

Isabel PINA

Portuguese Dictatorial Propaganda in the Periodical Press of the 1940s: Music Criticism, Composers and Ideology

Portugalų diktatūros propaganda penkto dešimtmečio periodinėje spaudoje: muzikos kritika, kompozitoriai ir ideologija

CESEM – NOVA FCSH, Av. de Berna, 26C, 1069-061 Lisbon, Portugal
isabel.as.pina@gmail.com

Abstract

During the Estado Novo there was a clear investment in cultural initiatives. These were mainly related to the need, stated by the dictator himself, António Salazar, and António Ferro—the head of Portuguese propaganda during the most critical years of the dictatorship—to build a solid political regime, based on traditional, regional, and Catholic values, which were supposed to be recognized by both the Portuguese and abroad. The *modus operandi* of Ferro's propaganda resulted in the appropriation—or even creation—and dissemination of artistic objects that even today are recognized as inherently Portuguese symbols. Music and music criticism had an important role in this propaganda: some of the music criticism regarding the events promoted by the dictatorship was written by composers and critics that took part in the dictatorship's propaganda, while others were against the conservative right-wing policy. In a context marked by censorship and where—not surprisingly—most articles react positively to government policy, the intention of this article is to analyze the discourses of music criticism and the way the cultural and musical changes imposed by the Estado Novo were aired—supported and criticized—by some of the most influential periodicals, composers, and critics of the Portuguese twentieth century, at the same time taking into account obvious nuances with regard to political positioning.

Keywords: *Estado Novo*, Secretariat of National Propaganda, music criticism, Portuguese music, ideology.

Anotacija

Antrosios Respublikos, arba *Estado Novo*, laikotarpiu buvo nemažai investuojama į kultūrinės iniciatyvas. Šios investicijos iš esmės buvo susijusios su politine propaganda: kaip skelbė pats diktatorius Antonio'us Salazaras ir ypač portugalų propagandos galva Antonio'us Ferro'as – reikėjo sukurti tvirtą, tradicinėmis, regiono ir katalikų vertybėmis paremtą politinį režimą, kuris būtų pripažįstamas ir Portugalijoje, ir užsienyje. Ferro propagandos *modus operandi* rėmėsi perėmimu – arba netgi sukūrimu – bei sklaida meninių objektų, kurie ir šiandien pripažįstami neatsiejama Portugalijos simboliais. Muzika ir muzikos kritika šioje propagandoje taip pat atliko svarbų vaidmenį: kai kurie į propagandą įsitraukusių kompozitorių ir muzikos kritikų rašyti straipsniai pristatė diktatūros propaguojamus įvykius, o kiti kritikavo konservatyviają dešiniųjų politiką. Atsižvelgiant į cenzūros paženklinimą kontekstą, kai daugumoje straipsnių išreiškiamas teigiamas požiūris į vyriausybės politiką, šiame straipsnyje siekiama išanalizuoti muzikos kritikos diskursus ir būdus, kuriais keletas įtakingiausių XX a. Portugalijos periodinių leidinių, kompozitorių ir kritikų vertina – teigiamai arba kritiškai – *Estado Novo* atneštas kultūrinės bei muzikines permainas, neignorodami ir akivaizdžių, su politine pozicija susijusių *niuansų*.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: *Estado Novo*, Nacionalinės propagandos sekretoriatas, muzikos kritika, portugalų muzika, ideologija.

Introduction

After the First Republic—1910-1926—Portugal lived under a military dictatorship until 1933, and, with the Constitution of 1933, under a dictatorial regime designated and known from then on as the Estado Novo. Between them, the military dictatorship and Estado Novo, brought to an end by the Carnation Revolution of 1974, are known as the Second Republic. In 1928, António de Oliveira Salazar entered the government definitively, becoming Minister of Finance and later President of the Council of Ministers. In 1933, Salazar officially became Portugal's dictator—the dictator of a corporatist, conservative, nationalist,

traditionalist, Catholic regime, considered by many to be fascist in its essence. For almost fifty years, Portugal saw the establishment of, for instance:

1) the law of censorship—which was imposed on all media, press, radio, and literature:

With the implementation of the Constitution, the reorganization of earlier censorship in 1933, and the creation of the Secretariat for National Propaganda (SPN) the following September, the appropriate legal means and instruments were created for intervention to bring these main aims into effect. In the actual terms of the 1933 Constitution, public opinion was considered a “fundamental element of the administration

politics of the Country.” But this “public opinion” then conceived by the Estado Novo was not at all related to the complex formation of a “space for opinion” where ideas were freely confronted. It was merely an attempt to constitute a “bloc of national opinion” which served the rulers’ interests, with the ultimate objective of faking the “national spirit.” This implied that, besides silencing the discordant voices (through censorship, through the PIDE), there was an attempt to implant the greatness of this regime’s works into public awareness as well as the notion that this was the expression and strongest guarantee for the defense of the perennial values of national identity. (Tengarrinha. 2017: 383)¹

2) the secret police,² whose torture of prisoners and men and women of the political (leftist) opposition has only recently become known to part of the Portuguese population:

After a question about possible maltreatment that was being exercised by the police, Salazar declared that after an inquiry, it was “concluded that the people maltreated were always, or almost always, fearsome bombers, who refused to confess, despite the use of every means.” He added the justification that “only after using these violent means” did they decide to “tell the truth,” leading Ferro to ask “whether the lives of children and defenseless people were not of sufficient worth or did not in large part justify giving these sinister creatures half a dozen well-timed shoves. (Pimentel 2017: 25)

3) and the deflagration of the Portuguese Colonial War or Overseas War, between 1961 and 1974 in the overseas territories of Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique—in these countries this war is known as the War of Liberation:

In 1961 a series of wars began between Portugal and the different liberation movements invested in conquering the independence of African territories under colonial domination. First in Angola, then Guinea and Mozambique, the war on three different fronts continued as the last rattle of an already anachronistic empire. Hundreds of thousands of young men were then transported from the “metropolis” to a remote war.

[...]

This extensive armed conflict, born amid the post-World War II anticolonial wars, would work, directly or indirectly, as a defining preliminary to the independence of Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and São Tomé and Príncipe. (Cardina & Martins 2018: 11)

As a logical consequence, for almost five decades, the country went through a series of cultural impositions, which were sometimes merely the official establishment of cultural policies already in existence during the First Republic, in order to create the image of an apparently culturally uniform population with values assumed by the Portuguese people themselves and perceived by other nations.

However, Salazar could not act alone in order to make these changes or construct all this *mise-en-scène*. His main

concerns were evidently economic rather than cultural, given his admitted willingness to sacrifice some of the population’s cultural needs in order to restore the country’s finances. In other words, he had no qualms about sacrificing actual people in order to be able to build roads, castles, and monuments, using the high figures obtained in these areas as proof of success. Moreover, Salazar was quite different from other authoritarian leaders, such as Mussolini or Hitler, whose cultural and artistic campaigns were viewed, in a sense, as priorities. According to various researchers currently focusing on the Estado Novo and on Salazar himself, what makes this Portuguese political dictatorship quite different from other European cases is the figure of the “leader”—which Salazar, by comparison with his Italian or German counterparts, was not, since he lacked the charisma and concerns about mass politics that characterized the other regimes. Reclaiming his image as a shy, conservative, humble man, with a calm, isolated, monastic way of living and interacting with the people, Salazar gave little value to the mass politics of Hitler, considering that the interest of the Estado Novo was principally in drawing in the upper classes, who would subliminally guide and influence the lower ones.

In a society marked by the hegemony of ultraconservative social and political elites, but with a heavy weight from the oligarchies of rural landowners and commerce, intimately linked, as a strategy of preservation, to the traditional powers of the Catholic Church and the Army; with a fanatical attachment to “order,” to “natural hierarchy,” to “tradition,” to “discipline,” and for that very reason, with a sense of fear and panic, which are essential to everything that concerns the “street,” the masses, social protest, unions, democracy, and even in important sectors of the ruling classes, and modernity in general; in a society, moreover, in global terms little massified and with the intermediate classes having little weight; in a society, however, strongly affected by the economic, social, political, and ideological crisis of liberalism; in this mix of social and political culture, it was understood that the “Head” of the “National Revolution” would ultimately be who it was. An austere professor of public finance at the University of Coimbra, a former seminarian and leader of the Catholic party, a son of rural homesteaders from the Beira Alta, a conservative and authoritarian elitist trained in the cultural traditions of counterrevolutionary, social Catholic, and integralist thought, someone utterly alien to the glamour of Lisbon politics. A “university dictator” who, almost without being noticed, had evolved from Coimbra to Finance and from that to the head of government. In outward appearance, in style, in methods, he is seemingly different from the Latin, populist, plebeian, and modernist virility of the Italian *duce*. A sort of national variant of the dictator and modern European dictatorships. (Rosas 2015: 166–7)

In this sense, and with a view to making Salazar’s and the Estado Novo’s ideas closer to and easily grasped by the

whole Portuguese population, the charismatic and influential figure of António Ferro³ became known nationally on the political scene through the publication of a series of interviews with António Salazar in the daily newspaper *Diário de Notícias*, considered perhaps one of the first real acts of political propaganda of the Estado Novo:

[...] before 1933, the year of adoption of the new Constitution and of the complementary measures of organization of the secret police and of censorship, of the creation of National Unions, of the regulation of the exercise of freedoms, etc., at the end of 1932, in November, Salazar agreed to be interviewed by António Ferro for the *Diário de Notícias*. He was not simply any old journalist. He was perhaps the most international and cosmopolitan Portuguese reporter of the time, travelling throughout the world of the new dictators, an interviewer of Mussolini and Kemal Atatürk, among many others, knowledgeable about international politics, a man of culture close to the modernists, and an extreme right-wing intellectual seduced by the radical novelties of propaganda, aesthetics, and the great *mise-en-scènes* of fascism. An encounter, for all that, providential.

The newspaper was to publish this series of interviews between 11 and 23 December 1932, and its first edition as a book (bringing together these five talks) appeared, with other supporting material, in 1933.

It would be the first great propaganda document about the regime and its head, appearing in a newspaper and then collected in a book, even before the institutionalization of the Estado Novo itself. (Rosas 2015: 157–8)

A year later, in 1933, António Ferro became the director of the newly created Secretariado da Propaganda Nacional—Secretariat for National Propaganda. From 1933 to 1949, this former journalist, enthusiast of modernism and an admirer of Hitler and Mussolini, was the person behind what he called the *Política do Espírito*—the “Policy of the Spirit”—the policy of cultural enhancement of the Estado Novo.

The Estado Novo cannot be understood in all its length and breadth, not even the singularity of the Portuguese authoritarian regime, without knowing António Ferro, the man responsible for propaganda. The essence of Salazarism is indissociable from the maneuvers and expedients that he used in the construction of the political image of the leader of the Estado Novo [...]

In command of the propaganda apparatus, Ferro was, at the same time, the rudder, the prow, and the captain of the Salazarist ship. Intelligent, creative and hardworking like few of his generation, he manipulated the press, radio, and cinema with total disdain for the public, he falsified popular habits and customs, and he invented traditions that never existed, sacrificing everything for the interests of the regime. (Raimundo 2015: 11)

For around fifteen years, António Ferro was the principal figure responsible for the appropriation, which

sometimes may even be considered “invention,” of certain cultural objects that to this today are considered inherently Portuguese symbols. As examples mention may be made of the *Galo de Barcelos* (Cockerel of Barcelos), today sold as a national symbol throughout the country, which at first was a chance handicraft object sold by a local artist in a local market; the regional clothes, a typification or creation of local, but actually not very representative, working apparel—which intended to show the differences between people from different regions, but which also served the purpose of showing the population as equally poor, but happy; and folk-music groups, with which the Secretariat for National Propaganda intended to do the same but through music.

For fifteen years he made the country a theater and took on the role of director. He organized exhibitions of modern art, instituted literary and artistic prizes, financed various films and many documentaries, prepared representations at major international exhibitions, created a ballet company, drew attention to the potential that exists in folk art, and took care of the organization of a Museum of the People, inaugurated in 1948. At the same time, and in order to promote tourism, which at that time was still incipient, he worried about the appearance of the streets, launched window-shopping contests, promoted the decoration of hotels and restaurants, collaborated in the *pousada* program [the installation of luxury hotels in historic buildings], convinced that hygiene, taste and dignity were essential in the way the visitor was welcomed, and launched a campaign that would tend to generalize good taste. (Acciaiuoli 2013: 8)

One of the main initiatives of this political and cultural secretariat was the mega-celebration of the poly-centenaries in the year of 1940. This year was, for Salazar’s regime, fundamental, on both a national and international level, for asserting both its own power and that of the history, value, and economic evolution of the Portuguese Empire. During the year 1940, Portugal celebrated the 800th anniversary of the foundation of the country, that is to say, as a separate Portuguese nation, in 1140, and 300 years of independence from the Spanish crown, in 1640. In 1940, countless events took place, various monuments were restored, built, and rebuilt. The country was, in a sense, “cleaned up” and organized for the ultimate celebration—the Portuguese World Exhibition:

The exaltation of the Discoveries is the central motif of the great Portuguese World Exhibition, set up in Belém in 1940. [...]

In evoking epic seaborne voyages, national pride was enhanced by showing foreign visitors that the Portuguese Colonial Empire was an oasis of peace in a world at war. And the dictator was glorified, elevated to the condition of great emperor, heir, providing continuity to the heroes of the sea, although this helmsman never set foot in the overseas territories. [...]

Inaugurated on 23 June 1940 by president Óscar Fragoso Carmona, with Salazar at his side, the exhibition lasted more than five months [...]

The exhibition, which stretched over a gigantic area of 560 thousand square meters, was set up in Belém, since there were already three national monuments there extolling the glorious past: the Jerónimos Monastery and the Tower of Belém from the beginning of the sixteenth century, and the statue of Afonso de Albuquerque from 1901. For over 11 months the operation mobilized full-time 5,000 manual workers, 1,000 plasterers, 123 masons, 15 engineers, and 12 architects, joined by 43 painters and 19 sculptors. (Raimundo 2015: 291–2)

Musically speaking, 1940 was indeed a crucial year: António Ferro finally managed to create a Portuguese ballet company, Verde-Gaio, with which he intended to create a powerful propaganda weapon across borders as well as fulfil his expectations as to how dance could raise awareness of certain moments of national history; the national opera house, the Teatro de São Carlos, was at long last, reopened, after years of remodeling and repairs. These two events were integrated into the 1940 commemorations.

The première of the ballet company Verde-Gaio

The primary aim of this article is to identify and analyze the criticism pertaining to the première of the Verde-Gaio ballet company and the reopening of the Teatro de São Carlos, as published in the Portuguese periodical press, focusing on opposing discourses—those in favor of the Estado Novo and its initiatives, and those against them. However, and perhaps not surprisingly due to the existence of the law of censorship under the Estado Novo, openly opposed articles were not to be found; of course, even the articles concerning the launching of Verde-Gaio and the reopening of the São Carlos published by music critics of the opposition were not, in essence, negative. Indeed, mention should be made of a notable silence, since criticism by various known oppositional music critics, those who, despite censorship, were most openly opposed to the regime's events in other situations, is non-existent. On the contrary, if we consult the main newspapers and journals of the time, only positive criticism on these events is to be encountered. However, the intention of this text is to examine nuances in these discourses, with a view to identifying further information about what the true opinions and ideologies of the critics and the periodicals at stake might be.

Chronologically, the first of these two events was the première of Verde-Gaio, on 8 November 1940. It had wide publicity in the periodical press, namely in the regime's official daily newspaper, *Diário da Manhã*, which for days beforehand prepared readers and the theaters' frequenters for the great event that the Secretariat for National Propaganda

would finally bring to fruition. Immediately mentioning all the main artists involved in the project and with almost the same enthusiasm—composers, choreographers, plastic artists, fashion designers—the *Diário da Manhã* or its critics and journalists, just like other newspapers, tried, from the outset, to enhance the dimension of the “total work of art” that was implied in an undertaking such as Verde-Gaio, therefore demonstrating the cooperation between the multiple artists, arts and sectors of the initiative:

We await with great interest the forthcoming première, at the Teatro da Trindade, of the ballet company Verde-Gaio. This atmosphere is fully justified, both because of the importance of the Secretariat for National Propaganda's initiative, aiming to create a “school” of Portuguese ballet among us, and owing to the fact that Francis is the artist that will bring it to fruition, as well as to the recognized merit of the people that work with him.

Amongst them, it is fair to highlight, besides the composers who wrote the music for the ballets—Rui Coelho, Frederico de Freitas, and Jorge Croner de Vasconcelos⁴—the name of Dr. Ivo Cruz, illustrious director of the Conservatório Nacional, who will conduct the Orquestra Filarmónica de Lisboa, a remarkable group with more than seventy invaluable members.

To the success of this initiative there will equally be contributions from the plastic artists: Estrela Faria, Maria Keil do Amaral, José Barbosa, Paulo Ferreira, and Bernardo Marques, designing the scenery, the curtains, and the costumes, have afforded this work all the resources of their original and vigorous art. (*Diário da Manhã* 2.11.1940: 3)

The most important part of convincing the public of this achievement was carried out immediately before the show by António Ferro himself, who gave a speech about Verde-Gaio on the official state broadcasting station—the Emissora Nacional.⁵ This “radio talk” was published in its entirety in the *Diário da Manhã* the day following the broadcast and the show itself. Beginning his talk by emphasizing the inescapable presence of the art of dance throughout human history, Ferro quickly explained, in enthusiastic and laudatory terms, the reason behind the creation of a ballet company, presenting Portugal as a country naturally devoted to dance, even if not fully conscious of the fact:

Portugal is, precisely, one of the richest European countries in ballet motives. All over the country, from North to South, buried or simply unknown, there are endless themes, of a high poetical quality, that can be transformed into choreography. This was the task undertaken by the Secretariat for National Propaganda from its foundation. Exhibitions of Popular Art, national and foreign exhibitions of our folklore, specialized publications, and the contest for the most Portuguese village have been no more than simple excavations in order to bring to the surface certain colorful and rhythmic expressions of the national soul, the eternal gestures of the race, and its interior design made visible. [...]

“Verde-Gaio,” a small company of Portuguese ballets that is premiered today, is the first flower produced from the seeds we found in the earth and cast back to the earth. A timid, modest flower, a simple flower of the field, but which can be transformed when carefully nurtured in Klingsor’s Garden. (*Diário da Manhã* 9.11.1940: 1)

Making constant reference to the values of the Portuguese race and the relevance of popular and traditional, almost mythological, art forms as representatives of the true national essence, António Ferro made the point that

...in Portugal we had to start from scratch, since we have neither a school nor a ballet tradition. We have the raw material, dances, and rhythms in their virginal state, but we lacked the impulse, the creative spirit. (*Diário da Manhã* 9.11.1940: 1)

In the pages of the *Diário da Manhã*, the show was described as “the most beautiful moment amongst all the theatrical presentations of the poly-centenary celebrations” and as “eminently national, racially Portuguese” (*Diário da Manhã* 9.11.1940: 4). The music itself is only briefly mentioned and seemingly in the least direct way possible, emphasizing the “Portugueseness” of the themes and music—one of the pieces emphasizing Portugal’s Islamic heritage while at the same time promoting one of Portugal’s regions (the Algarve) and assets (almonds); another based on a rhapsody of excerpts inspired by traditional music; and a third based on one of the best-known romantic episodes of Portuguese royal history:

In the three ballets presented the day before yesterday, the lyrical motif is predominant, both in its subjective and static expression of the delicate musical *poemeto* by Jorge Croner de Vasconcelos, which is the adorable “Lenda das Amendoeiras” [“Legend of the almond trees”], and in the objective and dynamic expression of the cheerful watercolor, screaming of color and movement, that is *Muro do Derrête* by Frederico de Freitas.

But where this lyricism is deeper and greater is surely in *Inês de Castro*, by Rui Coelho, a magnificent interpretation of a centuries-old *Leitmotif*, the theme of tragic love, for the first time choreographed in a Portuguese expression. (“J. de F.” 10.11.1940: 5)

Identical is the discourse published in the newspaper *Novidades*, a Catholic newspaper that printed the very same words as found in the *Diário da Manhã*. All of the articles concerning Verde-Gaio’s première refer, for instance, to the presence of leading state figures, such as the President or ministers; similarly, the performance of the main dancer, Francis Graça,⁶ is always mentioned. But in other newspapers, the ones that adhered less closely to the political regime’s ethos, the focus is different. In *O Século*, for example, the presence of modernist lines in the visual part of the show is stressed and praised. In the *Diário de Notícias*, although making similar points, the critic refers to this première as “a first decisive step to the creation of

Portuguese ballet” (*Diário de Notícias* 6.11.1940: 4), in a way implying that this initiative did not exactly constitute a finished achievement, but merely a first attempt. It is also in the *Diário de Notícias* that certain difficulties and reservations are mentioned in relation to Francis’s choreography for one of the ballets, perhaps being the only article to refer, albeit subtly, to weaknesses in the artistic training of the leading dancer. Although Francis tried to improve his classical technique with official classes at the *Conservatório Nacional* and through private coaching with foreign teachers, he was already known as a dancer whose aim was to put popular dancing traditions on the map, less worried about classical technique. António Ferro himself recognized that, even if he lacked experience, Francis was ready and willing, which was, in this particular instance, more important.⁷

The reopening of the Teatro de São Carlos

As for the Teatro de São Carlos,⁸ now the Teatro Nacional de São Carlos, it reopened on 1 December 1940, the day of the “Restoration of Independence,” which celebrated Portuguese independence from the Spanish Crown, in 1640, during the reign of King João IV, following sixty years of domination by the Spanish monarchy. It was not, of course, a coincidence that the country’s principal opera house reopened on this specific day, with a performance of the opera *D. João IV* by Rui Coelho, who was, as we have seen, also involved in the Verde-Gaio initiative, and was one of the composers most closely associated with Salazar’s regime. Furthermore, King João IV, who lived between 1604 and 1652 and reigned from 1640 until his death, had been the object of fascination for various nationalist Portuguese composers, since he had a double significance with regard both to his being the monarch responsible for the restoration of independence and to his passion for music and occupation as a composer. João IV was the subject of musicological research by the monarchist composer Luís de Freitas Branco,⁹ whose book *D. João IV Músico* was published posthumously (1956) as well as of an article by Rui Coelho for the periodical *Revista dos Centenários*—a journal published by the Secretariat for National Propaganda during the commemorations of 1940, with propaganda and news about its initiatives—by way of promoting the opera which reopened the Teatro Nacional de São Carlos.

Unlike the Verde-Gaio première, the reopening of the São Carlos was not, in a sense, an event in itself, since it was only one of the several events that took place on the same day. On 1 December, there were many initiatives, given that it was also the closing of the Portuguese World Exhibition and the official final day of the poly-centenary commemorations; amongst other things, the final moments of the commemorations also consisted of parades by the *Mocidade*

*Portuguesa*¹⁰ and the *Legião Portuguesa*,¹¹ a homage by the President beside the Restoration monument, and a solemn *Te Deum*. Moreover, it is worth pointing out that, in a similar way to the criticism relating to Verde-Gaio, the music was not the most important element in the reopening of the São Carlos. It was, so to speak, more of an architectonic and social event, since the São Carlos had been closed for several years and was now one of the projects of the Minister of Public Works. In the same manner as the castles, churches, universities, and hospitals, the Teatro Nacional de São Carlos, at its reopening, became an architectural symbol of the country's and of the regime's greatness through the reconstruction of valuable items of national heritage. As regards the relevance of the Ministry and Minister of Public Works, mention should be made of the periodical *Panorama*, also published by the Secretariat for National Propaganda, which emphasized the importance of public works in its editions:

The publication, in the first issue, of an article on the "Port of Lisbon," which was followed, with the same emphasis, by texts on the Coast Road, the Hidráulica Agricultural, the School of Alfeite, the National Stadium, the Instituto Superior Técnico, the Church of Fatima, and the Maritime Station of Alcântara as well as the extensive references that appear about the first *pousadas*, illustrate the effort that was made to show how these undertakings rivalled the natural beauties and the exhibitions that had been held. [...] But there were also coded references that were of no less importance, especially those linked to their great promoter, Minister Duarte Pacheco [Minister of Public Works] (1900-1943). (Acciaiuoli 2013:247-8)

For instance, in the Catholic newspaper *A Voz*, the reopening of the theater is not only mentioned as part of a whole day of celebrations, but also as an architectural and decorative comeback, including a description of the building in the opening sentences of the article:

As a complement to the day's ceremonies, the gala performance at the Teatro de São Carlos consisted of an extraordinarily splendid event, full of dignity.

The old theatre, imposing and rejuvenated in its decor, evoked the atmosphere of the great festivities of the past, which had particular significance there. (*A Voz* 3.12.1940: 2)

The same newspaper, a few days after the first article, published a much more elaborate critical text, this time signed—one of the few that also mention the decoration, the public and the music. As regards the theatre's visual aspect, Alfredo Pimenta, a known monarchist in the Portuguese intellectual aristocracy, stated:

That symphony of white and gold coexisting in perfect balance, which offer us a patina midway between novelty, the impertinence of the debut, and the old that requires restoration, that symphony is one of the most joyful happenings that I have witnessed.

The salon for rendezvous during the intermissions, broad and beautiful, is a precious jewel that provoked in me a spontaneous and uncontrollable *bravo!*, and it underlines all the good taste of the architect that imagined and brought it about.

I already knew the theater, of course, as I already knew fragments of the opera *D. João IV*, because on the night of the visit there was a rehearsal, and I couldn't resist the urge to sit and listen to a bit of music. (Pimenta 5.12.1940: 1)

As an inherently social event, perhaps the reopening of the São Carlos was even more ostentatious and elegant than the Verde-Gaio première. This time, the political and diplomatic figures present in the audience were mentioned with greater enthusiasm, the presence of Spain's ambassadors being underlined, with greater or lesser subtlety, as a way of showing the empathy that Portugal and Spain now shared. Also noted was the attendance of Filipa de Bragança, direct descendant of King João IV, symbolizing an evident compromise between the Estado Novo and the monarchic factions of Portuguese society.¹² Moreover, one of the most characteristic traits of the articles concerning this reopening is the way the newspapers describe the reaction of the public towards the presence of the President, Óscar Carmona¹³ and the President of the Council of Ministers, António Salazar, visible, for instance, in the pages of *O Século*, in a passage that also underlines the secondary role the music played in this event:

The orchestra began the spectacle with the Hymn to the Restoration. Everyone standing. Sensation. Applause for the President as well as for Dr. Oliveira Salazar, and the velvet curtain of the proscenium opened. The light entered with its phantasmagorias [...]. And maestro Rui Coelho lifted his baton. The show on the stage is about to begin and is met with silence. In the first intermission, the great salon grows crowded. [...] In a corridor [...] the Head of State passes by, the President of the Council and various ministers, Mr. Duarte Pacheco in front, guiding herald and creator of this fine work. The applause is vibrant, enthusiastic and affectionate. ("M.S." 3.12.1940: 1)

Only two articles mention the music in a more extended fashion. One of them was written by the Portuguese composer and critic Luís de Freitas Branco,¹⁴ with whom Rui Coelho had had differences in the past, the two sometimes being by Portuguese musicology as rivals.¹⁵ Freitas Branco's article is short, and in a certain sense neutral, mentioning only the main parts of the opera and the traditional or popular inspiration of the composer, without going into detail. In Alfredo Pimenta's review for the newspaper *A Voz*, the quality and appropriateness of Rui Coelho's opera is highlighted, but reading between the lines we understand that the composer is, in a way, a problematic personality with whom a number of artistic and political objectors had regularly had public arguments in the press, something

that would have been known to the informed Portuguese newspaper reader:

It has very beautiful musical passages—some that caress our ears in sweet melody; others that thrill us with enthusiasm, awaking in our spirit that joy that does not deceive us.

It is possible that the technicians, tomorrow, holding their pencils with the score open, will find reasons to mention semiquavers or demisemiquavers, sharps and flats. I couldn't care less about that, because I don't know. What is true is that down below, in the audience, there were moments when I was delighted, wishing it would never end, and others when I wished to scream my love for Portugal.

If, during all this time, there was a demisemiquaver more or a flat less, or in the wrong place, that is of no interest to me. The ultimate aim of Art is to provoke reactions of the ear, or emotional images. That aim was achieved by Mr. Rui Coelho—a very controversial person, but with whom I have no relations, let me add, for the elucidation of the critics. (Pimenta 5.12.1940: 1)

Conclusion

Throughout this article, the main purpose has been fundamentally to demonstrate how musical events served the political propaganda agenda of the Estado Novo and how that dimension was perceived in the publicity and media coverage to be found in the Portuguese periodical press of the time—in all the daily non-specialist newspapers that built up readers' and general public's interest before the premières and emphasized in critical articles. This was brought about sometimes by critics and musicians related to the political regime, in the pages of official right-wing periodicals, and by others, in articles that, although positive at first sight, reveal to us certain details about the events which are not present in the first group. Nevertheless, we may state that the reviews in the periodical press mentioned in this article are mainly positive in tone—even though severe censorship can explain the reasons why there is no actual negative criticism, the silence of opposing voices is indeed curious, particularly from critics who, on other occasions, and despite previous censorship, do not restrain themselves in their openly critical opposition to the intentions of the Secretariat for National Propaganda.

One particular silence, by the composer Fernando Lopes-Graça, is worth mentioning. Admittedly aligned with leftist ideologies, imprisoned by the secret police for actions that included the direction of a subversive republican newspaper, and later exiled in Paris and linked to the Portuguese Communist Party, Fernando Lopes-Graça always maintained a highly critical position with regard to the appropriation, by the Secretariat for National Propaganda, of Portuguese traditional music for the creation of an image in sound of a picturesque country,

devaluing the actual voice of the people, while also criticizing certain composers who, from an early stage, took on the main creative intentions of Salazar's regime—such as Rui Coelho. However, Fernando Lopes-Graça does not write about these particular events – it almost seems that he consciously refused to write about the subject. Indeed, Fernando Lopes-Graça, in private correspondence, asked his friend and colleague Francine Benoît, equally linked to opposition organizations, and who was likewise severe as a music critic on a number of occasions, to write about the Portuguese ballet company Verde-Gaio, instead of himself, for the weekly periodical *O Diabo*, of which Lopes-Graça was the main music and musical theater critic. The article by Francine Benoît, curiously, since it was written for an anti-Salazar periodical, just like other critics, is not negative as such, with only a few points about what didn't go so well in the performances: the shows were more visual than musical, the musical compositions that were more interesting were not suited to choreography, and the best choreography was not applied to the best musical works. But throughout her article we can read that she was actually trying to understand and explain why Verde-Gaio was, indeed, a success, since that was not obvious.

Broadly speaking, these two events were not of great interest to the periodical press simply as musical events. They were important moments but as spectacles in all their dimensions, consisting, amongst other things, as elements of the regime's *mise-en-scène*. 1940, with the poly-centenary commemorations, was the ideological, propaganda and aesthetic zenith of the Estado Novo, which until 1945 would maintain its “fascist-ish” theatrical activities, which tended to disappear after World War II. I could have chosen other manifestations, such as architecture, sculpture, clothing, interior decoration, photography, arts and crafts, painting, or other musical genres, such as *fado*. I could even have chosen other examples of art music specifically composed for the 1940 commemorations, such as *Abertura 1640*, by Luís de Freitas Branco. This particular work was recently analyzed by Manuel Deniz Silva (2016) as a fundamentally monarchic achievement, given that the monarchic composer used the occasion as a celebration of Portuguese independence from the Spanish crown, instead of being the fascist impulse of someone who, in fact, never supported Salazar. However, with these examples we can probably see that the cultural change carried out by Estado Novo translated itself into the crystallization of artistic forms of a presumably traditional character, and were, therefore, representative of an authentic past that was to be perceived by everyone and in the building, rebuilding and restoration of monuments that, in a way, showed the antiquity of the Portuguese race and assured a convenient social stratification for the regime. Music was only one of the instruments of the so-called “Policy of the Spirit” of the Estado Novo.

Endnotes

- ¹ This and other translations are the author's.
- ² Created in 1933 and known until 1945 as the *Polícia de Vigilância e Defesa do Estado* (PVDE), and between 1945 and 1969 as the *Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado* (PIDE).
- ³ António Ferro (1895–1956).
- ⁴ Rui Coelho (1889–1986) was a composer, conductor, and prolific music critic who came to be known as essentially a composer of symphonies and operas with national or nationalist themes inspired by Portuguese poets, significant moments in Portuguese history, and folk or popular ideals. He was one of the composers most committed to the celebrations of 1940 (Silva 2010: 301–5).
 Frederico de Freitas (1902–1980) was a composer and conductor, prolific in a variety of genres, such as symphonic music, religious music, operettas, and vaudeville. With regard to ballet music, his output is closely linked to the Verde-Gaio ballet company (Côrte-Real & Latino 2010: 524–9).
 Jorge Croner de Vasconcelos (1910–1974) was a music teacher and composer, for example, of chamber music and ballet music, being best known thanks particularly to the pedagogic activity to which he dedicated himself in the last years of his life, above all as a music teacher at the Conservatório Nacional de Lisboa (Miranda 2010: 1317–8).
- ⁵ The Emissora Nacional was also an initiative brought about during the Estado Novo. Its first broadcast occurred in 1934 and its official inauguration in 1935. Given that music, in the early days of the radio station, was the most primary element in its programming, a symphony orchestra was immediately created as well as a chamber orchestra and a department of Portuguese music. Art music was given first place in the programming of the station; however, popular culture also had to have a place in the broadcast, since António Ferro's goal was to reach the entire population. (Silva 2010; Ribeiro 2005).
- ⁶ Francisco Florêncio Graça, known as Francis Graça (1902–1980). Acciaiuoli 2013: 196.
- ⁷ The Teatro de São Carlos was inaugurated in 1793, first as the Real Teatro de São Carlos, having been built at the initiative of the business elite of Lisbon. It was premièred with *La ballerina amante* by Domenico Cimarosa, and, during most of the nineteenth century, the theater's output was mainly related to Italian opera. French and German opera flourished in Lisbon at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1934, the Teatro de São Carlos closed for restoration work, which only began in 1938. The theater reopened in 1940; "the opera chosen was by Rui Coelho, who became the official composer of the Salazar regime" (Cymbron 2010: 1254).
- ⁸ Luís de Freitas Branco (1890–1955) was a composer, musicology and composition teacher, lecturer, music critic, and researcher, who became known in the history of Portuguese music as the introducer of musical modernism in Portugal and, years later, of a new classicism (ideas that were prominently repeated by his students and family). With a broad output of chamber and symphonic music, Freitas Branco was also one of the most widely recognized music critics of the time. During his youth, he was linked to the political movement Integralismo Lusitano, retaining the ideas of order, Latinism, and classicism throughout his life (Pina 2016).
- ⁹ Organização Nacional Mocidade Portuguesa, commonly known as Mocidade Portuguesa (the Portuguese Youth), was

the youth organization of the Estado Novo, created in 1936 and extinguished with the Carnation Revolution of 1974.

- ¹⁰ Legião Portuguesa (Portuguese Legion), like Mocidade Portuguesa, was founded in 1936 and extinguished in 1974. It was a paramilitary state organization dependent on the Ministry of the Interior and War and responsible for the military and civil defence of Portuguese territories (including those overseas).
- ¹¹ Concerning the integration of all the rightist factions in one single right-wing organization, the historian Fernando Rosas mentions the absorption of Centro Católico (the Catholic right) and monarchism, for example, the movement called Integralismo Lusitano, founded in the 1910s by young men unhappy with the Republic:

The absorption of the Integralists would be more complicated. It should be pointed out, perhaps, that the followers of the restoration of the constitutional monarchy were a species in rapid extinction, not least because the exiled king himself dropped that claim [...] in 1922. Indeed, the majority of the restoration groups would gradually fall under the decisive cultural and ideological influence of the anti-liberal currents in general, and Integralismo Lusitano in particular. [...] the Monarchist Cause and most of the Integralists came to support the Military Dictatorship and then become part of the Estado Novo and the single party, the National Union, the Central Board of Integralismo Lusitano dissolving itself in 1933. (Rosas 2015: 145–6)

- ¹² António Óscar de Fragoso Carmona (1869–1951).
- ¹³ Luís de Freitas Branco signs this article, as many others, only as "LFB."
- ¹⁴ Rui Coelho, as a prolific music critic, became known in twentieth-century Portuguese music history essentially as a polemicist. He initiated and maintained a number of public discussions with composers and critics in the pages of the newspaper where he published his articles, *Diário de Notícias*, as well as in other periodicals to which he sent open letters addressed to directors, editors, critics and composers, questioning their perspectives and explaining his own. One of the first controversies started by Rui Coelho is related to an accusation of plagiarism against Luís de Freitas Branco, in 1911, in an article in which Rui Coelho compares a sonata by Freitas Branco to another by César Franck. The gesture can be seen as the senseless act of a young composer who suffered from being underrated when compared to Luís de Freitas Branco, but the polemical tone of Rui Coelho's articles would remain, creating more heated discussions with well-known music critics such as Francine Benoît (1894–1990) and Fernando Lopes-Graça (1906–1994).

Bibliography

- Acciaiuoli Margariga, *António Ferro – A vertigem da palavra*, Lisboa: Editorial Bizâncio, 2013.
- Cardina Miguel & Bruno Sena Martins (eds.), *As voltas do passado*, Lisboa: Tinta-da-China, 2018.
- Côrte-Real Maria de São José & Adriana Latino, Frederico de Freitas, in: *Enciclopédia da Música em Portugal no Século XX*, Salwa Castelo-Branco (ed.), Vol. 2, Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores, 2010, p. 254–259.
- Cymbron Luísa, Teatro Nacional de S. Carlos, in: *Enciclopédia da Música em Portugal no Século XX*, Salwa Castelo-Branco (ed.), Vol. 4, Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores, 2010, p. 1253–1255.

- Miranda Gil, Jorge Croner de Vasconcelos, in: *Enciclopédia da Música em Portugal no Século XX*, Salwa Castelo-Branco (ed.), Vol. 4, Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores, 2010, p. 1317–1318.
- Pimentel Irene Flunser, *A história da PIDE*, Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores, 2017.
- Pina Isabel, *Neoclassicismo, nacionalismo e latinidade em Luís de Freitas Branco, entre as décadas de 1910 e 1930*, Master Thesis in Musicology, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2016.
- Raimundo Orlando, *António Ferro, o inventor do salazarismo*, Alfragide: Publicações D. Quixote, 2015.
- Ribeiro Nelson, *A Emissora Nacional nos primeiros anos do Estado Novo – 1933-45*, Lisboa: Quimera, 2005.
- Rosas Fernando, *Salazar e o Poder, a arte de saber durar*, Lisboa: Tinta-da-China, 2015.
- Silva Manuel Deniz, Rui Coelho, in: *Enciclopédia da Música em Portugal no Século XX*, Salwa Castelo-Branco (ed.), Vol. 1, Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores, 2010, p. 301–305.
- Silva Manuel Deniz, Rádio, *Enciclopédia da Música em Portugal no Século XX*, Salwa Castelo-Branco (ed.), Vol. 4, Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores, 2010, p. 1080–1086.
- Silva Manuel Deniz, Salazar's dictatorship and the paradoxes of State music: Luís de Freitas Branco's ill-fated *Solemn Overture* 1640 (1939), in: *Composing for the State: Music in 20th-Century Dictatorships*, Esteban Buch, Igor Contreras and Manuel Deniz Silva (eds.), *Musical Cultures of the Twentieth Century Series*, Farnham (GB): Ashgate Publishing and Cini Foundation, 2016, p. 144–167.
- Tengarrinha José, Breves considerações sobre o Estado Novo de Salazar e os Media, in: *Salazar, o Estado Novo e os Media*, Garcia José Luís et al. (coord.), Lisboa: Edições 70, 2017, p. 381-8
- “P.”. “Bailados portugueses – A estreia do Grupo «Verde-Gaio» no Teatro da Trindade”, *Diário de Notícias*, 26853, 10.11.1940, p. 2.
- “A récita de gala em S. Carlos foi espectáculo de rara beleza”, *Diário de Notícias*, 26375, 3.12.1940, p. 3.
- Nogueira de Brito, “A ópera «D. João» - música de Rui Coelho e letra de Silva Tavares”, *Diário de Notícias*, 25376, 4.12.1940, p. 2.
- “Bailados portugueses”, *Novidades*, 14390, 2.11.1940, p. 2.
- “O grupo de bailados «Verde-Gaio» estreia-se amanhã em espectáculo de gala”, *Novidades*, 14395, 7.11.1940, p. 2.
- “Bailados portugueses”, *Novidades*, 14397, 9.11.1940, p. 6.
- Palma Vargas, “Bailados portugueses «Verde-Gaio»”, *Novidades*, 14398, 10.11.1940, p. 5.
- “A récita de gala, em S. Carlos”, *Novidades*, 14420, 3.12.1940, p. 1.
- Francine Benoît, “Apontamentos sobre os espectáculos do «Verde-Gaio»”, *O Diabo*, 323, 30.11.1940, p. 6.
- “O Grupo de Bailados Portugueses estreia-se depois de amanhã, no Teatro da Trindade”, *O Século*, 21062, 6.11.1940, p. 4.
- “C.A.”, “O Grupo de Bailados Portugueses «Verde-Gaio» que, ontem, se estreou no Trindade, ofereceu um espectáculo de arte que foi justamente aclamado”, *O Século*, 21065, 9.11.1940, p. 6.
- “M.S.”, “O Teatro de S. Carlos ressurgiu esplendoroso de luzes e de dourados num espectáculo de maravilha”, *O Século*, p. 1 and p. 4.
- “LFB”, “A partitura de «D. João IV» tem acentuado sabor popular”, *O Século*, 21088, 3.12.1940, p. 4.

Santrauka

Antrosios Respublikos, arba *Estado Novo*, propaganda paveikė visas kultūros sritis – architektūrą, fotografiją, skulptūrą, kiną, interjero ir drabužių dizainą, muziką, o jos galutinis tikslas buvo paskleisti žinią apie oficialiąsias vertybes ir jas įdiegti visiems Portugalijos gyventojams, drauge kuriant unikalį, spalvingą kultūrinę įvairovę pasižyminčios šalies ir jos vientisos istorijos, geografijos bei meno paveikslą. Tuo užsiėmė Nacionalinės propagandos sekretoriato pirmininkas Antonio'us Ferro'as, kuris Salazaro politiniam režimui suteikė estetinį matmenį ir kurio veiklos pasekmės jaučiamos iki pat šių dienų.

Akademinė muzika ne tik turėjo skatinti etnografinės studijas, daugiausia turizmo tikslais, bet ir atliko svarbų vaidmenį kuriant tam tikrą Portugalijos įvaizdį. Šiame straipsnyje pasirinkta nagrinėti du reikšmingus įvykius, susijusius su vienu iš didžiausių Sekretoriato projektų – daugybe 1940 m. surengtų šimtmečio minėjimų. Kadangi periodinė spauda yra pagrindinis šaltinis, norint geriau suprasti tam tikros epochos muzikinius įvykius, ji lygiai taip pat svarbi tyrinėjant ne tik konkretaus laikotarpio, bet ir straipsnį rašančio muzikos kritiko bei jį spausdinančio leidinio ideologiją. Taigi šio straipsnio objektas – muzikos kritikų straipsniai, apžvelgiantys „Verde-Gaio“ portugalų baletu premjerą ir pirmąjį iš naujo duris atvėrusio São Carlos nacionalinio teatro pastatymą – Rui Coelho operą „D. João IV“.

Periodical press [order by newspaper and date]

- “A récita de gala no Teatro de S. Carlos”, *A Voz*, 4942, 3.12.1940, p. 2.
- Alfredo Pimenta, “Tribuna livre em S. Carlos”, *A Voz*, 4944, 5.12.1940, p. 1 and p. 6.
- “Bailados portugueses - É aguardada com interesse a estreia no Teatro da Trindade”, *Diário da Manhã*, 3420, 2.11.1940, p. 3.
- “O Grupo de Bailados Portugueses «Verde-Gaio» estreia-se amanhã em espectáculo de gala”, *Diário da Manhã*, 3425, 7.11.1940, p. 2.
- “Os bailados portugueses apreciados por António Ferro, ao microfone da Emissora Nacional”, *Diário da Manhã*, 3247, 9.11.1940, p. 1 and p. 3.
- “O Grupo de Bailados Portugueses «Verde Gaio» alcançou um grande êxito na sua primeira apresentação, em récita de gala a que assistiu o Chefe do Estado”, *Diário da Manhã*, Nº 3247, 9.11.1940, p. 4.
- “J. de F.”, “«Verde Gaio» - Bailados Portugueses”, *Diário da Manhã*, 3428, 10.11.1940, p. 5.
- “A récita de gala no Teatro de S. Carlos”, *Diário da Manhã*, 3450, 3.12.1940, p. 5.
- “O grupo de Bailados Portugueses faz depois de amanhã a sua estreia no Teatro da Trindade”, *Diário de Notícias*, 26849, 6.11.1940, p. 2.
- “A apresentação do grupo de bailados portugueses «Verde-Gaio» feita por António Ferro ao microfone da Emissora Nacional”, *Diário de Notícias*, 26852, 9.11.1940, pp. 1-2.
- “A apresentação dos bailados portugueses no Teatro da Trindade”, *Diário de Notícias*, 26852, 9.11.1940, p. 4.

Antonio'us Ferro'as idealizavo „Verde-Gaio“, norėdamas parodyti, kad Portugalijai niekada nestigo teminės ir muzikinės motyvacijos baleto menui, nors ši meno sritis anksčiau nebuvo sulaukusi jokių oficialių iniciatyvų. 1940 m. lapkričio 8 d. „Teatro da Trindade“ scenoje įvykusi šios baleto trupės *premjera* visuose pristatymuose, visuose periodiniuose leidiniuose, visų kritikų buvo laikoma tikra sėkme, nepaisant keleto svarstymų, kad *premjera* rodo ne tiek pasiekimą kiek pastangas ir kad pagrindiniai šokėjai stokoja technikos. Muzikos prasme šis įvykis buvo menkai reikšmingas; nors kai kur pabrėžiama programinės ir populiariosios muzikos įtaka, kituose straipsniuose muzika beveik neminima. Muzika – tik vienas iš spektaklio aspektų, greta scenografijos, kostiumų dizaino, choreografijos ir kitų dalykų.

Tą patį galima pasakyti apie 1940 m. gruodžio 1 d. parodyto São Carlos nacionalinio teatro atidarymo spektaklio muziką: nors ir giriama dėl programinės krypties, kurią lėmė Portugalijos nepriklausomybę atkūrusio karaliaus istorija, ji spektaklyje vaidina nepagrindinį vaidmenį. Todėl recenzijose daugiausia dėmesio skiriama architektūriniais aspektams ir politinei reikšmei. Į Viešųjų darbų ministerijos programas įtrauktam São Carlos nacionaliniam teatrui, kuris iki tol keletą metų buvo uždarytas, skirtas vaidmuo – parodyti švarią, tvarkingą atkurtą šalį.

Kitaip tariant, abiem atvejais muzika laikoma tik vienu iš daugybės komponentų, padedančių siekti kur kas didesnio tikslo – kurti nuolankią, tradicinę, konservatyvią, religingą, tautinę kaimiškosios tapatybės šalį, tačiau sostinės socialinis elitas „suvartojo“ šiuos renginius kaip egzotiškos, įdomios, spalvingos kultūros apraiškas. Taigi tie du kultūros įvykiai tapo Antonio'aus Ferro ir jo vadovaujamo Nacionalinės propagandos sekretoriato sugalvotos ir vykdomos Portugalijos autentiškumo kūrimo programos dalimi.

Kaip tik tokios išvados pateikiamos straipsnio pabaigoje, tačiau čia taip pat minima vieno aršiausiai Salazaro režimo puoselėjamus muzikinius idealus kritikavusių muzikologų Fernando Lopes-Graços tyla: jis, atrodytu, atsisakė rašyti apie „Verde-Gaio“ ir „D. João IV“ pastatymą, nors buvo kalbėjęs apie kitus *Estado Novo* šalininkus ir programas. Kita muzikos kritikė, Francine Benoît, nors buvo siejama su opoziciniu judėjimu ir rašė kairiesiems periodiniams leidiniams, gana teigiamai vertino šiuos renginius, šiek tiek užsimindama apie baleto trupės kokybę ir apie tai, kad vaidiniai sprendimai buvo daugiausia skirti choreografijos trūkumams ir nepakankamam pasirengimui paslėpti. Pasak kritikės, kadangi spektakliai pritraukdavo pilnas sales, „Verde-Gaio“ galima laikyti tikra sėkme. Taigi akivaizdu, kad net šis konkretus straipsnis yra puikus itin efektyvus, tiek sceną, tiek kritikų straipsnius veikiančio propagandos mechanizmo pavyzdys.

Delivered / Straipsnis įteiktas 2019 02 01