
Dossiê: Fascismos, 100 anos depois

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**Zarco Moniz Ferreira and the Portuguese radical right-wing between
authoritarianism and democracy: a biographical approach**

*Zarco Moniz Ferreira e a direita radical portuguesa entre autoritarismo e democracia:
uma abordagem biográfica*

*Zarco Moniz Ferreira y la derecha radical portuguesa entre el autoritarismo y la
democracia: una aproximación biográfica*

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SUMMARY: In the 1960s and 1970s, Portugal witnessed a cycle of political radicalisation on the right and left, in the context of the crisis and fall of the authoritarian Salazarist regime, and the transition to democracy after the military coup of 1974. For the right wing, radicalisation was led by young university students inspired by the Portuguese nationalism of the first half of the 20th century, but also by foreign doctrines from the inter-war period, and by the neo-fascist subculture immediately after the second world war. This article explores the mobilisation of this radical subculture, with its links to the Estado Novo and the European far right, through a bibliographical appreciation of one of its best-known leaders, nationally and internationally: Zarco Moniz Ferreira. From his career as a political activist, between the end of authoritarianism and the democratic transition, a faithful picture emerges of the characteristics, dynamics, successes and failures of the mobilisation of the far-right in those troubled years of recent Portuguese history.

Keywords: Portuguese Radical Right. Salazarism. Nationalism. Neofascism. Colonial war. Marcelo Caetano. Portuguese New State.

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RESUMO: Nas décadas de 1960 e 1970, Portugal testemunha um ciclo de radicalização política, à direita e à esquerda, no contexto da crise e queda do regime autoritário salazarista e da transição para a democracia, após o golpe militar de 1974. Na direita, a radicalização é protagonizada também por jovens estudantes universitários inspirados pelo nacionalismo português da primeira metade do Século XX, mas também pelas doutrinas estrangeiras de entre guerras e pela subcultura neofascista do segundo pós-guerra. O artigo explora a mobilização desta subcultura radical, entre ligações ao Estado Novo e à extrema-direita europeia, através da abordagem biográfica de um dos seus líderes mais renomados a nível nacional e internacional: Zarco Moniz Ferreira. O seu percurso de vida como militante político, entre o fim do autoritarismo e a transição democrática, faz emergir eficazmente as características, as dinâmicas, os êxitos e as fragilidades da mobilização de extrema-direita naqueles anos conturbados da história contemporânea portuguesa .

PALAVRAS CHAVE: Direita Radical Portuguesa. Salazarismo. Nacionalismo. Neofascismo. Guerra colonial. Marcelo Caetano. Estado Novo.

RESUMEN: En las décadas de 1960 y 1970, Portugal fue testigo de un ciclo de radicalización política, de derecha e izquierda, en el contexto de la crisis y caída del régimen autoritario de Salazar – Estado Novo - y de la transición a la democracia tras el golpe militar de 25 de abril de 1974. A la derecha, la radicalización fue protagonizada también por jóvenes universitarios inspirados por el nacionalismo portugués de la primera mitad del siglo XX, pero también en las doctrinas extranjeras de derecha del período de entreguerras y la subcultura neofascista de la segunda posguerra. El artículo explora la movilización de esta subcultura radical, entre vínculos con el Estado Novo y la extrema derecha europea, a través del enfoque biográfico de uno de sus líderes más reconocidos nacional e internacionalmente: Zarco Moniz Ferreira. Su trayectoria como activista político, entre el fin del autoritarismo y la transición democrática, resalta efectivamente las características, dinámicas, aciertos y debilidades de la movilización de extrema derecha en esos años convulsos de la historia portuguesa contemporánea.

Palabras clave: Derecha Radical Portuguesa. Salazarismo. Nacionalismo. Neofascismo. Guerra colonial. Marcelo Caetano. Estado Nuevo português.

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Methodology and historical context

Stories of the lives of leaders, reconstructed through archival documents, testimonials, interviews, and written memoirs, make it possible to sketch a profile of the person in question, to describe their behaviour and explain the importance attributed to them by the milieu in which they operated (Shamir et al 2019, 16). This qualitative method also makes it possible to analyse and understand particular events, build bridges between the micro, meso, and macro dimensions and, inductively, outline the universal aspects of a given phenomenon (Cornejo 2008, 337). Thus, the personal biography of the member of a given elite, is inextricably linked to the characteristics and dynamics of certain political phenomena (Krcmaric et al. 2020, 134-135). Although frequently used in different areas of historical and sociological research to explore notable events in national and international contexts, the use of the biographical approach is still rather limited in subculture studies (Xiao 2017, 707). These considerations become particularly relevant in dealing with right-wing radicalism, active throughout the last two decades of the Salazarist regime. These were troubled decades due to the international diplomatic and military offensive in Portuguese Africa, which forced the Estado Novo [the New State] to confront, the radicalisation of the left and the right in the Metropolis, in student academic elites, among others (Accornero 2013, 1036). Against this background, the authoritarian regime nurtured structural relationships with domestic radical factions in the aftermath of the second world war and, in particular, from the beginning of the 1960s until its overthrow. These relationships are explored here through the life-story of Zarco Moniz Ferreira, the best known leader of Portuguese neo-fascism, nationally and internationally (Bale 1994, 99 and 148), in the 1960s and 1970s, until the normalisation of democracy in the early 1980s. The aim is to trace, through the militant career of Zarco Moniz Ferreira, the internal dynamics of the Portuguese radical right and the interlacing relationships between this political area and the Estado Novo, as well as its evolution during the democratic transition. In this respect, the history of the Portuguese radical right in the 1960s and 1970s, can be divided in two phases: the final years of the Estado Novo, and the years of democratic transition. Each one of these phases were, however, characterized by two sub periods. The end of the Estado Novo was divided into the last eight years of António de Oliveira Salazar as President of the Council, and the six years of his successor Marcelo Caetano (27 September 1968 - 25 April 1974). In turn, the democratic transition can be divided between the years 1974 to 1976, including the most troubled phase of the Ongoing Revolutionary Process (Processo Revolucionário em Curso – PREC) of 1975, and the democratic normalisation during the second half of the 1970s (Marchi 2019, 4). In each of the four sub-periods, the radical right took different positions regarding those in power, which affected the

political strategies implemented. In the final years of Salazarism, it took advantage of the outbreak of the colonial war in 1961 to implement its plans – which had repeatedly failed since 1945 – to create a radical nationalist wing, primarily for youth. With the ascension to power of Marcelo Caetano, the extreme right took a position of internal opposition to the liberalisation of the regime, which they saw as prejudicial to the military and political defence of the Empire (Pinto 1995). With the overthrow of the regime and the successive waves of repression in the post-25 April period, on 28 September 1974 and 11 March 1975, the struggling far-right subordinated itself, clandestinely, to the military and civilians of the wider anti-communist front active during the PREC (Cerezales 2007 and 2017). Lastly, with the normalisation of the process of democratisation after 25 November 1975, the extreme right, yet again, tried the path of institutionalisation in various spheres – political parties, the press, social movements, extra-party organisations – with frankly unimpressive results (Zúquete 2007, 179). In all four sub-periods, the different components of the extreme right tried to conquer a hegemonic position in the radical area, imposing their organisational forms and their ideological and symbolic heritage. Its modus operandi was notably exemplified by the enduring militancy of one of its most prominent leaders: Zarco Moniz Ferreira. The life-story of Zarco Moniz Ferreira as a radical militant is reconstructed here from different sources: the archives of the political police PIDE/DGS, an institution preponderant in the surveillance of all forms of political activism during the Estado Novo ; the archives of the Legião Portuguesa (Portuguese Legion), a paramilitary institution controlled by radical factions of the Estado Novo; the archives of the Secretariat of State for Treasury and Finance, with documentation about the purges of the democratic transition; the private archives and testimonies of intellectuals and radical militants who had a relationship with Zarco Moniz Ferreira during the period in question; and the documents produced by the organisations in which Zarco Moniz Ferreira played a leading role, as well as the international organizations he collaborated with. As this approach is biographical, it should be noted that the death of Zarco Moniz Ferreira in 1995 made interviewing impossible, a gap that cannot be filled through autobiographical written testimonies, which unfortunately do not exist.

The story of the life of a Portuguese neo-fascist

Zarco Rogério Moniz Ferreira was born on 20 February 1935, in Lisbon, into a bourgeois family, loyal to the regime, and his father was a naval officer. His interest in politics began as an adolescent, in 1951, at the age of 16, as he himself recounted to the far-right Spanish newspaper

Fuerza Nueva.¹ This was the decade of Salazar's dictatorship, known as the "years of lead", when the *Estado Novo*, after a surge in opposition roused by the end of the Second World War, regained control of the situation, and imposed a system of rigid control through censorship and surveillance by the PIDE political police (Rosas 1994, 503). The demobilisation promoted by the regime also impacted the radical right: the Germanophile milieu, which during the war years had produced the magazine *Esfera* (1940-1945) and, in the immediate post-war period, the weekly *A Nação* (1946-1948), ceased all public activity as an organised group. His mentor, the intellectual *Ultra* Alfredo Pimenta, died in 1950. The youngest supporters of this radical wing of the regime, promoters of the journal *Mensagem* (1946-1950) at the University of Coimbra, also returned to private life once they had left academia, without handing the reins on to a new generation of militants. In this desertification of the radical nationalist area, Zarco Moniz Ferreira took his first steps within the official structures of the *Estado Novo* dedicated to youth – the, by then, politically toothless *Mocidade Portuguesa* (Portuguese Youth) – and various short-lived projects of autonomous organisations, incapable of consolidation. At the age of 23, he was already a leader of right-wing radicalism in Portugal, and began editing the newspaper *Ordem Nova* in 1958. The newspaper's name derived from the Italian organisation *Ordine Nuovo* [New Order], founded in 1956 in a break-away from the neo-fascist party *Movimento Sociale Italiano* (MSI). Its name indicates Zarco's awareness of the European far right from the first half of the 1950s. In a letter from January 1959 to the fascist intellectual António José de Brito, a leading member of the earlier group *Mensagem*, Zarco enthusiastically announced the acquisition of a typewriter for the newspaper, whose imminent publication would finally see Portugal take its place in the renewed awakening of nationalist ideas in Europe, led by the younger generation.² The publication of the first issue of *Ordem Nova*, in February 1959, was accompanied by Zarco's proposal to hold lectures on leading nationalist intellectuals such as José António Primo de Rivera, Robert Brasillach, and Pierre Drieu La Rochelle, among others. The idea was, depending on the reception by the nationalist milieu of the proposed cultural cycle, to introduce lectures on Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler in a second stage of the programme.³ Zarco's neo-fascist political culture was also evident in the organisational structure prepared around *Ordem Nova*: in March 1959, the young nationalist launched the National Socialist Movement (*Movimento Socialista Nacional* – MSN), whose emblem was a black cross

¹ "Entrevista: Crear una corriente ideológica y ética", *Fuerza Nueva*, 1980, pp.21-23. In the Private Archive of Luís Fernandes.

² Letter from Zarco Moniz Ferreira to António José de Brito, of 2 January 1959. Private Archive of António José de Brito.

³ Letter from Zarco Moniz Ferreira to António José de Brito, of 23 February 1959. Private Archive of António José de Brito.

inscribed in a white circle on a red background.⁴ In May 1959, the MSN was renamed *Ordem Nova* (ON), taking the name of the magazine whose second issue was published in March, and the publication of its founding principles, drawn up in April by Zarco Moniz Ferreira and António José de Brito. Even in this embryonic phase, internal dissension began to emerge between a handful of members, due to their involvement with the regime, a problem that would recur throughout the history of Portuguese right-wing radicalism. In particular, the possibility of the ON being joined by David Lopes Gagean – who had a recent and troubling past in the *Legião Portuguesa* – drew criticism from Zarco:

Collaborations with entities and people with whom I have nothing in common. Previous examples clearly indicate the fate suffered when collaboration and protection ultimately fail. The cases of the J.N.T., *Ação Popular* and the F.A.P. are examples of this. When danger looms, they were the first to scream: Come on boys, form groups and movements, "our people" will help out, until you are no longer needed. I find it abhorrent to restrict ourselves to the mere parroting of what the "enlightened" have already said. My intention has always been to make genuine statements, to call things by their proper names, etc., etc. If we were to mention again, the case of the *Frente Nacional*, and our membership of the *Mocidade*, the *Legião* and the *União Nacional*, it becomes absolutely ridiculous, as has started to happen with these gentlemen. If that was our aim, we might as well pack up, be friends and call it a day.⁵

Unlike the generation of intellectuals of the 1940s and 50s, Zarco was more concerned with street campaigning than the newspaper's editorial success. However, at this stage, the translation of nationalist beliefs into militant action was not tied to the political contingencies of the *Estado Novo*. At the end of the 1950s, the Salazarist regime suffered one of the most serious crises of the second post-war period: the candidacy of General Humberto Delgado in the 1958 presidential elections, which mobilised thousands of people against the regime's official candidate, Admiral Américo Thomáz. Humberto Delgado's campaign also shook up the nationalist ranks, due to the general's earlier involvement in right-wing radicalism in the 1930s, and the sympathy he attracted from right-wingers unhappy with the *Estado Novo*. For example, Rolão Preto, the former leader of the *Camisas Azuis* [Blue Shirts] fascist movement, joined Delgado's campaign with the aim of removing Salazar from his position as President of Council (Quintas 2014, 191). The so-called "Delgado Earthquake" (Rosas 1994, 523) represented a window of opportunity for the young intellectuals from the radical right who had grown up with the *Mensagem* and who, in May 1959, were sponsored by the National Secretariat of Information (*Secretariado Nacional de Informação* – SNI) to publish the periodical *Tempo Presente* (1959-1961): an attempt to reinstate the nationalist right within the regime. Although António José de Brito was one of the leaders in launching the

⁴ Letter from Zarco Moniz Ferreira to António José de Brito, of 17 March 1959. Private Archive of António José de Brito.

⁵ Letter from Zarco Moniz Ferreira to António José de Brito, of 12 May 1959. Private Archive of António José de Brito.

magazine, Zarco Moniz Ferreira was still too young to be directly co-opted into this project. He remained relegated to autonomous militancy: the same month *Tempo Presente* was founded, Zarco was still trying to explain how to use his bulletin *Ordem Nova*:

The surreptitious distribution of an issue [of *Ordem Nova*] to friends in the café, impels him to take action by printing a number of virulent, annoying, troublesome leaflets, by sticking the insignia of the Movement on window-panes, and painting it on walls, so that people will know that the Sacred Cross is the symbol of an active, bold and vigorous Movement.⁶

In parallel with his action in Portugal, Zarco managed to get his ON included in the international neo-fascist networks. On 5 April 1958, in Milan, he took part, in the fifth assembly of the neo-Nazi *Nouvel Ordre Européen* (NOE), founded in 1951 by Gaston-Armand Amaudruz. Along with other comrades, he was given the task of organising the Young European Legion, which brought together various youth organisations of the European extreme right, and had the French language periodical, *Fascisme* as its mouth-piece (Lebourg 2019). In June 1959, he was invited to the First Congress of the European National Revolutionary Youth (Milan, Italy, 3-7 August), organised by the *Centro Studi Ordine Nuovo* in collaboration with the *Mouvement Social Belge* (MSB) and the French Popular Movement, which was attended by representatives from various European countries, under the slogan “European Youth against Communism and Americanism”.⁷ At this congress, Zarco presented the Portuguese radical milieu, to promote his leadership and organisation, and capitalised on the interest of European comrades, who considered the Portuguese *Estado Novo* to be one of the last fascist regimes in Europe.⁸ With this in mind, on 29 July, the leader of ON took part in a preparatory meeting for the congress in Milan, attended by the former Nazi officer Otto Skorzeny. On his return to Lisbon in mid-August, Zarco expressed his dismay when he compared Portuguese radicalism to that of Europe:

Everything went as I wished, and I consider it a great pleasure to talk to genuine fascists. Making any comparison between them and us is ridiculous. I am truly ashamed to think of those (some of whom we know) who call themselves fascists. Over there, there is real sacrifice. Sacrifice that implies unemployment, hunger, etc., etc. It's enough to make you cry, yes, cry – so don't tell me that certain things should be excused – when you just ask for a simple article or a measly 50 escudos, and these fascists immediately avoid the former, because they supposedly have no time, and the latter, because they need the money. The *Ordem Nova*, as I conceived it, is a youth movement, ready for action, and not a bourgeois, intellectual or literary position, where you have to beg on your knees for the help of some fine fellow. I am not, nor will I ever be, a boss – I know my own limitations, but there is no reason why we should not all work together on an Idea that is bigger than all of us. Is all our Race emasculated? Could it be that in Portugal, Fascism does not exist! What can we say, what can we assert, when we encounter one of the French delegates, a woman, moreover, who has physically and mentally suffered the abuses of democracy, yet continues unshakable in her beliefs? What can

⁶ Letter from Zarco Moniz Ferreira to António José de Brito, of 19 May 1959. Private Archive of António José de Brito.

⁷ Letter from Zarco Moniz Ferreira to António José de Brito, of 18 June 1959. Private Archive of António José de Brito.

⁸ Letter from Zarco Moniz Ferreira to António José de Brito, of 29 June 1959. Private Archive of António José de Brito.

we say when we meet an Italian comrade, who, in 1948, aged 14, volunteered for the R.S.I., and was part of the famous *Fascios de Acção Revolucionaria* (a secret organisation), which led to him being arrested and losing his job! What can we say when confronted by a Belgian comrade who fought on the Russian Front, and now lives on the alms of former comrades? What can we say about our German Comrade, who at 83 years of age, but still absolutely lucid, did not want to miss this meeting of people far younger than him! Either we cease activity out of embarrassment, or we continue, but in a way that recognises this, in other words, with this sacrifice and revolutionary dynamism, associated with fascism!⁹

When referring to the structure of NOE, Zarco once again ridiculed the situation in Portugal – “of course the Legion there, bears no comparison to the one that exists, or rather, is supposed to exist in the noble Lusitanian house”¹⁰ – and he proposed himself, António José de Brito, and Fernando Madureira, to be the Portuguese members of the editorial board of *Fascisme*, because of the importance of the magazine *Ordem Nova* in the nationalist area: “Of course we are not the epitome of National Fascism, but as it was us who sent out the call, and us who have done the work, I think it is only fair that we be the ones to continue it”.¹¹

Activism was the watchword adopted by the young neo-fascist leader: in September 1959, he planned new conferences on the Germanophile Portuguese intellectual Alfredo Pimenta, he contemplated turning the *Ordem Nova* magazine from a bimonthly into a fortnightly publication, and he intensified propaganda wherever there were ON nuclei (Lisbon, Porto, Coimbra, Nazaré and Viseu).¹² At this stage, the ON's membership was increasing, which made it opportune to invest in propaganda through the magazine and in mobilisation through street action. However, despite planning these projects, *New Order* disappeared at the end of 1959. But Zarco did not give up, and, after reading several references to the defunct *Nova Ordem* in the Swedish newspaper *Nordisk Kampf*, he resolved to start again, with another name and another title, but the same old spirit.¹³

These intentions came to fruition in 1960: between April and November, Zarco brought together a dozen students from the University of Lisbon (Faculties of Law and Letters) and a dozen from the University of Coimbra,¹⁴ to found the Portugal Youth Movement (*Movimento Jovem Portugal* – MJP). The political landscape in the early 1960s was clearly more conducive to the recruitment

⁹ Letter from Zarco Moniz Ferreira to António José de Brito, of 17 August 1959. Private Archive of António José de Brito.

¹⁰ Letter from Zarco Moniz Ferreira to António José de Brito, of 26 August 1959. Private Archive of António José de Brito.

¹¹ *Idem*.

¹² Letter from Zarco Moniz Ferreira to António José de Brito, of 3 September 1959. Private Archive of António José de Brito.

¹³ Letter from Zarco Moniz Ferreira to António José de Brito, of 22 December 1959. Private Archive of António José de Brito.

¹⁴ Letter from Zarco Moniz Ferreira to António José de Brito, of 6 December 1960. Private Archive of António José de Brito.

of radical militants. Only two years after the Humberto Delgado crisis, opposition to the *Estado Novo* intensified once again. At an international level, on 14 and 15 December 1960, the UN General Assembly approved a series of resolutions (1514-XV, 1541-XV, 1542-XV) that required Portugal to provide information on its overseas provinces, which the international organisation did not consider to be self-governing territories. This constituted a clear sign that the international community wanted to challenge the multi-continental dimension of Portugal, and to begin the process of dismantling Portuguese colonialism (Almada e Santos 2011, 68-69). On the domestic front, the massacres on 15 March 1961, led by the Union of Angolan Peoples (*União dos Povos de Angola* – UPA) in the north of the overseas province, marked the beginning of the Colonial War, which would determine the regime's rapid decline over the following fifteen years. The *Estado Novo* responded to the internal military and international diplomatic offensives by mobilising resources, which included the radical fringes close to the regime, to play a counter-subversive role. In 1961, for example, the weekly *Agora* (1961-1969) hit the news-stands; the first far-right newspaper published since the failure of *A Nação* in 1948. Zarco Moniz Ferreira also took advantage of this climate of crisis and mobilisation, and organised the *Movimento Jovem Portugal* in a hierarchical fashion, with a national triumvirate presided over by himself, assisted by Manuel de Almeida Damásio (for Lisbon) and José Valle de Figueiredo (for Coimbra). Their repertoire of activities, concentrated in Lisbon and Coimbra, was limited to fly-posting manifestos, the distribution of pamphlets and painting slogans on walls. In 1961, the MJP was extended to the south bank of the Tagus, with the inclusion of the so-called *Facho de Almada*. Led by Vasco Lourinho, this nucleus consisted of some thirty young students and workers. It became official on 17 January 1961, with oaths sworn on the bible and the flag of the fourteen founding members. Still in 1961, the MJP also became active in Porto, due to some students from the D. Manuel II Secondary School, led by Jaime Nogueira Pinto, who quickly assembled around a hundred young people from various institutions (Pinto 2008: 16). In the summer of 1961, the official organ of the MJP, *Ataque*, reported the creation of nuclei in Trafaria, Vale Maior, Albergaria-a-Velha, Guimarães and some new cells in the high schools of Coimbra.¹⁵

The radicalisation of the youth of the MJP was based on a mythical vision derived from various sources, from Spanish national-syndicalism, and the Algerian War, to the *ponjadist* revolt in France. These references also marked its international relationships: Zarco and his comrades met the Phalangists of the Spanish *Movimiento*, while visiting the Vale dos Caídos; between 1961 and

¹⁵ Editorial, "Vida do Movimento", *Ataque*, no. 2, Ano I, June 1961, p. 4 and *Ataque*, no. 3, Ano I, June/August 1961, p. 4

1963, they attended doctrinal courses at the Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo, organised by the *Centro de Estudios Sindicales*; and in Portugal, they helped their French comrades from the *Organisation Armée Secrète* (OAS), by providing them false documents.

The enlargement and organisation of the MJP also brought out the first internal frictions, caused by Zarco's leadership style. On 28 February 1963, Vasco Lourinho abandoned the movement, after a controversy concerning the centralisation of the leader's powers, which caused the departure of leading militants, who then became activists for the rival National Union of Portuguese Students (*União Nacional dos Estudantes Portugueses* – UNEP). Zarco was also challenged for his insistence in involving the MJP in the European neo-fascist subculture. Despite the Almada nucleus having the name *Facho*, Vasco Lourinho accused Zarco of wanting an MJP in the style of the *Hitlerjugend* or the Fascist *Gioventù*, with a uniform and flag in the colours of the Third Reich (a black Celtic cross on white with a red background). In ideological terms, this criticism was directed at the lack of doctrinal originality and the sterile copying of the national-syndicalism of José Antonio Primo de Rivera or Ramiro Ledesma Ramos.¹⁶ Another bone of contention was the relationship between the MJP and the *Estado Novo* and its attitude towards other nationalist organisations. In the former, the funds provided by the National Secretariat of Information (SNI), the PIDE and, subsequently, the *Legião Portuguesa*, to the movement's publications were contested. In the latter, there was stigma for Zarco's attacks on the Nationalist Student Front (*Frente dos Estudantes Nacionalistas* – FEN), the second most important nationalist youth organisation, which was sponsored by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of National Education. In fact, relations with the regime were less peaceful for Zarco than he had been led to believe. In 1963, for instance, Zarco became involved in a controversy with the Director of Censorship over the ban of the publication of *Ataque*, due to an article that was critical of how the war in Africa was being managed. The instrumental nature of Zarco's relationship with the regime was, in this case, well represented by the tone used in a letter he wrote to another leader of the MJP addressing the subject:

I met the Director of Censorship regarding “*Ataque*”. And now, “it’s decision time”!!! It was agreed that I would call him about it today. [...] We'll soon see who wins!! As a last resort, a loyal but firm letter will be sent to “*Botas*” [“Boots” i.e. Salazar].¹⁷

The departure of the Almada cell – which reduced the MJP to its Lisbon group and the small nuclei of Trafaria, Costa da Caparica, Cacilhas and Barreiro – was counterbalanced by the

¹⁶ Letter from Vasco Lourinho to Zarco Moniz Ferreira, 28 February 1963. IAN/TT, PIDE Archive, proc. *Jovem Portugal*, cota SC/SR - 3155 (NT3040), fls. 50-53.

¹⁷ IAN/TT, Arq. PIDE/DGS, proc. *Jovem Portugal*, cota SC/SR-3155 (NT 3040), fls.41-42.

students who joined from the Higher Institute of Economic and Financial Sciences, and the restructuring of the top of the organisation into a Lisbon Triumvirate and a National Triumvirate, as always, led by Zarco Moniz Ferreira.

In terms of their action, the radicalisation of young people, during the academic crises of the first half of the 1960s and during the colonial war, often led to MJP militants roaming the streets armed with iron bars and pistols. For example, during a fly-posting campaign, MJP militants shot an employee of the Law Faculty who appeared unexpectedly. In March 1962, on Students' Day, around a hundred university students belonging to the MJP, the FEN and the *Legião Portuguesa* tried to expel the left-wing students gathered in the university canteen, by firing shots in the air. It was only when Carlos Góis Mota, secretary of the Central Junta of the *Legião Portuguesa*, asked the police to disperse the radicals, led by Zarco, that a final assault was averted (Marchi 2009, 81-82).

Despite the extremism it exhibited, the *Estado Novo* did not consider the MJP to be a danger, but rather, another resource in a turbulent academic environment. In fact, the regime itself financed the propaganda used by the MJP, in a counter-subversive role during the most difficult political moments, specifically, during the UN crisis in 1960, at the outbreak of the colonial war in 1961, and during the student unrest in 1962. In this context, there was direct action, led by Zarco, such as the assaults by the MJP on the Academic Association of the Lisbon Law Faculty (*Associação Académica da Faculdade de Direito de Lisboa*) on 20 March 1964, and on the Portuguese Association of Writers on 21 May 1965. The first led to the arrest by the police of six MJP militants, who were promptly released from the Civil Government headquarters due to the intervention of a former commander of the police in Luanda (Angola), who was the father of one of the detainees. In a communiqué issued on 6 April 1964, the Academic Association complained that the case had been transferred from the Civil Government to the PIDE, so the regime could cover up the incident. The second assault followed a ceremony, held by the Portuguese Writers' Society (*Sociedade Portuguesa de Escritores* – SPE), to award a literary prize to the Angolan poet Luandino Vieira, who was sentenced, in June 1963, to fourteen years in prison for terrorism. Not only did the Minister for National Education, Inocêncio Galvão Telles, manage to close down the SPE but, after its closure, MJP militants, along with comrades from the FEN and the *Legião Portuguesa*, went to the association's headquarters and vandalised the building with graffiti such as "Agency of Terrorists in the Metropolis", "MPLA branch office" and "Traitors".¹⁸ This operation was protected by the PIDE, who, on the scene, prevented the extremists from also attacking the headquarters of the *Diário de Lisboa*, which was considered pro-communist. This latter idea was repeated by Zarco

¹⁸ IAN/TT, PIDE Archive, proc. *Sociedade Portuguesa de Escritores*, cota SC/CI (1), NP 232. N. Inst. 1179.

during an event organised by the City Council of Lisbon, by staging a fake spontaneous procession consisting of MJP militants supposedly heading towards São Bento, while actually intending to attack the headquarters of the *Diário de Lisboa*. But, just like the previous attempt, it came to a halt when Carlos Góis Mota ordered the PSP to block the radicals. Gois Mota himself would later employ MJP militants in a dispute between the regime and the British concessionaire of Lisbon's public transport system, when the latter wanted to increase fares (Marchi 2009, 85). The relationship between the *Legião Portuguesa* and MJP was not merely episodic. Between 1964-1965, Zarco Moniz Ferreira joined the *Legião Portuguesa*, thanks to the intervention of António Luís Gomes Lopes, director of the *Legião's* Information Services, who was also a nationalist militant. To take advantage of the movement's organisational structure, on 28 May 1965, the Central Board of the *Legião Portuguesa* authorised the creation of the *Formação Legionária Académica* (FLA), based at the premises of Battalion No. 4 of the LP, on Avenida António Serpa. On 19 June, the Central Board appointed Zarco commander of the FLA with the rank of commander of the unit, assisted by two leaders of the MJP, with the ranks of commanders of the lance. By this time, Zarco was already working at the Bank of Angola, and was also a fifth-year student at the Faculty of Literature of the University of Lisbon. Initially composed of fifty-five members, the FLA was overseen by the Secretary General of the Central Junta of the LP, Carlos Góis Mota, and his deputies.¹⁹ For his part, Zarco got all his closest militants to join the FLA, together with elements of Militia Training Centre No. 1 of the *Mocidade Portuguesa* [Portuguese Youth], which Gomes Lopes had led. The rapprochement with the *Legião Portuguesa* allowed the MJP to get better funding, material, and contacts with the extremist factions of the regime. Despite Zarco's attempts to take advantage of the resources, while maintaining a certain autonomy from the MJP, the rapprochement with the LP created tensions with the movement's militants, who were reluctant to collaborate with official bodies of the *Estado Novo*. In Coimbra, the district leader of MJP was able to keep the critics at bay. In the capital, however, the officials of the Lisbon Triumvirate disapproved of the national leader's line. Several core militants threatened to leave the organisation and join the *Frente Nacional do Trabalho* (FNT), of former leader of the MJP, Manuel Damásio. Unable to manage the crisis, Zarco was only able to watch as the MJP declined and came to an end in 1965.

However, the neo-fascist leader did not give up his militancy and, based on the *Legião's* structure, created the Revolutionary National Front (*Frente Nacional Revolucionária* – FNR). The FNR was officially launched on 21 May 1966, with a conference in the meeting hall of the Lisbon Volunteer Fire Brigade, entitled "Marking of the Presence of the Nationalist Youth", chaired by

¹⁹ IAN/TT, *Legião Portuguesa* Archive, proc. *Formação Legionária Académica*, cota LP 1591/2, fls. 101-102.

Zarco Moniz Ferreira, and José Valle de Figueiredo (from the magazine *Combate* and the Coimbra MJP), among others. Of the hundred or so participants, most were *Legião* members from Lisbon, Porto and Coimbra, including Carlos Góis Mota. In fact, the FNR was a creation of the *Legião*, supported by extremists in the regime who wanted to bring its wilful young radicals to order, through a single structure which would be less costly and more practical (Marchi 2009, 178). The first conversations on the new project took place in the summer of 1965,²⁰ but it was only in January 1966, that the two radical leaders, Zarco and Valle de Figueiredo, reached an agreement. However, they were unable to convince the other nationalist organizations, namely the *Centro dos Estudantes Nacionalistas* (Nationalist Student Centre, former FEN), the *Real União Portuguesa* (RUP), *Jovem Europa* (Young Europe), the *Viriatos*, and *Ação Académica* (Student Action).

From an organisational point of view, Zarco applied the same vertical and hierarchical logic to the FNR as was applied in the MJP: a central committee, composed of around ten militants representing Lisbon, Coimbra, Porto, and the overseas troops. Zarco Moniz Ferreira and José Valle Figueiredo headed the central committee, as well as being director and deputy-director of the newspaper *Frente*, which was an organ of the FNR. The ideological affiliation was still along the lines of European neo-fascism: the symbol of the FNR was a double-edged ax topped by two symmetrical eagle heads; the newspaper *Frente* featured right-wing radicals from Zarco's network, under the column entitled *Frente Europeia* (European Front) – the German Wolfgang Silling (*Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* – NPD), the Spaniards Adriano Bruno and Pedro Carriça (*Falange Espanola das JONS*), the Italian Antonio Lombardo (*Ordine Nuovo*), the Frenchman Alain De Benoist (Europe-Action) – and interviews by its correspondent in France, Luís Fernandes, of well-known radical intellectuals such as Maurice Bardèche, Maurice-Ivan Sicard (under the pseudonym Saint-Paulien) and Marc Augier (under the pseudonym Saint-Loup). With regard to the international network, Zarco was keener to establish contacts with the Italians and the French than with the Germans and Spanish. For him, the Spanish radical right – in particular the various Phalangist factions and the neo-Nazi organisation *Círculo Español de Amigos de Europa* (CEDADE) – were undermined by Francoist authoritarianism and endless internal squabbles over the ideological legacy of José Antonio Primo de Rivera.²¹ With the Italians of *Ordine Nuovo*, on the other hand, the links of the late 1950s were formalised in March 1964: and in June-July 1964, the magazine *Ordine Nuovo* published an interview with Zarco as leader of the MJP²² and incorporated the Portuguese leader into the Franco-Italian network (Picco 2016a, 120-121). As for contacts with

²⁰ IAN/TT, PIDE Archive, proc. *Frente Nacional Revolucionária*, cota SC/CI (1) - 366, NT 7000, fl. 6.

²¹ IAN/TT, PIDE Archive, proc. *Frente Nacional Revolucionária*, cota SC/CI (1) - 366, NT 7000, fls. 61-64.

²² "Intervista col capo di Jovem Portugal", *Ordine Nuovo*, N° 5-6, Giugno-Luglio 1964. pp. 37-45.

the French, they dated back to the early years of the MJP's activity. In 1961, elements of the MJP met with the French populist leader Pierre Poujade.²³ As a representative of the MJP, Zarco took part in the 4th National Conference of the *Fédération des Étudiants Nationalistes* (FEN). Both Zarco and José Valle de Figueiredo maintained regular correspondence with the editorial staff of the magazine *Europe-Action*, in particular Alain De Benoist and Dominique Venner.²⁴ In the early 1960s, Zarco himself was the Portuguese correspondent for the French extreme right-wing magazine *Europe-Action* (Camus and Monzat 1992, 253). In Portugal, and under the auspices of the *Legião*, Zarco took part, as an instructor, in courses on revolutionary warfare given by French refugees of the OAS gathered in the organisation *Aginter Press*, which was based in Lisbon under the protection of the regime (Jesus 2012, 95). On 30 January 1966, as leader of the FNR, Zarco took part in the VI National Conference of French Nationalist Youth, organised by the French FEN, the *Comité d'Appui Europe-Action* and by a component of the *Comités Tixier-Vignancour*. Between 30 April and 1 May 1966, Zarco, along with Fernandes, addressed the founding congress of the *Mouvement Nationaliste du Progrès* (MNP):

As head of the Portuguese delegation, I can state without fear of error that, as far as we are concerned, Portugal, this small country of meagre natural resources, has known, knows, and will know, how to remain faithful to itself and to our Europe, the Europe that we will build together so that the light of Culture and Civilisation may continue to illuminate the whole world. (Barcellos 1966, 9)

Despite his convinced adherence to the European radical right, Zarco maintains the typical traits of Portuguese nationalism. This is particularly evident in his ideas about the Portuguese multiracial empire in the context of the European colonialism. On one hand Zarco shares the supremacist conception of the European radical right of the 1960s. Although aware of the impossibility of boasting an alleged racial purity of the Portuguese, Zarco denounces irresponsible miscegenation within the Empire, which produced a Europeanized African elite, champion of the independentist guerrilla warfare against Portugal. His view of the multiracial relationship in the Empire is efficiently expressed by his journal *Ataque*:

From the unquestionable observation of European superiority, we do not infer, in any way, the right to enslave other races; but what we do not admit to these races is the right to want to destroy our creative power, in the name of an anti-White racism, truly hateful, and which, if it triumphed, would be equivalent to the end of Man's immortal desire to surpass himself.²⁵

On the other hand, according to Zarco, the hierarchical superiority of the white man in the Portuguese Empire has nothing to do with the materialist imperialism of other European colonial

²³ IAN/TT, PIDE Archive, proc. *Jovem Portugal*, cota SC/SR - 3155 (NT3040), fl. 102.

²⁴ Letter from Fabrice La Roche (Alain Benoist) to Zarco Moniz Ferreira, on 29 June 1965. IAN/TT, PIDE Archive, proc. *Frente Nacional Revolucionária*, cota SC/CI (1) - 366, NT 7000, fls. 65-66.

²⁵ «Racismo e anti-racismo ou a realidade para além das palavras», *Ataque*, no 13-14, May-June 1963, pp. 7-8.

powers – mainly Great Britain and France –, but with the Christian civilizing mission of peoples and nations still primitive. This mission of the white man is at the antipodes of the true racism expressed by the international Capitalism – led by the United State – interested in exploiting more easily the new independent States in Africa and Asia, from a political and economic point of view.

In this sense, Zarco agrees with the radical right's idea of Europe as a bastion against the North American global capitalism, but always safeguards the specificity of the Portuguese presence in Africa. He does not accept the dilution of the Portuguese Empire in a pan-Euro-African empire to the detriment of the geopolitical centrality of Lisbon. In this regard, Zarco's answer to the question about the decadence of Europe in the interview with the Italian magazine *Ordine Nuovo* is symptomatic:

I tell you that we define ourselves as Europeans, but only as Portuguese. We do not deny, therefore, that Portugal must collaborate in the reconstruction and affirmation of Europe. [...] We are Portuguese, and our existence assumes total and integral meaning only within the framework of our homeland.²⁶

Quite significant is also the veiled criticism published by this important Italian radical right magazine:

We do not agree with all the statements made by Zarco Moniz Ferreira [due to some] gaps in the ideology and a still tepid adherence to an integrally and fully European «weltanschauung» which, on the contrary, is very advanced, passionate, and vehement in the homologous French milieu.²⁷

Despite Zarco's efforts at both national and international levels, the FNR project collapsed by the end of 1966. What was now becoming a pattern for the nationalist leader, repeated itself, in January 1967. He created yet another project: the *Movimento da Revolução Sindicalista* (MRS), more or less composed of the same elements who had transitioned from the MJP to the FNR. Seen as a school of cadres, the MRS had no better luck than the FNR and, in fact, it resulted in a definitive rupture with Legionary circles, and the expulsion of Zarco from the LP in March 1967, by decision of the Central Junta.²⁸ This experience only confirmed Zarco's mistrust of the regime, which he had already expressed in a document of January 1966:

If [...] this legitimate concern of ours provoked a positive reaction, however minor, in government circles, under these circumstances, it would, perhaps be reasonable to expect our goodwill and for us to silence our calls [...] But, unfortunately, this has not been the case, but very much the contrary, as we bitterly observe. [...] having defined our position in relation to the current regime – transitory, like any human enterprise or task - and, as such, with its understandable errors, but now incomprehensible omissions and compromising silences [...] it is our most sacred duty and legitimate right, at this moment and with a view to the future, to shoulder certain responsibilities.²⁹

²⁶ Interview of Zarco Moniz Ferreira by the journal *Ordine Nuovo*, no.5-6, June-July 1964, pp.44-45.

²⁷ Interview of Zarco Moniz Ferreira by the journal *Ordine Nuovo*, no.5-6, June-July 1964, p.37.

²⁸ IAN/TT, Arquivo Legião Portuguesa, proc. *Zarco Moniz Ferreira*, cota no. 665/115518.

²⁹ Zarco Moniz Ferreira (1966). “Pontos essenciais da tática e organização”, p.4. In the Private Archive of Luís Fernandes

The end of the decade coincided, for Zarco, with the age of enlistment for the Overseas War: in 1967 he attended the course for his promotion to captain of the militia, and in 1968 he was sent to the theatre of operations in northern Angola. José Carlos Craveiro Lopes, his comrade at the time, recalled Zarco's military career:

In the war years, militia officers who had not been deployed to the Overseas Territories during their compulsory military service could be called up to take the militia captain's course (Zarco did this in Mafra) even if they had begun their civilian careers and started families. It should be clarified that being considered "able-bodied" did not necessarily mean they were. Zarco was thus faced with being deployed after he had established a family and a professional life (unlike the majority, who went as militia recruits) and also with the idea that they had deployed him to put an end to his political activity. He protested profusely, but still went. He commanded a company as a militia captain, and served well, as was to be expected.³⁰

For Zarco, his experience of the war, between 4 January 1968 and 14 March 1970, confirmed the regime was no longer viable. In letters of February 1969 to the French intellectual of the extreme right, Henri Lèbre, he deplored the self-interested betrayal by the Marcellist elite of the combatants' efforts, and wished for a pluralist opening by the regime (without communists) so that the radical nationalists could finally free themselves from the Christian-democratic Salazarist ballast.³¹ The war also represented a new window of political opportunity: on 1 June 1970, Zarco joined the *Liga dos Combatentes* (League of Combatants), with the aim of playing a leading role in the organisation. On 16th March 1971, on the occasion of the celebrations of "Combatant's Day" organised by the *Liga*, Zarco delivered a lecture on the "Combatants' Place and Mission, and the social role of ex-combatants, as protagonists in the fight against the traitors of the Homeland in the service of subversion, and against the political and economic elites, incapable of fighting in the Metropolis as effectively as the Overseas military (Marchi 2009, 372). His leading role in the *Liga* allowed Zarco to take part in the 1st Congress of Combatants, in 1972-1973. With the involvement of the radical right in the organisation of the Congress from its earliest stages, as demonstrated by the presence on the consultative committee (alongside the executive committee) of António da Cruz Rodrigues, leader of the traditionalist Catholic *Círculo de Estudos Sociais Vector* (CESV). On its organisational chart, Zarco appeared as secretary of the Lisbon delegation. In this capacity, he participated in the Second Youth Congress (*II Encontro de Jovens*) promoted by the CESV (Sameiro, 7 April 1973), with his address, "Former combatants – strength and future of the Nation".³² It was the radicals' intention to turn the Combatants' Congress into a stage for contesting Marcelo Caetano's government. In this sense, the actions of Zarco and his closest comrades were part of

³⁰ *Império, Nação, Revolução*. 2010. "Zarco Moniz Ferreira". <http://imperionacaorevolucao.blogspot.com/2010/04/zarco-moniz-ferreira.html>.

³¹ IAN/TT, Arq. PIDE, proc. Frente Nacional Revolucionária, cota SC/CI (1)-366, NT7000, fl.6

³² IAN/TT, Arquivo PIDE, proc. no. 5335: *Círculo de Estudos Sociais Vector*, cota SC/CI (1), NT 1317, fl. 1.

the so-called right-wing opposition to Marcelo Caetano. This was a variegated front composed of two distinct components: the Salazarist factions, and those who were autonomous of the regime and the former president of the Council. The Salazarist faction fundamentally brought together political supporters of the *Estado Novo* and its founder, sectors concerned with the loss of social status determined by the liberalisation of the regime, economic groups that had grown up in the auspices of Salazarist imperial protectionism, and conservative milieus concerned with public morality threatened by the greater freedom of left-wing action. The autonomous faction brought together the anti-Salazarist monarchists, the liberal professions who were opposed to the alleged Europeanism of Caetano and the liberal technocrats of the Liberal Wing, the young revolutionary nationalists who had been active since the early 1960s and were now together in the magazine *Política* (1969-1974), and the latest generation of nationalist university students, mainly active at the University of Coimbra. Initially limited to the most radical and fascist-leaning factions of the *Estado Novo*, this opposition universe expanded with the growing indecisiveness of Marcelo Caetano's policies, particularly with regard to the *Ultramar* – the Portuguese territories overseas. The attempt at constitutional reform of 1970-1971, strengthened the impression among many that the regime was trying to abandon Africa, through the suggested creation of new independent states, and to move closer to Europe, without, however, resolving issues regarding the political structure of the authoritarian regime (Marchi 2010). The central importance of the African question and the role of combatants in government policy, formed the backdrop to Zarco Moniz Ferreira's attempt to radicalise the Congress. This attempt was thwarted by the moderate faction of the Congress's organisation, which inclined towards an event of a merely patriotic and corporate nature: supporting the regime's war effort and the reintegration of ex-combatants into civilian life. The reservations of the pro-government faction towards the radicals was accurately illustrated in the portrayal of Zarco Moniz Ferreira outlined by Amadeu de Vasconcelos, one of the main organisers of the Congress:

The impression one gets in conversation, is of being in the presence of a man with a strong personality, with such a refined notion of patriotism that he inevitably condemns anything that seems to him to be remotely ambiguous about the defence of the *Ultramar*. It's a passion that overwhelms and blinds him. He manifests an impetuous and violent temperament, which dominates and drives him. That is how I saw him and, in a certain way, admired him. (AAVV, 1974:26-27)

In the dispute between the two factions, the radicals won points in February 1973, by managing to replace the phrase "against the rear-guard revolts" in the first version of the Congress Manifesto, with the phrase "against everything that threatens the integrity of Portugal", including Marcelo Caetano's reformism (AA.VV. 1974, 81-82). The anti-Marcelism of the radicals was reaffirmed in a communiqué by the Lisbon nucleus that underlined their "contempt for those who

wish to sacrifice the Nation to the taste of equivocal ambiguity, opportunism, or ideological superstitions to suit the times” (AA.VV. 1974, 89). Tensions with the moderates became bitter when the radicals insisted on the anti-government slant of the Congress, the invitation of foreign delegations made up of French and Italian right-wing radicals and the requirement that the Congress conclude with Zarco Moniz Ferreira's official speech. The political nature of these demands was confirmed by Zarco in an interview with the newspaper *A Capital* on 12 May 1973:

No one should meddle with the unity and greatness of Portugal, because it seems to me, sincerely, that the combatants will definitely have something to say, the last word [...] Homelands are not referendums or plebiscites. They are to be defended.³³

In statements to RTP at the end of May, Zarco reiterated his threats regarding Marcelo's reforms:

If we have been mobilised for war (and there can sometimes be war in the rear-guard too), we have no qualms about showing our presence when it is needed, and furthermore [...] rifles weigh as much up here as they weigh down there, and so far here... they are newer.³⁴

Faced with the anti-Marcelo escalation of Zarco's group, the regime pressured the pro-government members of the organisation who, on 25 May, definitively ousted the Lisbon secretariat. Expelled from the Congress, all the radicals could do during its proceedings on 2 June, was to distribute a communiqué "To our comrades and the Country", in which they reaffirmed that:

In response to the national and patriotic interest that inspires us, the Government has, from the outset, tried to impose its particular interests, and manoeuvred against the integrity and independence of combatants. [...] The Government is preparing to approve motions that serve its political objectives in this election year. [...] With firmness, unity and steadfastness, the Combatants of Portugal refuses to be manipulated or entangled in political-electoral games.³⁵

The 1973 Combatants' Congress would be Zarco's last political action during the *Estado Novo*. After the events of 25 April 1974, the nationalist leader suffered from the wave of sanctions that swept the country from north to south. In 1975, in particular, he was sued by the Screening Commission of the Bank of Angola for political reasons, and suspended, without loss of salary, by the Bank's Board of Management, until the competent authorities reached a definitive decision. Prevented from working, Zarco took refuge in Brazil, and in fact played no role in the most active phase of the democratic transition: the Ongoing Revolutionary Process (*Processo Revolucionário em Curso* – PREC). In the transitional period of 1974-1975, comrades who had collaborated with Zarco Moniz Ferreira over the previous two decades split, in various attempts to reorganise the radical

³³ Interview of Zarco Moniz Ferreira by the newspaper *A Capital*, 12 May 1973, p. 3.

³⁴ Statements by Zarco Moniz Ferreira to RTP, mentioned by Rádio Voz da Liberdade, on 25 May 1973. IAN/TT, Arquivo PIDE, Del. Coimbra, proc. *I Congresso dos Combatentes*, cota CI (2), pasta 559, fl. 162.

³⁵ IAN/TT, Arquivo PIDE, Del. Coimbra, proc. *I Congresso dos Combatentes*, cota CI (2) - 690, pasta 559, fls. 107-108.

right. Some, like José Valle de Figueiredo, who founded the Portuguese Progress Party Federalist Movement (*Movimento Federalista Português Partido do Progresso* – MFP/PP), supported President of the Republic António de Spínola's federalist project for Portuguese Africa, in the hope of saving the Empire; others, like António José de Brito and Luís Fernandes, refused to make any concessions to the transitional authorities and created the more radical Portuguese Action Movement (*Movimento de Acção Portuguesa* – MAP); while others sought to transform their end-of-regime organisations into political movements, as in the case of António da Cruz Rodrigues who created the Portuguese Popular Movement (*Movimento Popular Português* – MPP) from *Véctor*. In these post-April 25 mobilisations, there is no record of Zarco Moniz Ferreira having any political involvement. Only Jaime Nogueira Pinto has conjectured, without confirmation, that Zarco may have collaborated in the creation of the Portuguese Democratic Worker's Party (*Partido Trabalhista Democrático Português* – PTDP), an ephemeral acronym set up by former members of the *Legião* interested in joining the right-wing front supporting Spínola's strategy.³⁶

Zarco Moniz Ferreira only returned from exile in 1976, when the Inter-ministerial Screening and Reclassification Commission (*Comissão Interministerial de Saneamento e Reclassificação*) reinstated him in his former banking institution, based on the appeal he had filed, and on the position taken by the Bank's employees in a plenary meeting called for the purpose.³⁷ In 1976, Zarco resumed political activity along the same lines that had always characterised him: he founded a tiny group called *Frente de Libertação Nacional-Sindicalista* (FLNS) (National Syndicalist Liberation Front), with the same Phalangist Justicialist orientation as the MJP, but this time claiming experience of the war in Africa as the cement of the new militancy.³⁸ Like the previous organisations, the FNLS did little more than publish its bulletin *Em Frente NS* (its first issue is dated February 1978) and occasionally carry out a few actions (Fafe 1983, 38). At the same time, Zarco reconnected with former comrades, both civilian and military. From 1978, he collaborated with *Renovação – Associação Nacional de Estudos Políticos e Sociais* (Renovation – National Association for Political and Social Studies), chaired by the commando lieutenant-colonel, Gilberto Santos e Castro, but actually led by José Valle de Figueiredo who incorporated it into far right European networks: for example, *Renovação* invited Blas Piñar, Spanish deputy of the *Fuerza Nueva*³⁹ to Lisbon. On 28 December 1979, as a war veteran, Zarco joined a group of seventeen citizens - among whom

³⁶ Interview of Jaime Nogueira Pinto, 17 August 2021.

³⁷ Archive of the Ministry of Finance, Process SETF/SET/036/001/002/0126, Zarco Rogério Moniz Ferreira.

³⁸ Manifesto *Pátria, Trabalho, Justiça. Para Resgate de Portugal. Nacional-Sindicalismo*, p. 7.

³⁹ Ephemera. 2020. "Um Prédio Neo-Fascista Em Lisboa." <https://ephemerajpp.com/2020/04/02/ephemera-diario-2-de-abril-de-2020-um-predio-neo-fascista-em-lisboa/>

were General Silvino Silvério Marques and Lieutenant-Colonel Gilberto de Santos e Castro – to file a complaint against the politicians responsible for decolonisation, for the crime of treason to the Homeland, under article 141 of the Penal Code (Fonseca 1984, 55). In 1980, Zarco joined the *Intervenção Nacionalista* (Nationalist Intervention), an acronym created by leading radical intellectuals from the nationalist area - António José de Brito, Florentino Goulart Nogueira, Caetano de Mello Beirão, Rodrigo Emílio, and Walter Ventura, among others – to oppose the electoralist path of comrades linked to the weekly newspaper *A Rua* produced by Manuel Maria Múrias, founder, at the time, of the National Front (*Frente Nacional* – FN) and of the coalition with the PDC and MIRN parties for the general elections of that year (Santos 1996, 25). Zarco's most important achievement in the early 1980s, however, was the foundation of New Order (*Ordem Nova* – ON), on 25 July 1980, by notarial deed in Sintra. Reviving the name with which he had inaugurated his political career twenty years earlier, Zarco brought together comrades from the first years of his career, such as José Valle de Figueiredo and Luís Fernandes, military men from the struggle for Imperial Portugal, such as Gilberto Santos e Castro, as ON's headquarters were in the same building as *Renovação*, at Rua Tomás Ribeiro, no. 8, 3º esquerdo⁴⁰ – and young people from the latest nationalist generation, such as Paulo Teixeira Pinto. Due to constitutional prohibitions against fascist-inspired groups (Fafe 1983, 39), the members of *Ordem Nova* concentrated on political indoctrination, along the typical lines of Portuguese nationalism: Man as the vector of eternal values, integrated into the Nation as a community, with a destiny and a mission, and organised in a syndicalist-corporative state, as a guarantor of social justice in the economy and in politics.⁴¹ The affiliation with right-wing radicalism of a fascist nature remained, however, untouched both in terms of its repertoire of activities and in terms of its international relationships. Regarding the former, the ON carried out the usual militant activities, with the distribution of propaganda in the neighbourhoods and central schools of Lisbon, without abandoning, however, more muscular action. Along the same lines as the attack on the SPE headquarters in 1963, the ON tried, unsuccessfully, to storm the *Grémio Lusitano* during the election of Adão e Silva as Grand Master of Portuguese Masonry in 1981. Regarding the latter, a delegation of sixty Portuguese members of *Ordem Nova* participated, in Madrid, in the commemorations of 20 November, the anniversary of the death of José Antonio Primo de Rivera and of Francisco Franco. On this occasion, elements of the ON formed part of the guard of honour for Blas Piñar and Giorgio Almirante, leaders of the *Fuerza Nueva* (FN) and of the neo-fascist *Movimento Sociale Italiano*, respectively and Zarco Moniz Ferreira gave an official

⁴⁰ Ephemera. 2020. “Um Prédio Neo-Fascista Em Lisboa.” <https://ephemerajpp.com/2020/04/02/ephemera-diario-2-de-abril-de-2020-um-predio-neo-fascista-em-lisboa/>

⁴¹ "Ordem Nova - Estatutos", Private Archive of Luís Fernandes.

speech to those at the event. This marking of presence had some impact, as the Portuguese ambassador in Spain, João de Sá Coutinho, launched a formal protest against the "inappropriate use of the national flag".⁴² Zarco's connection with Spain was important enough for the ON to be officially featured in number 727 of the magazine *Fuerza Nueva*⁴³, and he translated texts by the neo-Nazi CEDADE destined for Brazil.⁴⁴ In the new democratic regime, however, the climate was different to that of the latter years of the *Estado Novo*. The Attorney General's Office began to put repeated pressure on the ON to modify its statutes, leading the organisation to voluntarily disband on 26 January 1982, before it was outlawed. Even though thirty new militants joined the organisation on 1 December 1982, on the occasion of a mass requested by the League of Former Graduates of the *Mocidade Portuguesa*, the organisation did not survive the first half of the 1980s. The ON was the last political act of the veteran of radical nationalism Zarco Moniz Ferreira who, on the eve of his 50th birthday, abandoning front-line militancy. His return to private life coincided with a generational change in the Portuguese radical right, and the emergence of young radicals who were now indifferent to the Portuguese Imperial myth, and more attracted by the Anglo-Saxon matrix of subcultural racism, evident in the early days of the skinhead movement in Portugal.

This schism is evident in José Carlos Craveiro Lopes' recollection of Zarco Moniz Ferreira's funeral in 1995: "He was buried] carrying in his hands the cap – immortalised in the Algerian War – which accompanied him in his mission in the service of the Homeland".⁴⁵ The epilogue to the life-story of someone important to the radical generation of the 1960s and 1970s, but almost unknown to the right-wing radicals of the last decade of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st.

Conclusions

The story of the life of Zarco Moniz Ferreira as a political militant of the 1960s and 1970s brings together all the elements of this Portuguese generation of right-wing radicalism. Entering politics because of the idea that Portugal as an Empire, rather than the authoritarian regime, was under threat, the mobilisation of this generation was essentially limited to academic urban elites. Bearers of a certain dissatisfaction with the demobilisation of the regime, especially in relation to

⁴² *Ibidem*.

⁴³ "Entrevista: Crear una corriente ideológica y ética", *Fuerza Nueva*, 1980, pp.21-23. In the Private Archive of Luís Fernandes.

⁴⁴ European Parliament. 1985. *Committee of Inquiry into the Rise of Fascism and Racism in Europe. Report on the findings of the inquiry - December 1985*. <https://op.europa.eu/mt/publication-detail/-/publication/557b5ea7-34f9-4399-aa0d-14f19aab1d90/language-en>

⁴⁵ *Império, Nação, Revolução*. 2010. "Zarco Moniz Ferreira". <http://imperionacaorevolucao.blogspot.com/2010/04/zarco-moniz-ferreira.html>

youth, this elite sought inspiration in radical nationalism, both Portuguese (Lusitanian Integralism and National Syndicalism) and foreign (Fascism, and National Syndicalism). In terms of militant action, they looked far beyond national borders, and profited from the ideas and militant practices that circulated among contemporary European right-wing radicalism. However, only some of them became fully integrated into the neo-fascist political subculture active mainly in France and Italy. From a strategic point of view, in some cases, the most prominent leaders and militants of this radical universe joined the paramilitary structures of the regime – the Legião Portuguesa and Mocidade Portuguesa – but always with a desire to mould this sense of belonging in the same way as the most prominent bodies of European radicalism. In terms of organisation, this generation managed to become more fragmented than united, due to personality clashes and ambitions for leadership and control. The small-group-based, splintered, factious and ephemeral nature of the radical universe, did not prevent a continuum of mobilisation over the two decades analysed here, with peaks of militancy coinciding with the major political crises of the regime. Despite the independence they claimed, their relationship with the Estado Novo was always symbiotic, making use of any resources it made available, but also paying a price for its merely instrumental relationship on behalf of the Estado Novo and its internal institutional benefactors. The voluntary distancing of this generation from the "Marcelist Spring", seen as the most advanced stage in the degeneration of the regime, led to a progressive loss of vitality in its action. This decline became particularly evident when the Estado Novo was overthrown, and the young radicals participated, at best, in fleeting attempts to reconstruct the integrationist right wing of the Empire, without, however, demonstrating the least aptitude for doctrinal or organisational renewal. As an elite that shared a common political culture and history of activism, they faded away during the process of democratic normalisation, without passing on any testimony to a younger generation, now mobilised by other radical world views in a consolidated democracy.

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