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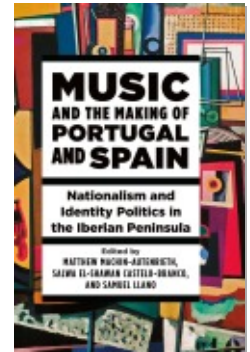
Music and the Making of Portugal and Spain

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6

Radio, Popular Music, and Nationalism in Portugal in the 1940s

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In 1941, António Ferro was the then-new director of the National Radio (Emissora Nacional, henceforth NR) and simultaneously the head of the National Propaganda Secretariat (Secretariado da Propaganda Nacional—SPN), a post he held since 1933. He decided that the general programming, and especially music broadcasts on the NR, should sound more “Portuguese” and converge with the values and nationalist propaganda of the Portuguese authoritarian regime (Ferro 1950, 15–30). One of his strategies was to design a policy that aimed at “Portuguesefying” (*aportuguesamento*) the popular music (*música ligeira*)¹ broadcast on the NR and “shielding” audiences from the impact of foreign musical genres that were then popular such as jazz, tango, samba, and French song (Moreira 2012; Roxo and Castelo-Branco 2016). However, rather than forbidding these genres, they were recontextualized at a discursive level. The institutionalization of Portuguese popular music in the National Radio music production resulted in repertoires (mostly popular songs) that mixed local musical genres and styles, mainly drawing on rural musics, with selected foreign music styles such as those mentioned above. In order to implement this seemingly paradoxical strategy, a music production system was set up within the NR in the 1940s that paved the way for the creation of Portuguese music styles and repertoires that became popular locally but that also gained some international visibility.

This chapter examines the creation and institutionalization of Portuguese popular music within the NR during the 1940s, a period corresponding to António Ferro's administration. It will consider national discourses against the backdrop of the wider international context, highlighting how nationalist music mixed local and transnational musical styles and performance models. It will also examine how national and transnational repertoires contributed to the configuration of radio music production in the context of the Portuguese National Radio. Based on the assumption that national radio structures were formed through transnational processes and by drawing on a case study of the vocal group *Irmãs Meireles*, I interrogate how the tension between the local and the cosmopolitan (Turino 2013) informed the NR's nationalist ideological project and its strategy of "Portuguesifying" popular music.

I draw on a growing body of work that focuses on Portugal (Moreira 2012; Ribeiro 2005, 2007; Santos 2005; Silva 2005, 2010) and other countries (Birdsall 2012; Currid 2006; Hayes 2000; Hilmes 2012; Pinho and Mendivil 2019), which analyzes the use of radio by authoritarian regimes to inculcate nationalist ideologies, often instrumentalizing popular music. As Hilmes argues, nation-states used radio "as national circulatory systems, delivering the signs and symbols of the national imaginary across geographical space into individual homes and minds" (2012, 2). He also affirms that "The continuing presence of the transnational [. . .] shaped core values, aesthetics, and practices within each national tradition, whether in opposition, resistance, adaptation, exchange or emulation, or some combination of all of those" (3). Thus it is relevant to contextualize radio nationalism at a transnational level (Western 2018, 258), given that "national structures of radio were formed in transnational processes" (Badenoch and Föllmer 2018, 11) affecting, as we shall see, the National Radio's music policies and production.

The Estado Novo and National Radio

"If this device does not fail, which seems to tremble at the slightest vibrations of my voice, I will be speaking at this moment to the largest audience that has ever gathered in Portugal to listen to someone's word." (António de Oliveira Salazar's Speech, Broadcast by the NR, *Diário de Lisboa*, December 9, 1934)²

The Portuguese authoritarian regime, dubbed *Estado Novo* (New State), was officially established in 1933 by António de Oliveira Salazar (1889–1970) and lasted until the April 25, 1974, revolution. It was anchored on the ideological cornerstones of nationalism, Catholicism, authority, ruralism, and traditionalism. As with other authoritarian regimes, such as those in Italy or Spain, a network

of institutions exerted state control over all sectors of society, allowing for the transformation and resurgence of a country modeled by its dictator's ideology. In Portugal, cultural production operated within or was affected by several institutions, particularly the Secretariat of National Propaganda that designed cultural policy and sponsored, regulated, and promoted all cultural activities (Roxo and Castelo-Branco 2016, 213); the National Foundation for Joy at Work (Fundação Nacional para a Alegria no Trabalho—FNAT), which was in charge of workers' leisure time and popular culture (Valente 1999); and the Censorship Services that had a major impact on the media and all cultural activities.

The National Radio was officially founded in August 1935, after one and a half years of experimental activity, quickly becoming a key vehicle for disseminating the regime's ideology and political propaganda. Prior to the NR's foundation, there was much debate around the political and artistic role of radio. The First National Conference of Radiotelephony (I Congresso Nacional de Radiotelefonía), held in 1932 and organized by the newspaper *O Século*, served as the basis for the creation of the 1933 decree-law that regulated the NR and private radio stations that had been operating for almost a decade.³ During the conference, the modernist composer Luís de Freitas Branco (1890–1955) called for the cooperation between engineers and musicians and proposed the introduction of a course on radio broadcasting at the National Conservatory in Lisbon, where he taught (Silva 2010, 1081). He was hopeful that the NR could help resolve the unemployment crisis faced by musicians since the end of the 1920s, a crisis that was provoked by the increasing dissemination of sound recordings, radio broadcasts, and sound cinema, and that led to a decrease in the number of orchestras and small ensembles during that period (Silva 2010, 1081), similar to what happened with the BBC (Doctor 1999, 16). His proposal that the NR should found a symphony orchestra that could employ musicians was implemented in 1934 under the direction of his brother, the conductor Pedro de Freitas Branco (1896–1963). The musical milieu was also hopeful that the NR would have the capacity to stimulate and to centralize musical production that was adrift (*O Século*, November 26, 1931).

The 1932 conference also provided a platform for debate around radio's political mission and how it could serve as a medium for the regime's propaganda, although the role that radio could play was not always clear. A parallel is found here in the Italian regime, where initially Mussolini did not "realize its [radio] potential as a vehicle for propaganda" (Ragnedda 2014, 201). In Portugal, up to the 1940s, the radio as a propaganda tool was a controversial issue that led to disputes among politicians about who should head the National Radio. During the first two radio administrations (1934–1940), the NR was the responsibility of the General Administration of Posts, Telegraphs, and Telephones (Adminis-

tração Geral dos Correios, Telefones e Telégrafos—AGCTT), resisting the SPN's authority and António Ferro's ambition. Politically, Salazar understood that the NR could be a propaganda tool, but he was ambivalent about delivering all propaganda issues to the SPN and especially to António Ferro, trying to please other figures of the regime, mainly Couto dos Santos, Director of the AGCTT, and Duarte Pacheco, Minister of Public Works and Communications. In 1934, this led several figures of the regime to question the existence of the NR as a political project and to rising tensions between the NR and Ferro's SPN, which even threatened to broadcast political propaganda on a private radio station (Ribeiro 2007, 180).

National Radio's Administrations, Programming, and Their Nationalist Orientations

Radio broadcasting depended not only on the national political framework and transnational factors (Birdsall and Walewska-Choptiany 2019; Western 2018; Hilmes 2012) but also on the agency, and personal, intellectual, and artistic profiles of the radio administrators in defining the NR's policy and programming. Political and artistic concerns were, in different ways, the main policy priorities for the NR's first three administrations led by António Joyce (1934–1935), Henrique Galvão (1935–1940), and António Ferro (1941–1949).

The NR's first director, António Joyce (1888–1964), was a well-known composer and choir conductor. His main concern was to create a structure for music production, which meant that he lacked a political strategy for the NR. Joyce was influenced by international models for organizing radio orchestras and applying these to the Portuguese case. In particular he was inspired by the BBC's model,⁴ which led him to found several orchestras in an effort to respond to the musicians' employment crisis during a period marked by the appearance of several radio orchestras across Europe and the US (Lawson 2003, 277–78).⁵ The NR orchestra model included a "Symphony Orchestra; a Music-Hall Orchestra; a String Orchestra; a Sextet with harmonium, and chamber music ensembles[. . .]" (*O Século*, April 7, 1934). According to Joyce, the "renaissance of Portuguese Music" was dependent on radio orchestras, since "we currently have no orchestra formed in Portugal [and] our musicians are unemployed" (*Rádio Jornal*, July 22, 1934). Following the BBC's model where radio was considered the center of music production (Doctor 1999, 17),⁶ Joyce spent a considerable part of his budget on the Music Department, configuring the NR as an almost exclusively artistic project (Moreira 2012, 127–28). He was also responsible for founding the Portuguese Music Section (*Secção Musical Portuguesa*) and hired

Ruy Coelho (1889–1986), the regime’s “semi-official” composer, to run it. His goal was to support Portuguese art music composition and the collection of rural musics that could serve as the basis for the creation of a nationalist repertoire (Moreira 2012, 50).

Budgetary problems and the lack of a political strategy for the NR were problematic issues for Salazar and other figures of the regime. In March 1935, the government appointed Fernando Homem Christo (1900–1995), a former student of Salazar at the University of Coimbra and a member of the National Union (União Nacional), the regime’s official political party, with the mission of reporting on the NR’s activities and establishing a political plan. Christo revealed what he considered to be the almost nonexistence of supporters of the regime among the staff, which led him to call for urgent change in programming and personnel.⁷ This meant the end of Joyce’s administration. However, for Salazar and his staff, Christo’s radical political vision, connected to the regime’s ultra-extreme-right wing ideology, disqualified him from running the NR’s political program. Ferro was not under consideration either. In 1935, Henrique Galvão was appointed as the new director for the NR. He was an important military member of the regime well known for his rigor, his ideological loyalty, and his links to colonial affairs due to his positions as Portuguese representative at the Colonial Congress of Paris in 1931, director of the Colonial Fairs of Luanda (Angola) and Lourenço Marques (Mozambique) in 1932, and director of the First Colonial Exhibition in Porto in 1934. As a high-ranking military officer, Galvão had the important mission of making the NR a “respectable” Estado Novo institution as well as rescuing it from the difficult financial situation inherited from the previous administration. The NR was to serve as “another enlisted soldier, a force at the service of the Estado Novo,” as stated at the official inauguration in August 1935 (*Boletim da Emissora Nacional*, no. 1, August, 1935).

Unlike his predecessor, Galvão brought to the NR a strongly nationalist ideological project that intended to transform it into the “voice” of the Estado Novo. He implemented reformist measures that included financial rigor and the reorganization of the music department that had consumed a significant part of the budget, reducing the number of orchestras to three: a Symphony Orchestra, a Portuguese Orchestra, and a Music-Hall Orchestra (Moreira 2012, 128).

During a period characterized by access to several foreign radio stations in Portugal, mainly the BBC but also German and Italian stations that broadcasted in Portuguese, Galvão launched a plan to increase the NR’s coverage on medium and shortwave stations aimed at rural Portugal, the Portuguese colonies, and emigrant communities.⁸ Shortwave radio stations, at a transnational level,

“intensified existing competition over available frequencies and the attention of listening audiences” (Birdsall and Walewska-Choptiany 2019, 440), and had considerable impact during the war time in what has been called a “war of the waves” (Gagliarducci, Onorato, Sobbrío, and Tabellini 2020). For Galvão, Portugal needed to mark its political position in the international (Lusophone) domain, broadcasting the regime’s propaganda on selected radio programs and affirming its popular culture and national identity.

Galvão’s plan to transform the NR into an institution that could contribute to the building of a national identity that aligned with Salazar’s vision overlapped with António Ferro’s and the SPN’s approach, especially when he announced several radio programs and live events that celebrated folklore and popular culture like the Folkloric and Ethnographic Parade (*Cortejo Folclórico e Etnográfico*), which took place in Lisbon in 1937 with all regions represented (Ribeiro 2012, 177).⁹ In January 1938, Galvão and Ferro argued in newspaper articles over who should organize events exhibiting folklore and popular culture, revealing their different positions (177–78). The dispute continued until 1940, when, on the occasion of the Exhibition of the Portuguese World (*Exposição do Mundo Português*), the largest propaganda event of Salazar’s regime held in Lisbon to celebrate the double centenary of the foundation of Portugal (1140) and the restoration of its independence from the Spanish crown (1640), Galvão gained control over the Parade of the Portuguese World (*Cortejo do Mundo Português*), leaving out António Ferro and the SPN. Following a dispute with the minister Duarte Pacheco, Galvão was removed from his position as the NR’s director and Ferro was appointed as its new director in 1941.

António Ferro’s “Politics of the Spirit” and the “Portuguesification” of Popular Music (1941–1949)

World War II had a considerable impact on Portuguese national institutions, which had to reframe and adapt their activities. In the political domain, Salazar understood that radio and propaganda should go hand in hand, accepting Ferro’s own vision that had been influenced by international authoritarian models. In 1939, a governmental decree limited private radios to broadcast only a few hours a day from the same transmitter, forbid publicity as a way of revenue, and implemented a government employee to supervise broadcastings. Rádio Clube Português, a pro-regime private radio station that had an important propaganda role during the Spanish Civil War (Pena Rodríguez 2011), and Rádio Renscença, the Catholic radio station, continued their broadcasts with some

restrictions (Santos 2005). By 1941, Ferro had absolute control over the NR but also a “disguised” monopoly system that allowed him to implement his vision of the Estado Novo’s ideology.

António Ferro took office as the NR’s director in 1941, combining this position with the SPN directorship. He started his career as a journalist and writer. In the interwar period, he interviewed major political and intellectual figures such as Gabriele d’Annunzio, Jean Cocteau, Mussolini, Primo de Rivera, and Salazar, and traveled to the US and several European countries. As an intellectual, he was influenced by the modernist and cosmopolitan avant-garde, a perspective that did not always align with Salazar’s traditionalist and provincial outlook. Nevertheless, Ferro, considered the “inventor of Salazarism” (Raimundo 2015), was important in defining the regime’s propaganda strategy until 1949, when he was removed from office. He reorganized the cultural field, reinventing Portugal and its traditions (Castelo-Branco and Branco 2003).

Taking up the position as the NR’s director also meant that Ferro needed to align the radio’s programming policy with the Estado Novo’s main ideological pillars and priorities and with the SPN’s cultural policy dubbed as the “Politics of the Spirit” (*Política do Espírito*), which undergirded cultural production in the 1930s and 1940s. The Politics of the Spirit “was intended to create a modern cultural configuration for Portugal, in which the nation was imagined according to the regime’s imperialist ideals” (Roxo and Castelo-Branco 2016, 213), instrumentalizing expressive culture as political propaganda with the aim of creating an official aesthetics of the regime. This involved, among other aspects, promoting stylized and modernized representations of the rural world (Alves 2013), a strategy that was applied to the NR’s musical production (Moreira 2012). For António Ferro, control over public radio was essential to affirm the nation’s vitality during war time; it was a way of emphasizing Portuguese “neutrality” and “peace” granted by Salazar’s leadership in contrast to the war-time propaganda encountered in Germany or France (Fagot 2014). Ferro knew the international scenario and the importance of radio broadcasting. As he stated: “We are going through a moment in which listening to the radio is to feel the heartbeat of the nations, to know the state of their soul” (Ferro 1950, 24). Thus, he considered that his mission as the new director of the NR was vital to the country, arguing that “To the National Radio, the most powerful instrument of direct propaganda that exists in our country, it largely belongs the heavy responsibility for the civic, moral, and artistic education of our people” (19). Anchored to the Politics of the Spirit, Ferro’s strategy was to “Portuguesify” the NR’s programming and, in particular, popular music. This was also the basis of several of the SPN’s initiatives (Alves, 2013).

In the case of the NR, Ferro aimed to mix elements of Portuguese popular culture with international models—in what he considered to be the “mixture of Portugal with the world and with our era” (Ferro 1950, 40)—in a stylized modernization of presumably traditional elements. In Ferro’s opinion, this strategy provided a solution to the problem of excessive exposure to foreign popular music and the scarcity of Portuguese popular music (37–41). The strategy was based on the notion that so-called “rural” music was an “authentic” element of Portuguese culture and was underpinned by a nationalist agenda in which music could be in the “service” of the state (Bohlman 2004, 119). As part of the SPN’s folkloristic initiatives, the use of popular culture served to integrate people across the nation as part of an imagined community (Anderson 1983), but it also served as a living portrait of a culturally rich nation where “traditional” expressive culture was to be introduced to the modern world for entertainment and leisure (Alves 2013).

Central to the NR’s strategy of Portuguesifying music was the collection of rural musics that were harmonized and arranged, or used as the basis for the creation of art and popular music compositions, as a way of counteracting the influence of American, French, Spanish, and Brazilian musics.¹⁰ In a broadcast speech from 1942, the NR’s director stated that light or popular programs should be taken very seriously, never forgetting their main function as entertainment (Ferro 1950, 37), an idea that was central to Ferro’s vision for popular music production. In his words, he indicated what should be done: “Replace that frenetic music by Portuguese popular music, which has the same seductive power? Replace it by our own melodies, which are not limited to being regionalist [and] folkloric [. . .], but that can be listened to with pleasure in Lisbon, as well as in Paris, Berlin, Rome, London, or New York?” (39).

Ferro’s Portuguesifying project had several opponents in the musical milieu, particularly the art music composer Fernando Lopes-Graça (1906–1994) who fought against the regime’s ideology and strategy for culture, including the folklorization of rural musics. He was very critical about the use of the label “Portuguese music” to refer to music remotely based on traditional genres, which he believed could be “very ‘nationalist’ but [not] national, in the sense that the national identifies with the capabilities or translates the capacities of a people to create universal or universalizing values” (Lopes-Graça 1989, 61–62). However, Ferro’s intention was to promote the creation of hybrid styles, mixing musics collected in rural areas with internationally popular musical styles and genres. In order to achieve this goal, he mobilized composers, arrangers, singers, conductors, and orchestras to compose and to perform this repertoire on radio programs.

Institutionalizing the “Portuguesification” of Popular Music

The institutionalization of the “Portuguesification” of popular music was an important political move by António Ferro’s administration, affecting all music production, including art and popular musics. He invited the composer Pedro do Prado¹¹ (1908–1990) to take office as Director of the NR’s Music Department with the aim of implementing the “Portuguesification” policy. In 1942, Prado and Ferro founded the Musical Studies Bureau (Gabinete de Estudos Musicais—MSB), a department that provided support for the creation of a repertoire of both popular and art music grounded in rural musics (*Rádio Nacional*, March 22, 1942). The MSB was structured into four sections dedicated to the harmonization of rural melodies by art music composers; the composition of art music inspired by national historical events and figures, using stylized rural melodies; the arrangement of popular songs for voice, sometimes with orchestral accompaniment, based on rural musics; and the recording and editing of music produced within the framework of the MSB (*Rádio Nacional*, March 22, 1942). The strategy developed by the MSB was meant to compensate for the scarcity of Portuguese popular music considered adequate for broadcasting by the NR. As Ferro questioned: “But where is, actually, that music? It is not enough to fill the NR’s light dance programs [. . .]. Regarding traditional music [*música típica*] there are not many records that are appropriate for broadcast” (1950, 39). And he continues, affirming that “[. . .] nothing will be able to destroy, for now, the nonexistence of Portuguese popular music [*música ligeira portuguesa*]” (41), considering that the NR should have an important role in solving this problem.

The NR’s popular music was intended to entertain the audience with national musical references but also to include what António Ferro referred to as the “*international imagination*” (40), by which he meant popular song and dance genres and styles such as one-step, fox-trot, swing, but also French popular songs, Brazilian samba, and Argentinian tango. This illustrates that the regime’s attitude towards the inclusion of genres such as jazz or tango in radio broadcasting were sometimes contradictory as was the case with other European contexts such as Italy (Ragnedda 2014, 204–6). For this purpose, Ferro commissioned composers to create songs that combined national “popular rhythms” finding a “desirable formula” that resulted in the “mixture of Portugal with the world and with our era” (Ferro 1950, 40). The “desirable formula” also meant the establishment of the NR’s own music production system. This included: hiring

composers, arrangers and conductors, and founding different orchestras that could perform the new repertoire, most notably the *Orquestra Ligeira* (Popular Music Orchestra) conducted by Armando Tavares Belo (1911–1993) and inspired by American big bands and the *Orquestra Típica Portuguesa* (Portuguese Typical Orchestra), consisting of traditional chordophones and wind instruments, conducted by José Belo Marques (1898–1986).¹² The above-mentioned composers were almost entirely devoted to composing and arranging new repertoire for the NR's orchestras and vocal groups.

The following step was to find and to coach appropriate voices for singing the repertoire composed by the NR's composers, mainly vocal quartets, trios and duets, but also soloists. In 1943, the NR launched singing competitions with the goal of finding new voices and rewarding some of its famous voices (Moreira 2012, 237). In 1947, as it was still difficult to find new singers, António Ferro and Mota Pereira, a former opera singer, launched the Centro de Preparação de Artistas (Center for Preparing Artists), a center for training the NR's singers in vocal techniques and to sing with orchestral accompaniment.

Several vocal groups were formed within the NR and became the main attraction of popular radio broadcasts, such as variety shows and, particularly, the Evenings for Workers (*Serões para trabalhadores*) organized with FNAT (the National Foundation for Joy at Work) since 1941. Mainly trained and rehearsed by radio orchestra conductors, they emulated international popular singers and film stars. The American Andrews Sisters and Boswell Sisters were the models for several vocal duos and trios founded and promoted by the NR, namely the Irmãs Santos, Irmãs Meireles, and the Irmãs Remartinez. The Americanization of vocal styles and performance models during this period had parallels in other dictatorships, for example the Trio Lescano in Italy (Forgacs and Gundle 2007, 184)¹³ and the Hermanas Arveu and Hermanas Russell in Spain (Iglesias 2013, 8), groups that were linked to the swing era and were usually formed by and rehearsed with well-known jazz orchestra conductors.¹⁴ As Iglesias argues regarding swing in Spain, the success of “sister” vocal groups in dictatorial regimes during the late 1930s and 1940s was based on the fact that swing was mainly a form of “physical entertainment” (dance) and not of “aesthetic contemplation” (2013, 7). It created an interest in jazz production and consumption both in Portugal (Roxo and Castelo-Branco 2016) and Spain (Iglesias 2013). In Portugal, other factors contributed to the popularity of the “sister” groups, mainly the modernist ideas of António Ferro, the influence of international phonographic labels and Hollywood films, and the centrality and strength of the NR's music production system.

Nationalism and the “International Imagination”: The Irmãs Meireles

Radio singers, especially in popular music genres, had great popularity in the 1930s and 1940s, becoming well-known stars in their own countries but also internationally. The NR’s singers became very popular, bringing to people’s homes and through live performance the results of a programming policy and musical production system oriented towards the creation and promotion of a nationalist repertoire that would be mixed with international music genres. The Irmãs Meireles (Meireles Sisters) was one of the most popular vocal groups in Portugal during the 1940s but also had a prominent international career. Also known as Trio Meireles, this vocal group consisted of three sisters from Porto and was modelled on the Andrews Sisters (Moreira 2012).¹⁵ In 1943, António Ferro and his wife, the writer Fernanda de Castro, invited the Meireles sisters to form a vocal ensemble. For Ferro, the idea of creating a group that could be the “voice of the nationalist” regime, but that evoked an “international imagination” at the same time, was fundamental (Ferro 1950, 40). He provided the conditions within the NR for training and promoting the Irmãs Meireles.

Soon after the formation of the Irmãs Meireles, the composer and conductor Tavares Belo, who conducted a jazz orchestra at Casino Estoril, was hired by the NR. He trained the group in vocal techniques and composed and made arrangements of repertoire, both with orchestra and *a capella*, which was adequate for their voices. They rehearsed this repertoire with the NR’s Popular Music Orchestra that Belo also conducted. In 1943, the group began performing the new repertoire, alongside major international hits, on several radio programs. In 1945, they were invited to perform in Barcelona, Spain, at the Cine-Olimpia and Salon Rigat, also recording their first phonograms for His Masters Voice (*Diário de Lisboa*, October 10, 1972).

The discourse surrounding the Irmãs Meireles was in tune with António Ferro’s own ideas, as it emphasized their mission to bring attention to Portuguese rural and traditional music and to well-known international songs. As one of the sisters, Cidália, stated: “The government helped us in our ‘crusade,’ paying for our studies. We can say they hired the maestro Tavares Belo almost exclusively to teach and train us. We then toured over all of Portugal, disseminating and elevating national music. In Minho, [a region in the northwest of Portugal] people did not know music from the south, and vice-versa. That was our mission: to unveil to every corner of the country the music from all the other corners” (*Álbum da canção* no. 41, July 1, 1966).

Following World War II, the Portuguese regime changed its cultural policy, which affected António Ferro's strategy of using some singers to project Portugal's image abroad. The Irmãs Meireles were the products of his effort to "Portuguesify" popular music by creating a formula that presumably reconciled "authenticity" with the "international imagination" (Ferro 1950, 40). In 1947, the Irmãs Meireles went to Brazil with the mission to promote Portuguese music on Brazilian National Radio and in local concert halls. Their success in Rio de Janeiro and other Brazilian cities was considerable, as highlighted in several newspaper articles. According to Cidália Meireles: "[...] our name crossed the borders of Brazil and our presence was demanded in other countries in Latin America. We performed in Argentina, Chile—we went for a month and stayed eight—Uruguay. Then we returned to Brazil, where we made a new artistic tour" (*Álbum da canção* no. 41, July 1, 1966). During their tour in Brazil, they recorded for major commercial labels such as Sinter, Capitol, and Continental.

The repertoire they performed in several theaters across Brazil was the same that they sang in Portugal, composed for them by Belo Marques, Tavares Belo, Silva Marques, and other NR composers. The shows followed a tripartite structure, mixing "Portuguese folklore" with "international music" and "popular melodies." The program presented at the Municipal Theater of São Paulo on October 13, 1947, illustrates the show model, which alternated between solo and trio numbers and repertoire by the NR's composers. The program was divided into three parts: the first was dedicated to "Portuguese folklore"; the second to "international music," from Franz Schubert to Hekel Tavares and London Ronald; and the third to "popular melodies" by George Gershwin, Ary Barroso, and Tavares Belo (Borges 2016, 107–9).

Between 1948 and 1950, the Irmãs Meireles toured in Argentina, Chile, Peru, and Colombia, where they also performed with local artists (Borges 2016). In 1949, after almost two years on tour, they returned to Portugal where they were received like national heroes, as documented by local newspapers: "The artistic tour of the Irmãs Meireles was not only a commercial success, [but] a victory for the Portuguese Radio. It was [. . .] a consoling and happy moment for all Portuguese that, in other countries, show the dignity, effort, and the qualities of a race spread throughout the world, with their soul rooted in our patriotic land" (*Rádio Nacional*, April 2, 1949). In 1949, the year António Ferro's administration as the head of the SPN and the NR came to an end, the Meireles sisters returned to Brazil and ended their career as a trio two years later.

Final Observations

The politics of nationalism played out on the Portuguese National Radio reflect different perspectives on the role of radio in propaganda, as illustrated by its three administrations. The pressures of civil society and the musicians' employment crisis played major roles in defining the NR's strategy during its first year, namely to give priority to "artistic" projects influenced by the BBC's orchestra model. The replacement of its director in 1935 signaled the fact that the NR was of capital importance in promoting the Portuguese nationalist project and affirming its position among the most important *Estado Novo* institutions. However, the nationalist approach adopted by the NR was different from that of the SPN directed by António Ferro. In 1941, when he took office as the NR's director, his project of reconciling Portuguese and "international" influences was extended to the NR, where he founded a music production system with the goal of creating a music repertoire, orchestras, and vocal ensembles to perform it.

I contend that the *Irmãs Meireles* were promoters of António Ferro's program of "Portuguesifying" popular music, embodying its contradictory nature. If, according to Ferro, the presumably authentic rural melodies constituted the basis for his project and its mark of "authenticity," the NR's sound was imagined through the models disseminated by the transnational music industry, including orchestral arrangements of local melodies and the American "sisters" performance model. As several scholars have shown, radio promoted a dynamic conception of nationalism, its power being played between different worlds: on the one hand, the ideology of nationalism based on ideas about authenticity and uniqueness, and on the other hand, the impact of the transnational circulation of new formats and performance models by the music industry. In the Portuguese case, like most countries during this period, it was the State that produced the necessary discourse and created the framework for institutionalizing transnational performance models. For Ferro, this was "the mixture of Portugal with the world and with our era" (1950, 40).

Notes

This chapter draws on research I carried out for my doctoral dissertation on the politics of radio programming and the production of popular music by the three administrations that directed the NR from 1934 to 1949 (Moreira 2012), funded by a scholarship from FCT (2004–2008) and under the supervision of Professor Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco. I conducted archival research at the Historical Radio Archives (RDP), at the National Archives (Torre do Tombo), the National Library (Biblioteca Nacional), and the Hemeroteca Municipal de Lisboa (Municipal Library of Portuguese Periodical Press). I also interviewed radio musicians and employees who were active during the period under research.

1. “*Música ligeira* (literally, light music) is a generic term that was first used in Portugal in the late nineteenth century to designate music produced within the framework of the music media as well as of new forms of urban entertainment, especially the *revista* (revue) theater, commercial recordings, and radio [. . .]. Approximating to the English term “popular music,” *música ligeira* encompasses a variety of musical styles and genres, most importantly the *canção ligeira* (light song), a strophic song, with or without a refrain characterized by a simple melody and a simple harmonic accompaniment” (Moreira, Cidra, and Castelo-Branco 2017, 503).

2. All translations from Portuguese are the author’s.

3. Unlike other authoritarian regimes, the Estado Novo allowed public and private radio broadcasting to coexist (Silva 2005, 2010; Moreira 2012).

4. The BBC’s “Comprehensive Orchestral Organization” (Kenyon 1981, 35) was based on a symphony orchestra that was then subdivided into smaller orchestras that performed classical and popular music.

5. Several radio orchestras were founded in the 1920s and 1930s by European radio organizations, such as Swedish Radio Orchestra (1923); Rundfunks Sinfonie Orchester, Berlin; MDR Symphony Orchestra, Leipzig (1924); Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra (1925); Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra (1926); Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra (1927); Radio Symphony Orchestra, Frankfurt; Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra (1929); BBC Symphony Orchestra, UK; Tchaikovsky Symphony Orchestra of Moscow Radio (1930); BBC Northern Orchestra (1933); Orchestre Nationale de France (1934); Flemish Radio Orchestra (1935); Symphony Orchestra of the RAI, Rome (1936); and Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France (1937) (Lawson 2003, 277–78). In Spain, due to the Civil War (1936–1939) the radio orchestra debate took place in the early 1940s, resulting in the foundation of the National Radio Chamber Orchestra (Orquesta de Cámara de Radio Nacional) in 1945 and the National Radio Symphonic Orchestra (Orquesta Sinfónica de Radio Nacional) in 1947. For further details, see García Estefanía (1999, 215–27).

6. According to Doctor, the BBC “was an intrinsic player in the new music industry, setting new standards and developing new trends as a powerful employer of musicians, as a commissioning body for new compositions, as a disseminator of music repertoires—inevitably shaping new audiences—and as a leading distributor of music-related funds” (1999, 17).

7. Christo’s report, deposited at the Torre do Tombo National Archive (AOS/CO/OP-7/subdivision 2), provides a general political analysis of the NR, describing its daily activity and the personal and political profiles of its most important staff.

8. Radio Broadcasts to Angola, Mozambique, Europe, Brazil, and the United States began in 1936, on short wave, from a 5-kW transmitter built by the NR’s employees.

9. For the Estado Novo’s policy toward folklore and folklorization, see Castelo-Branco and Branco (2003).

10. In his speeches, Ferro lightly mentions fado that was also broadcasted by the NR (Ferro 1950, 20). If in the 1930s there was an intense debate whether the NR should broadcast fado as “national song,” during the 1940s it became a part of several NR shows. For the regime’s ambivalence towards fado, see Nery (2012, 305–9).

11. Pedro de Oliveira Leitão do Prado (1908–90) was responsible for the NR’s popular and art music departments between 1942 and 1974. Together with António Ferro, he

was one of the most influential figures in the organization of a music production system for the NR in the 1940s. He was responsible for the founding of the Music Studies Bureau (1942), a symphony concert series at the São Carlos and Tivoli theaters in Lisbon (Caseirão 2010, 1063).

12. For more information on these composers and orchestras, see the relevant entries in Castelo-Branco (2010).

13. According to Forgacs and Gundle, “The Trio Lescano were one of the few acts to suffer as a result of the Nazi occupation. Banned from the radio on account of their mother’s Jewish background, they continued to perform live until they were arrested in Milan in late 1943 and imprisoned” (2007, 184).

14. As Iván Iglesias states: “Both trios were created, inspired, and directed by two prominent Spanish jazz musicians and composers whose fame had survived the Civil War: the Arveu, by the pianist Sigfredo Ribera, and the Russell, by the multi-instrumentalist Sebastián Albalat” (2013, 8).

15. The *Irmãs Meireles* was composed of Cidália Meireles (1925–1972), Rosária Meireles (1926–2022), and “Milita” (Emília) Meireles (1928–2021).

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