



Sounds of Protest: Music in deprived places

Ana Estevens, Leandro Gabriel, Isabel André

In the contemporary cities, arts play an important role in deepening processes of social cohesion, including dialogue enablement and strengthen to bridging capital among Diasporas. Furthermore it has been considered especially relevant for the promotion of individual and collective self-esteem, to the (re)construction of local and social identities and to strengthening the sense of place belonging. Artistic activities can become a means to counter or reverse the reproduction of inequality and disadvantage, constituting a stimulus to increasing personal and collective confidence, collective learning and critical thinking and contributing towards the elimination of the negative connotations associated with certain communities and places. In deprived areas of the city, where poor immigrants are overrepresented, the artistic production has the potential to help build bridges and to facilitate encounters between different populations sharing the same urban space.

Certain city neighbourhoods, like Cova da Moura in Amadora municipality, experience systematic disadvantages. Despite the social and cultural inequalities that beset this social domain, arts remains one of the main pathways to promoting social and urban cohesion, particularly via the development of competences related to creativity, citizenship and interculturality. In the context of Cova da Moura, the music, especially de migrant music from Cape Vert can also be looked at from a political significance point of view, as an expression of cultural activism, contestation and resistance. Departing from this framework, we will discuss and explore how music making, performance and consumption take shape within urban dynamics influenced. For that purpose, it will explore how Cova da Moura residents use diverse musical practices to express meaningful messages to the wider society and to contest the conditions of their inclusion (or lack thereof). Some key questions should be answered such as: what are the main messages of the musical pieces? Who are the authors? What kind of musical competencies do they have? And links with other musicians in the neighbourhood, in Portugal or abroad? What means this musical scene to the residents? Information for this purpose comes from interviews and focus groups sessions.

Keywords: Music, Deprived places, Protest, Urban Transformations.