

Margarida Rendeiro

The Literary Institution in Portugal since the Thirties

An Analysis under
Special Consideration of
the Publishing Market

PETER LANG

Despite the numerous studies of the politics, economy, culture, and society of the *Estado Novo*, the relations established between publishers, authors, and governmental institutions and their contribution to the making of the literary canon are still marginal subjects of analysis. Based on the systems theories developed by Bourdieu, Dubois and Even-Zohar, this study focuses on the cultural production produced during the *Estado Novo* (1933-1974) and after the Revolution (1974-2004), within their political, economic and social framework. The chapters on José Saramago and José Luís Peixoto show them as examples of literary consecration that confirm the systemic relations in the Portuguese literary field. This research makes use of a survey on habits of purchase of Portuguese fiction, interviews with publishers, original statistical analyses, and takes a new approach to the study of Portuguese literature.

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Abstract

The dissertation aims to show that the Estado Novo (1933-1974) influenced the constitution of the Portuguese literary canon and the positioning of Portuguese literary producers in the domestic and foreign book markets. Despite the numerous studies of the politics, economy, culture, and society of the Estado Novo, the development of the Portuguese publishing market, the relations established between publishers, authors, and Governmental institutions and their contribution to the making of the literary canon are still marginal subjects of analysis.

The research is based on the systems theories developed by Pierre Bourdieu, Jacques Dubois, and Itamar Even-Zohar and it makes use of a survey on habits of purchase of Portuguese fiction, interviews with publishers, original statistical analyses, and takes a new approach to the study of Portuguese literature. I suggest that the degree of autonomy of the Portuguese literary field has been compromised due to its close dependence on the political, economic, and social fields.

The Estado Novo moulded the Portuguese readership through the implementation of an educational policy that met the Regime's needs of emasculation of subversive thinking. This purpose had an effect on Portuguese publishing and on the positioning of Portuguese literature abroad, and this influence continued after 1974. Despite literary consecration being fundamentally oriented towards the Neo-Realist literature and towards authors who were not approved of by the Estado Novo, the Revolution did not introduce greater autonomy into the Portuguese literary field.

Editorial Caminho's skilful use of contexts and management of the social trajectory of José Saramago, the Nobel Prizewinner in 1998, confirms the systemic relations of the Portuguese literary field, despite being a non-typical case of literary consecration. José Luís Peixoto whose prestige was influenced by Saramago's stature, is pinpointed to show that, present-day literary field is as dependent on the environment as it was in 1933.

List of Acronyms

APE	Associação Portuguesa de Escritores [Portuguese Association of Writers]
APEL	Associação Portuguesa de Editores e Livreiros [Portuguese Association of Publishers and Booksellers]
CADC	Centro Académico para a Democracia Cristã [Academic Centre for Christian Democracy]
CDS	Centro Democrático Social [Social Democratic Centre]
FAOJ	Fundo de Apoio a Organizações de Juventude [Fund for Youth Organizations]
FNAT	Fundação Nacional para a Alegria no Trabalho [National Foundation for the Joy at Work]
ICAP	Instituto de Cultura e Arte Portuguesa [Portuguese Institute of Arts and Culture]
ICALP	Instituto de Cultura, Arte e Língua Portuguesa [Portuguese Institute of Arts, Culture and Language]
IPLB	Instituto Português do Livro e das Bibliotecas [Portuguese Institute of the Book and Libraries]
MFA	Movimento das Forças Armadas [Movement of the Armed Forces]
MUD	Movimento de Unidade Democrática [Movement for Democratic Union]
MUNAF	Movimento de Unidade Nacional Anti Fascista [Movement of Anti Fascist National Union]

PCP	Partido Comunista Português [Portuguese Communist Party]
PDC	Partido da Democracia Cristã [Party of Christian Democracy]
PEN	Poets, Essayists and Novelists
PVDE	Polícia de Vigilância e Defesa do Estado [Police of Vigilance and Defence of the State]
PIDE	Polícia Internacional de Defesa do Estado [International Police for the Defence of the State]
PPD	Partido Popular Democrático [Democratic Popular Movement]
PREC	Plano Revolucionário em Curso [Ongoing Revolutionary Plan]
PS	Partido Socialista [Socialist Party]
RTP	Rádio Televisão Portuguesa [Portuguese Broadcasting Authority]
SEIT	Secretariado de Informação e Turismo [Secretariat of Information and Tourism]
SNI	Secretariado Nacional de Informação [National Secretariat of Information]
SPA	Sociedade Portuguesa de Autores [Portuguese Society of Authors]
SPE	Sociedade Portuguesa de Escritores [Portuguese Society of Writers]
SPN	Secretariado de Propaganda Nacional [Secretariat of National Propaganda]

Introduction

This thesis will set out to show that the Estado Novo (1933-1974) coordinated its educational and cultural policies with the purpose of implementing a pre-defined political strategy. This influenced the constitution of the Portuguese literary canon and had effects on canon revisions between 1974 and 2004.¹ This authoritarianism was particularly felt in the consecration of the Portuguese novel, in view of the associated financial rewards and the struggles for legitimacy based on compromise and opposition that involved the Government as instance of consecration and reproduction and Portuguese novelists. Moreover, the novel has played the most important role in the promotion of contemporary Portuguese literature worldwide. The fact that the Nobel Prize for Literature was given to José Saramago, for his work as a novelist, is evidence of that promotion. The number of Nobel Prizes given to novelists, media exposure given to national and international literary prizes for fiction and the importance of the novel in the worldwide book trade were also reasons for focusing this thesis on the constitution of the Portuguese canon novel within the wider struggles for literary legitimacy and consecration.

Since literature is regarded as a valuable asset, the aesthetic value is assessed, consecrated, or rejected by the valuing community, understood as the dominant group within a political, social, and cultural context. 'Valuing community' is used in this thesis to refer to the persons and institutions involved in the appraisal of a literary work, that is, publishers, editors, fellow-writers involved in reviewing and consecrating it, the media, governmental institutions, purchasers and readers. I will also borrow the term 'intellectual' from Pierre Bourdieu for operational purposes; according to Bourdieu, intellectuals are cultural producers who use their skills and legitimacy (acquired in the literary field) in the political field (albeit not becoming politicians because they con-

1 As discussed below.

tinue being cultural producers).² As far as Portuguese secondary education is concerned, there are writers that have been included and excluded from the curriculum of Portuguese language and literature disciplines. Nevertheless, this does not imply that their literary value is volatile. Reception is contextually developed with particular purposes and canon formation is not free from ideology. However, we should not discuss it in elegiac terms, as did Harold Bloom in 1994.³

Canon formation can be discussed within systems theory, in particular the conceptual contributions of Pierre Bourdieu and Jacques Dubois. The constitution of the valuing community and reception of literary works are carried out within time and place. Assuming the complex relations developed in the contemporary Portuguese literary field, consecration of writers by Portuguese people and the accumulation of prestige do not follow some principles stated by these scholars, in particular as far as the distinctions between commercial and symbolic recognition and between best-sellers and classics are concerned. Academic research, especially that undertaken by Frank de Glas, Hugo Verdaasdonk and Wouter de Nooy, is helpful to explain that Portuguese literary consecration is not unique and positions held by Portuguese publishing houses, critics and writers are also common to those held in different political, social and cultural contexts.

This thesis also looks into José Saramago's canonicity established on unparalleled grounds, in view of the fact that he was not

-
- 2 'Eles são, assim, seres bidimensionais. [...] têm de aplicar as competências e autoridade específicas que detêm na sua esfera intelectual própria numa actividade política fora dela. Têm de permanecer produtores culturais a tempo inteiro sem se transformarem em políticos', in Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Corporativism of the Universal: The Role of Intellectuals in the Modern World', Telos, 81, 99-110 (99). Cited in 'A relação entre o escritor e a sociedade mantém-se, neste aspecto, marcada por descoincidências várias e pela correlativa dificuldade em encontrar a identidade dada por uma função social'. Quoted from António Sousa Ribeiro, 'Configurações do Campo Intelectual Português no Pós-25 de Abril: O Campo Literário', in *Portugal: Um Retrato Singular*, ed. by Boaventura de Sousa Santos (Lisbon: Edições Afrontamento, 1993), pp. 483-512, (484).
 - 3 Harold Bloom discussed canon formation in his *The Western Canon – The Books and The School of The Ages* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1994).

part of the literary opposition against the Estado Novo and became involved in the aftermath of the Revolution in 1974. Literary legitimacy after 1974 was particularly directed to Portuguese writers who opposed the Estado Novo. Nevertheless, Saramago's symbolic capital was gained through a combination of factors, among them, Editorial Caminho's decision to publish his works opportunely, considering that they focussed on political and cultural issues debated at that time both in Portugal and foreign countries; the constitution of the writer's social trajectory; and the fact that his translated works were published by key publishing houses in the world book market, which gave him international visibility.

This research started with my critical reading of contributions about systems theory applied to literature, led by the scholars mentioned above. Purchase of fiction and reading of fiction are two different decisions that are not necessarily complementary and publishing houses play a decisive role behind the literary scene. Therefore, in 2001, I submitted a survey to Portuguese purchasers of fiction to learn what were the motivations that influenced their purchasing decisions. The results of this survey were complemented with my analysis of Portuguese best-sellers' lists between 1980 and 2004 and also with my analysis of the publishers and translations of the Nobel Prizewinners between 1947 and 2004 before they were awarded this prize on the assumption that the Nobel Prize for Literature is the highest level of literary consecration. In 2004, I also interviewed the publishers of Editorial Caminho, Temas e Debates and Oficina do Livro, three publishing houses with different policies, whose success has to be measured through distinct criteria. Although this thesis is centred on the consecration of novelists, I decided not to interview them. The writers whose novels were examined in my research have frequently been interviewed by different media. On the assumption that their statements contribute to their making of public personae, I believed that this contribution was enough for my research. In the course of my research on José Saramago, I interviewed (2005) Margaret Jull da Costa, his British translator since 1999 and, in order to better understand the British market, I interviewed (2004) Paul Langridge, a former director of A & C Black, Publishers. My various attempts to contact publishers or editors at Harvill were unsuccessful.

I came across unexpected difficulties derived from the constitution of the Portuguese literary field. Unlike in other European countries access to statistical data about the Portuguese book market is not easy. Statistics on the ranking of Portuguese publishers and other aspects related to publishing are non-existent or unavailable to the public. My efforts with the Associação Portuguesa de Editores e Livreiros, the institution that represents Portuguese publishers and booksellers, also proved unsuccessful as they claim that publishers resent publicising their volumes of sales and, consequently, that constrains official studies. Moreover, an analysis of the reading and purchasing habits of the Portuguese communities abroad, in particular of the second generation of Portuguese emigrants, would have been valuable for the discussion of the results of the promotion of Portuguese literature abroad. However, these studies are also non-existent, as confirmed by the APEL and by the North-American Embassy in Lisbon.

This thesis is organized into eight chapters. In Chapter 1, the theories of the Literary Field developed in the seminal works by Pierre Bourdieu, Jacques Dubois and Itamar Even-Zohar are discussed, with special emphasis on Bourdieu's construction of a space of positions and the struggles for legitimacy in the distribution of recognition and stature, understood as symbolic capital. Canon formation within a political, social, and cultural context is also the object of study, focusing on the contributions of Frank Kermode, John Guillory and Andrew Milner.

Chapter 2 analyses the educational purposes for Portuguese primary and secondary schools led by the Estado Novo to show the priority given to the shaping of way of thinking. This chapter also looks at Portuguese reading patterns to show that they were constrained by political ideology, social patterns that emerged from ideology, high rates of emigration, illiteracy and the Colonial War. My analysis of facts and events will focus on the period that comprises the establishment of the Estado Novo, formally elected in 1933, and the Revolution on 25 April 1974.

Chapter 3 will examine the results of the Estado Novo's most powerful instrument of propaganda to create the cultural establishment, the SPN/SNI/SEIT. This institution launched several initiatives with the aim of normalizing literary production and pub-

lishing, such as national prizes and international events to promote Portuguese books. I have included five tables in which I organized publicly available information about prizes, prizewinners, works and their publishing houses chronologically in order to show that the Regime was determined to reward and encourage works whose literary content illustrated the Government's ideology and educational policy. Furthermore, the Government's action in the promotion of Portuguese literature worldwide, enhanced by the country's geographical peripheral position and political alliances, limited the visibility of Portuguese writers abroad. Portuguese writers did not participate massively in the SPN/SNI/SEIT's prizewinning competitions, especially after the Sociedade Portuguesa de Escritores set up its own literary prizes in 1961. The SPE, together with the Academia das Ciências de Lisboa, challenged the Government in its role as consecrating agent.

Chapter 4 will measure the literary prizes set up by the Academia das Ciências de Lisboa and the SPE. The relations between the political and cultural fields did not always imply a full opposition to the Regime and that institutional compromise was the cornerstone of consecration and recognition.

Chapter 5 will establish that, despite the changes in readership and in the book market carried out between 1974 and 2004, the Revolution did not introduce radical changes into schools' curricula. Raising the State's expenditure on Portuguese education had an effect on reducing the level of illiteracy and on restructuring the educational system but it was not of particular relevance to redefining the literary canon as studied at secondary school level.

Chapter 6 will see the Revolution did not provide the cultural field with more autonomy. Dominating and dominated strata reversed positions efforts were oriented towards consecrating writers and literary trends disregarded by the Government during the Estado Novo and targeting to achieve literary autonomy.

Chapter 7 will examine how the Portuguese Government was led to consecrate Saramago due to internal and external pressure, since consecration also benefits those who have the power to consecrate. Saramago was canonized through an established structure of literary consecration and a mechanism of social recognition, enhanced by the fact that his publishing house struggled to legiti-

mize its business, with the traditional establishment and efforts to consecrate Neo-Realist literature. I will also examine José Luís Peixoto, whose works started being published in the late 1990s and whose literary legitimacy was achieved through his positioning in relation to Saramago, a process which was mainly led by critics and by the media and which Peixoto tacitly accepted. Peixoto was regarded as a control writer in my research into José Saramago's consecration, in particular, and of the development of the Portuguese literary field between 1974 and 2004. The expression 'control writer' in this thesis is referred to a Portuguese writer whose literary career and its recognition are developed according to what, in the present dissertation, are considered to be the Portuguese patterns of literary production and popularity between 1974 and 2004. 2004 was the *terminus ad quem* to limit my comprehensive analysis because it coincides with the beginning of the international promotion of José Luís Peixoto. In view of the fact that it was carried out in several European countries, I decided to compare it with José Saramago's early international promotion.

Chapter 8 will show how finding the right publisher and getting reviewed by the right reviewers is fundamental when it comes to acquiring legitimacy. The management of the publication momentum of Saramago's works in Brazil, Spain, the United States and the United Kingdom was essential to enhance consecration: publishing novels at the moment their stances and topics engaged with the political, social and cultural debate in those countries. Inevitably, this also implied a different management of the sequence of the works published in each country. The relevance of the publishing houses in their respective publishing markets and their communication skills played a significant role in attaining a desired impact. History shows that the Nobel Prizes are recurrently given to writers who are published by the same publishers in certain key countries, which also publish several works of literary critique about those writers, strengthening their literary legitimacy.

The Conclusion will examine my findings and the extent to which the theoretical systems models fully address my hypothesis.

CHAPTER 1

Literature as an Institution: Systems Theory

This chapter will establish that Literature has thoroughly been studied as a social construct and that canon formation and revision can be understood within the framework of systems theory. Systems theory enables us to understand the complex relations that involve writers, publishers, translators, critics, booksellers and readers, who operate as agents of (re)production and consecration when certain texts are chosen, read and rewarded against others in a particular political, social and cultural context. This stance does not imply that aesthetic valuing is irrelevant and that it is not inherent to literary writing. As Andrew Milner pointed out, 'value is a transitive term' and this means that literary writing is valued by a community in a specific context.¹ As far as systems theory is concerned, this thesis will particularly focus on Bourdieu's seminal work on the Theory of the Literary Field (*champ littéraire*) in the early 1970s.² This theory influenced the academic work of scholars and researchers who published in the 1980s and 1990s.³ Moreover, Bourdieu's theoretical postulates have also encouraged socio-

-
- 1 Andrew Milner, *Literature, Culture and Society* (London: University College London Press, 1996), p. 22.
 - 2 Some of Pierre Bourdieu's early works are 'Le marché des biens symboliques', *L'année sociologique*, 2 (1971), 49-126 ; 'Champ du pouvoir, champ intellectuel et habitus de classes', *Scolies, Cahiers de recherches de l'École normale supérieure*, 1 (1971), 7-26 ; 'La production de la croyance : contribution à une économie des biens symboliques', in *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, 13 (February 1977), 3-43 ; *La distinction, Critique sociale du jugement* (Paris, Minuit, 1979).
 - 3 Sigfried J. Schmidt, *Foundations For The Empirical Study of Literature: The Components of A Basic Theory*, trans. by R.de Beaugrande (Hamburg:Helmut Buske, 1982); Robert Estivals, ' Les Sciences de L'écrit ', *Encyclopédie Internationale de Bibliologie*, ed. by Robert Estivals and others (Paris : Retz, 1993); Niklas Luhmann, *Social Systems*, trans. by John Bednarz, Jr., and Dirk Baecker (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1995).

logical approaches to literary output, such as the studies developed by Frank de Glas, Hugo Verdaasdonk in the Netherlands and Lewis Coser in the United States.

According to Bourdieu, the Literary Field is a social microcosm that has its own structure and laws; it is a space of objective relationships among positions and each position exists only in relation to the others. Political, social, economic and cultural circumstances exert pressure and have effect through transformations in the structure of the field. Pressure drives the relations of power among agents, viz. producers, and their struggle for the preservation or transformation of the order. Studying these transformations enables us to understand both the relations among writers, critics, and publishers and the importance a specific genre acquires at a given period. Bourdieu pointed out that the principle of legitimacy in the field of power is based on possession of economic or political capital. Within this field, the cultural dimension is in a dominated or subordinated position because of its low degree of economic capital and, thus, intellectuals belong to the dominated fraction of the dominant class. Bourdieu also stated that the cultural field possesses relative autonomy with respect to its political and economic determinations. The value which the symbolic capital of intellectuals represents to the dominant class (old/new bourgeoisie, aristocracy) is dependent on the struggle to conserve the established order and, more specifically, on the struggle between fractions aspiring to domination within the field of power and on the production and reproduction of economic capital.

Bourdieu based struggling for the preservation or transformation of the established order on two important concepts: position and taking position. He defined 'position' as 'the one which corresponds to a genre such as the novel or, within this, to a subcategory such as 'the society novel' and is 'subjectively defined by the system of distinctive properties by which it can be situated relative to other positions'.⁴ Positions are defined by their degree of recognition within the structure. 'Taking position' (originally '*prise de position*') in the literary field implies developing strategies

4 Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, ed. and trans. by Randal Johnson (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), p. 30.

to acquire legitimacy and can be defined as 'the structured set of the manifestations of the social agents involved in the field – literary or artistic works, of course, but also political acts'.⁵ Those strategies should be understood as practices specifically oriented towards recognition and which result from education. Taking a position is defined in relation to the position a specific genre holds in the literary field. The work of art is, thus, identified as a 'symbolic capital' because it is the symbol of accumulated prestige and honour in the dialectical relations between knowledge and recognition. It is subjected to the laws of the market, with the irruption of techniques borrowed from the economic field (collective production, advertising, etc.).

Jacques Dubois, who followed Bourdieu and developed the Theory of the Literary Institution (*L'institution littéraire*) in 1978, pointed out that literary creation is held back by market constraints and that sometimes writers participate in the system in order to achieve legitimacy. This is also shown in Richard Peterson's article on the production of literary works.⁶ According to Peterson, there are six constraints that alone, or in combination, influence the development of literary work: technology, law, industry structure, organizational structure, occupational career and the market. This thesis will claim that legal constraints, such as the censorship implemented during the Estado Novo, the structure of the Portuguese book markets, writers' jobs and their political involvement and the understanding of the market both by the State and by book professionals, played decisive roles in the development of the Portuguese market and, especially, in consecrating some Portuguese novelists.

Bourdieu distinguished between two different forms of capital: symbolic and cultural. Symbolic capital refers to accumulated prestige, consecration and honour and is established upon the dialectic between knowledge and recognition, whilst cultural capital

5 Bourdieu, p. 30.

6 Richard Peterson, 'Six Constraints on The Production of Literary Works', *Poetics* 14 (1985), 45-67.

involves a form of cultural knowledge which equips the agent with competence to appreciate the cultural works and relations.⁷

In other words, Bourdieu insisted that texts should be analysed in relation to other texts, in relation to the structure of the literary field and in relation to the agents operating in it. The agents of production position their texts in relation to the Establishment, reproducing it or rebelling against it. This position may be overtly or covertly taken not only by writers, but also, for example, by publishers and critics who play a decisive role when they present the texts and their authors to the public.

Taking position in the literary field is competing for legitimacy and Bourdieu has differentiated three competing principles: first, recognition granted by producers who produce for other producers, their competitors; second, 'taste' consecrated by the dominant class and the latter includes academies that sanction literary production; and third, popular consecration, viz. the one bestowed by readers.

Jacques Dubois classified authorities that confer legitimacy to literary production: literary movements, in view of the fact that new writers, viz. initiators, position themselves in relation to a legitimated authority; publishers and booksellers, considering that their position in the literary institution enables them to select and promote literary production; academies, because they use literary awards as promotional strategies and position themselves in the field as official commentators; and, finally, the educational system that integrate literary practices into a set of norms and regulations (prescribed reading). A selection of a corpus of literary texts creates a pre-designed image of literature.⁸ Dubois's taxonomy is very helpful in defining the establishment of legitimacy and consecration in the Portuguese literary field. Although neither author defines these agents in relation to hierarchical positions, the fact is that Bourdieu has recognized that the State has the widest range of possibilities for conferring legitimacy, in view of the fact that cul-

7 Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of The Judgement of Taste*, trans. by Richard Nice (London: Routledge, 1986), p. 2.

8 Jacques Dubois, *L'Institution littéraire : Introduction à une sociologie* (Bruxelles: Labor/ Paris : Fernand Nathan, 1986), pp. 81-102.

tural policies include subsidies, commissions, and honours; that the educational system inculcates oriented reading; and that the State also has ways to implement overt and covert censorship.

Bourdieu also differentiated the field of restricted literary production (highbrow literature) from the field of large-scale literary production (mass or popular literature). As far as restricted literary production is concerned, the system of relations between different instances functionally is divided according to their role in production, reproduction and promotion of symbolic goods. They develop their own criteria of assessment so that they achieve the recognition of the elite. Hierarchy is dependent on success (volume of sales, prizes and reputation). As far as large-scale literary production is concerned, recognition is entirely defined by the public because this field is dominated by the quest for maximum profitability. The product is aimed at various 'targets' and involves 'brand-name' culture.

Therefore, Bourdieu divided literary business into 'commercial' and 'cultural'. A commercial business corresponds to pre-existent demand and usually involves short-production cycles in order to minimize financial risks. It uses marketing techniques, such as eye-catching dust jackets, signing-sessions, advertising and public relations, and uses short-term authors, such as journalists and celebrities. A cultural business is associated with long production cycles and does not have a pre-defined market. It is a future-oriented production and its stocks may either relapse into the status of material or rise to the status of cultural objects. It depends heavily on the activity of publishers as talent-spotters.

De Glas and Verdaasdonk suggested that Bourdieu's clear-cut division between 'commercial' and 'cultural' businesses no longer holds. They studied the Dutch literary market in the late 1980s, in particular, the activity of leading Dutch publishers, and concluded that the division between 'commercial' and 'cultural' business should not be taken in an absolute sense. De Glas studied the status of Dutch publishers and he found that debutant writers of-

ten used their first work as a sort of training ground.⁹ The productivity of authors varied constantly and many of them did not produce more than one title. If the debut was taken as a seedling, this meant that the publisher's initial investment was not returned. Fiction debut also became the training ground for writing in another genre and only in a quarter of these cases, did the debut grow into maturity production. Authors who produced only a limited number of fiction books contributed to the cultural prestige and economic success of a publisher by writing in other literary genres. The cooperation between publishers and writers was strongly influenced by commercial interest and mutual loyalty. The Dutch dominating publishers took by far the most initiatives when it came to publishing debuts.

Developments in book markets, and particularly in the Portuguese book market in the late 1990s, show that the publishing houses that were committed to publishing highbrow literature have also published popular literature to overcome financial problems, and that consecrated writers also agreed to some promotion associated with popular literature, such as carefully designed covers and media exposure.¹⁰

De Glas also concluded that publishers, like writers, were subject to social ageing and often had uncertain relations with many debutants whose future as writers was unclear. This conclusion disputed Bourdieu's suggestion of publishing as talent spotting. After analysing the literary programmes of the leading Dutch publishers, Verdaasdonk concluded that the literary programme is the

9 Frank de Glas, 'Literature, 'In-House' writers and processes of success in publishing', *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 1.4 (1999): <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol1/iss4/3v> [accessed in December 2009].

10 After being taken over by Planeta Publishers, Dom Quixote has published some titles, often commissioned, that are clearly identified with 'popular literature'; equally relevant is the fact that other publishing houses, that are more committed to popular literature, have also felt the need to publish titles that could be associated with 'highbrow literature', such as the historical novel (an example is *Oficina do Livro's Equador* (2003) by Miguel Sousa Tavares).

result of a number of choices, which are restrained by market demand for some literary works and by competitors' analyses.¹¹

The concept 'gatekeeping' is important to analyse the relations established between publishers, writers and public within the cultural field. It is associated to the process of decision-making and, according to Lewis Coser's study of the North-American book market, it implies 'operating a 'sluice gates for ideas', deciding which will be offered and which will be excluded'.¹² De Glas also suggested that we should see publishers as 'gatekeeping'. Deciding what to publish at the right time makes the difference between the bestseller and the commercial flop. Lewis also extended 'gatekeeping' to book reviewing, bookselling and working as literary agent. There are many examples in Portuguese literature where recognition and commercial success occurred because certain books were published at the right time, examples being José Cardoso Pires's successful *Dinossauro Excelentíssimo* in 1972 and Saramago's earlier works which were commercial flops unlike their multiple reprints after his consecration, ten years later.

Commercial success and legitimacy are also determined by writer profile. Bourdieu pointed out that the perception of the space of possible positions depends on what he called 'social trajectories', that is constructed biographies, considering that literary genres, schools, styles and subjects have a specific value attached to them. Similarly, Dubois suggested that the establishment of writers' profiles is determined by the stages of their career; their participation in groups; the literary genre they have chosen; their relation with other literary producers; their rewards; their attitudes towards aesthetic programmes; their stances; and the image their publishers promote of them. He also added that these pro-

11 H. Verdaasdonk, 'The Influence of Certain Socio-Economic Factors on The Composition of The Literary Programs of Large Dutch Publishing Houses', *Poetics* 14 (1985), 575-608 (p. 602).

12 Lewis A. Coser, Charles Kadushin and Walter W. Powell, *Books: The Culture and Commerce of Publishing* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 4. Equally relevant is Frank de Glas, 'Authors' oeuvres as the backbone of publishers' lists: Studying the literary publishing house after Bourdieu', *Poetics* 25 (1998), 379-97.

files are complemented by their family and academic background; jobs; and political and ideological stances.¹³

Writer profile is helpful in understanding the positions they take in the literary field and this can be shown in interview transcripts and in the way publishers promote their writers. This thesis will endeavour to show that profiles of Portuguese writers during the Estado Novo and between 1974 and 2000 enact mechanisms of recognition and prestige, especially as far as their consecration is concerned. In other words, family and social background, employment and ideological stances enhance the social value attached to a particular literary genre and to particular writing styles. As far as Portuguese literature is concerned, it is worthy of note that publicized biographies of most consecrated writers after 1974 share several aspects in common, such as their opposition to the Estado Novo, their working-class or lower middle-class background, and the fact that they were brought up in rural areas. These aspects strengthened their writing in terms of enhancing them with 'publicized' experience and also influenced the promotion of writers consecrated more recently.

Systems theory enables us to recognize dialectical relations between individuals and institutions in the constitution of what has been called national literature. Itamar Even-Zohar proposed that Literature is dynamic and heterogeneous and that these features ensure its vitality when the dominating classes, such as Governments or literary institutions, introduce new norms and models.¹⁴ He first suggested the Polysystem Theory in 1969 and 1970, subsequently reformulating and developing it in the early 1990s. It was designed to deal with multi-lingual literary communities and, to be more accurate, to discuss the historical structure of Hebrew Literature. According to the Polysystem Theory, Literature is a complex whole of systems, bound by history, and, thus, open to interpretation. Tension between canonized and non-canonized literary praxis ensures the vitality and balance of the systems. The absence of any pressure causes their collapse, motivated by a revo-

13 Dubois, pp. 109-10.

14 Itamar Even-Zohar, 'Introduction to Polysystem Studies', *Poetics Today* 11.1 (1990), 1-6.

lution such as the overthrow of a Regime, and the total disappearance of a hitherto preserved model.

The definition of national literature is worth discussing because it raises complex interpretations. Does it refer only to a set of texts written in the official language, reflecting the official culture? Does it correspond only to the inside view of intellectuals? What does the collocation *national literature* imply as far as its suitability to the literary promotion led by official agents of consecration are concerned? The constitution of the valuing community is very heterogeneous, and encompasses academic institutions, critics, publishers, booksellers, political and cultural authorities, literary associations and writers producing in particular circumstances.

This also raises the question of how the work of art is received in a particular context, an issue that has been debated within the framework of literary work, particularly that developed by Pierre Macherey.¹⁵ *National literature* is constructed upon value judgments by the dominating class. Reception Theory, as developed by Hans Robert Jauss, Tony Bennet and Steven Mailloux, among others, is a valuable contribution to the debate on national literature.

Reception theorists hold that the interpretative activity of readers explain the text's aesthetic value. Jauss emphasized that the reader has an 'horizon of expectations'; in other words, this 'stipulates that, to interpret a text or a society readers bring to bear the subjective models, paradigms, beliefs and values of their necessarily limited background'. According to him, texts serving political ends can demonstrate aesthetic value.¹⁶ Steven Mailloux took a more radical stance as far as Reception Theory is concerned. He held that a text is interpreted differently by different communities of readers and acknowledges the existence of political divisions.¹⁷ The importance of politics in Reception Theory was also endorsed

15 A relevant contribution for this debate is Pierre Macherey, *A Theory of Literary Production*, trans. by Geoffrey Wall (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978).

16 In Hans Robert Jauss, 'The Identity of the Poetic Text in the Changing Horizon of Understanding' and *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception* (1977), rephrased and ed. by James Machor & Philip Goldstein, *Reception Theory: From Literary Theory to Cultural Studies* (New York & London: Routledge, 2001), p. 2.

17 In Steven Mailloux, 'Interpretation and Rhetorical Hermeneutics' (1982), rephrased by James Machor & Philip Goldstein, pp. 3-4.

by Tony Bennet. He claimed that reception study is a political intervention in cultural affairs; in other words, institutional structures encourage interpretation with their justifying ideologies.¹⁸

This is particularly relevant for the analysis of the literary canon, consecrated by the educational system, in relation to the inclusion and removal of several literary texts following curricula revisions. In Portugal, these revisions show that authors, such as Camões and Fernando Pessoa, have been studied with different emphases and objectives. Moreover, the fact that many literary texts associated with the foundation of Portugal and with the Discoveries, were studied at secondary education level during the Estado Novo and removed from the curriculum after 1974, indicates that aesthetic valuing contributed to shaping the mind of the Portuguese within certain 'horizons of expectations'.

In the 1970s, history revisions were encouraged by the academic work of scholars such as Hayden White, Kiernan Ryan and A. Aram Veesser, which has become known as New Historicism. The New Historicist perspective claims that history is a construct, a selection of facts made by historians who rearrange them according to a point of view:

New Historicism can be distinguished from 'old' historicism by its lack of faith in 'objectivity' and 'permanence' and its stress not upon the recreation of the past, but rather the processes by which the past is constructed or invented. Unsettling, transgressive, at times contradictory, new Historicism tends to regard texts in materialist terms, as objects and events in the world, a part of human life, society.¹⁹

So, too if we recognized the literary or fictive element in every historical account, we would be able to move the teaching of historiography onto a higher level of self-consciousness than it currently occupies.²⁰

18 In Tony Bennet, 'Texts in History' (1987), rephrased by James Machor & Philip Goldstein, p. 5.

19 *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism: A Reader*, ed. by Kiernan Ryan (London: Arnold, 1996), p. 4.

20 Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), p. 99.

History revisions can be understood as constructs in the sense that they serve the purpose, institutionally defined, of showing the past as an orientation or an explanation for political policies. This is not far from Reception Theory, in particular Tony Benнет's stance, and is relevant when analysing cultural and ideological paradigms held during the Estado Novo. Moreover, the New Historicist tenets are also relevant when reading the novels of Saramago, in particular his novels such as *Memorial do Convento* and *História do Cerco de Lisboa*, in which he approaches certain periods of Portuguese history.

The concept of *national literature* is rooted in consecration; nowadays, the word 'consecration' has become a useful catchphrase to refer to those texts and writers who achieve the highest degree of legitimacy and are widely appraised as part of a cultural heritage. Nevertheless, it was an interesting expansion of the original meaning that referred, according to Christian theology, to that which was genuine and divinely inspired; the term 'canon' referred to a set of sacred texts of the Bible officially recognized by the Church. However, when used within literary studies, this does not mean that writers were gods. It means, by analogy with the biblical texts, that the literary canon is deemed 'authentic' and 'inspired' by legitimate literary authorities in ways that other texts are not. The canonized or consecrated texts constitute the literary establishment, the fundamentals of which should remain unquestioned. The authorities who form the valuing community decide on the basis of judgement of taste defined by context.

Sociological approaches to Literature challenge stances that claim that the literary canon is dependent only on aesthetic value. Harold Bloom is a staunch supporter of literary studies as a search for a kind of value that transcends particular prejudices and needs of societies at a particular time.²¹ Frank Kermode, John Guillory and Andrew Milner developed studies that challenge Bloom's *Western Canon* and defined premises that support systems theory. Kermode assumed that history is manageable for literary periods and has pointed out that the association between canon and au-

21 Harold Bloom, *The Western Canon – The Books and The School of Ages* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1994).

thority is ingrained in us.²² This means that the canon is a selective instrument used by authorities, themselves complicit with power. The canon, he claimed, 'shapes the past and makes it humanly available, accessibly modern' and this is effected through periodization.²³ I consider that their contributions are very valuable for understanding the establishment of the Portuguese literary canon, especially when assessing the definition of aesthetic values inherent to canon formation.

This stance is not far from Even-Zohar's definition of the canon because authority is vested in the dominant circles. Kermode explained that the consensus around the canon is perpetuated through institutional control of interpretation, such as academic curricula. Students are trained to make certain interpretations of the favoured texts. Guillory's study of the canon was influenced by Bourdieu's theory but he pointed out that the literary canon has more complex social contexts than the immediate response of readers and that the institutional context shapes and moulds judgements in such a way that the canon cannot be considered as a representation of the dominant community.²⁴ This was true, Guillory claimed, at least in the United States because there was no real national cultural school programme. This should constitute ground for allowing for countries' differences to be scrutinized. Unlike the United States, Portugal lived through a repressive Regime. The Portuguese Government was the hegemonic consecrating authority and repressive methods were used to shape literary production as part of the nationwide project to educate the Portuguese way of thinking. In view of the fact that dynamic and heterogeneous relations are essential to preserve the system's vitality, the institutions that competed with the Government as far as consecration was concerned, played the role of counter-hegemonic forces within the literary field. They consecrated alternative narrative representations and, thus, ensured restricted le-

22 Frank Kermode, 'Canon and Period', in *History and Value – The Clarendon Lectures and the Northcliffe Lectures 1987* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

23 Kermode, pp. 116-17.

24 John Guillory, 'Canonical and Noncanonical: The Current Debate' in *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 29.

gitimacy. By compromising with the Regime, they also ensured their literary legitimacy. The present thesis will argue that commitments taken by literary producers have affected the literary field's autonomy and that they continued between 1974 and 2004.

Milner also disagreed with Bloom's stance and has defined the 'literariness' of literature as a 'function of the ways in which different kinds of writing are socially processed, both by writers themselves and by readers, publishers, booksellers, literary critics and so on'.²⁵ Literature is a social construct and social studies and cultural studies have to be interrelated for it to be understood in-depth. The aesthetic value is identified by the valuing community in specific contexts, according to particular criteria and with defined purposes. The fact that some texts are better than others becomes a relevant assumption only when the valuing communities of different generations are able to sustain the same judgement over time. Studying the literary field during the Estado Novo and its developments after 1974 exposes the diversity of criteria used to establish the literary canon, and the vested interests that resulted in successive revisions of the Portuguese literary canon over decades.

Whether taking more traditional or radical approaches to Reception Theory, the question is that the interpretative community determines the validity of the interpretation of a particular text and this becomes especially relevant when considering the establishment of the literary canon. This links with conclusions drawn by Milner and Kermode as regards value judgements by a community at a particular time. Assuming that the interpretation, and especially its communication, is influenced by the political, social and cultural environment, it follows that canon revision is influenced by the dominant ideology and that the canon is formed with the purpose of representing the nation, something that is clear in representation of national history.

25 Milner, p. 22.

CHAPTER 2

Education and Readership at the Service of Politics during the Estado Novo (1933-1974)

This chapter will aim to show: first how the Estado Novo enforced education and moulded a Portuguese literary canon that met the requirements of its political strategy; and second, how education influenced readership in a country with economic and social problems, such as poverty and massive illiteracy. The contribution of Itamar Even-Zohar's work on the Polysystem Theory will be of particular relevance to the understanding of the Estado Novo's disregard for the systematicity of Portuguese society.

Immediately after the Portuguese Government was appointed on 19 March 1933, António de Oliveira Salazar defined that education should serve the wide-ranging purpose of re-defining national identity.¹ The 1933 Constitution guaranteed that public opinion was a fundamental instrument and that the State was responsible for defending it from every subversive factor.² When the Revolução Nacional was implemented, opposition was only theoretically possible because Salazar wanted to make sure that it would not affect his reforms. The União Nacional, set up in 1930, aggregated the civilian forces which supported the Estado Novo. The Regime was strengthened through the assimilation of certain ideological stances and vocabulary used by nuclei and institutions

1 'Mas a posse do Estado, que é condição necessária para salvar a Nação da ruína total e da desordem, não é factor suficiente de renovação material ou moral nem por si só pode garantir a estabilidade, o futuro da obra realizada. Esta há-de firmar-se na reforma da educação', António Ferro, *Salazar – O Homem e a sua obra, Oliveira Salazar* (pref.) (Lisbon: Empresa Nacional de Publicidade, 1933), p. xxxiii.

2 Constitution, Title VI, 'Da Opinião Pública', Art. 20: 'A opinião pública é elemento fundamental da política e da administração do País, incumbindo ao Estado defendê-la de todos os factores que a desorientem contra a verdade, a justiça, a boa administração e o bem comum'.

that had been set up before 1933, such as the Integralismo Lusitano, the Centro Académico de Democracia Cristã and the Centro Católico Português.³ Moreover, and as indicated by António Costa Pinto's study on contemporary Portugal, early on the establishment of the Estado Novo, Salazar created institutions that aimed at subduing opposition: the Acção Escolar de Vanguarda, set up in 1933, replaced by the Mocidade Portuguesa in 1936, was used to hold back the Nacional Sindicalismo; and the Legião Portuguesa, set up in 1936, was an anti-communist militia. The Acção Católica Portuguesa, structured in 1933 within the wide-range promotion of Catholicism led by the Holy See, followed the dissolution of the CCP, and involved the Church in the role of strengthening Roman Catholicism in Portugal. This was useful to strengthen the values defended by the Estado Novo, as discussed below.⁴

The Portuguese Government also created institutions, such as the Obras das Mães para a Educação Nacional, the Fundação Nacional para a Alegria no Trabalho and the Casas do Povo, that endorsed the values of the Revolução Nacional. These institutions were effective in the process of accepting the Regime because the Portuguese people were strongly encouraged to take part in the activities organized.⁵ Outlawing political movements and parties

3 The Integralismo Lusitano was a political and social movement set up in 1913. It aimed at the regeneration of Portugal. It was nationalist, monarchical and anti-liberal. The death of António Sardinha in 1925 contributed to this movement's dissolution in 1933; the CADC was a students' nucleus set up at Coimbra University in 1901 with the purpose of discussing political, economic and social issues from a Christian point of view. It was discontinued in 1971; the CCP was a nucleus set up in 1917 and stood for the need to preserve the Portuguese's Christian values which, the CCP claimed, were menaced by the First Republic. It had been supported by Salazar and Cardinal Cerejeira before the Estado Novo. The CCP was replaced by the Acção Católica Portuguesa in 1933.

4 António Costa Pinto, 'Portugal Contemporâneo: Uma Introdução', in *Portugal Contemporâneo*, ed. by António Costa Pinto (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 2005), pp. 11-50.

5 The OMEN was set up through Decree-Law No.26 893 on 15 August 1936 with the purpose of 'estimular a acção educativa da família'; and the FNAT was set up through Decree-Law No.25 495, on 13 June 1935 with the aim of promoting 'o aproveitamento do tempo livre dos trabalhadores portugueses'.

such as the Communist Party hit opposition, although the Estado Novo did not succeed in dissolving it completely, as will be shown below. The formation of the Polícia de Vigilância e Defesa do Estado (PVDE) in 1933, subordinated to the Ministry of the Interior, aided the Prime Minister in controlling oppositionist and subversive movements. It was specially oriented towards prevention and repression of political and social crime and also towards the fight against illegal emigration.⁶

As far as the education of the Portuguese was concerned, the major objective of the Estado Novo, as established in the revised Constitution, was to deal with illiteracy *in strictu sensu*, that is, children should be able to read and write at a basic level at the end of their primary education.⁷ National education was to be run according to basic values: the cult of the family; religious faith; respect for authority and hierarchy; and love for literary and scientific culture. These principles were rooted in five values that Salazar considered unquestionable: God, Homeland, Authority, Family and Work.⁸ The Government was assigned, in Salazar's own words, the mission of national regeneration, saving the Nation from chaos and disorder through the indoctrination of principles and good education.⁹ Preserving the legacy of Portuguese

6 PVDE was renamed PIDE in 1945. In 1969, Marcello Caetano's Government changed its name to DGS-Direcção Geral de Segurança in an attempt to reduce the extremely negative connotation to this institution.

7 Decree-Law No.27603 of 29 March 1937: 'escrever uma cópia, redigir um telegrama, preencher um questionário, fazer um requerimento, passar um recibo ou um vale do correio'.

8 '[...] temos respeitado a consciência dos crentes e consolidado a paz religiosa. – Não discutimos Deus. [...] Sem receio colocámos o nacionalismo português na base indestrutível do Estado Novo; [...] Não discutimos a Pátria. Não discutimos a autoridade. Ela é um facto e uma necessidade. [...] Não discutimos a família. Aí nasce o homem, aí se educam gerações, [...] Não discutimos o trabalho nem como direito nem como obrigação'. Speech delivered on 26 May 1936. António de Oliveira Salazar, *Antologia – Discursos, Notas, Relatórios, Teses, Artigos e Entrevistas* (Lisbon: Editorial Vanguarda, 1954), pp. 52-7.

9 'A obra educativa a realizar, mormente nesta época de renascimento nacional, tem de partir dum acto de fé na Pátria portuguesa e inspirar-se num sã nacionalismo. É preciso amar e conhecer Portugal – no seu passado de grandeza heróica, no seu presente de possibilidades materiais e morais,

history and tracking the roots of popular culture were essential steps to achieve national regeneration. This stance was not new because it used some of the Republican propaganda about Portuguese nationalism whose theoretical principles had been developed by Teófilo Braga at the end of the 1880s. Braga had pinpointed collective beliefs, cultural symbols and rituals as ways to build national identity. As shown in Nuno Monteiro's and António Costa Pinto's study on Portuguese national identity, the Estado Novo approached the concept of Nation, bestowed it transcendental value and promoted it in the political and ideological fields.¹⁰

Salazar believed that the major objective of the government's educational policy should be the constitution of elites.¹¹ The masses should receive instruction which enabled them to perform daily chores, whereas the pursuit of higher education should more accessible to the upper classes. Philippe Schmitter's study on the social basis of the Portuguese authoritarian rule has shown that the highly qualified deputies served more terms at the Assembleia Legislativa and Câmara Corporativa: between 1934 and 1938, workers, landowners and military officers did not serve more than one term, whilst professors and educators, lawyers, judges and physicians were amongst those who served more than five terms.¹² The gap between the population and the Government was self-consciously arranged.¹³ By respecting authority, the Estado Novo

adivinhá-lo no seu futuro de progresso, de beleza, de harmonia', Ferro, pp. xxxv-xxxvi.

10 Nuno G. Monteiro and António Costa Pinto, 'A Identidade Nacional Portuguesa', in *Portugal Contemporâneo*, pp. 51-65.

11 Considero [...] mais urgente a constituição de vastas elites do que ensinar o povo a ler. É que os grandes problemas nacionais têm de ser resolvidos, não pelo povo, mas pelas elites enquadrando as massas', *Anais da Revolução Nacional*, Vol. IV, p. 259, Cited in Maria Filomena Mónica, *Educação e Sociedade no Portugal de Salazar* (Lisbon: Editorial Presença/ Gabinete de Investigações Sociais, 1978), p. 116.

12 Phillipe Schmitter, "The Regime d'Exception That Became The Rule: Forty-Eight Years of Authoritarian Domination in Portugal", in *Contemporary Portugal – The Revolution and Its Antecedents*, ed. by Lawrence Graham and Harry Mackler (Austin & London: University Texas, 1979), pp. 3-41 (p. 12).

13 Our regime is popular, but it is not a Government of the masses, being neither influenced nor directed by them. These good people who cheer me one