piracy, homicide, assault and battery, and damage to the liner, assessed by her owners to exceed £6000.³⁹ The accused comprised twenty Portuguese, eleven Spaniards and two Venezuelans.⁴⁰ There were 24 witnesses for the prosecution including Captain Simões Maia and other members of the *Santa Maria*’s crew. Defence counsel Dr Mário Reis represented Galvão and his men.⁴¹

During the trial Simões Maia accused the hijackers of having shot Nascimento Costa in “cold blood”. The shooting was “an act of murder”⁴² eventually attributed to Vitor

³⁶ *Keesing’s Contemporary Archives*, 1961-62, p.18546.

³⁷ ‘2d Sentence in Absentia is Imposed on Foe of Lisbon’, *New York Times*, October 13, 1963, p.14.

³⁸ Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar*, p.290.

³⁹ ‘Lisbon to Try Absent Galvão’, *New York Times*, February 4, 1962, p.33; *Keesing’s Contemporary Archives*, 1961-62, p.18700.

⁴⁰ ‘Hijackers of Liner Accused of Murder’, *New York Times*, February 8, 1962, p.16.

⁴¹ *Keesing’s Contemporary Archives*, 1961-62, p.18700.

⁴² ‘Hijackers of Liner Accused of Murder’, p.16.

Velo Perez.⁴³ Maia also told the court that although Galvão was apparently “in command of the operation” it appeared as if Jorge Sotomayor was the “real leader”.⁴⁴

Dr Reis argued that Nascimento Costa had been killed during an attempt to “offer resistance” and that Galvão and his men had acted solely for “political ideals” and were not motivated by piracy or any other charges of the indictment. Therefore, the defense asked for the acquittal of all the defendants.⁴⁵

Twenty-six of the accused were found guilty and seven were acquitted. Henrique Galvão was sentenced to twenty-two years imprisonment; Humberto Delgado, implicated for “moral responsibility”, received a sentence of 19 years imprisonment; Jorge Sotomayor and Vello Mosquera were sentenced to twenty years imprisonment. The remaining defendants received sentences ranging from fifteen to eighteen years imprisonment. In addition, all twenty-six men were ordered to pay \$10000 in compensation to the family of Nascimento Costa.⁴⁶

Salazar found the sentences appropriate. The possibility of having Galvão extradited from Brazil should, however, be seriously considered.⁴⁷ In the end the premier came to side with the Portuguese Foreign Affairs ministry in its view that seeking the extradition of the hijackers would be “unpolitical” and “futile”.⁴⁸

Galvão greeted his sentence, somewhat flamboyantly, as “the only sentence that men of character could expect from a Salazar court.” Adding that since he had not yet consumed all his “reserves of optimism”, he had expected the maximum penalty in the Portuguese judicial system – twenty-eight years imprisonment. Galvão had shuddered to think what extenuating circumstances might have prompted Salazar to spare him six years of punishment.⁴⁹

⁴³ Guerra, ‘A Batalha Naval do Santa Maria’, p.10.

⁴⁴ *Keesing’s Contemporary Archives*, 1961-62, p.18700.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ ‘Lisbon Sentences Liner’s Hijackers’, *New York Times*, February 11, 1962, p.2.

⁴⁷ Franco Nogueira, *Salazar: A Resistência* (Porto, 1984), p.396.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.36.

Humorous comments aside, Galvão thought that his trial served a concrete purpose. The government in Lisbon sought a formula that would enable it to extend its powers beyond national borders by diplomatic means. In other words, by convicting the rebels in a court of law the regime made it a legal duty on the part of democratic allies to comply with current extradition treaties. In real terms, Galvão and his associates would have their freedom of movement restricted since most western states were unlikely to grant entry visas to persons with a criminal record nor would be willing to face the diplomatic implications. There was, after all, method in what Galvão condescendingly labeled the “comedy” of the trial of the *Santa Maria*’s men.⁵⁰ For the next few years the captain would feel the impact of having been convicted when he repeatedly tried to visit the UN.

d) UN appearance, 1963: “A trip to the moon”

In 1962 the Trusteeship Committee, at the UN, had unsuccessfully invited Henrique Galvão to come to New York to testify on conditions in Portugal’s African territories.⁵¹ Again, in 1963, the committee repeated the invitation. A major hurdle stood in the way. The United States would not grant an entry-visa to Galvão, without which he could not travel the distance between New York’s Idlewild airport and the UN headquarters.⁵² The State Department justified the visa denial on grounds of Galvão’s “moral turpitude” stemming from an alleged 1957 conviction for “fraudulent bankruptcy”⁵³ for which we could not find any evidence. Considering that Galvão was in prison at the time makes such a “conviction” rather puzzling.

The U.S. government faced a dilemma. It wished to fulfill its “moral and legal obligation” to permit Galvão to appear before the UN. On the other hand, Washington was bound to uphold an existing treaty with Portugal providing for the extradition of persons convicted in either country. Galvão, convicted as an accessory in the murder of the *Santa Maria*’s third-officer, certainly qualified for extradition.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.36-7.

⁵¹ ‘Portuguese Exile to Testify’, *New York Times*, December 8, 1963, p.22.

⁵² Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.273.

⁵³ Benjamin Welles ‘Brazilian Accused in Portugal of Bomb Plot on U.S. Embassy’, *New York Times*, April 15, 1961, p.7. Galvão claimed the conviction to be a pretext “invented” by the regime to ensure Washington did not grant him a visa. Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.274.

Should Galvão land in American soil, Lisbon would seek a court order for his arrest. If he should be found, by a US court, to be “subject to extradition” the case would then go before the Secretary of State for a decision on whether the reasons for the extradition were “political or criminal”.⁵⁴ Washington did not look forward to such a prospect. It would force the US into a rigid position, precisely what it was trying to avoid.

Galvão’s case caused much disturbance, particularly among the Afro-Asian representatives at the UN. Their contention was that a witness “should be immune to arrest while on UN business.”⁵⁵ If individuals could not come to New York to testify, African delegates reasoned, perhaps the location of the world body headquarters should be reconsidered.⁵⁶

The agreement between Washington and the United Nations was clear on the subject of immunity: the Headquarters District was not to be “a refuge” for persons “avoiding arrest under Federal, state or local law of the United States.”⁵⁷ At any rate, the American authorities agreed to take steps towards finding immunity for Galvão.⁵⁸

George W. Anderson, the new US ambassador in Lisbon, asked the Portuguese government not to request Galvão’s extradition. Franco Nogueira was adamant: Portugal wanted the captain returned to prison and was studying the way in which to ask for his extradition.⁵⁹

A solution was eventually found. Portuguese and American officials agreed verbally that only after Galvão had addressed the UN would the United States comply with extradition treaty conditions. This should provide enough of a delay to allow Galvão to leave American soil before a warrant for his arrest could be processed.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ ‘US Facing Dilemma’, *New York Times*, December 8, 1963, p.22.

⁵⁵ ‘Portuguese Exile to Visit UN Although He Risks Extradition’, *New York Times*, December 8, 1963, p.1.

⁵⁶ ‘UN Is Told Witness Risks Arrest Here’, *New York Times*, November 12, 1963, p.10.

⁵⁷ ‘Portuguese Exile to Testify at UN’, *New York Times*, December 8, 1963, p.22.

⁵⁸ ‘US Will Discuss Immunity at UN’, *New York Times*, November 14, 1963, p.2.

⁵⁹ Franco Nogueira, *Um Politico Confessa-se* (Lisbon, 1987), p.82

⁶⁰ Nogueira, *Salazar: A Resistência*, p.401; Thomas Hamilton, ‘Galvão, at UN, Angers Africans’, *New York Times*, December 10, 1963, p.1.

Despite all the difficulties raised by Lisbon and Washington, Galvão had, all along, been keen on going to New York. “I will only not appear at the United Nations”, he wrote, “if the US government denies me an entry visa.”⁶¹ That ceased to be an issue in early December when the State Department finally granted him permission to enter the country. Galvão landed at Idlewild at 12:30 on 9 December 1963.⁶² At 15:00, on the same day, he took the floor at the UN.⁶³

Speaking in French, Galvão addressed the Trusteeship Committee for two hours and fifteen minutes.⁶⁴ A large audience listened with interest as the Portuguese dissident testified on Africa and Lisbon’s territories there.

What Galvão told his UN audience was consistent with his views on record. Nothing he told the Afro-Asian delegates was new. It had all been expressed before. In a 1961 essay, for example, he had expounded on what he thought were Portuguese Africa’s real problems and solutions. This had been published in English and was widely available.⁶⁵ That same year Galvão, in a speech with strong “colonialist overtones”, told a gathering of Brazilian students that Angola was not ready for independence.⁶⁶

The gist of Galvão’s testimony was simple and controversial: Portugal’s African territories were not ready for independence. Immediate emancipation would result in a situation worse than the chaos that followed Belgium’s departure from the Congo.⁶⁷ Two scenarios could emerge. A return to “barbarism”, in the form of interracial violence, or the automatic absorption of the newly independent countries either by the United States or the Soviet Union.⁶⁸ This was a reality that the UN delegates did not see because they had a “preconceived idea” as to what should be done in the Portuguese territories in Africa.⁶⁹ They recommended instantaneous self-rule without

⁶¹ Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.275.

⁶² Hamilton, ‘Galvão, at UN’, p.1.

⁶³ Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.276.

⁶⁴ Hamilton, ‘Galvão, at UN’, p.1; Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.276.

⁶⁵ See, Henrique Galvão, ‘Portuguese Africa Today and Tomorrow’ in James Duffy & Robert A. Manners (eds), *Africa Speaks* (New York, 1961).

⁶⁶ Raby, ‘Transatlantic Intrigues’, p.144.

⁶⁷ Burnham, ‘Galvão Cautions on Quick Freedom’, *New York Times*, December 10, 1963, p.3

⁶⁸ Galvão, ‘Portuguese Africa Today’, p.178.

⁶⁹ Burnham, ‘Galvão Cautions’, p.3.

considering the wider implications for the African peoples. Such an approach had little bearing on the realities confronting Portuguese Africa.

Galvão blamed Portuguese Africa's inability for self-rule on Salazar. Portugal's mission in Africa aimed at the progressive elevation of the colonial populations towards emancipation. Salazar had interrupted this "good and fruitful" process, allowing the re-emergence of exploitative and debased colonialism. Forced labour and administrative corruption replaced the humanist principles of Portuguese colonialism. The New State had implemented colonial policies that had been "condemned by Portugal before they were condemned internationally."⁷⁰ Using the methods of subjection applied in metropolitan Portugal, Salazar had imposed a situation of peace and order in the overseas territories that only "those in the cemetery were acquainted with."⁷¹

Galvão was no less critical of the African nationalists whom he considered a problem rather than a solution. In his view neither the Salazar regime nor the African liberation movements were representative of the populations concerned. None had been democratically elected and were thus illegitimate belligerents in a fight between two extremisms. Although presented by propaganda as a struggle for self-determination, on the one hand, and its negation, on the other, the clash in Angola was about something entirely different. Underneath the rhetoric, the true fight was between the agents of colonial (New State) and neo-colonial (communist/capitalist sponsored African nationalist movements) interests. A victory of either party would be catastrophic. One would maintain the metropolitan and colonial populations chained to an inhuman brand of colonialism. The other would plunge Angola and Mozambique into a "neo-colonial adventure" without the most elementary conditions to make an immediate independence function.⁷²

⁷⁰ Galvão, 'Portuguese Africa Today', pp.173-5.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.173.

⁷² Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.278.

Illegitimate participation in the quest for a solution to Portuguese Africa's problems was, however, not confined to Salazar and the African nationalists. Galvão considered himself as also an "illegitimate party" since he too did not carry a mandate from either the Portuguese or the African people. He limited himself, therefore, to ask for what he thought was fair: an end to the fighting in Angola, to be followed by consultation of the populations in Portugal and Africa regarding their own future.⁷³ This would offer a third option to the alternatives presented by Lisbon and the African nationalists.

Before any steps could be taken towards the emancipation of Portuguese Africa, Lisbon had to return to democratic rule. The ousting of the Salazar government was a precondition to a solution in Africa. It did not make sense to discuss independence for the overseas territories if the Portuguese people were deprived of the very self-determination being extended to the colonial populations. Ironically, Salazar seemed to confirm Galvão's point when he explained to an American diplomat why automatic independence could not be granted: "I cannot give Portugal's African colonies what I cannot grant to my own people."⁷⁴

A true solution for the Portuguese colonies could, therefore, only be achieved within a democratic framework that took popular opinion into consideration. The populations of metropolitan Portugal, Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau had to be engaged in a peaceful dialogue.⁷⁵

Once a democratic regime was restored in Lisbon, the African territories would be re-directed towards self-government.⁷⁶ Africans would be given a choice, by plebiscite, between independence and membership in a federation of autonomous states with Portugal as its center.⁷⁷ Galvão favoured the latter option as the natural outcome of "four centuries of living together."⁷⁸

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp.278-79.

⁷⁴ Dean Rusk, *As I Saw It* (New York, 1990), p.275.

⁷⁵ Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.279; Burnham, 'Galvão Cautions', p.3.

⁷⁶ Galvão, 'Portuguese Africa Today', p.176.

⁷⁷ Burnham, 'Galvão Cautions', p.3.

⁷⁸ Galvão, 'Portuguese Africa Today', p.178.

The Portuguese territories, Galvão argued, had to be viewed against the broader context of the African continent. In his viewpoint there were more than one Africa. The north and south of the continent were as distinct from each other as “from the rest of the world.” Besides these two Africas, there were a plethora of others, mostly mythical. The Africas of the pioneers, marvelous fauna, slavery and “sub humans”, forests and deserts were examples of the continent’s plurality. After the Second World War yet another Africa emerged, one created by politicians, financiers and scientists. This was an Africa expressed in physical territories, defined by political or economic interests that did not consider the “human realities” of the continent.⁷⁹

For Galvão the realities of tribalism were decisive for the continent’s future. Yet less was known about tribal Africa in 1963 than fifty years before. Instead, western intelligentsia had focused exclusively on the artificial construct that was urban Africa. As a result contact with the continent’s human reality became superficial and distorted by “academic preconceptions” concerned only with transforming African societies by capitalist or revolutionary speculation.⁸⁰

Western bias towards urban Africa had led to the neglect of the tribal populations that were the only real manifestation of the true Africa. It was only close to these that human Africa could be understood. Yet western intelligentsia, preoccupied with models of modernity, had shown no interest in establishing contact with them. This vital aspect of relations was relegated, therefore, to those in physical proximity to the tribal environment – the traders, colonial officials and missionaries whose capacity to study and learn was insufficient.⁸¹

In Galvão’s opinion, anti-colonialism was more political than humane.⁸² He criticised those who sought automatic independence without considering the human problems inherent in African societies. Issues such as the psychological and cultural inadaptability to western institutions imposed upon Africans, political divisions rooted on tribalism and a heritage of intertribal violence made immediate independence a

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.167-69.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.169-70.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p.170.

⁸² Galvão, *Carta Aberta*, p.65.

disastrous prospect.⁸³ These aspects could not simply be swept under the rug, if Africa was to be truly independent.

External interference in African affairs presented another danger to the continent's future. The bi-polar adversaries in the cold war seemed to entertain similar intentions regarding Africa: the establishment of neo-colonial dependency. An example of this could be seen in the "macabre game" played by the political interests of communism and capitalism in the UN. The Soviet Union's African aims were as imperialistic as those of the colonial powers but "with all the defects and none of the latter's virtues." Capitalist interests, on the other hand, used the guise of democracy to mask imperialist designs that were not much different from those of Moscow.⁸⁴ Galvão astutely points out that neo-colonialism had been first introduced to Africa by the granting of independence to Liberia by the United States.⁸⁵ Interestingly, Galvão's views seemed to echo those expressed by Salazar in August 1963 when he accused the U.S and the Soviet Union of pursuing "parallel policies" in the African continent. Although motivated by apparent different ends, it mattered little, the premier said, "that one power starts from the purpose, widely invoked as a national imperative, of giving freedom to all men and peoples, while the other starts from its concept of a world revolution which is supposed to make for the full happiness of Man."⁸⁶

African nationalists, in either of the cold war camps, contributed to Africa's descent into chaotic neo-colonialism. These elites were mostly educated in European institutions or "indoctrinated" in Moscow, with no deeper roots in African culture than they did in the one they had acquired.⁸⁷

Finally, the current trend towards Africa's emancipation was based on the outright condemnation of western colonialism. Galvão felt that this was tendentious. Colonialism had come to be viewed "more passionately than rationally" and "more condemned than judged". In reality, along with its negative facets, colonial systems had produced much good. Two questions had to be asked in this regard: was it fair to

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.177.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p.171.

⁸⁵ Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.227.

⁸⁶ David W. Wainhouse, *Remnants of Empire: The United Nations and the End of Colonialism* (New York, 1964), p.32.

⁸⁷ Galvão, 'Portuguese Africa Today', p.170.

take colonialism out of the moral environment in which it originated? And, was it not from colonial rule that the foundations of Africa's emancipation had been created?⁸⁸ It would be foolish to discard the experience and knowledge of Africa accumulated by colonialism. No modern technique could, "without time, blood, sweat and tears", replace the information acquired by the colonial experience.⁸⁹

Twice, during his deposition, Galvão had been interrupted. His scepticism regarding the prospects of African unity – a goal cherished by the UN African delegates – and his reminder that Latin America had yet to achieve unity 150 years after independence, "irritated" some members of the audience. When Galvão expounded on his concept of multiple Africas, the Algerian delegate broke in on a point of order, insisting that the captain should limit his testimony to Portuguese Africa. The chairman who added that the committee was simply not interested in "two, three, four or five Africas" upheld his protest.⁹⁰

After his address Galvão fielded questions from the audience. Angered by the contention that Portuguese Africa was not ready for independence, African delegates used the opportunity to vent their disapproval. Delegates from the two Congos, Togo and Ivory Coast, for example, criticised the 68 year-old Galvão. In the meantime the Algerian delegation left the room.⁹¹ One of the Algerians compared Galvão's appearance with "a mountain giving birth to a mouse" and urged the captain to substantiate his reference to the "untenable solutions' proposed by African leaders for Angola and Mozambique.⁹² Most African delegates seemed unanimous in their condemnation of Galvão's deposition, which they voted to have struck from the record.⁹³

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.174-75.

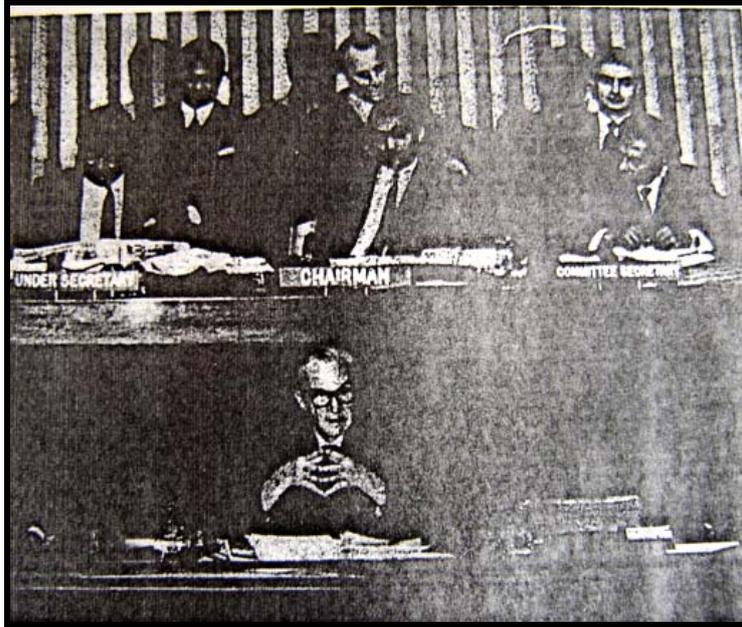
⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p.177.

⁹⁰ Hamilton, 'Galvão, at UN', p.1-2.

⁹¹ Nogueira, *Um Politico Confessa-se*, p.83.

⁹² Hamilton, 'Galvão, at UN', p.2.

⁹³ Nogueira, *Salazar: A Resistência*, p.544.



Henrique Galvão (forefront) addresses the United Nations.

New York Times, 10 December 1963

Although Galvão had ended by stating that he and the African delegates had “agreed to disagree”⁹⁴, the truth was somewhat different. Two years after his New York visit the captain was to admit that the Africans had been under the impression he was going to side with one of the anti-colonial theses at the UN. “How could I”, Galvão wrote, “be in agreement with one of the extreme positions” prevailing in New York? Was not the real Africa “so different from the one presented at the United Nations?” “No”, he went on, “my testimony did agree with neither the majority nor the minority.”⁹⁵

Perhaps Galvão’s hosts could be excused for misinterpreting him. The captain had, after all, signed a 1961 telegram addressed to the United Arab Republic delegation in New York, repudiating Portuguese colonialism and recognising the right to self-determination for the African populations.⁹⁶ The trouble was that, as we have seen, Galvão’s conception of self-determination did not coincide with the one prevailing in anti-colonialist circles.

⁹⁴ Hamilton, ‘Galvão, at UN’, p.2.

⁹⁵ Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.277.

⁹⁶ Raby, ‘Transatlantic Intrigues’, p.144.

At the same time that Galvão made his appearance before the Trusteeship Committee, Franco Nogueira was addressing the UN Security Council on matters concerning Portuguese Africa.⁹⁷ The minister recalls being told by a Ghanaian delegate that Galvão's deposition had been a disappointment and an indication that, when it came to African affairs, all Portuguese thought alike.⁹⁸

On 10 December, Galvão departed for São Paulo.⁹⁹ His 36-hour visit to New York was over. What did it achieve? According to Galvão, another victory to add to those of Dulcinea and Vagô. "The first time", the captain added, "that a "common criminal" of the Portuguese opposition was heard at the United Nations."¹⁰⁰

A sarcastic Salazar described the accomplishments of Galvão's visit to the UN. In a telegram to Nogueira, in New York, the premier summarised that the captain had "satisfied his pride and wish to appear once more on the international stage." His deposition had left the Africans disappointed and unable to use the Portuguese opposition as a weapon against Portugal. In addition, the Americans were content to show the "superiority of their neutrality" as well as their "exemplar adherence" to the extradition treaty with Portugal. Lastly, Lisbon's African policy had been directly vindicated by an "enemy with colonial experience."¹⁰¹ In short, Galvão had done a service to the New State.

Referring to the difficulties related to his UN appearance Henrique Galvão commented that "perhaps a space voyage" would have been easier to undertake. "I went to New York", he said, "feeling as if I was really going to the moon."¹⁰² In a sense, he might as well have gone there since the world he encountered at the UN was no less alien to him than a lunar landscape – and just as inhospitable.

⁹⁷ 'Portuguese to Testify', *New York Times*, December 8, 1963, p.22.

⁹⁸ Nogueira, *Um Politico Confessa-se*, p.83.

⁹⁹ Alexander Burnham, 'Galvão Gets Visa, Flies to Brazil', *New York Times*, December 11, 1963, p.10.

¹⁰⁰ Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.280.

¹⁰¹ Nogueira, *Um Politico Confessa-se*, pp. 83-4.

¹⁰² Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, p.276.

e) The Delgado case

Because of his association with Galvão, particularly during the seizure of the *Santa Maria*, a brief discussion of the Humberto Delgado's case is necessary. The career of the general came to an abrupt end on 24 April 1965. His bludgeoned body and that of his Brazilian secretary and lover, Arajaryr Campos, were found in a shallow grave on Spanish soil near the Portuguese town of Badajoz;¹⁰³ a violent and mysterious end.

Delgado's murder remains unsolved. Many explanations have been advanced yet no conclusive evidence has ever been produced to support any of them. All we can be certain of is that the general's propensity for making enemies provided a number of agencies with a motive for wanting him eliminated.

Many blamed PIDE for the assassination. Mário Soares, lawyer for the Delgado family, is one of the main exponents of this interpretation. He takes the view that the general was the victim of a planned operation in which PIDE agents, posing as anti-Salazarists, lured him to an ambush in Spain.¹⁰⁴ Henrique Galvão dismissed this explanation as facile and too convenient. In his opinion Delgado was either murdered or betrayed by fellow confederates. The general's turbulent association with the Algiers-based *Frente Patriótica de Libertação Nacional* (FPLN) reached crisis level in 1964. An umbrella organisation ostensibly aimed at unifying all anti-Salazar forces,¹⁰⁵ the FPLN was, in reality, a stooge of the PCP.¹⁰⁶ The idea was to combine Delgado's prestige with the organisational skills of the party. Considering Delgado as a "lemon that still contained a few drops of juice" the communists sought to use him as a means to bestow legitimacy on the FPLN.¹⁰⁷ Hence, the general was made president of the organisation while Álvaro Cunhal assumed the vice-presidency. Humberto Delgado was not, however, an easy man to manipulate, settling for nothing less than absolute leadership.¹⁰⁸ Soon the general's relations with the PCP reached a

¹⁰³ Neil Bruce, *Portugal: the Last Empire* (London, 1975), p.46; Gallagher, *Portugal*, p.159.

¹⁰⁴ For a detailed account of Mário Soares' views on the Delgado case see his *Portugal Amordaçado: Depoimento Sobre os Anos do Fascismo* (Lisbon, 1974), pp.329-425.

¹⁰⁵ Raby, *Fascism and Resistance*, p.227.

¹⁰⁶ A different view of the FPLN and Delgado's relation to it is taken by D.L.Raby. See, 'Portuguese Exile Politics', pp.81-88.

¹⁰⁷ Galvão, *Da Minha Luta*, pp.286-88.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p.289.

cul-de-sac. Delgado became an inconvenient man whose independence of mind was a hindrance to the party's strategy. The communists, Galvão reasoned, had thus the strongest motive for the assassination that they conveniently blamed on PIDE.¹⁰⁹

Delgado's murder was the direct result of "undesirable and absurd" arrangements between democrats and communists that, Galvão maintained, made as much sense as those between democrats and Nazis or any other totalitarian type.¹¹⁰ In other words, Delgado's pragmatic attitude towards the PCP had cost him his life.

f) Final curtain, 1970-75

Galvão's visit to the UN was to be his last appearance on the international arena. Henceforth he restricted his political activities to the writing of articles, in Brazilian newspapers, as well as books lashing out at Salazar and his policies.¹¹¹

By 1963 Galvão's political isolation was complete. His views on the colonial issue combined with a deep-seated anti-communism had made him difficult to work with. Attitudes towards Portuguese Africa were polarised by the outbreak of war in Angola. Support for its immediate independence had become part of the basic criteria for any Portuguese revolutionary. Galvão's unchanging stance on colonial matters and communism therefore translated into political alienation.¹¹² To his credit the captain remained steadfast in his position, even as political isolation destroyed his capacity to mobilise support for any action against Lisbon. Ultimately, Galvão was left with the pen as his sole weapon in his fight against Salazar. And yet he did not capitulate.

Afflicted by a serious brain illness, Galvão spent his last four years interned in a psychiatric clinic in São Paulo. He had been deserted by almost everybody, including his own family.¹¹³ Twelve years earlier, in a Portuguese prison cell, he had seen three alternatives in his future: death, madness or escape. Unbeknown to him these were to be the exact last three stages of his life. Escape in 1959, madness in the late 1960s and

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.291.

¹¹¹ 'Henrique Galvão, seized ship in '61', *New York Times*, June 26, 1970, p.41.

¹¹² Raby, 'Transatlantic Intrigues', pp.145; 154.

¹¹³ Soares, *Portugal Amordaçado*, p.296.

death on 25 June 1970.¹¹⁴ The Euro-African crusader was laid to rest in São Paulo's Vila Nova Cachoeirinha cemetery; a strange terminus for an unusual life.

Mário Soares recounts a telling episode during his last visit to Galvão. Lying on his hospital bed, fully clothed, the captain, who did not recognise his visitor, asked why he was incarcerated. Soares explained that he was only there to be treated. "Then," Galvão insisted, "why do they not allow me to return to Portugal?" To which Soares replied: "Perhaps that isn't impossible, now that Salazar is dead" (he meant it metaphorically since the premier had, by then, been replaced by Marcello Caetano). Galvão stood up as if ejected by a spring: "It's not true," he shouted, "Salazar cannot be dead because I am the one who is going to kill him".¹¹⁵ A clear indication of how deep-rooted was his bitterness toward the Portuguese leader.

Ironically, the man who had been the *raison d'être* of Galvão's dissidence would outlive him by a few weeks. A brain clot followed by a stroke had removed Salazar from office in 1968. He passed away two years later on 27 July 1970. The regime survived its creator's demise but became increasingly vulnerable under Caetano's reformist attempts.

A military coup, carried out by the *Movimento das Forças Armadas* (Movement of the Armed Forces) (MFA), finally toppled the Caetano government on 25 April 1974. Although the moderate General António de Spínola (1910-1996) was initially chosen as the leader of the new Portugal, it soon became evident that power lay with the extreme left-wing faction of the MFA whose aims were the immediate disengagement from Africa and the installation of a Marxist state in Portugal. In September 1974 Spínola was dismissed and the revolution entered its most radical phase, lasting until November 1975.¹¹⁶

The liquidation of the overseas territories was swift. Within 20 months of the 1974 coup, Portuguese Africa was no more. An end to the colonial wars in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau was negotiated between an interim military

¹¹⁴ Galvão, *Santa Maria*, p.71; 'Henrique Galvão', *New York Times*, June 26, 1970, p.41.

¹¹⁵ Soares, *Portugal Amordaçado*, p.297.

¹¹⁶ Douglas L. Wheeler, 'The Revolution in Perspective: Revolution and Counterrevolution in Modern Portuguese History', in Lawrence S. Graham & Douglas L. Wheeler (eds), *In Search of Modern Portugal: The Revolution and Its Consequences* (Madison, 1983), p.352.

government in Lisbon and the nationalist movements in those territories. Independence was granted without any democratic consultation of the populations concerned. The arbitrary way in which the transfer of power was executed resulted in communist regimes in all ex-Portuguese territories in Africa.

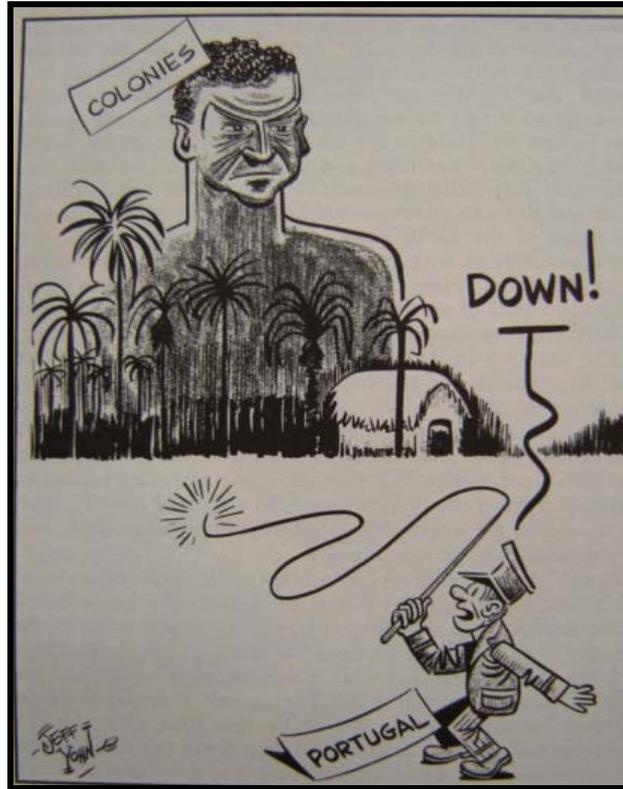
The debacle that followed Portugal's departure from Africa seemed to partly vindicate Galvão's warnings at the UN. Post-colonial civil wars fuelled by neo-colonial interests, ensued in Angola and Mozambique, costing millions of lives and destroying the economies of the two countries. Galvão appears to have been right on at least three counts. Firstly, that Portuguese Africa was not ready for independence; secondly, that the nationalist movements, particularly MPLA and FRELIMO (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*), did not carry enough political legitimacy to justify their governments. And thirdly, that neo-colonialism would fill the void left by Portugal's exit from Africa.

Having succeeded in the installation of communist governments in the ex-colonies the Portuguese military saw their efforts to establish a Marxist state in Portugal thwarted by a right-of-centre counter-coup in November 1975.¹¹⁷ This revolt arrested the drift towards leftist radicalism and heralded a truer democratisation process.¹¹⁸ The new Portugal that eventually emerged, however, did not coincide with the one visualised by Galvão. The loss of the overseas territories had destroyed the African dimension of the Portuguese nation. As a consequence, Portugal became a tiny southern European democracy instead of the federal Euro-African state Galvão had envisaged. Incidentally, general Spínola had subscribed to a Lusitanian commonwealth solution similar to Galvão's. He too believed that without the African territories Portugal would be reduced to insignificance. Deprived of any trump cards in their dealings with other nations, the Portuguese faced a grim prospect: mere existence within a European context in which their own independence would be compromised.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ David Birmingham, *Concise History of Portugal* (Cambridge, 1993), p.17

¹¹⁸ Portuguese communism was one of the most orthodox in Western Europe, adhering to strict Leninist principles and fundamentally antagonistic to liberal democracy. For a relevant discussion of the Portuguese Communist Party see Tom Gallagher, 'The Portuguese Communist Party and eurocommunism', *Political Quarterly*, vol.50, no.2, 1979, pp.205-218.

¹¹⁹ António de Spínola, *Portugal e o Futuro* (Lisbon, 1974), p.234.



A cartoon view of Portuguese colonialism in the wake of the *Santa Maria*.

San Bernardino Sunday Telegram 1961

For most of his life Henrique Galvão had endeavoured to ensure the continuity of Portugal's historical presence in Africa. His opposition to the Salazarist state had stemmed primarily from his concern about the future of the Portuguese empire in a world increasingly hostile toward colonialism. It was his contention that Portugal should stay in Africa but without Salazar.¹²⁰ Galvão's rebellious activities had contributed to the erosion process that led to the collapse of the Salazar/Caetano regime in 1974. But if this was a posthumous victory over Salazar, it was at a cost Galvão would certainly be reluctant to pay. For the New State and its creator were gone but so was African Portugal. In the greatest of ironies, the seizure of the *Santa Maria* came to be viewed, retrospectively, as "the symbolic beginning of the end" for the Lusitanian empire.¹²¹ By exposing the weaknesses of Portuguese colonialism to

¹²⁰ Hugh Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal* (London, 1970), p.358.

¹²¹ James Duffy, *Portugal in Africa* (Harmondsworth, 1962), p.214.

the world's media, Galvão had unwittingly contributed to the demolition of the very imperial edifice he helped construct and endeavoured so hard to preserve.

CONCLUSION

This thesis began with the preconceived picture of Henrique Galvão as an historical figure whose actions could be reasonably explained. The process of writing undermined my certitude. As the physical construction of the work progressed, the subject matter revealed multiple layers, offering labyrinthine alternative explanations. The complexity of Galvão's private and public lives did not allow for clear-cut conclusions regarding neither his interventions in the National Assembly in 1947-49 nor the seizure of the *Santa Maria*. His life was replete with contradictions: a Salazarist who became an obsessed anti-Salazarist; a colonialist who helped destroy Portuguese colonialism with the seizure of the *Santa Maria*; a humanist that paved the way for contemporary international terrorism. In the end, many of the questions that had motivated this study did not so much find resolution but begat instead more questions. In a sense, this study turned out to be a journey without an arrival.

Basically this work attempts, albeit modestly, to raise the *Santa Maria* and her rebel captain from the depths of impending oblivion, political obscurity and popular misinterpretation. It aims to re-tell Galvão's sea epic within the wider context of his adherence to the New State and his campaigns against Salazar, communism and anti-colonialism.

For this reason the thesis has dwelt, at some length, upon the 1947 report on conditions in Angola and Mozambique that marked the beginning of Galvão's slow-paced disengagement from the Salazarist regime. It shows that his criticisms of the colonial administration had been embryonic for almost twenty years. They had been a feature of his reports and monographs since, at least, the early 1930s. The study has also drawn attention to the fact that Galvão's criticisms at the National Assembly were as much concerned with the survival of Portuguese colonialism as with the welfare of the African populations in the overseas territories. His contention that Salazar deviated from the original aims of Portugal's African mission underpins his report. Galvão's denunciations,

this study argues, could thus be interpreted as a reflection of his humane and colonialist concerns.

The achievements of Dulcinea are difficult to ascertain. Publicity seems to have been the only tangible success of the operation. Its broader political ambitions, however, failed. In fact, the plans of a revolution based in Angola were so fantastic that one wonders whether they were ever more than a sketch designed to mask the fact that the operation was essentially a publicity exercise. There is reason to believe that the seizure's main target might have been to draw international attention to the regimes of Salazar and Franco. Galvão had long contended that "publicity abroad" was what the Portuguese opposition movement most needed.¹ A man of the theatre, Galvão had a notion of the *mise-en-scène* and was fully aware of the capacity of the theatrical act as a subversive action. Dulcinea put these talents into spectacular effect. An editorial at the time of the seizure might well be headed: "playwright hijacks liner". With some exceptions (e.g. the oversized epaulettes) Dulcinea's choreography was impressive. As publicity the *Santa Maria* affair appears to have been very effective, striking a chord deep in the public's imagination. A bestseller novel of the late 1960s has one character say this about the *Santa Maria* and Galvão: "We've all been fascinated by the news story of a genuine adventure of modern-day piracy"; "I'd like to see the man who at sixty-five has the courage to pirate a luxury liner with six hundred passengers".²

The international attention drawn by the seizure certainly pierced the insularity of Salazar's regime. This seems to have been the only direct result of the hijacking. Whatever other effects Dulcinea had in the political field seem to have been accidental. The present study has argued that the connection between Dulcinea and the Angolan revolt (February-March 1961) was unplanned. By 1961, revolutionary conditions existed in Angola. All that was needed was a spark to ignite the latent insurgency. The *Santa Maria* accidentally provided it. Two factors played a significant role. Firstly, international attention had been focused on Luanda (where the hijackers claimed to be

¹ 'Fearless critic of Portugal's administration', *The Times*, January 25, 1961, p.10.

² Jacqueline Susann, *The Love Machine* (London, 1969), pp.99-100.

headed). Secondly, the seizure of the liner projected an (erroneous) image of division among the Portuguese, which stimulated Angolan nationalists into action. In this way *Dulcinea* catalysed Angolan events in early 1961.

For the Kennedy administration in Washington, the seizure of the Portuguese liner presented the ideal medium with which to test its intended policy on Portugal and Africa. Kennedy used the opportunity – one could almost say that the President actually carried out his own hijacking of the ship – to send a dual signal. Lisbon was put on notice. Unconditional American support for Portugal, as experienced during Dwight Eisenhower's presidency (1952-60), was now a thing of the past. At the same time Washington's handling of the *Santa Maria* indicated to the world that Kennedy's foreign policy orientation favoured an active support for democracy. In African terms this meant that the United States was throwing its lot with the emerging nationalist drive for independence.

Kennedy's handling of the *Santa Maria* marked the beginning of a crisis in Portuguese–American relations that would reach alarming proportions in March 1961. On that occasion the United States voted in favour of a Liberian motion to place Angola on the agenda of the Security Council at the UN. On the same day that the voting took place the nationalist UPA launched a terror campaign across northern Angola. Considering Kennedy's vote in the UN and UPA's links with American funding, Portuguese officials deduced that the Angolan revolt was at least partly attributable to Washington. Although the seizure of the *Santa Maria* had not caused the rift between Portugal and the United States it had accidentally contributed to it.

The impact of *Dulcinea* on Portuguese politics is another aspect that this thesis has dealt with. It looks at how much of a threat the operation actually presented to the New State. Here we found that the general conditions in Portugal were not conducive to revolutionary activity of the sort favoured by Galvão and Humberto Delgado. In January 1961, the opposition movement was too fragmented, anyway, to respond to the stimulus provided by the seizure of the *Santa Maria*. And the military, the only institution with the

capacity to assault the state, were busy with insurrectional plans of their own. Notwithstanding Galvão's claims to the contrary, Operation Dulcinea brought no immediate danger to the Salazarian system. Nevertheless it contributed substantially to the internationalisation of Portugal's problems in Europe and Africa.

Although Dulcinea had been an exercise in physical prowess, Galvão's 1963 appearance at the UN was to be his bravest moment. In New York, the Portuguese rebel displayed significant moral courage. Aware that his colonial views ran counter to those of his audience, Galvão proceeded to tell the truth as he saw it. In the process he revealed himself as an autonomous oppositionist who was prepared to pay the price for his refusal to compromise.

Besides the main gist of his deposition – that Portuguese Africa was not ready for independence – Galvão made a number of valid observations regarding colonialism, its adversaries and the dangers of neo-colonialism. His perspicacious views on the future of Africa are of particular importance since some of their aspects have become part of the continent's current problematic conditions. Galvão's admonition, for example, that it would be shortsighted to discard the experience and knowledge of African matters accumulated by colonialism, has proved correct. Independent Africa's attempts to break with its colonial past have led to a crippling historical discontinuity. Starting from a clean slate is a utopian goal responsible for much of modern Africa's woes. Perhaps a future historian ought to resurrect Galvão's interpretation of African problems and reassess it in the light of postcolonial historical conditions. Such a reappraisal could be fruitful.

Henrique Galvão's visit to the UN was his swansong as a physically active dissident. Thenceforth he became almost totally isolated. His colonialism and deep-seated anti-communism made him into an anachronistic figure within opposition circles. By the 1960s, to be a revolutionary meant an unconditional embracing of anti-colonialism and a sympathetic attitude towards Marxism. Galvão failed on both counts. If being an independent Salazarist had been a utopian illusion in 1945, autonomy as an oppositionist in the sixties proved no less illusive.

Contemplating his future political prospects in 1952, Galvão wrote, “I am going alone”.³ In a sense he did. His rebellious activities, including the assault on the *Santa Maria*, were the work of a one-man army. His obsessive preoccupation with Salazar appears to have fuelled his indefatigable determination to act. But, at the same time, it clouded his reasoning. After 1950, Galvão was incapable of discerning anything good about the New State and its leader. His disdain towards the prime minister assumed pathological dimensions. According to one writer Galvão blamed the Portuguese premier “not for political divergences but for an old hatred”.⁴ Ultimately, he traced virtually all of Portugal’s troubles to one source: Salazar.

The question as to why Galvão turned against Salazar is one that lingered throughout the writing of this thesis. A solution to this question might have placed Galvão on an entirely different perspective. An attempt to resolve the puzzle, however, meant probing deep into Galvão’s personal life as well as into his relation to the New State. This could not be done. Such a project required a considerable number of primary sources that were simply inaccessible. But there was another prism through which the subject could be approached. What if Galvão’s ‘crusade’ did not have a rational explanation? After all, his quixotic nature did not always comply with the requirements of reasonable behaviour. As Lewis Namier once wrote, “to treat political ideas as the offspring of pure reason would be to assign them a parentage as mythological as that of Pallas Athene”.⁵ In short, it could well be that Galvão’s 1947 report, the *Santa Maria* and operation Vagô had stemmed from the realm of the emotional rather than that of the rational. Seen from this angle, these events might have been examples of artistic creation driven by the need for transcendence, inspired by anger or resentment. Whatever the case may be, this writer did not want to stray from his initial resolution not to delve into the metaphysical. Thus, the present thesis has not generally focused on explaining the causes of Galvão’s dissidence. It has concentrated, instead, on telling the story of this unique man and his actions at sea, air and land.

³ D.L.Raby, *Fascism & Resistance in Portugal* (Manchester, 1988), p.173.

⁴ Franco Nogueira, *Salazar: A Resistência* (Porto, 1984), p.74.

⁵ Quoted in William Pfaff, *The Bullet’s Song: Romantic Violence and Utopia* (New York, 2004), p.19.

It is perhaps more sensible to look at Galvão's dissidence in terms of what we are certain did not cause it. Financial gain is one good example. Galvão repeatedly claimed personal poverty. Neither his involvement in the 1926 military coup nor his career as a New State official brought any financial advantages. "I left the New State with clean hands", he wrote in 1959, "and as poor as I was when I joined in".⁶ Interestingly, Salazar echoed this emphasis on personal poverty. In a famous phrase the statesman told a French journalist in the 1950s: "When I step down, I will turn my pockets inside out. Of my past years, not even the dust will I take with me."⁷

Henrique Galvão's rebellion was that of a fiercely independent man driven by what he called an "aversion to all forms of tyranny".⁸ This translated into an obsessive opposition to the regime of Oliveira Salazar, which Galvão categorized as tyrannical. In his struggle against the New State, Galvão was at times overwhelmed by his romantic tendencies. His own family concluded that Operation Dulcinea, for example, had been mere "quixotic bravado".⁹ There was, however, much more to Galvão than romanticism.

We can, and should, debate the validity of Galvão's political views. We ought to question the moral and legal aspects of his subversive actions. To be sure, there is much to be criticised there. But none of this should obscure the fact that Galvão represented, in his qualities and defects, the concept of individualism that is so central to western culture. From that perspective, the case of Henrique Galvão is particularly relevant to us in an age when the individual and democracy itself are threatened by an ever more preponderant trend towards egalitarian populism.

⁶ Henrique Galvão, *Carta Aberta ao Dr Salazar* (Lisbon, 1975), p.15.

⁷ Christine Garnier, *Férias com Salazar* (Lisbon, 1992), p.83. Salazar's statement was corroborated at the time of his death. His estate was valued at 200,000\$00 (*escudos*) (roughly R12 000). See Franco Nogueira, *Salazar: O Último Combate* (Porto, 1985), p.445.

⁸ Henrique Galvão, *Santa Maria: My Crusade for Portugal* (London, 1961), p.41.

⁹ Justina Malta Galvão, Henrique's niece, states in the documentary *Santa Liberdade* that Dulcinea had been *uma bravata à Dom Quixote* (quixotic bravado). She adds that the Galvão family much preferred to remember their prominent ancestor as a writer and explorer, than the rebel captain of the *Santa Maria*. M.Ledo Andión, dir. *Santa Liberdade*. 2004.

In the final analysis, one could argue that the case against Galvão was one of methodology. He had used unacceptable methods (e.g. the seizure of public conveyances) to express legitimate humane private concerns. His political activism infringed on the limitations of civil society. From this point of view, Galvão could well be regarded as an apostle of the ends-justify-the-means approach favoured by modern terrorism. He might have thought that Salazar's authoritarianism sufficed to excuse the fact that he was committing a legal offence (by hijacking a liner or an aeroplane), however limited the use of physical violence.

In addition, Galvão assumed the position of spokesperson for the Portuguese and African peoples when in truth he had never been elected as such. In fact, he was very unlikely to be representative of the average citizen in Portugal or Angola. But, in true visionary fashion, he placed ideas before reality. He was a leader with a largely imaginary following in the middle of a real battle, marching to one drummer only: himself. Henrique Galvão's crusade was mostly a personal affair carried out in public.

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