

THE INFLUENCE OF MUSIC IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE

DEMOCRATIC PORTUGAL (1964-1975)

A influência da música na construção do Portugal

democrático (1964-1975)

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Abstract

The history of portuguese democracy is closely linked to the song of protest and intervention. Music was the basis of the Carnation Revolution, which dictated the fall of the Estado Novo regime, on April 25th, 1975. This article aims to analyze the influence of music on the construction of portuguese democracy, between the first edition of the RTP Song Contest and the end of the Ongoing Revolutionary Period.

Resumo

A história da democracia portuguesa está intimamente ligada à canção de protesto e de intervenção. A música esteve na base da Revolução dos Cravos, que ditou a queda do regime do Estado Novo, a 25 de abril de 1975. Este artigo propõe-se a analisar a influência da música na construção da democracia portuguesa, entre a primeira edição do Festival RTP da Canção e o fim do Período Revolucionário em Curso.

Key-words: *Music; April 25th; Protest song; Intervention song; RTP Song Contest.*

Palavras-chave: *Música; 25 de abril; Canção de protesto; Canção de intervenção; Festival RTP da Canção.*

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INTRODUCTION

The first half of the 20th century was marked by major crises in Europe. After the First World War, fascism grew in the Old Continent and dominated the European political scene. Benito Mussolini was the founder of fascist ideals, using the resentment of an Italy decimated by the conflict. Like Portugal, music was also linked to the fall of this Italian regime. *Bella Ciao* is an Italian song that was present in the anti-fascist struggle, although the origin of the melody is unknown. It was adopted by the Partisans, guerrillas of the Italian Resistance, who gave it their own lyrics. The fight against fascism encompassed all ideologies opposed to Mussolini's regime, whether Christian Democrats, Communists, Liberals, Socialists, or Anarchists (Matas, 2023).

In Portugal, the fall of the oppressive regime occurred on April 25, 1974. The Estado Novo regime fell with the Carnation Revolution, perpetrated by the Armed Forces Movement, also known as the "Captains' Movement." The strategy and guidance of the movements in the revolution were the responsibility of Major Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho. Portuguese music was crucial to the unfolding of the operation. The signals to begin the movements were given through the transmission of two songs on the radio. "E depois do adeus" by Paulo de Carvalho was the first signal. The final signal, the point of no return, was given by "Grândola, Vila Morena" by José Afonso. (Ciccía, 2013) The involvement of songs in the military operation reveals the importance that music can have in the development of society. The democratic construction in Portugal was linked to songs, both in the fight against the regime and in the mass dissemination of the message after April 25th.

Portuguese music has undergone an evolution over time. Before 1974, during the Estado Novo regime, "national-songwriting" dominated, a style favored by the regime for controlling the masses. Student movements gave impetus to the emergence of protest songs. Ballads gained strength through the voices of José Afonso and Adriano Correia de Oliveira in the city of Coimbra in the 1960s (Côrte-Real, 1996). This was a starting point for the anti-regime struggle that developed through music. Many names were essential in the journey towards democracy in Portugal, notably José Mário Branco, Sérgio Godinho, and Fausto Bordalo Dias. Protest songs were influential not only in the anti-regime struggle but also in the construction and consolidation of democracy after April 25th. The "protest song" became "intervention song" and became part of the dissemination of the new political message. The Ongoing Revolutionary Period (PREC) brought to Portugal

the fervor of decisions about the path to take for the country's future. With November 25, 1975, democracy was consolidated, and the "pamphlet-like" protest song began its end. (by Menezes Leitão, 2024)

Throughout this process, the RTP Song Festival was a mirror of the prevailing society. In 1964, still under the name Grande Prêmio TV da Canção (Grand Prize TV Song), the event had its first edition, dominated by light songs. As the protest intensified, and with the arrival of the Marcelist Spring, the Song Festival took on some more rebellious contours. After the revolution, the first edition of the Song Festival without censorship brought a handful of songs with a high political content. The PREC edition was won by Duarte Mendes, one of the captains of the April Revolution, with the song *Madrugada* (Dawn).

Given the importance of the RTP Song Festival in the perception of Portuguese society, a study period was defined between the first edition of the festival and November 25, 1975, when the counter-coup that ended the PREC (Processo Revolucionário em Curso - Ongoing Revolutionary Process) occurred. This period was central to the development of a collective consciousness, which greatly benefited from the national songbook.

This article proposes to investigate the influence of music on the construction of democratic Portugal between 1964 and 1975, seeking to answer the following research question: *To what extent did music influence the construction of Portuguese democracy?*

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Neuman (2008), music as an "agent of change" and as a "representation of social transformations" constitutes two essential dimensions for understanding the interaction between musical practice and the political sphere.

Through song lyrics, often laden with social and political criticism, artists have transformed music into a form of protest that goes beyond simple entertainment, serving, in some way, as a powerful language of protest and an instrument of social transformation.

According to Eyerman and Jamison (1998), protest songs are fundamental in the creation of social movements, helping to form a collective identity and mobilize groups around political causes. According to the authors, protest songs transcend the simple

portrayal of social and political circumstances, actively functioning as instruments that shape mentalities and drive change in society. Martin (2010) argues that music, when incorporated into a political context, becomes a means of expression for those who are frequently marginalized by the prevailing power structures.

In Portugal, music stood out as an important resource of resistance to the authoritarian regime of the Estado Novo, in addition to driving social transformations in the post-April 25th period. During the dictatorship, despite the restrictions imposed by censorship, songs emerged as an effective means for disseminating political messages.

The “intervention song” in Portugal emerged as a form of protest against the regime, initially through the fado of Coimbra, and gained strength with artists such as José Afonso, Adriano Correia de Oliveira, Sérgio Godinho, and José Mário Branco (Corte-Real, 1996). José Afonso, in particular, is often referred to as a central figure in the protest song movement with the song “Grândola Vila Morena”, from October 1971 (Ciccia, 2013).

Francisco Fanhais also played a significant role in protest songs in Portugal. A singer, priest, and opponent of the Salazar regime, Fanhais used music to challenge the regime and support the social and political causes of the time. His repertoire focused on issues of freedom and social justice, reflecting the spirit of protest of that period.

Several situations demonstrate the importance of music in the resistance to the Estado Novo and in the construction of democratic Portugal. Composer, performer, and music producer José Mário Branco is one example, whose musical work was linked to the social and political struggles of the time. Despite being exiled in France during the dictatorship, he transformed exile into a stage for social resistance, keeping his commitment to music alive. According to Castro et al. (2023), José Mário Branco contributed to the aesthetic renewal of the “protest song”, increasing the communicative potential of the musical component of the songs.

After April 25th, music continued to play a fundamental role in the construction of the new democratic identity. According to Cardão (2014), the RTP Song Festival, which began in 1964, reflected the process of political radicalization after the revolution. This annual program not only mirrored the changes in society but also served as a stage for controversial performances that challenged censorship and brought to light previously forbidden themes. The evolution of the festival illustrates how popular music and

television became central to Portuguese cultural life, contributing to the political and social transformations of the country during the period of democratic transition.

As democracy consolidated, the role of protest music also evolved. From the end of the PREC (Processo Revolucionário em Curso – Ongoing Revolutionary Process), in November 1975, there was a decline in overtly political music, which was replaced by a more diverse musical landscape.

Analysis of Relevant Cases

i. Victor Jara

Víctor Jara was one of the most emblematic musicians of the New Chilean Song movement, which marked the popular struggles in Latin America with his songs of social criticism and protest, but which he preferred to call revolutionary (Borelli and Brum, 2014). The New Chilean Song was a musical movement that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, with strong political and social content, as a response to social inequality and authoritarianism, which quickly became an important means of political protest.

Jara caused a revolution in popular music, becoming a symbol of political resistance, since he used music as a way to mobilize the masses, criticize social injustices and especially support the government of Salvador Allende and the rise of the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet (Borelli and Brum, 2014).

According to Borelli and Brum (2014), the widely disseminated story, for years, recounted that Víctor Jara sang in prison in order to offend the military. Furthermore, they cut off his fingers, or even his hands, so that he could never again play his guitar. However, it became known that, after leading and being unanimously supported by the political prisoners who melodically accompanied him in the chorus of “Venceremos” (We Will Win), he ended up being assassinated with a burst of machine gun fire.

Víctor Jara became known as one of the most iconic voices in the fight for social justice, a permanent reference in the resistance against oppression. From the beginning of his career, Jara strove to "give voice" to the marginalized parts of society (Simões, 2006). Songs like *El derecho de vivir en paz* (The Right to Live in Peace) are still sung today in demonstrations.

ii. Liberation of Timor

The Carnation Revolution, in addition to guaranteeing the liberation of the Portuguese people, was crucial for the recognition of the independence of the overseas colonies. One of the banners of the Armed Forces Movement was to put an end to the Colonial War and liberate the African peoples.

On November 28, 1975, Portugal finally recognized the independence of East Timor, the Asian territory under Portuguese rule since 1512. On December 7 of the same year, Indonesia, militarily supported by the United States of America, invaded Timorese territory under the pretext of anti-communism. The occupation lasted until 2002.

Along the way, it was from Portugal that the anthem of Timorese liberation emerged. The genocide perpetrated by Indonesia against the people of East Timor led to the unification of the Portuguese. Trovante was responsible for the music that served as the soundtrack for the struggle for freedom, led by José Ramos-Horta, Ximenes Belo, and Xanana Gusmão. In 1988, João Gil composed a piece for the soundtrack of the film *Flores Amargas* (Bitter Flowers), by Margarida Gil. The film told the story of the Timorese refugee camp in the Jamor Valley. The theme consisted of a chorus singing in Tetum, the native language of East Timor. (Santos, 2015)

The story took on new dimensions with Pope John Paul II's visit to Indonesia in 1989. The Pope included Timorese territory in his itinerary as Indonesian territory. Upon arriving in Timor, the pontiff did not kiss the ground, as he had already done so in Jakarta. This detail triggered in João Monge a sense of solidarity with the Timorese people. He wrote the poem that was added to João Gil's song and became the anthem of East Timor's liberation. He called it "Timor". (Santos, 2015)

For Trovante, the objective was to awaken the Portuguese to the historical responsibility they had towards the Timorese people. The music was a critique of the Catholic Church, which ignored the genocide of an innocent people. (Santos, 2015)

The music had a decisive influence on the unification of the Portuguese in the diplomatic struggle for the liberation of East Timor. The songs "Soltem os Prisoneiros" by Delfins (1994) and "Timor" by Resistência (1992) were also composed with a view to the struggle for the freedom of the Timorese people.

iii. Homens da Luta (Men of the Fight)

Protest music regained prominence during times of crisis with Homens da Luta. A humorous-musical duo that, inspired by Portuguese protest songs, gave voice to the song “A luta é alegria” (The struggle is joy). In 2011, during the economic crisis that plagued Portugal, the song won the 47th edition of the RTP Song Festival. The theme emerged as a critique of the austerity policies imposed by the Pedro Passos Coelho government. Os Homens da Luta (Men of the Struggle), led by Jel (Nuno Duarte) and Falâncio (Vasco Duarte), represented Portugal at Eurovision with a song that called for the fight for labor and civil rights, as well as opening the eyes of the population to the measures that aggravated the economic difficulties of the population in those years.

Through humor, “Os Homens da Luta” openly aligned themselves with protest musicians, based on the lyrics of the songs and the composition of the characters (Vaza, 2011). “A luta é alegria” (The struggle is joy) can be seen as a revival of protest music in times of need.

iv. Pablo Hasél

In 2021, the Catalan rapper Pablo Hasél was arrested, becoming an emblematic case in the discussion about freedom of expression through music. Detained in Spain, the rapper faced several accusations regarding the critical discourse of his compositions, leading to his imprisonment for challenging the monarchy. This case gave rise to protests among the Spanish people, who assumed that freedom of expression had been questioned (Filipe, 2021).

In response to his arrest, much of Spain rallied in support of the Catalan rapper, signing petitions for his release. This situation goes beyond a simple isolated incident and reignites the debate about artistic freedom (Filipe, 2021).

2. METHODOLOGY

In order to analyze the influence of music on the construction of democracy in Portugal, a qualitative and historical methodology was applied. This approach focuses on the analysis of song lyrics, taking into account the historical context, and on an interview with Fernando Tordo, winner of the 1973 RTP Song Festival. To ascertain the historical context between the years 1964 and 1975, existing bibliography in academic repositories

or journalistic articles focusing on the period under study was used. The songs to be analyzed were selected based on their historical and political relevance, considering the theme they address and the period in which they are framed:

- i. *Oração*, António Calvário (1964);
- ii. *Ronda do Soldadinho*, José Mário Branco (1969);
- iii. *Maré Alta*, Sérgio Godinho (1971);
- iv. *Queixa das Almas Jovens Censuradas*, José Mário Branco (1971);
- v. *Cantar Alentejano*, José Afonso (1971);
- vi. *A Morte Saiu à Rua*, José Afonso (1972);
- vii. *Tourada*, Fernando Tordo (1973);
- viii. *Liberdade*, Sérgio Godinho (1974);
- ix. *O Patrão e Nós*, Fausto Bordalo Dias (1974);
- x. *A Cantiga é uma Arma*, Grupo de Ação Cultural – Vozes na Luta (1975).

The interview with Fernando Tordo, as one of the protagonists of protest songs, but also of the Festival da Canção, bridges the historical context he himself lived through and the musical culture experienced during that period.

Some limitations were encountered in the development of this article, namely, the limited access to relevant documents from the national archive, but also the subjective interpretation of the song lyrics, which depends on the context and experience of each listener. Nevertheless, triangulating the data obtained, taking into account the historical context, the analysis of the songs, and the interview, allowed us to mitigate some of the limitations and construct a relevant analysis.

3. HISTÓRICAL CONTEXT

In 1926, a coup d'état perpetrated by General Gomes da Costa led to the closure of Parliament by military force. António de Oliveira Salazar was called upon to assume the Finance portfolio and quickly rose to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. In 1933, the new Constitution of the Portuguese Republic was approved, marking the beginning of the Second Republic, which remained in effect in the country under the Estado Novo regime until 1974. (Assembly of the Republic, n.d.)

In April 1945, the Second World War was nearing its end. In this context, within a few days of each other, Adolf Hitler committed suicide and Benito Mussolini was assassinated. In Portugal, the Salazar regime raised the flag to half-mast, due to excessive "protocol zeal," following the death of the Führer. It was in this year, 1945, that Fernando Lopes-Graça composed his first book of heroic songs. He defined it as the "peaceful, but

not innocent, weapon in the service of our oppressed people, of their liberation, their exaltation, and fraternization.” These words did not withstand the censorship of the blue pencil, and the songs were seized by the PIDE (Portuguese secret police). (Côrte-Real, 1996)

In 1961, the Colonial War broke out, and the opposition, which led to increased political repression in the country, intensified.

The politicization of the student youth would represent one of the most combative sectors of the resistance in the following years. 12 The student agitation was followed by street demonstrations by the working class in Lisbon and other parts of the country, and strikes by rural workers in the Alentejo region, who finally won the eight-hour workday. (Côrte-Real, 1996)

Coimbra became a center of contestation against the regime, via student movements. According to Côrte-Real (1996), the city of students was “a vanguard center of protest songs in the sixties.” The Colonial War, however, led to the mass desertion of young Portuguese people, who refused to go to a war with which they disagreed. The concentration of many of these young people in Paris led to a focus of creation of Portuguese protest songs in the French capital. The French colonial process and its parallel to the Portuguese case facilitated the easy integration of the young Portuguese who arrived. In 1964, the Portuguese movement in Paris began with the song by Luís Cília, which was joined by prominent figures such as José Mário Branco, Sérgio Godinho, and Francisco Fanhais. (Côrte-Real, 1996) In that same year, in Portugal, the Grande Prémio TV da Canção (later, Festival RTP da Canção) was held for the first time, won by António Calvário with the song “Oração”.

In 1968, Marcello Caetano replaced António de Oliveira Salazar in power. The change of Head of State brought the “Marcelist Spring” and an anticipated easing of repression.

The Song Festival felt this change with controversial entries that followed (Côrte-Real, 1996).

On April 25, 1974, the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) overthrew the Estado Novo regime in a revolution that used music to signal the movements of the military forces.

“E depois do adeus” (And After the Farewell), by Paulo de Carvalho, winner of the 1974 Song Festival, served as the first password to begin the revolt. The password that marked the definitive advance of the revolution was “Grândola, Vila Morena”, one of the many songs censored by José Afonso. Power was handed over to the National Salvation Junta, which ensured the dismantling of the PIDE (secret police) and the Portuguese Legion, in addition to overthrowing the outgoing regime (Reis, Rezola, & Borges, 2012).

Less than a year after the revolution of April 25, 1974, the country witnessed the nationalization of several sectors, notably banking and heavy industry. Workers expelled bosses and managers from companies. In the countryside, lands and farms were occupied by peasants. (Louçã, 2007)

The Hot Summer of 1975 followed, between the attempted coups of March 11 and November 25. The two failed coups clarified the “political scenario and paved the way for the holding of democratic elections”. (Louçã, 2007)

4. ANALYSIS OF MUSIC IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF DEMOCRATIC PORTUGAL

The TV Grand Prix of Song premiered in 1964. It featured future winners, representatives of “national-songwriting”. The first edition was won by António Calvário, with the song “Oração” (Prayer). This was the first time the Portuguese language was heard on the stages of the Eurovision Song Contest. Despite the historical milestone it represented for Portuguese music, António Calvário's debut on European stages was not well received, being booed by the audience. This negative reaction was due to the dictatorial regime in force in Portugal and the Colonial War, which was the subject of international protest. These factors contradicted the values that the Eurovision organization intended to transmit.

Like other songs intended for the first editions of the RTP Song Festival, “Oração” bases its lyrics on religion. António Calvário asks God for forgiveness, confessing to having made his lover suffer.

Lord,
at your feet I confess.
Lord,
I mistreated my love.

The performer asks forgiveness from the “Lord,” promising to have learned the lesson.

Lord,
I erred, but in life I found the lesson (...)
Lord, o infinite goodness,
give me Your forgiveness.

António Calvário ends, asking that

*If love is punishment
Forgiveness, my Lord.*

In that same year, José Mário Branco was launching “Ronda do Soldadinho” (The Little Soldier's Round) in France.

Written in 1968, the song is a call to revolt against the Overseas War (Altamont, 2019). The first verses of the song show us the style of a “children’s song”.

One and two and three,
Once upon a time
There was a little soldier.

José Mário Branco alludes to the irony and absurdity of “the lords of war” not killing, but ordering killing, and not dying, but ordering death. Orders that led to the death of thousands of young people at the hands of a useless war, described by José Mário Branco.

But the little soldier realized
That these lords
Were at war
Against their brothers of color

Beautiful little soldier,
You are also a worker,
You turn your rifle
Against your exploiter.

The excerpt above was later included in a new version of the song by the Cultural Action Group - Voices in the Struggle.

The last quintet of the song is autobiographical. It tells the story of a young José Mário Branco who, like many other young Portuguese people, chose to flee Portugal to escape the war:

Beautiful little soldier,
He was the king
Of our land.
He fled to France,
So as not to go
To die in the war.

The stanza is repeated, but instead of ending with the verse “To die in the war”, it ends with “To kill in the war”, alluding to both sides of the conflict. (Castro, 2019).

“Maré Alta”, “Queixa das Almas Jovens Censuradas”, and “Cantar Alentejano”, included in three different albums, were songs that marked the protest song genre. Released in 1971, they were part of albums considered a watershed moment in Portuguese music.

Freedom permeates Sérgio Godinho’s songs from “Maré Alta” onwards, the final track of his debut album, *Os Sobreviventes* (1971). According to the Porto Alegre-born artist, the song that closes the album is pure rock. Composed and performed by Sérgio Godinho, this song carries a symbolism about the need to be prepared for change.

Learn to swim, my friend,
For the tide will rise.

Sérgio Godinho's music is marked by the repetitive structure of these verses. There is a reference to freedom as the engine of social and political transformations in times of change and transition.

Freedom is passing through here (A liberdade está a passar por aqui).

And it’s over!

“Complaint of Censored Young Souls” is a poem by Natália Correia, first set to music by José Mário Branco in 1971, as the “anthem of censored youth” (Carreiro, 2012). Recorded in France, the song belongs to the album *Mudam-se os tempos, mudam-se as vontades* (1971).

This title begins with the idea of a plural, suggesting a lament from young people who have been prevented from being free. The first verse, “a lily and a penknife”, introduces the ideas present throughout the poem: life and death. This generation of young people is forced to “go to school” for a rigid education that aims to produce “mannequins”, without soul or identity and “empty”, as can be seen in the verse “where our age doesn't come”.

The theme contemplates the annihilation of the censored subject's own identity, who is prevented from the irreverence that youth demands.

They comb our barren skulls
With the hair of our grandparents,
So that we may never resemble
Ourselves when we are alone.

There are also references to the Colonial War. In the verse “they give us tickets to heaven”, it is connoted as a premonition of certain death for the young men forced to leave for Africa.

Cantigas do Maio (1971) is one of the most remarkable albums in José Afonso's career. It is here that *Grândola, Vila Morena*, *Maio Maduro Maio*, or the title track itself, *Cantigas do Maio*, appear. The strong influence of French culture on Brazilian singers is ingrained in this album. "May" is a reference to the student struggles of May '68 in Paris. José Afonso sought to appeal to the fight for democracy in Portugal.

The album was part of the *Cantar Alentejano* theme, a tribute to the people of Alentejo and, especially, to Catarina Eufémia. Catarina Eufémia was a poor, illiterate harvester, mother of three children and pregnant with her fourth, who was brutally murdered by a military policeman in 1954. She was 26 years old and participating in a strike of 14 rural women wage earners. The song's verses represent the brutality of the murder.

Harvesters on a cold morning
Flowers will be placed on her grave
The countryside turned red
From the blood that then flowed

The song is a symbol of the struggle and resistance of Alentejo workers against the oppression of the Salazar regime. In a tone of lament and revolt, José Afonso structures the poem in two parts: the first appears as a biographical summary of Catarina Eufémia, introduced in the first verse with “Her name was Catarina”. Her life, death, and tribute are narrated.

Her name was Catarina,
The Alentejo region saw her born
The mountain women saw her in life
Baleizão saw her die.

The second part reflects on the impact of her murder and the desire for justice and freedom.

Calm the fury, countryside
For your weeping has not ended
Those who saw Catarina die
Do not forgive those who killed her.

The “white dove” and the “black swallow” are symbols of peace and freedom. José Afonso's song, which precedes the freedom of April 1974, presents an Alentejo “burned,” “forgotten,” and victim of injustices, as was the case with the murder of Catarina Eufémia.

In the same way as in *Cantar Alentejano*, José Afonso uses music to denounce another murder. The song “A Morte Saiu à Rua” brings back a lament, this time for the murder of José Dias Coelho.

Released on the album *Eu Vou Ser Como a Toupeira* (1972), the song “A Morte Saiu à Rua” is a protest song that combines poetry and strong emotional weight. In 1961, José Dias Coelho, a visual artist and leader of the Portuguese Communist Party, was assassinated with two shots by the PIDE (Portuguese secret police) on Rua da Creche, in Lisbon. The assassination, for purely ideological reasons, led to the naming of the street where he was murdered after José Dias Coelho. The song addresses an assassination, but only at the end is José Dias Coelho mentioned.

They say everywhere:
The painter is dead.

In the last verses of the third and fourth stanzas, José Afonso sings that the death of José Dias Coelho and all revolutionaries was not in vain. He adds that the deaths will give rise to a “nation”, appealing for popular unity against the oppression of the regime.

Here we affirm to you tooth for tooth,
That one day he who laughs last will laugh best.
At the bend in the road there are pits dug in the ground
And in each one will bloom roses of a nation.

In 1973, the RTP Song Festival felt a jolt. “A Tourada” (The Bullfight), by Fernando Tordo and Ary dos Santos, exposes the prevailing Portuguese society. Tordo and Ary dos Santos circumvented the censorship of the blue pencil and won the event with an ironic song about the state of Portuguese society, using a bullfighting analogy. Censorship was weakening and, unknowingly, was only a year away from falling.

The lyrics are a metaphor comparing society to a bullfight. It is a critique of the social types, hypocrisies, and contradictions of Portuguese society at that time.

Enter old women, madwomen, and tourists,
Enter excursions,
Enter benefits and chroniclers,
Swindlers,
Enter dandies and chorus girls,
Enter crested gallants.

The theme carries strong irony and satire, subverting elements associated with a bullfight to denounce the Estado Novo regime, led by Marcello Caetano. The song calls for struggle, regardless of “sun or shade”, and for unity, “shoulder to shoulder”.

It doesn't matter Sun or shade,
Boxes or barriers,
We fight shoulder to shoulder,
The beasts.

Ary dos Santos' lyrics allude to the “Marcelist Spring”, as an open arrow to freedom. He refers to the hope that the regime will soon be driven away. Ary dos Santos and Tordo allude to a bright future for the country and for the Portuguese.

With banderillas of hope
We drive away the beast
We are in the square
Of Spring.

We're going to seize the world
By the horns of misfortune
And turn sadness

into grace.

The theme ends with a phrase that leaves doubts in the air.
And the clever one says
That the songs are over.

Fernando Tordo still doesn't reveal who the “intelligent” person he refers to in the emblematic song is. In the interview conducted for this study, the question was raised, but Fernando Tordo remained tight-lipped. He mentioned that it was someone of great importance to national politics:

The intelligent person is a figure from our politics, from that time, the 60s. He was a very important person, I consider, for all Portuguese people. He is known by all Portuguese people. This referred to him. In a time, probably, a less happy one in his life, when he was, like so many other Portuguese people, linked to the previous regime. And therefore, these things happen, it's not worth us saying 'this so-and-so, this so-and-so'. I'm more interested in the positive side of this person, and the positive side of this person is gigantic. (Interview with Fernando Tordo)

He proved, however, that the songs were not over.

In 1974, on April 25th, freedom passed through here. The paradigm of Portuguese song was changing at that moment. The freedom envisioned by Sérgio Godinho had arrived, and the post-April 25th era brought new needs: to inform, to educate, to get the message across. On the album *À Queima-Roupa* (1974), Sérgio Godinho released a song that described what he himself believed. The song "Liberdade" (Freedom) brought us the "single" of freedom:

Peace,
Bread,
Housing,
Health,
Education.

The song is described by Sérgio Godinho as “graffiti set to rock” (Batista, 2020). Sérgio Godinho opens the song with a reference to the days of oppression under the Estado Novo regime and contrasts it with the Portuguese people's desire for freedom.

We lived so many years speaking in silence
You can only want everything when you've had nothing.

With freedom achieved, but with democracy yet to be built, Sérgio Godinho presents his priorities for achieving “true freedom”, advocating for nationalizations and the seizure of the means of production by the workers.

There is only true freedom when there is
Freedom to change and decide,
When it belongs to the people
What the people produce.

Like Sérgio Godinho's "Liberdade" (Freedom), Fausto Bordalo Dias' "O Patrão e Nós" (The Boss and Us) also seeks to build a new Portugal. The song was released in 1974 and stood out for its social criticism. The theme addresses, in an ironic and critical way, the relationship between workers and bosses, where social inequalities and the struggle for social justice are explored. The lyrics are structured as a dialogue between two universes: that of the workers, represented by "us", whom Fausto incites to rebel against the employers; and that of the bosses, whom Fausto calls thieves and sons of bitches. The narrative's construction exposes the power imbalance, highlighting the abuse and contempt of the bosses for the rights and dignity of the workers. Phrases that initially seem complimentary reveal themselves to be critical. In the first stanza, Fausto describes the luxurious life of the boss, with the top hat serving as a reference to unbridled capitalism.

Look at that man in the top hat
With a bow tie and a coat
The suitcase full of money
That he carries in his hand
He lives in Cascais or Estoril
And lives in a mansion
He enjoys his summer vacations
Whenever he wants and feels like it
He has a bank and many factories
He has the name of a boss
But he's a thief
He's not needed and he's a bastard!

In the second stanza, he describes the miserable life of the workers.

Mas isto vai acabar
À porrada no patrão!
And look at us now
Broken cap and overalls
Tool bag
And lunchbox in hand
We live in Casal Ventoso
We live in a shack
Working all year round
Without summers or springs
We have children, many children
Without school or school bags
But this will end
With a fight against the boss!

The use of pronouns like “he” and “we” highlights the division and antagonism of classes. “He”, the boss, is described as someone who holds power and wealth, while “we”, the workers, are portrayed as the force that sustains this wealth, but which is maintained in precarious conditions.

Also, “A Cantiga é uma Arma” (The Song is a Weapon) became notable in the struggle for democratic construction. Released in 1975, it has a remarkable history that dates back two years earlier. It was composed by José Mário Branco during his exile in Paris. With his guitar in hand, he concluded that the song could also be a weapon.

It was during this period that the song premiered at the “Jogos Florais da Imigração Portuguesa” festival, held at the Cartoucherie de Vincennes and organized by the newspaper “O Salto” and the Portuguese Emigrant Workers Movement. Despite winning first place in the festival's music competition, it did not receive the prize. According to the jury, a true revolutionary cannot use the expression “I didn’t know,” a phrase he repeats several times throughout the song (José Mário Branco Archive, 2018).

The song was officially published in 1975 by GAC - Vozes na Luta (Voices in the Struggle).

Founded by José Mário Branco, Fausto, Afonso Dias, and Tino Flores shortly after the Carnation Revolution, the group, created on May 1st, 1974, quickly became a reference point for protest music in Portugal. They released several albums addressing political and social themes, with “A Cantiga é uma Arma” (The Song is a Weapon) being one of their most iconic songs. However, the group only existed until the beginning of 1979, marked by its revolutionary songs. The group's end was due to the ideological divergence of the musicians.

This song not only highlights the power of music as a means of political mobilization but also reflects the revolutionary fervor that characterized Portugal in the years following the Carnation Revolution. The message is clear: “soft song with harsh lyrics never made revolutions”, emphasizing the power of music as a tool for social transformation.

The song is a weapon
Against the bourgeoisie,
Everything depends on the bullet
And the aim.

José Mário Branco emphasizes the target of the protest song, "the bourgeoisie," stressing that the strength of the message lies in the power of the song. The singer and composer from Porto Alegre also summarizes the anxieties he harbors regarding music.

He alludes to “national-songwriting” as those who sing for self-interest. He also criticizes those who sing “in slippers so as not to lose their place”, alluding to the gentle metaphors that do not directly point the finger at the problems of the people.

There are those who sing for self-interest
There are those who sing for the sake of singing
There are those who make a profession of it
From fighting to singing
And there are those who sing in slippers
So as not to lose their place

José Mário Branco also criticizes those who sing “in tow”, without specifying who he is referring to concretely. The stanza, in general, calls for unity and equality: there shouldn't be anyone who goes behind, but there also shouldn't be anyone who goes in front.

If you sing in tow
It's not worth singing
If you go too far ahead
You might choke
Song is only a weapon
When the fight accompanies it.

5. INTERVIEW WITH FERNANDO TORDO

The interpretation of songs is subjective. Several factors influence the analysis of written poems. In order to fill some gaps that might exist in the analyses, we sought to understand the historical context through an interview with Fernando Tordo.

Fernando Tordo was one of the most influential protest singers of his generation. He used music as a way to point out the flaws of Portuguese society in the 1970s. He was a protagonist of a cultural revolution, alongside José Ary dos Santos, with whom he formed one of the most emblematic partnerships in Portuguese song.

He was one of the most influential names in the history of the RTP Song Festival, with seven participations as a performer, six of which were with songs of his own authorship. He also composed six more songs for other voices. “O Cavalo à solta” (The

Horse on the Loose), “Estrela da tarde” (Evening Star), and “Tourada” (Bullfight) were major highlights of this vast musical range that Fernando Tordo presented throughout his career. He won the Song Festival, with a "finger pointed" at the regime and society.

Fernando Tordo argues that “freedom is not the daughter of democracy”, but rather “democracy is the daughter of freedom.” He believes that freedom must be constantly fought for, not only for its conquest but also for its maintenance.

(...) we must be dedicated to defending and growing our freedom. The other things, then, are things very much linked to politicians, which have nothing to do with the people, nothing to do with us as the Portuguese people. Freedom, yes, freedom has a lot to do with us. We started talking about freedom, which we didn't have, and today we are talking about freedom again as a major concern in our country. (Interview with Fernando Tordo)

Regarding the need for songs in the fight for freedom, Fernando Tordo says that, even today, he would be able to vigorously sing “Tourada” (Bullfight) if he considered it necessary. Despite this, he says that, nowadays, there is no such need

I believe it won't be necessary, just for fun. In other words, it's no longer necessary to satirize Portuguese society, because it's already there for all to see. The problem before was that there wasn't much opportunity to do so. Anyone who spoke too openly was told to shut up or was arrested. We don't have that risk today. (Interview with Fernando Tordo)

Fernando Tordo praises several figures in national culture. Amadeo de Souza Cardoso is placed alongside Picasso in terms of genius in the field of painting. Regarding the written word – and that's what this article is about – Fernando Tordo mentions two names he considers to be the personalities most missed by the country: Natália Correia and José Carlos Ary dos Santos.

Within the realm of the written word, or song, or poetry, the culture, literature in general, the absence of José Carlos Ary dos Santos and Natália Correia has made a huge difference in what our country's culture is like. There are certain things that wouldn't have happened. There are certain things that wouldn't have occurred. There are certain things that wouldn't happen today and there are certain things that wouldn't happen tomorrow. (Interview with Fernando Tordo)

He remembers Ary dos Santos as the greatest songwriter in Portugal, who had his own style: “for love and not for anger; for love and not for hostility; for love and not because one is old and the other is young; it was for love”.

Regarding picking up the guitar again and composing songs to change society, Fernando Tordo states that he would always be motivated by freedom. He says that living in a “depraved society, completely out of sync” is enough to return to protest songwriting.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the role of music in the construction of democratic Portugal between 1964 and 1975 reveals the crucial role of music as a form of social protest. The research question presented and addressed throughout this document allows us to conclude the fundamental role of song in the country's political transition.

In Portugal, throughout the 20th century, music was an important tool for political expression. Furthermore, it was fundamental in the construction of democratic Portugal, emerging as a mirror of the social, political, and cultural transformations that occurred in the country during the Estado Novo period and after April 25th. Through various musical genres, music can be seen in society as:

ideological instrumentalization during the Estado Novo, resistance to the dictatorial regime, partisan intervention after April 25th, and the use of music by movements against neoliberalism in recent decades (Institute of Ethnomusicology - Center for Studies in Music and Dance, n.d.).

Throughout the dictatorship, protest and intervention songs, such as those by José Afonso, Sérgio Godinho, José Mário Branco, and others mentioned throughout this article, became instruments of resistance against the regime. They also portrayed the population's discontent and a form of political awareness. Music expressed, through its lyrics, dissatisfaction with the regime. It also contributed to linking the needs for freedom, equality, and justice, central elements of the Carnation Revolution. Songs like “E depois do adeus” and “Grândola, Vila Morena” were not only sounds of the revolution but also icons of a social and political transformation. After April 25th, music continued to reflect a society in transformation, while the country moved towards a solid democracy, albeit with tensions throughout the transition.

Not only did music influence the construction of democracy, but the country's historical and political period also influenced the national songbook. From the “national-songwriting” that prevailed in the serenity of the Estado Novo regime, to the emergence of student movements that politicized the ballads of Coimbra, and the integration of various distinct genres into protest songs. Sérgio Godinho brought rock, José Mário Branco brought the French influences of the chanson style. If until 1974 the songs demanded freedom, the redemocratization of the country, and the end of the regime, from

the revolution onwards they began to diversify their message. Leftist ideas were widely disseminated through intervention songs, with several prominent protagonists.

The interview with Fernando Tordo allowed for a temporal and historical contextualization of the composition of protest songs, to learn about the figures who inspired the fight for freedom, and the motivations that led them to sing about their ideals before and after the Carnation Revolution. Fernando Tordo was one of the most important names in the history of the Song Festival in the 1970s.

The RTP Song Festival gradually reflected the political tensions of the time and became a space for disseminating the social and political anxieties of the era. The impact of music throughout its years of editions is evident there.

However, interventionist music declined after the PREC (Processo Revolucionário em Curso – Ongoing Revolutionary Process), giving way to a more diverse musical landscape. This reflects the transition from an era of political mobilization to a period of democratic stability. An analysis of the evolution of Portuguese music between 1964 and 1975 reveals the role that music played both in denouncing the Salazar regime and in the construction of democratic Portugal.

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