

## Migration, *sodade* and conciliation: Cape Verdean batuque practice in Portugal

Jorge Castro Ribeiro\*

**Abstract** This article analyses the practice of batuque within the context of Cape Verdean immigration in Portugal. It observes the practices of two groups, comparing them as strategies of institutional relationship between Cape Verdean migrants and the host society. It reviews the practice of music as a strategic factor for display/presentation of the culture of origin and as a catalyst for community members' socialization. The musical and choreographic practice is interpreted as a process of conciliation between time, place of origin and people. It notes the hostility between the migratory space and the time and place of origin in the emotional recall that is granted by the music content and the choreographic practice display.

**Keywords** Batuque, Portugal, conciliation, Cape Verdean music, Cape Verdean immigrants, Ethnomusicology.

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### The Cape Verdean migration in Portugal<sup>1</sup>

The official figures of the Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras [Borders Control Service] (2009) for the year 2008 accounted for 440,277 foreign residents in Portugal<sup>2</sup> of which 51,353 (11,7% of the total) were Cape Verdeans. This figure only refers to the status of political nationality, leaving out a huge amount of individuals of other nationalities (including the Portuguese) that form part of the large group of Cape Verdean ethnic origin. Many descendants born in Portugal and many other citizens with dual nationality, or those that have acquired the Portuguese nationality for practical reasons, are taken into account in the assessment of the sum of all Cape Verdeans<sup>3</sup> in several academic studies, by the Cape Verdean diplomatic representation and by Portuguese official institutions dealing with this reality.

The modern migration of Cape Verdeans to Portugal has some unique features. According to the principal studies on this topic, it started on a large scale in the 1960s (Amaro, 1999; Batalha, 2008; Carreira, 1983; Esteves, 1991; França, 1992; Góis, 2008; Gomes, 1999; Oliveira, 1973). In 1973, it accounted for about 20,000 Cape Verdean emigrants in Portugal, particularly men that constituted the first generation. However, its main expansion occurred after the Cape Verdean independence in 1975. The successive waves of new immigrants, young men and women, that reached their increase peak in the late 1980s (Amaro, 1999: 39), set the contours of the gradual process of family reunion for hundreds of families. For work-related reasons, and in order to benefit from the informal network of social solidarity and mutual support facilities, the vast majority of Cape Verdeans gathered in the area, which is nowadays the Lisbon<sup>4</sup> region. According to Ana de Saint-Maurice, the migratory experience of many Cape Verdeans to Portugal has implied strong personal changes in *"the redefinition of their behavioral rules and the reconstruction of their identities, giving rise to new concepts and new ways of life"* (1997:1). Furthermore, this causes *"processes of family deconstruction that develop along with the creation of new forms of solidarity"* (1997:1).

The Portuguese tradition throughout history has almost always entailed emigration and the national experience of significant labour immigration movements dates only from the mid-1960s. It precisely starts with the Cape Verdean immigration and, comparatively speaking, is therefore a relatively recent phenomenon. This could be one of the reasons to account for the fact that, in the decades between 1960 and 1990, the country had virtually no social conditions prepared to receive tens of thousands of Cape Verdean immigrants who were by then arriving. There were not, for example, residences and neighbourhoods that could meet the housing demand of immigrants; the education system was not prepared to deal with the young Cape Verdeans, having a different mother tongue and other cultural references; the intense demand for

labor in sectors such as construction or the catering business and the lack of labor inspection enabled the establishment of a precarious labor market, adjusting itself to the scope of the law and allowing for a range of abuses. This framework summarizes some of the problems that many immigrants faced on arrival in Portugal.

The hostility of the migratory experience of Cape Verdeans was also aggravated by cultural differences, language difficulties and a non-understanding of the organization of the host society. The education system was often unable to cope with the education - and integration - related needs of many young people who suddenly - disconnected from Cape Verde or children of foreigners, born in Portugal - felt it necessary to create and adapt their identity references. Informal groups of young people living together in neighbourhoods became a substitute for school regarding their support for personal development. However, this process sometimes generated value systems very different from those that are transmitted in school. In response to the lack of accommodation, for example, a large proportion of immigrants resorted to illegal self-constructed dwellings in large neighbourhoods without any urban infrastructures, especially in the outskirts of Lisbon and also within the city limits (Amaro, 1999:62).

In this context, both formal and informal solidarity networks had a great importance, establishing sources of comfort and contributing to the success of the migration project and to conciliation with the Portuguese society. The associative migrant movement played many roles, often serving as an interlocutor of immigrants with the political, administrative, social and institutional instances, as well as being privileged provider of social services, education and training. Furthermore, it also provided space for conviviality, sociability, organisation, invention and reconstruction of cultural expressions of immigrants. For the Cape Verdean immigrants, genres of music and dance of Cape Verde remained as essential markers of their identity. Besides leisure in everyday life, the formal and informal gatherings of Cape Verdeans in Portugal never do without the presence of music and dance. Generally, in these contexts, the so-called 'Cape Verdean'<sup>5</sup> music and dance are preferred, although other genres generally connoted to that what the music industry calls 'African music' can also be very popular. The genres that are present in the events are quite varied and rather diversified: funaná, zouk, kizomba, kuduro, batuque, coladeira, morna, canção, zouk-love, also known as cabo-zouk or cola-zouk, semba, hip-hop and rap kriolu, among others. Preferences are at times connoted to age group, socio-professional status or to the personal life experience of each social actor. The existence of a specific transnational niche for Cape Verdean music in the music industry (which also includes artists that dedicate themselves to repertoires of international scope), structured and with a substantial record offer, television and radio programs, the availability of amateur and professional musicians, concert venues, recording studios, etc. greatly facilitates accessibility to music.

On the associative level, one of the main genres in which Cape Verdeans take part is batuque, a musical, poetical and dance genre associated with the traditional culture of the island of Santiago, from where the highest percentage of immigrants in Portugal originates. The existence of batuque in Cape Verde, on the island of Santiago, is

documented since the early nineteenth century. Before Cape Verdean independence, this genre was mainly practiced by the rural people of the mountainous interior of the island, where, historically, black slaves on the run, took refuge, and where communities with some degree of preservation of memories and practices of African culture consolidated themselves (Gonçalves, 2006:27). Despite the regular influence of European colonisation - especially the Portuguese - in Cape Verde, an unique culture was forged, marked by the use of Creole and certain African practices, but also by other aspects imposed by the coloniser, such as the adoption of Catholicism and the establishment of economic, political and ideological structures of Portuguese origin. Since that time, the social role of batuque, in addition to its functions of recreation and animation of weddings and baptisms, has included a vehicular dimension of rules and moral attitudes, of judgments and joint appeals. The topics that are dealt with in batuque and *finassom* songs - *finassom* is a variant of batuque<sup>6</sup> - can hence take us back to the concerns and desires of this rural population, that, proud of its identity, has extended these characteristics up to the present. Nowadays, batuque has extended itself to the urban sphere and has adapted itself to new lifestyles. It enjoys great popularity - both in the archipelago and within the diaspora - attested by the continuous creation of repertoire, the emergence of new groups and festivals and the multiplication of commercial recordings. In Portugal, the first batuque groups formally organised between the Cape Verdean immigrants date from the late 1980s. At present, there is a strong circulation and consumption of recordings among immigrants, and the number of organised batuque groups, with regular activity, is to be about twelve.

Two emblematic cases of batuque groups operating in Portugal are: the group Finka-Pé, founded in 1989, based in the Associação Cultural Moinho da Juventude, in the neighbourhood of Alto da Cova da Moura, Amadora with well-known public activity, and the group Fidjos di Tera,<sup>7</sup> founded in 2008, of the Associação Cabo-verdiana do Norte de Portugal, in Porto. These two groups represent very illustrative case studies because of their contrast.

From the perspective of ethnomusicology, facing this framework, the following three questions can be asked: how does the batuque practice of these two groups in Portugal constitute a source of comfort and an antidote to the experience of hostility that is typical that the lives that Cape Verdean immigrants entail in the Portuguese society? Which articulation does the batuque practice cause between feelings of nostalgia for the homeland - *sôdade* or *sodadi* in creole -, sociability with patricians and personal requirements of the migration project? And finally, how does the batuque practice constitute itself as a privileged strategy of conciliation, in the institutional relationship between Cape Verdeans and Portuguese society? The migratory experience, analysed by ethnomusicology since decades, has permitted to establish some overarching principles of the relationship between music and migration, as we shall see below.

## Migration and ethnomusicology

Human migration as a social phenomenon has been subject of academic interest since the nineteenth century, with geography as a pioneer in its study. Migration presents a wide range of settings - labour-related, political, administrative, and many others - and can be analysed from various points of view. At present, labour migration is explained primarily by economical theories. Ernst Ravenstein (1834-1913) formulated the first interpretations of human migration based on the principle of attraction/repulsion ('push/pull') and on empirical observations of migration inside the United Kingdom (Góis, 2006: 83). In his review of this model, John A. Jackson pointed out that its centrality can only be attributed to the economy: "*(...) repulsive factors were generally of an economic character, and included lack of access to property or land use, unemployment, low wages, unproductive land, droughts and famines and, finally, the population increase. Attractive factors took the form of improved alternatives to the afore-mentioned and, furthermore, placed the advantages of urban life in sharp contrast over rural life*" (Jackson, 1991:19).

Some of the comments that Ravenstein made, and which deserve a critical analysis later on, can be summarised as follows: (a) migration flows have generated refluxes; (b) migrants prefer for short distances; (c) migrants have a preference for big cities when migrating over long distances; (d) rural people migrate more than the urban population and young adults are more prone to international migration than families. The assumptions of Ravenstein's classical theory, however, are based on the individual's free will, which raised the criticism that "*from the start, free will is subject to a set of social, historical and political conditions that make it less free and more arbitrary*" (Góis, 2006: 88) and that, unquestionably, condition migration.

The social and political contexts necessarily interfere with migration processes, not only through the setting of the migrating subjects' characteristics, but also through the selective choice of their migratory destinations. The individual level, the decision to emigrate, is limited by those contexts. In this respect, Pedro Góis concludes that the "*perception of reality leads the actors to use a set of adaptive strategies modifying both the final migratory destination or the migrations that they have to use in order to achieve them*" (2006: 90).

Studies on migration and culture have gained a new perspective from the 1990s onwards, to some extent influenced by reasoning about the theory of culture by certain authors, such as Hommi Bhabha (1994) or Zygmunt Bauman, who have provided important intellectual contributions to the way we see the relationship space/culture or the phenomenon of consumption and postmodernism. In fact, the approach of the mobility of cultural forms, which has challenged the classical notion of the link between culture and territory or 'place' (in the sense that Bhabha uses 'location'), offers a new way of looking at migration and corresponding migratory experiences. Statistics and data collection - which were the major methodological tools of sociology of migration, economics and geography - have proven to not be sufficient for understanding, for example, the way in which migrants see their own migratory experience. Cultural production in various forms, in particular expressive behaviours,

have thus become another instrument in order to make us understand the vision of immigrants on the host society and the place they have left, as well as how they are seen by the host society.

Music and dance, through the contents that they entail, through the distribution and great social reach they can obtain, imply enormous advantages as sources for the analysis of migration. The elements that make up the music, such as lyrics, instruments and costumes, to give a few examples, are important sources of information about the behaviors and attitudes of immigrants when combined with their social environment. It sometimes even happens, in the most spontaneous musical migrants performance, that those that who perform mix themselves up with those who attend. In addition to this argument, Baily and Collyer state: "*Music has a power to evoke memories and capture emotions entirely separate from the lyrical content (or where lyrics are entirely absent) that we can all identify with, migrants and non-migrants alike. Musical forms may travel independently of migrants, in response to other factors in the broader commercial and cultural environment*" (2006: 168).

Early on in the development of musical science, in the nineteenth century, the basic scientific questions were linked to the nature of music and human musicality, in an ideological framework still very marked by positivism and classificatory scientific paradigms. This was a time in which modern ethnomusicology had not yet been configured theoretically and methodologically and, therefore, it was defined as 'comparative musicology'. At this time, concepts like 'authenticity' or 'primitive music' were central concerns for comparative musicologists, and migration did not constitute an area of special interest to the discipline nor to its epistemology. Migration was merely a phenomenon that could help explain the distribution of musical instruments or of terminologies between different cultures over long periods of archaeological time.

In the 1940s, Melville Herskovitz<sup>8</sup> opened up a new perspective to the analysis of music and migration by examining African American musics in his study *The Myth of Black Past* (1941). From then on, ethnomusicology would experience major developments, especially with regard to incorporating new topics such as acculturation, change and cultural innovation. The knowledge that American musical genres with African influence carried in its origin, in part, the violent process of forced migration of African slaves, brought about new interrogations that certainly contributed to the new definition of ethnomusicology proposed by Alan Merriam, in 1964, in his main work *The Anthropology of Music: the 'study of music in culture'*. This perspective led, in turn, to the opening of a new scientific chapter, protagonised by Adelaide Reyes Schramm (1979), to define the city, or rather, the 'urban area' and 'ethnic music', as new research grounds in ethnomusicology. The study by Philip Bohlman (1984) on the re-urbanisation of musical life of Jewish immigrants from central Europe in Israel, or the works of Thomas Turino (1988 and 1993) on the music of the highlands of Peru being taken to Lima by internal migrants, for example, are two significant examples of this new perspective.

Adelaide Reyes Schramm, then at Columbia University, promoted a number of studies on minority groups, some of them immigrant, that helped to understand the

various ways of musical organisation in migratory contexts. Several studies about different migratory experiences ranging from the extreme case of political refugees to labour immigrants have showed, however, that music always has a deep personal and social meaning with hindsight to issues of human displacement. Migrants represent case studies that require different approaches and whose categorisations are problematic given their diversity of origin and migration: immigrants, emigrants, nationals, internationals, refugees, deportees, forced migrants, voluntary migrants, and so on. Surely, the diversity of human and cultural settings also produces the same diversity of musical articulations in time and space.

The cultural references in the migratory situation are many, and they represent a major interest to Ethnomusicology by the fact that migrant groups are physically displaced from the culture they are familiar with and find themselves immersed in another culture in which they are a minority. Given the physical dislocation as a fact which by itself generates new conditions for migrants, new communication technologies and the relative ease of modern transportation on the other hand seem to be potential mitigating factors in the feeling of dislocation. Moreover, immigrants, as is known, find ways to keep and redeem bonds of affection and to devise strategies for the reconstruction of niche communities where recreations of their cultural and affective pre-migratory space take place. Moreover, the prospect of return is, in many cases, a fact more or less chimerical, which evocation can be a strong catalyst of attitudes and strategies. Nevertheless, the cultural reality that migrants leave when they move to another territory is a reality that is constantly transforming itself, but of which the old image often remains as a referent that is more imaginary than real. Certain contexts of migratory experience change in such a great manner that the migrants' references become dull images of a past that no longer exists. It is in this space, between the imaginary and the real, that migrants often project identities and ways of being that do not correspond to the host society nor to the cultural idea that they have left behind. And this view can castrate the project of return. Obviously, many migrants *"return to the places they came from but still experience the feeling of being out of place"* (Said, 1999, in Baily and Collyer, 2006:171).

It is in the private sphere that immigrants often organise their closest approximations to the culture they have left behind. The sense of ambiguity between referential space and culture - not being here nor there - has been widely explored in ethnomusicological research, especially in transnational communities, such as in the study by James Watson, *Between Two Cultures* (1977). As Baily and Collyer conclude: *"Re-enactment and repetition of cultural practices continues to provide a source of comfort, a partial antidote to the hostility experienced in the new society, reinforcing and responding to feelings of nostalgia"* (2006:171).

In fact, this sense of longing has proved to be a creative engine in many communities and in these cases, immigrants are responsible for a dynamic cultural innovation that goes far beyond the simple repetition of cultural practices. Baily and Collyer, once again, argue: *"A transnational perspective helps to remove the blinkers under which only developments in the country of origin were seen as authentic representations of the culture of the migrant group"* (2006:171).

With regard to Cape Verdean music, Rui Cidra adds the motivation of migrants towards an own music production to this argument: *"Musicians, as well as intellectuals and writers involved in music production, living in the arquipelago and in the centers of the diaspora, have made migration and its emotional, intellectual and socio-economic consequences into one of the main topics of poetry for song. The texts of batuko, of funaná or morna, and the performative styles used in their interpretation, have limited the 'saudade' (sodade or sodadi) caused by separation from loved ones as an emotional and expressive element defining the aesthetic of these genres"* (Cidra, 2008:106).

Furthermore, this seems to be a case in which culture in general and music in particular help to understand new structures of a transnational community as a whole. Ethnomusicological literature has also showed us how the immigrants can play a role in the maintenance and transmission of traditions. Diasporas at times are seen as much as reserves of cultural memory as respected authorities of musical innovation. In reaction to more conventional explanations of economy and politics about the complexities of the relations between migrant groups, Baily and Collyer (2006: 172) argue that issues of cultural production, innovation and dissemination in transnational communities elucidate them best.

Some factors may have implications on the way in which music inscribes itself onto the migratory experience. Migration occurs in varying circumstances that also produce different uses of music. The presence or absence of musicians and traditional instruments, for example, can design different ways of identification of migrants with the musical traditions of their homeland. Thomas Turino (1993) addresses this problem in his studies on the music of internal migrants in Peru that descend from the highlands to Lima and use music as a means of connection, musical genres as an emblematic function and musical practice as a rhetoric of their social objectives. But, similarly, the spatial and cultural proximity between the local host and region of origin has important implications for the production and consumption of music among immigrants. It is common - and the case of Cape Verdean immigrants in Portugal - that cultural proximity provides certain choices in practice and consumption of music by immigrants, including the music of the host society. Linguistic, religious and other proximity has its implications in the practice and use of music. This proximity can be independent of class divisions that exist within the proper community, such as age, education or social group that in turn, may refer to different choices of consumption and production. A comparison between practices in the immigrant community and in the place of origin is also informative about the way music is perceived and represented. Likewise, by means of its claiming ability or emotional evocation, music can be an element of identity negotiation and assertion of migrant communities. With regard to the popular music of Cape Verdean immigrants, Timothy Sieber raises the question as follows: *"Popular music is a powerful medium for representing, contesting, and negotiating changing cultural identities within shifting global diasporas. Music indexes continuity and change, sustains and renegotiates connection across transnational space, and reshapes generational relations"* (2005:123).



Music may play a role not only of evocation of space but also of a time that, eventually, ceased to exist. Immigrants often secure musical practices in a kind of 'ritualized repetition', cultivating the 'retention of musical models' (Carvalho, 1991) which retains and evokes a past era. This finding raises the question of maintenance of ritual music among immigrants, which also constitutes an element of the rhetoric of maintaining cultural identity. It is very common within immigrants' discourse. The prolongation of migration for several generations, however, can create interesting dynamics of musical innovation. It is exactly by opposition to 'ritualized repetition' that Baily and Collyer explain innovation: "... migration can lead to cultural innovation and enrichment, with the creation of new forms which are indicative or symptomatic of the issues facing the immigrant, and which help one in dealing with a new life in a place of settlement and in the articulation of new identities. This is specially typical of the second or third migrant generation, born and brought up in a new land" (2006:174).

Some migrant communities use music for themselves as a way to maintain their cultural identity. Yet, in other situations, music and dance are more addressed to the host community. In these circumstances, music is a way of affirming the group identity to others. One may also use it to create cohesion within the proper group or to clarify one's beliefs. For this reason, too, music among migrants can create splits and divisions. The capacity to evoke ideological, religious or other pre-migratory affiliations that are not understood or shared by all can create cracks within the group. Even at the level of social class, music can be a divisive factor.

Finally, in the context of migration one may ascribe to music a role that Baily and Collyer (2006:177) refer to as 'therapeutic possibility', both for individuals and for groups. People that are migrating may experience emotional weakness or lack of self-esteem. Separation from their homeland, the difficulties of everyday life in a new country and the immigration status itself - the decision to move, even voluntary, is hard and possibly punitive - can be factors of depression. In certain contexts, it is here that music seems to have a therapeutic role in stimulating self-esteem and relief to the feelings of depression and anxiety. In the context of Cape Verdean immigration in Portugal, this is one of the referred qualities for the justification of the batuque practice. Its therapeutic possibilities are related to the alternation of percussion, the expression of problems of daily life and the sharing experience provided through practice (Rosa, 2006).

### **Batuque in Portugal, *sodade* and conciliation**

From an ethnomusical perspective, batuque can be analysed through its sound dimension and through the various discourses that underpin it: the content of the lyrics and the stories associated with each batuque song, the discursive rhetoric of the social actors involved - musicians, publics and other agents in the organisation of music production -, their behaviour and attitudes and, finally, the personal narratives of individual members of each batuque group. The song repertoire of batuque groups is gradually transformed and renewed in the light of events and the passage of time, since this genre embodies a very important kind of social commentary.

My research work on batuque in recent years has particularly examined the above-mentioned group Finka-Pé, integrated into the activities of the Associação Cultural Moinho da Juventude, a community project based in the neighbourhood of Alto da Cova da Moura. This neighbourhood, located in the municipality of Amadora, on the outskirts of the city of Lisbon, is mostly populated by people of Cape Verdean origin and, in previous years, has received extensive media coverage related to violent events and crime, although the official rates themselves are numerically lower in the neighbourhood than elsewhere. In fact, this media coverage is associated with the exploration of social prejudices of racism against immigrants of African origin in Portugal (Horta, 2008:225). The process of discrimination and the spread of marginalisation in the neighbourhood ends up feeding and further increasing the limitations of the population of Alto da Cova da Moura towards integration in and dialogue with the outside world. Irreconcilable feelings deepen on both sides, between immigrants and their host society. Moreover, Ana Paula Beja Horta significantly explores these topics by showing how the representations of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood by the state and the media have a 'racialised nature' and how these images 'have fixed local identity in an ideological scale, that articulates the cultural difference with marginalisation and deviant behaviour' (2008:233). This author further concludes that: *"The imposition of individual subjectivities has found multiple forms of resistance and protest by the residents of the neighbourhood. Using their experiences of life in a translocal space, migrants have fought for social identities and have built new alternative ways to represent themselves and the community"* (2008:233). This explains why the district has virtually no basic infrastructure such as paved streets, basic sanitation or public transport. For these reasons, manifestations of expressive culture of the inhabitants - particularly music and dance - represent an important exchange coin to negotiate a social image with a positive signal to the outside.

Founded in 1989, Finka-Pé consists of about 18 women of three generations. Originally, the group only consisted of older women born in Cape Verde who had traveled to Portugal during the 1980s. However, since 2002, the group has begun to include girls, daughters and relatives of the older members, already born in Portugal and also their daughters, granddaughters of the former. This group has a long list of performances all over the country and at least four international tours (Spain 1992, 1995, Cape Verde 1996, Belgium 2003). It has appeared several times on television and continues to carry out frequent performances throughout the country that are almost always commented upon. Once a month, on Sunday, it promotes batuque sessions - the so-called 'batuque course' - with free participation for anyone that wants to. Its repertoire is frequently renewed with new songs composed by own members or with repertoire adjustments of other groups.

In Porto, there is another batuque group that was recently formed and is headquartered in the Associação Cabo-verdiana do Norte de Portugal (ACNP). According to its chairman, Martin Ramos, the association's objective is:

*"[...] the spirit of congregation, promoting conviviality and the union of all Cape Verdeans in the northern region of Portugal in order to disseminate the values of Cape Verdean culture, cultural ties between Cape Verde and Portugal, and vice versa. To promote initiatives in the*

*field of social security, education and health, to promote and participate in cultural, sportive, social, economic manifestations, through the organization of public initiatives aimed at greater social integration and harmony of the Cape Verdean immigrants in the Portuguese society in northern Portugal" (Borges, 2007).*

The batuque group Fidjos di Tera was created in 2008 and consists of 18 young students and student-workers based in the city of Oporto. Its members meet on a weekly basis at the headquarters to carry out batuque rehearsals and to compose new songs. The public performance is a parallel objective to the rehearsals. Whether or not it has any performance scheduled, the group meets on Sundays to rehearse. In these moments of sociability and conviviality, the members talk to each other, share their experiences, exchange news of their lives and their families because they have few opportunities to do so during the week. During about a year and a half, this group has made around 15 public performances in the region of Porto and has also performed in Spain. All members are youngsters - boys and girls - with personal projects of academic education that provide a migratory framework that is different from most of their patricians that emigrated often only with economic and labour-related objectives. As the migratory framework of these young people is different, their group organisation equally differs from other batuque groups. One of the distinguishing features is the fact that the group includes boys, which, a few years ago, was an unusual feature in batuque groups. However, at present, both in Portugal and Cape Verde, some groups do integrate boys, especially youngsters and children. Other features of differentiation by this group are the formal structure of its songs - which is quite varied and not repetitive -, the adoption of percussion instruments and strings - the *tumba* (a sort of *djembe* and the viola, in addition to the *tchabetas*<sup>10</sup> - and the musical content, especially in the rhythmical percussion part. This is organised in a way that accentuates the 'binary' character of the rhythmical accompaniment pattern, as opposed to the 'ternary' character that is found in the repertoires of other groups.<sup>11</sup> In addition, this group composes its entire repertoire by itself.

In one of the songs of the group Finka-Pé, the topic of migration is addressed by the desire to return. The return to the motherland is one of the objectives of migration. However, the transformations of life, especially the birth of children or the adaptation to cultural differences often "turn the return" into a permanently postponed reality that eventually is not realised. Therefore, in song, this desire is formulated in an hypothetical way - the hope to return - thus asserting the contingency of the migratory project:

*I hope to return  
Cape Verde I hope to return  
Tell Buraca because I hope to return  
Oh girl I hope to return  
Oh St. Anthony I hope to return  
I have hope, oh Angelina I hope to return  
I want to return  
I hope to return*

*Oia my mother  
Oia ah women  
Oh world of God  
When I was with you  
When I went to Cape Verde  
He said tomorrow and it remained on that  
Oh Black Lady  
Oia companions  
I hope to return  
Oiaiai oh I do hope to return*

Song of Finka-Pé repertoire. Source: INET-MD recording, 1992.

In another registration, in the context of immigration in Portugal, the batuque group Fijos di Tera uses the 'sodade' of loved ones and the earth as the theme of musical and choreographic creativity in batuque:

*I'm in Portugal  
My relatives in Cape Verde  
I cannot take separation  
Distance is killing my life*

*My friends  
Help me to go to Cape Verde  
Missing [Saudade] my mother  
Missing [Saudade] my dad  
Missing [Saudade] my sister  
My love goes without saying*

*Everything I do  
Never worked  
I have little luck  
A longing to embrace my family  
God illuminates my path*

Song of Fijos di Tera repertoire. Source: transcription by the group, 2009.

Within this group, which comes together to socialise and practice batuque, music plays a strategic role in maintaining its Cape Verdean identity, which its members do not want to lose. For most group members, batuque was a reality that they knew from Cape Verde, but had never practiced before coming to Portugal. The statements of several of them about the desire to practice batuque connects directly with the feelings of longing [saudade] and the need to establish processes of socialisation within their own age group of interests. Furthermore, this situation seems to be similar to the one described by Susana Sardo with regard to the practice of music among Goan Christians in Goa: "*The choice of music as an ingredient to voluntary partake in a feeling of nostalgia and to meet the need for reconstruction and maintenance of identity,*

*arises precisely from the fact that music contains within itself a reference to a space (a place and a social dimension) and to a time (history) where it is possible, supposed and desirable to find the essential components of that identity. It is a strong marker of identity because it is unique” (2004:233).*

Batuque, in the case of these two groups in Portugal, addresses itself to a Portuguese public that does not understand Creole and often incorporates a strong pedagogical dimension or an approximation to the expressive Cape Verdean culture. Therefore, the performances of the group Finka-Pé are usually commented with explanations about the content of lyrics, dancing, rhythm and other aspects of musical organisation, as well as about the Cape Verdean culture. Here too, the daily lives of women have been marked by a huge difficulty to find employment. In Cape Verde, many of these women were engaged in street vending of fish, an activity that is prohibited in the urban context of Lisbon. Their attempt to reproduce the professional experience that they knew within the host space gave rise to episodes of exclusion and persecution in which many women of the group were arrested or had their goods seized by the police. In the face of this situation and the traumas that it caused, the majority was forced to choose other activities. One of the songs from the group’s repertoire - recovered and adapted from a letter of the Cape Verdean musician Codé di Dona, *Pulicia di Praia* - clearly reflects the desperation and anger that this condition of exclusion and near-marginalisation has caused:

*Lisbon Police  
Let me sell on the street  
Earn the bread of my children*

*Running from the police  
[I am caught]  
I hit my chest on a car  
And die at once.*

Song of Finka-Pé repertoire in 1994. Source: personal recording.

In the following testimony F.S., one of the women of Finka-Pé, talks about her personal experience of tension and conflict with the authorities regarding the street vending of fish:

*“I ran into a policeman and he said: stop the car! I stopped the car. The documents of the car? And I handed over the documents. The documents of the fish? And I handed over the documents. I handed over more documents and then the police said I had to pay a fine of 50 thousand escudos. I said that I could not do that, because I have four kids to raise and the father gives them nothing and I was alone in this fight. Then the police said the following: grab the fish that you have there and put in the dustbin. We’ll go away and do not want to find you here anymore. If we’ll find you here again, you will be fined and imprisoned. I said: okay. And I grabbed into the garbage what I had there, from preparing the fish, and I threw it in the trash, I pretended. I put the fish in the car and went off to my house.” [Source: film by Catarina Rodrigues, Mulheres do Batuque, 1997]*

The conciliation of interests and legal status of Cape Verdean immigrants with the laws of the host country is not always easy. In Portugal, the experience of various immigrants regarding the legalisation of their status has often been complex and shrouded in bureaucracies and difficulties not always understandable. The representative apparatuses of the Portuguese state, such as the police or the *Serviços de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras* [Borders Control Service] decide about the legality or illegality of people's situation by means of guidelines that are sometimes unclear. In the following song, the group Finka-Pé exposes these difficulties and interpellates the authorities - the government and the president - to conciliate and resolve the bureaucratic problems of migration.

*Sorrow of our people, our Government  
President good day.  
We want a union with you  
Tell employees to give the people the documents  
They ask money from the people  
To deal with our issues.  
There are many people who have nothing  
Give them permission to dispatch their affairs.*

Song of Finka-Pé repertoire in 1994. Source: personal recording.

Finally, conciliation is also expressed through the consciousness of political power, of feelings of equality and of the ability to accomplish that immigrants have of themselves.

*Like us, only us!  
We came to Moinho da Juventude  
We met with people who were doctors  
With pen and paper  
We asked them what they were doing  
They said they would approve the law  
We went to Alto da Cova da Moura  
And we shouted to every youngster  
To not be afraid  
Let's join hands and construct Kova M.*

Song of Finka-Pé repertoire in 2008. Source: personal recording.

## **Conclusion**

In terms of expressive behaviour, migration generates a great diversity of responses in different contexts. At the same time, migration creates tensions and conflicts of interest and understanding - both on a collective and individual level - in which music can play an important role of conciliation. In many cases, music, equipped with multiple properties, functions both as a marker of group identity and a personal link

to memories, other times and other spaces. Its capacity for emotional and affective redemption makes it an indispensable element in assessing the migratory experience. Some of Susana Sardo's conclusions view music in these terms: *"It also is an argument for the recurrent construction of moments of enjoyment of a collective sense of belonging to a group, or of identification. The relationship with the others is absolutely necessary - not only aspired but also essential for musical performance - and works as an intermediary for sharing emotions that refer to the relationship with a place and a past and that seek to perpetuate themselves as a guarantee for maintaining the group and its identity"* (2004: 233).

This seems to be the way by which the practice of batuque, within the two groups mentioned in this article, takes up the form of a source of personal comfort and an antidote to the experience of hostility felt by the Cape Verdean immigrants in the Portuguese society. The automatic and instant ability that batuque provides to re-create time and place of origin is one of the reasons for adopting this musical and choreographic genre in the whole of available Cape Verdean expressive practices. On the other hand, for those that, being children of Cape Verdean immigrants, never emigrated because they were born in the migratory destination, batuque helps to define and shape their system of identity referents. Batuque is often present in their daily lives through practice or listening, thus raising familiarity and proximity, which becomes extremely important.

Batuque practice in Portugal is also an area par excellence of expression of feelings of nostalgia [*saudades*] for the homeland. The sharing of this common feeling, through performance, reinforces the sense of solidarity and group belonging and contributes to the resistance against hostility. Moreover, for the social actors involved, practicing batuque is also a pretext of socialisation, new experiences, new opportunities for conviviality, leisure, travel and knowledge. It very strongly contributes to personal and social development within the group of Cape Verdeans.

Finally, for the two groups observed, batuque represents a privileged conciliation strategy, although at different levels: for the youngsters of the group Fidos di Tera, batuque, as a space of expression of feelings, helps its members to establish their social position and to balance their own relationships within and outside the group. Because of this, they could reinvent batuque in their own way, without depreciating it or without worrying about aspects of 'folkloric reconstruction'. They have reinvented its form and rhythmic accents and have contributed the instrumental references that each member had brought in from other personal experiences, following the example of strong renewal that the genre has been undergoing in the archipelago. For these youngsters, batuque establishes itself as an emotional regulator of the personal relationship with life in the city of Oporto, with regard to the specific immigration status of students or student-workers. It also provides them a social visibility as a particular ethnic group.

For the women of the group Finka-Pé, batuque establishes itself as a social conciliator because it is the privileged domain for the presentation of Cape Verdean cultural identity of many residents of the Alto da Cova da Moura neighbourhood. The group's

performances always provide space for explanations about the characteristics of the neighbourhood and the lifestyles of its inhabitants. To this extent, it is an important contribution to the understanding of cultural difference and serves to diminish the mistrust about Cape Verdeans. At the same time, for each of the women, the practice of batuque is always a personal appeasement, a moment of evasion and conciliation with their dreams of life.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> I thank my colleague and academic supervisor Susana Sardo for proposing the concept of 'conciliation' associated with ethnomusicological analysis that I use in this article.

<sup>2</sup> The Instituto Nacional de Estatística [National Institute of Statistics] counted 10,627,250 residents in 2008. The foreign resident population was therefore 4.14%.

<sup>3</sup> This was, moreover, the criterion used by Amaro (1999) in *Estudo de Caracterização da Comunidade Cabo-verdiana em Portugal* in which, for the year 1997, he estimated a total of some 83,000 Cape Verdeans.

<sup>4</sup> The Lisbon region comprises 18 municipalities (5.8% of the national total): Alcochete, Almada, Amadora, Barreiro, Cascais, Lisbon, Loures, Mafra, Moita, Montijo, Oeiras, Oeiras, Palmela, Seixal, Sesimbra, Sintra, Vila Franca de Xira.

<sup>5</sup> The concept of 'Cape Verdean music' is ambiguous. For simplicity of the concept, we mean the set of practices that include specific expressive music and dance, performed by Cape Verdeans, both in Cape Verde and in the diaspora and which, when they are sung, use the Cape Verdean Creole. The literature (Cruz, 1981; Brito, 1998; Gonçalves, 2006; Martins, 1989; Monteiro, 1988; Tavares, 2005) highlights the following types: batuque, finassom, tabanka, colá (or colá sanjon), coladeira and morna. In another category associated with other origins: choro, lundum, mazurka, contradança, xotice, rabolo and samba. There should yet be another category that includes other kinds of international diffusion, especially associated with dance, sung in Creole: canção, zouk and its variant zouk-love, also known as cabo-zouk or cola-zouk, kizomba, kuduro, hip-hop and rap kriolu.

<sup>6</sup> Finassom is a variant of batuque in which the choreographic component, often exuberant, is completely replaced by an amplification of the sung narrative message. In these situations, the female singer reels off long moral, religious and reflective speeches about human relationships, norms of behaviour and social attitudes.

<sup>7</sup> Originally called 'Flor di Tera'

<sup>8</sup> Ph.D. in anthropology from Columbia University in 1923, a disciple of Franz Boas (1858-1942).

<sup>9</sup> The case of political refugees and exiles is obviously different from that of migrant labourers, because the former know that the return can mean putting their lives at risk.

<sup>10</sup> The tchabeta is a species of small cushion covered with a material made of napa or leather that serves to strike and make the rhythmic pattern that accompanies the batuque songs. The players are seated, have the tchabeta placed in the middle of the thighs and strike with both hands alternately.

<sup>11</sup> Actually, this is a very simplified interpretation of the rhythmic complexity of batuque. The rhythmic organisation of batuque, from the perspective of authors such as Nketia or Chernoff, does not follow the hierarchy of Western rhythmic and is therefore not 'ternary'! It can be, yes, heard as such. For a thorough study on these issues, besides the two mentioned, see Ribeiro (2004).

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