

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344531346>

El «Ángel Negro» en Lisboa: Josephine Baker desafía a Salazar en televisión en directo

Article · January 2020

DOI: 10.7203/eutopias.18.16845

CITATIONS

0

READS

16

1 author:



Pedro Cravinho

Birmingham City University

5 PUBLICATIONS 2 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

Some of the authors of this publication are also working on these related projects:



Jazz in Portugal [View project](#)

The ‘Black Angel’ in Lisbon: Josephine Baker challenges Salazar, live on television

Pedro Cravinho

Recibido: 30.08.2019 – Aceptado: 20.09.2019

Título / Titre / Titolo

El «Ángel Negro» en Lisboa: Josephine Baker desafía a Salazar en televisión en directo
Le « Ange Noir » à Lisbonne: Josephine Baker défie Salazar en direct à la télévision
“L’Angelo Nero” a Lisbona: Josephine Baker sfida Salazar, in diretta televisiva

Abstract / Resumen / Résumé / Riassunto

This essay examines a televised performance by Josephine Baker that took place in Portugal on 29 November 1960, during the time of Portugal’s so-called “New State” (*Estado Novo*) regime. The performance included the song ‘*Terra Seca*’ by Ary Barroso, the lyrics of which explore slavery and racial discrimination, and Baker also made a deliberate point of speaking to racial and human rights issues. Baker’s pronouncements took place within a context of global instability surrounding the ongoing decolonization process. At this time, Portugal was one of the last of the European colonial empires, and was the target of huge international media pressure in support of decolonization. Josephine Baker’s televised performance can be understood as a stance in opposition to Portuguese colonial policies. As Jill Dolan has argued, “utopian performatives persuade us that beyond this ‘now’ of material oppression and unequal power relations lives a future that might be different, one whose potential we can feel as we’re seared by the promise of a present that gestures toward a better later” (Dolan, 2008: 7). Baker’s stance reflected a resilient opposition against colonialism and a demand for better conditions for those living under oppression globally. So, with no small degree of irony, the Portuguese Public Television Service – the dictator Salazar’s “ideological apparatus”, which was controlled by a rigorous Censorship Bureau to prevent the circulation of any potentially subversive content, especially related to African issues – was used against itself by a “Black Angel”.

Este ensayo examina la actuación televisada de Josephine Baker que tuvo lugar en Portugal durante el régimen del Estado Nuevo. El 29 de noviembre de 1960, durante su show, además de interpretar *Terra Seca*, una canción de Ary Barroso que comprende letras que exploran la esclavitud y la discriminación de los negros, abordó deliberadamente temas raciales y de derechos humanos. Las declaraciones de Baker tuvieron lugar durante un período de inestabilidad mundial con respecto al movimiento de descolonización en curso. En ese momento, Portugal era uno de los últimos imperios coloniales europeos y se enfrentaban a una enorme presión internacional respecto a la descolonización. La interpretación televisada de Josephine Baker puede entenderse como una oposición a las políticas

coloniales portuguesas. Como ha argumentado Jill Dolan, los «performativos utópicos nos persuaden de que más allá de este “ahora” de la opresión material y las relaciones de poder desiguales vive un futuro que podría ser diferente, uno cuyo potencial podemos sentir» (Dolan, 2008: 7). La declaración de Josephine Baker, en cierta medida, reflejó su oposición contra el colonialismo y demandó una mayor calidad de vida para los oprimidos a nivel mundial. Paradójicamente, la Televisión Pública Portuguesa, el ‘aparato ideológico’ del dictador Salazar, que estaba bajo el riguroso control del Departamento de Censura para evitar la circulación de cualquier contenido potencialmente subversivo, especialmente aquellos relacionados con temas Africanos, fue utilizada contra sí misma por un «Ángel Negro».

Cet essai examine le spectacle télévisé de Joséphine Baker qui a eu lieu au Portugal pendant le régime du l’État Nouveau. Le 29 novembre 1960, au cours de son émission, elle interpréta notamment « Terra Seca », une chanson d’Ary Barroso comprenant des paroles, paroles explorant l’esclavage et la discrimination des Noirs. Elle aborde délibérément des questions relatives à la race et aux droits de l’homme. Les déclarations de Baker se sont déroulées au cours d’une période d’instabilité mondiale concernant le mouvement de décolonisation en cours. À l’époque, le Portugal était l’un des derniers empires coloniaux européens à faire face à une énorme presse internationale en faveur de la décolonisation. La performance télévisée de Joséphine Baker peut être comprise comme une opposition à la politique coloniale portugaise. Comme Jill Dolan l’a expliqué, « les performatifs utopiques nous persuadent qu’au-delà de ce ‘maintenant’ d’oppression matérielle et de relations de pouvoir inégales, un avenir qui pourrait être différent, » (Dolan, 2008: 7). La déclaration de Joséphine Baker a, dans une certaine mesure, reflété son opposition résiliente contre le colonialisme et pour ceux qui vivent sous l’oppression dans le monde. Paradoxalement, la télévision publique portugaise – « l’appareil idéologique » du dictateur Salazar –, contrôlé par un bureau de censure rigoureux pour empêcher la diffusion de tout contenu potentiellement subversif, en particulier ceux liés aux questions africaines, était utilisée contre lui-même par un « Ange Noir ».

Questo saggio esamina la performance televisiva di Josephine Baker che si è svolta in Portogallo durante il regime dello Stato Nuovo. Il 29 novembre 1960, durante lo spettacolo, oltre a realizzare “Terra Seca”, una canzone di Ary Barroso comprendente testi che esplorano la schiavitù e la discriminazione dei neri Baker, ha deliberatamente affrontato questioni razziali e sui diritti umani. Le dichiarazioni di Baker hanno avuto luogo durante un periodo di instabilità globale riguardante il movimento di decolonizzazione in corso. A quel tempo, il Portogallo era uno degli ultimi imperi coloniali europei e obiettivo di una enorme pressione dei media internazionali a favore della decolonizzazione. La performance televisiva

di Josephine Baker può essere interpretata come opposizione alla politica coloniale portoghese portoghese. Come ha sostenuto Jill Dolan, “le affermazioni utopiche ci persuadono che oltre questo ‘ora’ dell’oppressione materiale e delle relazioni di potere ineguali vive un futuro che potrebbe essere diverso, il cui potenziale possiamo sentire mentre ci brucia la promessa di un presente che ci indica un futuro migliore” (Dolan, 2008: 7). La dichiarazione di Josephine Baker, in una certa misura, rifletteva la sua opposizione resiliente al colonialismo e la richiesta di una vita migliore per coloro che vivono sotto l’oppressione a livello globale. Paradossalmente, la televisione pubblica portoghese – l’ ‘apparato ideologico’ dal dittatore Salazar -, sotto il controllo di un rigoroso Ufficio di censura per impedire la circolazione di qualsiasi contenuto potenzialmente sovversivo, specialmente se relativo alle questioni africane, fu usata contro se stessa da un ‘Angelo Nero’.

Key words / Palabras clave / Mots-clé / Parole chiave

Portugal, New State, Colonialism, Television, Josephine Baker.
 Portugal, El Estado Nuevo, Colonialismo, Televisión, Josephine Baker.
 Portugal, l’État Nouveau, Colonialisme, Télévision, Josephine Baker.
 Portogallo, Lo Stato Nuovo, Colonialismo, Televisione, Josephine Baker.

Introduction

Fifty-nine years ago, in late November 1960, an African-American artist with adopted French nationality, given the name ‘Black Angel’ by the Portuguese press, visited Portugal for the last time. This was Josephine Baker (1906-1975), a dancer and singer who had first found fame in Paris in the 1920s.¹ In contrast to previous visits, when her shows would customarily receive plenty of exposure in the daily press,² her last appearance in Portugal was without fanfare:

A prominent showbusiness figure, Josephine [Baker] was met by only four people on her arrival at *Aeroporto da Portela*: a television executive, Melo Pereira (responsible for her visit), Julio Costa (the newest member of the *Trio Odemira*), a photographer and a journalist ... The ‘Black Angel’ was disappointed.

¹ For further discussion on this topic, see Papich (1976), Haney (1981), Rose (1989), Stovall (1996), Dalton and Gates (1998), Blake (1999), Bonini (2000), Ezra (2000), Baker and Chase (2001), Shack (2001), Berliner (2002), Henderson (2003), Jackson (2003) and Jordan (2010).

² From March 1941 to July 1958, Baker participated in several shows in Portugal, which were prominently promoted in the daily press.

There would have been more if a certain misinformed [Portuguese] newspaper was to be believed, in which she might have read of an “enthusiastic reception by her fans” and a “series of shows she was going to perform in Portugal”. The truth is simply this: only four people were waiting for [Josephine] Baker, and she performed only one televised show.³

As the magazine explains, Josephine Baker was visiting Portugal to perform on a television show at the invitation of a Melo Pereira, at the time Director of Light Music programmes at the Portuguese Public Television Service (RTP).⁴ However, no one could have predicted the polemics that were to ensue. During the televised performance, Baker chose to deliver statements about human rights and racism. This did not go unnoticed. In fact, it led to tensions between the RTP directorate and the New State regime itself.

In seeking to analyse this incident, this essay is divided into three parts. The first, “The context”, begins by briefly describing the Portuguese New State regime during World War II and, later, the Cold War era. It was during WWII – when Lisbon was a city with Allies and Axis spies moving freely but under the intense surveillance of the Portuguese Political Police agents – that Josephine Baker first visited the country.⁵ The second part, “The many faces of Baker”, begins by examin-

³ *All translations from non-English sources are the author’s unless otherwise indicated. In each case, the original text will be presented in a footnote, as here. The author hopes that opening up these sources to non-Portuguese readers adds to the value of this study. “Figura destacada no mundo dos microfones, Josephine teve a recepção-la, no Aeroporto da Portela, apenas quatro pessoas: o técnico da TV, Melo Pereira (a quem se deve a sua vinda), Júlio Costa (o mais novo componente do ‘Trio Odemira’), o fotógrafo e o jornalista... O ‘anjo negro’, ficou decepcionada. E mais ficaria se, ao ler certa Imprensa pouco e mal esclarecida, tivesse tomado nota de uma entusiástica recepção por parte dos seus admiradores’ e de ‘uma serie de espectáculos que vinha realizar em Portugal’. A verdade e uma: apenas quatro pessoas esperavam Baker e a artista apenas interveio num ‘show’ televisionado.” Plateia 73 (1 January 1961), p. 7.*

⁴ RTP-DAG Proc. No. 1/60, microfilmed.

⁵ On 29 August 1933, under Decree Law No. 22 992, the *Policia de Vigilancia e de Defesa do Estado* (PVDE) (“Police of State Surveillance and Defence”) was created, which coincided with the establishment of special military courts. On 22 October 1945, the *Policia Internacional de Defesa do Estado* (PIDE) (“International State Defence Police”) replaced the PVDE under Decree Law No. 35046. Later, on 24 November 1969, under the Caetano government, the *Direcção-Geral de Segurança* (DGS) (“Directorate-General for Security”) replaced the PIDE under Decree Law No. 49,401.

ing Baker's visibility in the Portuguese daily press in the late 1920s and the 1930s, and her first visits to neutral Lisbon during WWII as a tourist, artist and French secret agent.⁶ Baker's performances in March 1941 and July 1958 are briefly considered, as well as her passage through Lisbon in April 1959. The third and final part, "The broadcast", presents a detailed analysis of the 1960 performance. Based on archival and bibliographical research, this section brings to the discussion original RTP microfilmed documentation associated with the broadcast. Although some accounts of Baker's earlier presence in Portugal can be found, especially those relating to her activity as a French secret agent, no detailed analysis of her television broadcasts has yet been published.⁷

The context: The Portuguese New State regime

To understand the importance of Baker's actions, it is essential first to comprehend the contemporary Portuguese socio-political context. During WWII, Lisbon was one of the few European cities in which both the Allies and the Axis powers could operate openly. In a bid to win foreign support for his New State regime, the Portuguese dictator, Dr Oliveira Salazar, authorized the creation of a novel form of tourism in metropolitan Lisbon. This offering was branded *Costa do Sol* ("Sunny Coast") and mainly comprised the areas covering São Pedro do Estoril, São João do Estoril and Santo António do Estoril. In those areas:

The accesses there had been improved tremendously so the poorest and most degraded areas located a little further from the coast would not be identified by those touring either on-board the comfortable Sud-Express train that travelled from Paris to Santo António do Estoril, or along a recently con-

structed coastal road which linked Lisbon to this Costa do Sol. The accommodation catering for these foreigners differed from the facilities dedicated to national tourists. In fact, palace hotels and similar chic lodging houses hosted not only these travellers, but also refugees and spies.

(Cadavez, 2013: 210)

These elite travellers fleeing the war in Costa do Sol would be greeted by an environment in which they could resume those social routines they had been forced to abandon, such as parties, movies and music concerts.⁸ As Pereira has noted, "under the Estoril sun, on the beaches, yachts and the golf club, in the terraces and bars of the cosmopolitan hotels, and in the casino at night under the watchful eyes of the croupiers, the high society serenely enjoyed its privileges" (Pereira, 2017: 20).⁹ Lisbon became a temporary home for both exiled European royalty and for refugees seeking passage to the North American continent, and it also played host to spies from many countries. It was within this context that Josephine Baker circulated freely in the Portuguese capital as a French secret agent during her first visits to the country.¹⁰

From the end of WWII throughout the Cold War era, Portuguese society underwent profound changes (Barreto, 2000). There were changes in behaviour and mentality, described by Rosas as "invisible changes", which took place in a context of domestic political and social repression, and isolation from the rest of the world (Rosas, 2001: 1051). An accelerated process of decolonization was evident in this period, especially with regard to the African continent. Portugal was one of the last European colonial empires, still ruling several colonies in Africa, Asia and Oceania.¹¹ The Portu-

⁸ For further discussion of the Estoril elites' lifestyle, see d'Orléans (2011) and Lochery (2013).

⁹ "Sob o sol do Estoril, nas praias, nos iates, no clube de golfe, nas esplanadas e nos bares dos botéis cosmopolitas, e à noite no casino, sob o olhar atento dos croupiers a alta sociedade gozava serenamente os seus privilégios" (Pereira, 2017: 20).

¹⁰ For further discussion on this topic, see Abtey (1948), Rose (1989) and Onana (2006).

¹¹ With Portugal being one of the colonial empires in Africa, Asia and Oceania, and thereby attracting widespread condemnation, in 1958 Salazar responded to this by creating a kind of "democratic mirage", pulling

⁶ For further discussion of the reception of African-American artists, as well as jazz-related music (and modern dance) in Portugal during the 1920s and '30s, see Cravinho (2016).

⁷ For further discussion on this topic in Portuguese language, see Santos (2011).

guese dictator was not willing to relinquish the overseas territories. To distract attention, the New State regime aimed to create the impression on the world stage of an opening-up of Portuguese political, social and cultural activities and temporarily suspended the repressive activities of the Censorship Services and Political Police. Salazar's intransigence on the colonial issue led to a long-lasting war of independence in the former Portuguese African colonies, beginning in March 1961. It was only a few months before the beginning of armed conflict in the then Portuguese colony of Angola that Josephine Baker paid her final visit to the country to make her notorious television appearance.

The many faces of Baker: Dancer, singer, spy and activist¹²

Josephine Baker is usually remembered primarily as a spirited and glamorous entertainer from the 1920s, but there was a great deal more to her than that. Born Freda Josephine McDonald on 3 June 1906 in St Louis, Missouri, she found work as a waitress in a club at the age of 13; shortly thereafter she learned to dance and soon

back on repressive practices and promoting free elections in order to manufacture the illusion of a free country. The candidacy of the Oposição Democrática (Democratic Opposition Party), led by General Humberto Delgado, was one of the strongest signs of change. On 10 May 1958, at the Café Chave d' Ouro in Lisbon, Humberto Delgado promised to depose Salazar, in response to a question from Lisbon's Agence France press correspondent Lindorff Pinto Bastos. With these words, General Delgado earned the nickname "General sem Medo" ("general without fear"), and subsequently managed to unite different sectors of Portuguese society around a political project that sought a democratic and non-colonial Portugal. because of this, the ensuing presidential elections offered a moment of hope for the Portuguese people, both at home and in the overseas colonies. Unfortunately, because of extensive electoral fraud, Delgado lost the election (Sardica, 2008). Nevertheless, the political framework established in Portugal during that year of presidential election campaigning forged a determination for change within Portuguese society.

¹² I borrowed the title of this section from the title of Caravantes's (2015) book.

found success on Broadway.¹³ By mid-1920s, she moved to France and soon became one of Europe's most famous artists. In 1937, she chose a French husband and fully embraced her new homeland by becoming a French citizen. The energy that had thus far been expended on developing her career was in 1939 redirected following France's declaration of war on Germany. She joined *la Résistance Française* (the French Resistance) and, working as a secret agent, used her European tours as a cover to convey information on Axis troop movements to the Allies.¹⁴ Later, when the war was over, Josephine Baker returned to her native USA, with a less acquiescent attitude towards the prevalent racism: she insisted on both a non-discrimination clause in her contracts and on playing to integrated audiences. Regarding her 1950s US tours, Dudziak has observed that:

[Baker] expressed quite frankly her disapproval of Negroes who come to Europe as "goodwill" ambassadors of the U.S. Government and attempt to sell the European people on the idea that all is well for Negro citizens in America. "Europeans are not ignorant", she said. "They read, and they visit America. They are quite familiar with the race situation in this country".

(Dudziak, 1994: 559)¹⁵

In recognition of Baker's involvement in the civil rights movement, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) declared 20 May 1951 "Josephine Baker Day".

Thus, it was during the latter part of her career that Baker accepted the invitation to perform on Portuguese television, although it was not her first visit to the country. Baker had been there several times before November 1960, either on extended visits –performing a number of concerts in Lisbon and Porto – or else passing through as a French secret agent.¹⁶ During WWII:

¹³ For further discussion on this topic, see Caravantes (2015).

¹⁴ For further discussion on this topic, see Abtey (1948), Rose (1989) and Onana (2006).

¹⁵ From the *New York Amsterdam News*, 14 July 1951, p. 22.

¹⁶ For further discussion on this topic, see Abtey (1947), Rose (1991) and Onana (2006).

Portugal welcomed Josephine with invitations to diplomatic parties at the British, Belgian, and French embassies. As she moved from one ambassador to another, she listened for information to help the Resistance. Then she went back to her hotel room and made careful notes on slips of paper that she pinned to her underwear. She felt confident that no one would strip-search her.

(Caravantes, 2015: 89)

However, it was during the 'Jazz Age' that the Portuguese press first made its readers aware of Josephine Baker. On 16 March 1927, *Ilustração*, a leading Portuguese magazine, published an article entitled "Josephine Baker: The Black Star" (see Figure 1).

Probably the most extensive piece during this period was also run by *Ilustração*, on 16 October 1930, and consisted of four pages with several photographs (see Figures 2 and 3).¹⁷

Her first sight of Portugal had been on 17 March 1939.¹⁸ She arrived in Lisbon at dawn aboard the ship *Massília*, from Bordeaux bound to Buenos Aires, accompanied by her secretary and two famous dancers, Betty Ben and Henchis Estes.¹⁹ Together with her secretary, Madeleine Charlot, Baker had a quick tour of Lisbon's city centre where she lunched at the Jerónimo restaurant before returning in the afternoon to Alcantara Pier, shortly before the ship departed. Portuguese audiences first saw Josephine Baker the artist on stage two years later in March 1941. On her arrival on 19 March, Baker was fêted as a famous star, garnering much positive coverage in the daily press up until her departure on 21 April. Under various soubriquets such as "Queen of Paris", "Black Venus" or "Princess of the World", Baker performed at the Teatro da Trindade in Lisbon and the Teatro Sá da Bandeira in Porto. However, as we now know, behind these shows lay a mission as a French agent. Baker handed over secret messages written in invisible ink on the margins of performance scores bound for London (Savage, 2006).



Figure 1. "Josephine Baker: The Black Star", *Ilustração* (16 March 1927).

Baker was to visit Portugal seventeen years later, this time during the Cold War era, to perform at the Casino Estoril,²⁰ with the daily newspaper *Diário de Lisboa* announcing her "sensational debut" at that venue in its 17 July 1958 edition.²¹ During this visit, she made an unsuccessful attempt to adopt a Portuguese child – part of an ongoing project since 1953 to assemble a "Rainbow Tribe" by adopting children of diverse races and ethnicities (the number would eventually reach twelve).²² Baker landed in the country again the following year on the 24 April 1959, on her way to Paris, according to the daily newspaper *O Século* ("The Century"). In the following day, the newspaper reported that Baker was returning from Venezuela, accompanied by her hus-

¹⁷ *Ilustração*, 116 (16 October 1930), pp. 24-25.

¹⁸ See *Diário de Lisboa*, 5860: 4 (17 March 1939).

¹⁹ See *Diário de Lisboa*, 5860: 5 (17 March 1939).

²⁰ See *Diário de Lisboa*, 12789: 2 (16 July 1958).

²¹ "Estreia sensacional". See *Diário de Lisboa*, 12790: 2 (17 July 1958).

²² For further discussion on this topic, see Guterl (2014).

ILUSTRAÇÃO

JOSEFINA



meu. E! Charlston!! Ao princípio parecia Charlston! Em cada escaninho da firma que todo os porcos reais de planeta tinham mecido tinha-se refugiado uma lagrima evaporação da epadana dos jardins, fazendo tanta, e cada coração, era uma cocktaileira vazia gorgear em milibao as suas gargantas auriferas; mas não! *des foram arrebatadas tam- Charlie!! Charlie!!* Como devia recitar pelo ritmo insolente, que lançara a sua zote estridente graando na medalha sevaria no próprio centro daquela grande das ruínas silvestres, no pulso das orquídeas fâncher que era a Europa de en- quida, no troço das águas de Jaxo, no alegra dos Benedictinos, na calva dos ma- Subida dos campos um feminino friso de giratros, nos dedos das mecanografas? E fazendas desvastadas. E a sextavida gritava: claro que os samiticos arranjavam, etc-



Algo passou pelo mundo, convencendo todas as suas bases. Pelo velho mundo da guerra europeia. Uma sextavida deitando por entre os excrementos molentes de calláveres, assoma a cabeça, que é uma coisa não conhecida ainda em nenhum bazar do Universo, e o espectáculo contragosto da pobre Europa, colapsou-se bruscamente: mas grita arre e somo: Charlston! Que gritos são tão agudo, tão fascinamento? Charlston!! As potes terras calcinadas, da última época europeia, tão expremidas como estão, tão exantadas, covinam: qualquer coisa distinta daquilo: quatro anos rotulos de máquinas férreas. Isto que grita uma sextavida, assomada nos monteiros europeus, não é semelhante, nem clássico, nem paródico, nem vic-

ILUSTRAÇÃO

BAKER



vandose por entre a névoa, foram os primeiros a bailar e, li actua, lançavam as suas mãos altas, beijando-se nas bocas das suas janelas. Os braços de esculida das vitrinas parisienses, a *embayage dos Brasilis* e dos *Stadtbaker*, as camisas de seda dos torceiros, a boa sopa quente dum serrallho levada, o miúdo da colónia, os taboos Luis XV comidados de pedras, os bilizes que florescem nas margens do Danúbio em Hungaria, no dia de S. Filipe Nery, os hotéis confortáveis, mas de segunda ordem, as gracinhas apalhas das graladas, a fogueira das chaminés, e o subitico espantado sobre uma comoda do salão, todos receberam no Infinito a chibotada flagrantis de esquisitissimo, Charlston!

Mas a Rússia fechou as portas das suas fronteiras. O soviete não se deixava enganar pelo velho Ocidente. Falava-se-lhe muito de espírito sábio, de primitivismo, de sabo atrás,



de volta ao regajo da natureza. Pó! Como aquilo cheirava a podridão burguesa!

Efectivamente, da árvore refinada da civilização acabava de cair com um horrível estrago de jazz o fruto bem maduro, o fruto já chibóbo: uma topra cultivada: Josefina Baker.

Mas, como? Que coisa o antigo *Arcebas*? Vêjo como assomam a cabeça estupefactos, os filósofos da biologia, os racionalistas, os scientificos, os tradicionalistas católicos... Sim, compeço todas as objecções que me podem fazer: o tratado de Westfalia, o Inca de Vergílio, o sistema da Ocidente, o esculido de Haraldi, as velas moimadas, o fechamento de Meritissimo, a heresia albigense, o panesclerismo, o atropello genético

ILUSTRAÇÃO



de Baker eram feitas de cultura secular e o grido de Charlston na sua boca não era senão a espuma irrisada da liquidação dumia época.

Mas chegou um momento em que a humanidade, ao desprender-se todas as noites do seu sistema nervoso o encontrava cada vez mais avariado até. Passou-lhe um ferrapo; e o male terrível era ter de encostar todas as manilhas com todas as neumas e os gânglios e as fibras sem estado verdadeiramente lamentável.

Josefina Baker, porém, tinha-se escondido sem canto com uma cubera de garoto, e um gado, dois coelhos, dois periquitos, uma cobra e um peixe. Aquela covra chegaram os Reis Magos do dia. Deram-lhe uma pérola



de Bélgica, o Darwinismo com todos os seus derivados, a tetralogia de Wagner, Robespierre, as suffragistas inglesas... Mas eu acho-me nos factos vivos! Sim, não resta dúvida de que todas essas faças da gravidade histórica não tiveram outro objectivo que dar à luz, opposto-se ao silício lídico das constelações, a negra escucha. Mas, pelo amor de Deus! não há motivo para essa cara de espanto! As coisas iam de cada vez pior, e, afinal de contas, o resultado não foi tão desastroso como se pensa. Os senhores conheceram a Josefina Baker? E uma coisinha que sempre me dá vontade de rir é a seguinte: Charlston! Não era um grido superficial; era um grido novo, mas não de novidade. As visões

ILUSTRAÇÃO



multo grossa, um automóvel de pelo de serpente e uma imponente caixa de bombas. Ella teve um colico de bosphoro, perdeu a pérola oculta debaixo de alguns milreis e foi-se esbarrar com o automóvel de encontro a um tapal de frades cistercienses. Na América, na França, em Inglaterra, na Austrália, todos diziam: Josefina Baker, Josefina Baker, Josefina Baker...

Trouxeram-na à Espanha, que já não ficava na Europa. A muitas senhoras gaudas, honradas espóias de coronéis, de governadores, de presidentes de Antifolia, intoxicaram-se-lhes fervorosos solapos de protesto. Os estabelecimentos de venda de objectos de cera ficaram as suas liquididades com *esperavit*. As Damas Catequistas precisaram da assistência médica. Mas, nos cinematógrafos, os mimodanos continuavam belicandando.

A pesar de tudo, eu vi a Baker. Agrandou-me muito. Não me fazia lembrar absolutamente nada. Com que prazer não lhe passaria o dedo pelas costas, seguindo depois a linha da anca, passando à perna até ao tornozelo.



Não sei porquê. Tinha a sua pele embeço de tacto, de qualquer coisa muito cara. E quando a vi pela segunda vez, como já sentias por ela muita simpatia, tive um momento de tristeza. Sim, porque pensei como o mundo lhe ia devolver o prazer recebido. Aquela sextavida tinha palhado a harpa de filizas da Velha Europa. Tinha-lhe arrancado os últimos sons. Tinha a sua biologia travessa feita posta ao serviço da causa: fazer rir a tristíssima Europa. Mas aquela coisa, quem a comprou depois? Por quantos milreis? E, se assim fosse, onde guardá-la para sempre?

Pior ainda: — onde la moter esta mulher... Mulher?

Mas o que mais graça tem é que Josefina Baker não é nem sequer uma negra, mas uma mulher como todas, e cabe-lhe ainda a esperança de que, com o tempo, todas as mulheres venham a ser como ela; nesse caso, da Velha Europa. Tinha-lhe arrancado as últimas notas. Tinha a sua biologia travessa realizando uma verdadeira obra meritória: feita posta ao serviço da causa: fazer rir a tristíssima Europa. Mas aquela coisa, quem a comprou depois? Por quantos milreis? E, se assim fosse, onde guardá-la para sempre?

1930. JEAN GU. ALBERT.

Figure 2-3: "Josefina Baker", *Ilustração*, 116 (16 October 1930).

band, sister and two of her children, one of whom was called Mara and had been adopted only days before in Caracas.²³ A few months after this brief sojourn, Baker would find herself in Portugal once again.

The broadcast: Baker's confronts Salazar live on television

From the outset of the Cold War era, Josephine Baker was involved in activities around racial equality, decolonization and support of the civil rights movement. She took advantage of her celebrity status to call attention to the discriminatory racial practices in her native US during her international travels, and, as a result, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) viewed her as a national security threat and kept a file on her (Dudziak 1994). According to Dudziak, the "State Department collected data on her activities, using the information to dissuade other countries from allowing her to perform" (Dudziak 1994: 543). Clearly, no such dissuasion took effect in Portugal.

On 6 November 1960, Josephine Baker wrote from the Palace Hotel in Madrid to Melo Pereira, RTP's Director of Light Music, to inform him that family circumstances meant she would have to postpone her planned visit to the television studios in Lisbon. The letter in full read:

Cher Monsieur,

Pour des raisons d'ordre familial, et indépendantes de ma volonté, je me trouve dans l'obligation de m'excuser auprès de vous, en ce qui concerne la date du neuf courant, date à laquelle vous auriez voulu que je fasse une émission de Télévision, et que j'aurais été enchanté de faire.

J'espère que ce contretemps ne vous cause pas trop de déséquilibre dans votre programmation et ne vous occasionnera pas d'ennuis auprès de votre direction, ennuis dont vous n'êtes absolument pas responsables.

Je serais contente de me mettre d'accord avec vous pour une autre date, et je vous prie de voir Monsieur CORTES pour cela si vous êtes intéressé.

Bien sincèrement à vous, et encore tous mes excuses.

Joséphine Baker²⁴

After an exchange of correspondence between the artist, Rafael Cortez (her agent in Spain) and Melo Pereira, it was agreed that the broadcast would take place on 29 November under the supervision of RTP Director Fernando Fradique.²⁵ With regard to the musicians involved, it was originally envisaged that the studio orchestra would be led by Fernando de Carvalho, as noted on the production sheet dated 23 November 1960.²⁶ An internal service note dated 28 November, the very day before the transmission, sent from the Music Programmes Office, informed RTP's Programme Directorate about Fernando Carvalho's replacement by conductor Tavares Belo.²⁷ Also, the pianist Antonio Melo was added to the roster of musicians.²⁸ Under Belo, the studio orchestra comprised fifteen musicians: four violins, one viola, one cello, one double bass, three saxophones, two trumpets, one trombone, drums and piano.²⁹

²⁴ "Dear Sir, For family reasons, and beyond my control, I find myself obliged to apologize to you, regarding the date of the ninth inst., when you would wish me to do a Television show, and which I would have been delighted to do. I hope that this setback does not cause you too much imbalance in your programming and will not cause you trouble with your management, trouble for which you are absolutely not responsible. I would be happy to agree another date with you, and I would ask you to see Mr CORTES on that matter if you are interested. Sincerely yours, and my apologies once again, [signed and printed] Joséphine Baker." RTP-DAG Proc. No. 1/60, microfilmed.

²⁵ RTP-DAG Proc. No. 1/60, microfilmed: "Ficha de Produção (November 23, 1960)" (Production Sheet).

²⁶ RTP-DAG Proc. No. 1/60, microfilmed: "Folha de Cachets (November 23, 1960) – ANULADA" (Cachet Sheet – CANCELLED).

²⁷ RTP-DAG Proc. No. 1/60, microfilmed: "Radiotelevisão Portuguesa – Serviço Interno (November 28, 1960)" (Portuguese Public Television – Internal Service).

²⁸ RTP-DAG Proc. No. 1/60, microfilmed: "Folha de Cachets (November 29, 1960)" (Cachet Sheet).

²⁹ On the programme's cachet sheet, approved by RTP's Director of Production Services, we find the musicians named as follows. Violins: Humberto de Aguiar, Fernando Correia Martins, Mário Garibaldi Du-

²³ See *O Seculo*, 25 April 1959.

The programme was aired on a Tuesday at 10:30 pm, with a duration of 45 minutes, and was announced in the daily press as “Music Hall: Josephine Baker in an exclusive presentation in Portugal”.³⁰ As far as production costs were concerned, Baker’s fee was at the time one of the highest ever awarded by RTP to a foreign artist: 25,000 Portuguese escudos, with no deductions for fees or tax.³¹

Baker took full advantage of her opportunity. She used the broadcast to challenge Salazar’s colonial policies via what Jill Dolan calls a “utopian performative”. According to Dolan, “utopian performances” can be understood as “small but profound moments in which performance calls the attention of the audience in a way that lifts everyone slightly above the present, into a hopeful feeling of what the world might be like” (Dolan, 2001: 5). This definition is apposite to the performance in question. At certain points, she conveyed anti-racism messages and sentiments about universal brotherhood. In introducing ‘Terra Seca’, a song by Ary Barroso, the lyrics of which explore slavery and racial discrimination, Baker claimed that it had been the ‘good God’ who had made her black (see Figure 4).³²

Baker’s pronouncements were not well received by the RTP Censorship Bureau and RTP Directorate,³³ while censorship meant the Portuguese press was silent



Figure 4. A screenshot of the Josephine Baker RTP broadcast.

on the issue. It is important to keep in mind that this controversy had taken place on Portugal’s only television channel, under the control of the corporatist far-right Estado Novo regime with its dominant colonial ideology, at a time when that regime was facing increasing international pressure from the UN to withdraw from its African and Indian colonies.

Frazier, in a study in which he characterizes diplomacy as “black cultural traffic”, claims that, with few exceptions, “Cold War historiography, in general, has under-theorized the discourses and performances features of black internationalism when in transit” (Frazier, 2013: 36).³⁴ He points out that the historians Charles R. Lilley and Michael H. Hunt have drawn attention to this, and quotes their assertions that many works “ignore and downplay the patterns of social interaction produced between different peoples’ and, therefore, treat ‘culture and power as though they were largely divorced from, rather than wedded to, one another in important ways” (Frazier, 2013: 36).³⁵ Moreover, as Bauman has observed:

arte, Domingos Ferreira Vilaça; viola: Francisco Canto e Castro; cello: Joaquim Bernardo Moreira; double bass: José Martins Esteves Graça; saxophones: Guilherme Martins d’Oliveira, Manuel Hermenegildo Taborda Pereira, Flamiano Ferreira Evaristo; trombone: Mário de Jesus, Joaquim de Almeida Lourenço; trombone: Edgar Fernando Oliveira; drums: Artur Brandenburg Machado de Oliveira; piano: António Melo. RTP-DAG Proc. No. 1/60 microfilmed: “Folha de Cachets (November 29, 1960)”. It is of much interest to note that some of these musicians were connected to the Lisbon jazz scene at the time. For further discussion on this topic, see Cravinho (2016, 2017, 2018a, 2018b).

³⁰ See *Diário de Lisboa*, 13638: 19 (29 November 1960).

³¹ Conductor Tavares Belo’s fee was 1.500\$00 (1,500 Portuguese escudos), and each musician was paid 400\$00 (400 escudos). RTP-DAG Proc. No. 1/60, microfilmed: “Folha de Cachets (November 29, 1960)” (Cachet Sheet).

³² “*C’est le bon dieu qui nous fait de c’est couleur.*” RTP “Music-Hall” Josephine Baker (29 November 1960).

³³ It should be noted that the programme was broadcast live and Josephine Baker’s remarks were in French with no subtitles.

³⁴ For further discussion on this topic, see Cohn and Platzer (1978), Griffin and Fish (1998), Gilroy (1993), Von Eschen (1996, 2004), Edwards (2003) and Frazier (2013).

³⁵ For further discussion on this topic, see Lilley and Hunt (1987).

The consideration of the power inherent in performance to transform social structures opens the way to a range of additional considerations concerning the role of the performer in society. Perhaps there is a key here to the persistently documented tendency for performers to be both admired and feared – admired for their artistic skill and power and for the enhancement of experience they provide, feared because of the potential they represent for subverting and transforming the status quo.

(Bauman, 1975: 305)

I argue that Baker's televised performance could be seen as an example of this dual agency of inspiring both admiration and fear. On the one hand, Baker was internationally admired: both as an artist and on account of her service to France during WWII as a secret agent and her support of the French Resistance, for which she was awarded the Medal of the Resistance with Rosette and named a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour by the French government. On the other hand, in a post-WWII world, she became feared by the US authorities on account of her deep involvement in the US civil rights movement (Dudziak, 1994).

As described above, Baker sent shockwaves through the corridors of RTP, with her pronouncements becoming the subject of an exchange of correspondence between the RTP Censorship Bureau and Deputy Director-General. Questions were asked within RTP's power structures about how this could have happened, given the prevailing system of prior censorship of all RTP content before transmission.³⁶ According to a letter from the Head of the Censorship Service to the Deputy Director-General of RTP, it was not just Baker's words that were controversial: the dress she wore for the broadcast left her shoulders and arms exposed during parts of the performance, which affronted the prevailing Portuguese conservative moral sensibilities of the day (see Figure 5).

This might seem an excessive reaction in Western Europe at the dawn of the '60s but it needs to be con-



Figure 5. A screenshot of Josephine Baker's RTP broadcast.

sidered in context: since 1933, Salazar's authoritarian, conservative, traditionalist regime, with its "Catholic-rooted vision of politics and society", had been ruling Portugal under the slogan *Deus, Pátria e Família* ("God, Homeland and Family") (Sardica 2008: 47).³⁷ Alongside a widespread moral conservatism in society at large, the Catholic Church in particular voiced strong opposition to new forms of entertainment and modern fashion.³⁸

The excuse given by the RTP's Head of Censorship Services was that he had not had the opportunity before the broadcast to analyse the song lyrics nor to see the dress Baker was to wear.³⁹ Yet he reaffirmed that it

³⁷ The new Portuguese constitution was approved on 19 March 1933, and initiated after its official publication on 11 April 1933. During this period, also known as Salazarism (1933–68), nationalist cultural symbols were widely circulated and the colonial mentality was amplified in ways that legitimized authoritarian power both in domestic and foreign policy, sustained by the guiding slogan *Tudo pela Nação, nada contra a Nação* ("All for the Nation, nothing against the Nation"). These nationalist discourses, alongside the dominant colonial ideology, to some extent represented a threat to new forms of entertainment from abroad that were intrinsically of "African origin". For further discussion on this topic, see Cravinho (2017, 2018a).

³⁸ For further discussion on this topic, see Cravinho (2016).

³⁹ "*Apesar das recomendações de V. Exa, não me foi ontem possível obter as letras das canções do programa em epigrafe, nem ver o vestido utilizado pela artista na emissão. Tive, porém, o cuidado de lhe falar com ela sobre as duas coisas.*" ("In spite of the recommendations of Your Excellency, it was not possible yesterday to ob-

³⁶ RTP-DAG Proc. No. 1/60, microfilmed: "Carta do Chefe do Gabinete Literário [Serviço de Censura da RTP] (November 30, 1960)" (Letter from the Chief of the Literary Cabinet [RTP Censorship Bureau]).

would “always be desirable to ascertain in advance all the elements that concern the programmes’ moral appreciation.”⁴⁰ On 3 December 1960, the Television Programmes Directorate received the following statement from RTP’s Deputy Director-General: “the utmost care should be taken so that a situation like this cannot be repeated. We want to be informed if any measures have already been taken that can put our minds at rest on this matter”⁴¹ Soon the Television Programmes Directorate received another message about the programme but this time it was a telegram from Josephine Baker sent on New Year’s Day, thanking them for their invitation to perform: “*Vous remercie tout cœur amitié et affection témoignages, par radio journalistes artistes et employés TV, amicalement Joséphine Baker*”.⁴²

Baker’s remarkable televised performance in Portugal can be understood to have come about as a result of one individual’s actions given RTP’s connections with the international music industry. In its simplest terms, it was a public event in which music was used as a form of protest against a repressive colonialist regime, not least because of that regime’s continuous resistance to international pressure to decolonize. However, as we have

tain the letters of the songs of the programme in the epigraph, nor to see the dress used by the artist in the broadcast. But I was careful to talk to her about both.” “Comentário do Adjunto do Diretor-geral da RTP a carta do Chefe do Gabinete Literário [Serviço de Censura da RTP] (December 3, 1960)” (Commentary by the Deputy Director-General of RTP to a letter from the Chief of the Literary Cabinet [RTP Censorship Bureau]).
⁴⁰ “conveniente conseguir sempre com antecedência todos os elementos que interessam a apreciação moral dos programas.” “Comentário do Adjunto do Diretor-geral da RTP a carta do Chefe do Gabinete Literário [Serviço de Censura da RTP] (December 3, 1960)” (Commentary by the Deputy Director-General of RTP to a letter from the Chief of the Literary Cabinet [RTP Censorship Bureau]).

⁴¹ “Recomenda-se o maior cuidado para que não possa voltar a repetir-se uma situação destas. Gostaríamos de ser informados se já foram tomadas providências que nos possam deixar tranquilos nesta matéria” RTP-DAG Proc. No. 1/60, microfilmed: “Comentário do Adjunto do Diretor-geral da RTP a carta do Chefe do Gabinete Literário [Serviço de Censura da RTP] (December 3, 1960)” (Commentary by the Deputy Director-General of RTP to a letter from the Chief of the Literary Cabinet [RTP Censorship Bureau]).

⁴² “Thank you with all my heart for the friendship and demonstrations of affection from radio journalists, artists and TV employees. Yours sincerely, Josephine Baker.” RTP-DAG Proc. No. 1/60, microfilmed: “Cópia do telegrama de Joséphine Baker recebido em 31.12.1960”.

seen, the picture is in fact more complex, and a range of other forces are in play in this interface between music, television and the Portuguese state, including RTP’s internal production dynamics, the New State regime’s colonial policies, the actions of the Censorship Bureau, and an artist visiting from abroad with a hidden political agenda. As Williams asserts in his study of television, there are profound historical, social, political and philosophical implications in representing the world through such media (Williams, 1974). This is clearly true of Baker’s televised performance. Despite the Censorship Bureau’s policy of vetting all television content before broadcast, the realities at play within such an institution operating within the New State regime allowed for significant tactical manoeuvres with the state itself, creating spaces in which the authoritarian control fails. One of these spaces was occupied by a “Black Angel”.

References

- ABTEY, Jacques (1948), *La Guerre Secrète de Joséphine Baker*, Paris: Editions Siboney.
- BAKER, Jean-Claude, and CHASE, Chris (2001), *Josephine Baker: The Hungry Heart*, New York: First Cooper Square Press.
- BARRETO, António (2000), *A Situação Social em Portugal, 1960–1999*, Lisbon: Imprensa de Ciências Sociais.
- BAUMAN, Richard (1975), “Verbal Acts as Performance”, *American Anthropologist New Series* 77(2), pp. 290–311.
- BERLINER, Brett A. (2002), *Ambivalent Desire: The Exotic Black Other in Jazz-Age France*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.
- BLAKE, Jody (1999), *Le Tumulte Noir: Modernist Art and Popular Entertainment in Jazz-Age Paris, 1900–1930*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- BONINI, Emmanuel (2000), *La Véritable Joséphine Baker*, Paris: Pygmalion.
- CADAVEZ, Cândida (2013), “Tourism in Portugal at the Beginning of the Second World War: An Innocent Oasis in Europe, or the Achievements of Disguised Propaganda”, Maria Fernanda Rollo, Ana Paula Pires and Noémia Malva Novais (eds.), *War and Propaganda in the XXth Century*, Lisbon: IHC CEIS20, pp. 205–211.

- CARAVANTES, Peggy (2015), *The Many Faces of Josephine Baker: Dancer, Singer, Activist, Spy*, Chicago: Chicago Review Press.
- COHN, Michael, and PLATZER, Michael K. (1978), *Black Men of the Sea*, New York: Dodd, Mead.
- CRAVINHO, Pedro (2016), "Historical Overview of the Development of Jazz in Portugal, in the First Half of the Twentieth Century", *Jazz Research Journal*, 6(2), pp. 75-108.
- (2017), "A Kind of 'in-between': Jazz and Politics in Portugal (1958–1974)", Bruce Johnson (ed.), *Jazz and Totalitarianism*, New York and London: Routledge, pp. 218-238.
- (2018a), "The 'Truth' of Jazz: The History of the First Publication Dedicated to Jazz in Portugal", *Jazz-Hitz*, 1, pp. 57-72.
- (2018b), "Portugal: 1920–1974", Francesco Martinelli (ed.), *The History of European Jazz: The Music, Musicians and Audience in Context*, Sheffield: Equinox, pp. 461-469.
- DALTON, Karen C.C., and GATES Jr, Henry Louis (1998), "Josephine Baker and Paul Colin: African American Dance Seen through Parisian Eyes", *Critical Inquiry*, 24(4), pp. 903-934.
- DOLAN, Jill (2001), *Utopia in Performance: Finding Hope at the Theater*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- D'ORLÉANS, Charles-Phillipe (2011), *Reis no Exílio*, Lisbon: A Esfera dos Livros.
- DUDZIAK, Mary L. (1994), "Josephine Baker, Racial Protest, and the Cold War", *Journal of American History* 81(2), pp. 543-570.
- EDWARDS, Brent Hayes (2003), *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- EZRA, Elizabeth (2000), *The Colonial Unconscious: Race and Culture in Interwar France*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- FRAZIER, Robeson Taj P. (2013), "Diplomacy as Black Cultural Traffic: Debates over Race in the Asian Travels of Adam Clayton Powell and Carl Rowan", *Journal of History and Cultures*, 3, pp. 33-48.
- GILROY, Paul (1993), *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- GRIFFIN, Farah J., and Fish, Cheryl J. (1998), *A Stranger in the Village: Two Centuries of African-American Travel Writing*, Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- GUTERL, Matthew Pratt (2014), *Josephine Baker and the Rainbow Tribe*, Cambridge and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- HANEY, Lynn (1981), *Naked at Feast: A Biography of Josephine Baker*, New York: Dodd, Mead.
- HENDERSON, Mae (2003), "Josephine Baker and La Revue Nègre: From Ethnography to Performance", *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 23, pp. 107-133.
- JACKSON, Jeffrey H. (2003), *Making Jazz French: Music and Modern Life*, Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- JORDAN, Matthew F. (2010), *Le Jazz: Jazz and French Cultural Identity*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- LILLEY, Charles R., and HUNT, Michael H. (1987), "On Social History, the State, and Foreign Relations: Commentary on the Cosmopolitan Connection", *Diplomatic History* 11, pp. 247, 246.
- LOCHERY, Neill (2013), *A Cidade Vista de Fora (1933–1974)*, Lisbon: Editorial Presença.
- ONANA, Charles (2006), *Joséphine Baker contre Hitler: La Star Noire de la France Libre*, Paris: Éditions Dubois.
- PAPICH, Stephen (1976), *Remembering Josephine Baker: A Biography of Josephine Baker*, New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company.
- PEREIRA, Bernardo Futscher (2017), *Crepúsculo do Colonialismo: A Diplomacia do Estado Novo (1949–1961)*, Lisbon: Publicações Dom Quixote.
- ROSAS, Fernando (2001), "O Salazarismo e o Homem Novo: Ensaio sobre o Estado Novo e a Questão do Totalitarismo", *Análise Social*, 157, pp. 1031-1054.
- ROSE, Phyllis (1989), *Jazz Cleopatra: Josephine Baker in Her Time*, New York: Vintage.
- SANTOS, João Moreira dos (2010), *Josephine Baker em Portugal: Cronica da artista, agente secreta, mãe universal e activista dos direitos civicos (1933–1960)*, Cascais: Casa Sassetti.
- SARDICA, José Miguel (2008), *Twentieth Century Portugal: A Historical Overview*, Lisbon: Universidade Católica Editora.
- SAUVAGE, Marcel (2006), *Les Mémoires de Joséphine Baker*, Paris: Edition Dilecta.
- SHACK, William A. (2001), *Harlem in Montmartre: A Paris Jazz Story between the Great Wars*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- STOVALL, Tyler (1996), *Paris Noir: African Americans in the City of Light*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- VON ESCHEN, Penny M. (1996), *Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937–1957*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.
- VON ESCHEN, Penny M. (2004), *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- WILLIAMS, Raymond (1974), *Television: Technology and Cultural Form*. London: Collins.