

# ***“Uma revolução democrática é sempre uma revolução inacabada” - or - “A democratic revolution must always remain unfinished”***

Commemorating the Portuguese 1974 revolution in newspaper opinion texts

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## **Abstract**

This article analyses the discursive construction of collective memories and the function of commemorative events for national identity. It focuses on how the 30th anniversary of the Portuguese 1974 revolution was portrayed in the government’s *Programme of Action* issued for the 2004 commemorations and in forty-three newspaper opinion articles also published in 2004. The 1974 revolution ended a 48-year right-wing dictatorship and has shaped subsequent historical events since the 1970s. When the *Programme of Action* changed the 1974 slogan ‘April is revolution’ into ‘April is evolution’, the written press responded by conducting a debate on this reframing. Using the Discourse-Historical Approach in CDA as the analytical framework, this paper highlights the discursive strategies on which the government’s manifesto was built and explores the opinion articles’ ongoing political and ideological tensions over the revolution, its commemorations, and how it paved the way into Europe, by describing the main macro-discursive strategies and raising issues regarding the (mis)representation of social actors and social action.

**Keywords:** Discourse analysis, discourse-historical approach, national identity, commemorations, Portugal, 1974 revolution.

## **1. Introduction**

This paper presents the case for a reassessment of the ongoing representations of the 25 April 1974 Portuguese revolution in Portuguese society by conducting an analysis of two different types of written documents produced in 2004 about the 30th anniversary commemorations; these are linked through theme and content: (1) The government’s *Programme of Action* (henceforth *PoA*) for the 2004 revolution commemorations; and (2) a set of forty-three opinion articles published at the time. The analysis of the official

document (political field of action) provides the background for the social and political fields in which the discursive events are embedded.

Wodak and de Cillia (2007), following Ricoeur, consider individual memories as a viewpoint on collective memory, the latter being a “collection of traces and events that were important for the historical sequence of a particular group” (Ricoeur, 1997, cited in Wodak and de Cillia, 2007: 343). Such events contribute to the definition of national identities as the group “preserves their stability through the integration of positive recollections and the rejection of negative ones” (ibid.). In the case of the 25 April commemorations in 2004, national in-groups were still competing for stabilization of both the collective memory of the events and the “anticipation of a particular future”.

## **2. Theoretical and analytic framework**

Discourse research on the 25 April 1974 revolution is scarce (*cf.* Mendes 2001; Mattos-Parreira 2000; Ribeiro 2010) but is needed in order to understand what happened then and how people relate to the event today, especially as many of the historical analyses conducted so far have been conducted by researchers who were also agents of the events they were analysing (Cerezales 2003: 885). In what follows, this double role of researcher/protagonist is salient in the many versions of the event and to its consequences. As Wertsch (2002: 25) points out, “if members of a group have experienced the events being remembered, they typically do not interpret or remember these events in the same way”. Drawing from the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) framework and methodology in CDA (Reisigl and Wodak 2009; Wodak 2006), in which I incorporate van Leeuwen’s social actor and social action theory (2000, 2008,) and following in the footsteps of various discourse historical studies (e.g. Oberhuber *et al.*, 2005; Reisigl and Wodak 2009; van Leeuwen and Wodak, 1999; de Cillia *et al.* 1999; Wodak *et al.* 2009), the analysis is guided by the following research questions: How does the government construct the 25 April 1974 revolution? How do the Portuguese media represent the 2004 commemorations? How are key social actors and actions represented?

DHA uses three interwoven dimensions of analysis: topics, rhetorical strategies and linguistic means of realization. Within DHA, strategies indicate systematic ways of using language, and they can be located at different levels of linguistic organization

and complexity. DHA distinguishes four types of macro-strategies: constructive, preservative or justificatory, transformative and dismantling strategies (cf. Wodak 2001: 71). As the nature of the present analysis is both relatively open-ended and iterative, proceeding back and forth in order to define which of the linguistic units of texts are recurrent, I analysed the whole corpus and realized that the *PoA* was built upon transformative and dismantling strategies. Because political discourse has a predominantly persuasive function, its formal structure is frequently argumentative. These arguments, including not only their content but sometimes also their structure, may provide information about underlying aims, thus, in terms of the argumentation devices present in the *PoA*, topoi are explored. The analysis focuses also on the following linguistic realizations which were considered to be most significant for answering the research questions: nominalization, passivization and deagentialization. I will refer to the necessary theoretical assumptions for each of these linguistic devices in each corresponding section.

### **3. Background**

The right-wing dictator Salazar gained political power as the Minister of Finance in 1928, and initiated what was officialized as the *Estado Novo* within the 1933 Constitution. Eventually, Salazar ruled the country almost single-handedly, as prime minister, from 1932 until 1968. The dictatorial regime lasted until the 25 April revolution of 1974, by which time the country was under the command of its only other prime minister, Marcello Caetano, who succeeded Salazar in 1968. At that time, Portugal had the longest-running fascist regime in the world. The Salazar/Caetano government spanned the inter-war years, World War II, and the post-war period.

The 25 April 1974 revolution was a left-leaning military coup led by a group of soldiers and a few officers who strongly opposed the war between Portugal and three of its five African colonies (1961-1974). The next two years (1974-1976), commonly known as the *Processo Revolucionário em Curso* (*PREC – Continuing Revolutionary Process*), were perhaps the most extraordinary ones in the country's history. Portugal was awakening from its long anaesthesia imposed by the authoritarian regime, so the lack of political democratic know-how led to inevitable contradictions in relation to

what had been flagged in the initial stages as the “Revolution of the people and for the people”.

From the start, every political party strived to project itself as the true defender of the “ideals of the 25 April”. Each party’s claim that it was the true defender of either the revolution’s ideals or the ensuing democratic values would feed every major debate about this historical event and about every commemoration of the revolution for the next thirty years. The data analysed here are a clear illustration of this ongoing political conflict.

#### **4. Presentation of data**

In 2004, for the 30th anniversary commemorations, the Portuguese government launched a campaign in which the *conceitoestratégico* (*strategic concept*) – as it was labelled by the government – *Abril é Evolução* (*April is Evolution*) was introduced based on the idea of *30 anos, a idade da maturidade* (*30 years old, the age of maturity*), in order to replace the 30-year-old slogan *Abril é Revolução* (*April is Revolution*). The government’s renewed public discourse was clearly signalling a discursive change in collective memories, transforming and, in some ways, dismantling the *past* in favour of a new focus on ideas of the *present* and the *future*. This “radical challenge of the hegemonic narrative” (Wodak and Richardson 2009: 231), which had seemed thus far relatively undisputed by the population in general, spurred a heated pros and cons debate in the media. The image below condenses the debate on the reconceptualization of (r)evolution and shows a cleansing pinkish version of the 1974 deep red carnation,<sup>1</sup> the traditional iconic symbol of the revolution. Because the debate drew upon various narratives of the event, this article analyses both the government’s (political field of action) and the press’s discursive construction of the commemorations (media field of action), focusing on the competing narratives of the historical event itself and of the official commemorations. The debate around the word (r)evolution illustrates how different actors have different views on the significance of wording (Chilton 2004: 7) and how the wording and phrasing of the *PoA* proposed a new conceptualization of the historical event.



Figure 1. Example of a billboard<sup>2</sup>

Whereas an editorial more often than not represents the voice of a newspaper, opinion articles may, and in many ways should, oppose that voice. These also reflect the reactions, attitudes and feelings of people towards situations and conflicts. A further reason that motivated the selection of opinion articles is that, despite their relevant role in the construction of public opinion, not much has been written on the genre of opinion and media discourse on the part of discourse analysts (van Dijk, 1998). Therefore, within each newspaper, I aimed to collect articles representing left-wing, right-wing and centre viewpoints that mirrored a broad spectrum of opinions, within the same newspaper. These were selected from three different newspapers *Expresso*, *Público* and *Correio da Manhã* (see Table 1).

**Table 1 Ideological affiliation of newspapers**

Ideological affiliations <sup>3</sup>	Medium	Target audience	Total No. of articles in corpus (No. words)	Readership for April-June 2004 (%)*
Centre-right	<i>Expresso</i> (broadsheet, weekly)	<i>Middleclass</i>	16 (8,612)	7.7
Centre-left	<i>Público</i> (broadsheet)	<i>Middleclass</i>	21 (23,224)	5.4
Centre-right	<i>Correio da Manhã</i> (tabloid)	<i>Lower-middleclass; working class</i>	6 (2,614)	9.4

\*From a total population of 8,311,000. Adapted from BaremeImprensa, Marktest. [www.marktest.pt](http://www.marktest.pt).

All the articles are signed by their authors, each of whom has a regular column in their respective newspaper. Considered as a group, they are individuals from very diverse backgrounds and do not have a professed common professional framework of reference (Figueiras 2008: 12).

We encounter various contextual dimensions of interference in what is being remembered (and forgotten): the fact that the narrators may themselves have been involved in the events narrated and interpreted; the fact that the narrators may themselves be researchers (of the event); the fact that the narrators may have witnessed the events, without actively participating in them. To these various roles, we must add the mediated action of the news text. These texts evaluate the socio-political and historical context of the event, of its impact during the following thirty years, and of the present context – selecting, reframing and backgrounding– or even omitting – (historical) facts (e.g. only two texts make reference to political arrests, torture, censorship, the absence of women’s civic and social rights, racial discrimination in Africa).<sup>4</sup> Each writer promotes arguments that are both individually-conditioned (personal experience and personal memories) and collectively typical (political affiliations, ideological worldview, a selected interpretation of one historical account amongst the many available). We thus encounter *consensual narratives* in which the emphasis is placed on several post-revolution landmarks, such as the 1976 Constitution, joining the (then) European Economic Community (EEC), and social and economic progress – views aligned with the two political parties, the centre-left socialist party (PS), and the centre-right social democratic party (PSD), which have taken turns in government since 1976 – or counter-discourses which again are politically aligned with the left-wing (the Communists, PCP) or right-wing (Democratic and Social Centre, CDS) parties. Finally, we also encounter personal accounts of lived experience which, nevertheless, reproduce discourses – of the left or of the right. The commemorations are thus used as a field of political struggle, a way of settling accounts, trying to impose particular narratives on the events. The following section is dedicated to analysis of the government’s *PoA* for the commemorations.

## 5. Analysis of the Government's PoA for the Commemorations

Based on the DHA framework, I focus on dismantling and transformative discursive strategies (see Reisigl and Wodak 2009; Wodak et al. 2009) and on topoi. My point of departure for applying these strategies is as follows: *dismantling strategies* are used to demolish an established situation or image, e.g., in the case of the PoA (Extract 1 below), the government construes a *new* discourse on the event that was dissociated from the concept of revolution; *strategies of transformation* attempt to transform the status quo (the revolution) into something different (evolution); therefore positive attributes are no longer directly dependent on the revolution, but on various other factors, construed as independent, such as being a “member of the most prestigious International Organizations” (line 16) so the emphasis is no longer on the past (1974) but on the *present* time as preparation for the *future*.

(1)

1 25 April is 30 years old. And 30 years is the age of maturity. That is why this year we  
2 wish to highlight those things that represent the maturity, the evolution of Portugal.  
3 Every culture, society, nation has in its history small and large events that mark  
4 and constitute its identity. From those events, a collective memory remains that,  
5 like its meanings, is alive, dynamic and evolving. The 25 April is also an element of  
6 our history, of our collective memory. The carnation is the buzz word. Synonymous  
7 with freedom, the beginning of a life in democracy. Symbols we will never forget.  
8 But we do not want to live in the past. We do not want the 25 April to be just a  
9 memory. The 25 April is renewed every time it is celebrated. The 25 April 1974  
10 indicated the beginning of a historical turning point in Portugal.  
11 But with the conquest of Freedom, the Portuguese people turned to another conquest,  
12 that of Development. In 30 years, the 25 April has grown, as the country has grown. In  
13 30 years, Portugal has changed from a sad, poor, closed country looking for a destiny...  
14 into a socially and economically open, democratic, dynamic country. A country in  
15 which it is worth living. Portugal has a place of prominence in the World today. It  
16 is a member of the most prestigious International Organizations. It is a technologically  
17 developed country, with a modern Transportation system, where the quality of life of  
18 the average citizen has increased remarkably in just 30 years. This is April's heritage.  
19 April is above all evolution. And after 30 years, it would be strange if the  
20 commemoration procedures did not change. The date that indicated the beginning of  
21 an era of progress in Portugal, should not, therefore, be a celebration of longing or  
22 solely ideological. It should be, instead, a National Celebration. A celebration, by which  
23 the idea of the Present will give us a vision of the Future. When we commemorate  
24 the idea of progress, which marks the daily lives of the whole population, we are  
25 saying that Portuguese society has fulfilled a mission. That it is proud of the Present  
26 and believes in the Future. This year's commemorations will then be framed within a  
27 spirit of assertiveness of national self-esteem. 2004 is a year of positive change for the  
28 economic cycle. It coincides with our hosting the largest sports event ever organized  
29 by Portugal, Euro 2004. Let's commemorate together the 30 years of evolution of  
30 the 25 April. [See appendix for original version].<sup>5</sup>

As the discursive transformation of *revolution* into *evolution* was the main intention, the text begins by dismantling macro-strategies, followed by transformative strategies. These are linked to reframing national identity through an all-inclusive national group whose collective memories are being delimited anew, i.e. the text recontextualizes the revolution's semiotic indices such as the *carnation* (line 6), *freedom* and *democracy* (line 7).

The PoA is composed of two parts: the first part presents a static image (realized through verbs such as *have, remain, be*) of *nossa memória colectiva* (*our collective memory*) and its *symbols*; the second part begins with the sentence: "*Mas não queremos viver no passado*" (*But we do not want to live in the past*) (line 8), signalling a transition and a clear boundary between the *static* past and *adynamic* active future. The text is built on a dichotomy of these two time-dimensions, where the collective *we*, in the form of the first-person plural verb conjugation, becomes the agent of change: "*Não queremos que o 25 de Abril seja só uma memória*" (*[we] do not want to live of the past, [we] do not want the 25 April to be just a memory*) (lines 8-9).<sup>6</sup>

### **5.1 Dismantling strategies**

The noticeable omission of the word *revolução* from the whole text (a deliberate choice) signals an overt dismantling strategy, through which the government seeks to erase the concept of revolution. As such, the 1974 revolution becomes only a date, the social actor *25 April*. However, this discursive dismantlement is framed within a recognizable traditional discourse on the revolution as a form of national identity. Significantly, the semiotic and discursive elements that had, until 2004, contributed to collective memory of the 25 April 1974 revolution are listed: "[...] *ocravo. Sinónimo de liberdade, o início de uma vida em democracia. Símbolos que jamais esqueceremos*" ([...] *the carnation. Synonymous with freedom, the beginning of a life in democracy. Symbols we will never forget*) (lines 6-7). However, these are not referred to in full grammatical sentences with active verbs, rather they are presented elliptically as a description of (almost) loose elements, with the elision of cohesive devices, conveying the idea of a

static *memory*, precisely the opposite of what is stated: “*Dessesacontecimentosficaumamemóriacolectivaque ,talcomoosseussignificados, é viva, dinâmica e evolutiva.*” (From those events, a collective memory remains that, like its meanings, is alive, dynamic and evolves) (lines 4-5). The explicit reference to the nation’s *identity* (lines 4-5), predicated as the sum of “*pequenos e grandeseventos*”(small and large events) that make up a *collective memory*, sets up one of the macro-topics of this text: national identity. However, the sentence “*Também o 25 de Abril é um element da nossahistória, da nossamemóriacolectiva*” (the 25 of April is also an element of our history, of our collective memory) (lines 5-6) diminishes the event and situates it as one more element, instead of *the* element to be celebrated: firstly, because it is not (positively) predicated; and secondly, the fact that it needs to be overtly stated presupposes that this claim might not be consensual.

## **5.2 Transformative strategies and topoi**

As stated above, along with dismantling the concept of *revolution*, the government proposes the new concept of *evolution*, transforming the “status quo into something different” (Benke and Wodak 2003: 121). The text accomplishes this effect by anthropomorphising and metaphorising the events of 25 April as a living person, which *has grown, has changed and reached the mature age of 30*.

Table 2 maps out the most salient topoi present in the *PoA*. To arrive at these, I examined how certain phrases from the text reproduce standard arguments which contain implicit premises or enthymemes as content-related warrants; these are not spelt out and therefore rely on a *system of public knowledge*; as such, these phrases lead to certain conclusions in which the premises are taken for granted.

In terms of Aristotelian rhetoric<sup>7</sup>a topos (plural *topoi*) is a general argumentative form or pattern that enables a rhetorician to construe a concrete argument for a given conclusion (Rapp, 2010). This means that “topoi are general instructions saying that a conclusion of a certain form can be derived from premises of a certain form” and that “one topos can be used to construe several different arguments” (ibid.). Furthermore, topoi are based on descriptions of things as good, noble, just, honourable, etc. According to Aristotle, syllogisms of a rhetorical deductive nature are enthymemes

(van Eemeren *et al.* 1987: 71), which means that for the formulation of enthymemes' deductive arguments should display a premise-conclusion structure. However, as rhetorical deductive syllogisms are rational ways of persuading, bound to a particular form of communication, e.g. monologue or public speeches, "the speaker can do without premises if he can assume that his audience automatically accepts certain premises as obvious or taken for granted"(ibid.). Enthymemes are the core of the persuasive process, and "the construction of enthymemes is primarily a matter of deducing accepted opinions" (Rapp 2010), as opposed to deductions from true sentences or principles. Van Eemeren (ibid.) argues that certain premises might be taken for granted, thus they need not to be spelt out, which seems to be how DHA scholars have interpreted enthymemes, i.e. the enthymeme is the hidden premise of the toposthat induces a logical leap between the premise and the conclusion without spelling out the argument. Given this, and bringing together classical rhetoric and DHA, I use topoi for argumentation schemes based on persuasion, where deductive arguments or enthymemes are based on descriptions of things or commonplace arguments which are ultimately presupposed to be good, noble, just, etc. (or that are lacking in these same characteristics, and therefore are fallacies) within a specific field of action and discourse. By applying topoi,DHA brings to the field of CDA a particularly useful tool for locating arguments as commonplaces – which are used because they are the most persuasive for the recipients – within a certain discourse/field of action and, therefore, DHA recognises how useful topoi identification is to help deconstruct arguments.

The transformative strategy, based on the topos of evolution, follows in the footsteps of what Santos (1993) and Ribeiro (2004) have argued to be the state's symbolic construction of Portugal as a European country. Using the usual themes which the Portuguese people recognize as the *discourse on 25 April*, the government introduces arguments that lead to the idea of *evolution*. The 25 April revolution is presented as an element of collective memory, of history, and as a symbol. It is equated with the past and with a moment of change confined to the past, instead (as had been the case in previous anniversaries) of being equated with a dynamic ongoing process.

**Table 2 Examples of salient topoi and argumentation schemes**

LINE	EXTRACT	TOPOI	ENTHYMEMES	CONCLUSION
(i) 8	<i>But we do not want to live in the past</i>	Topos or fallacy of history (negative)	History is the past, memory is the past The past is static We don't want to live in the past The 25th April is in the past	The 25April (revolution) is static /non-dynamic
(ii) 9-10	<i>The 25 April 1974 indicated the beginning of a historical turning point in Portugal.</i>	Topos of rebirth	The 25 April indicated the beginning of a new life. The 25 April has grown and developed The country has grown	The country was reborn
(iii) 15-16	<i>Portugal has a place of prominence in the World. It is a member of prestigious International Organizations.</i>	Topos or fallacy of authority	International recognition is beneficial and positive to the country; if there is international recognition then it is true that the country has developed	If there is international recognition (= authority) then the country has developed positively
(iv) 16-17	<i>It is a technologically developed country with a modern transportation system where the quality of life of the average citizen has increased remarkably in just 30 years.</i>	Topos or fallacy of progress (technology, innovation and modernity)	The quality of life has improved due to technological development and transportation.  This is April's heritage. April is above all evolution.	If there is progress and technology, then there is quality of life  If April is evolution and progress, then it cannot be revolution
(v) 23-25	<i>When we commemorate the idea of progress, which marks the daily lives of the whole population, we are saying that Portuguese society has fulfilled a mission.</i>	Topos of progress /evolution  Topos or fallacy of fulfilled destiny	If we do not commemorate progress we are not acknowledging the well-being (and happiness) of the population, therefore we are saying that Portuguese society has failed.	National Celebration is to commemorate the present and the future (not the past, not the revolution)  Progress is the nation's mission, therefore ifwe do not commemorate progress we are saying that Portuguese society has failed

The topos of development is associated both with the idea of *maturity* and with the idea of centring the focus on the present moment. Therefore, although the discourse on the 25April is recognizable, it has changed its orientation. Another argument is the negative evaluation of those who wish to commemorate the past, as the document predicates that type of celebration as a *festa ideological (ideological festivity)* and a *festasaudosista (remembrance festivity)*, in complete opposition to the government's own *dynamic, open and evolved* way of commemorating. The insistence on *celebrating* emphasizes the *strategic concept* and the metaphorical meaning of evolution as forward movement in terms of time and accomplishments. The nouns *progresso, desenvolvimento e evolução (progress, development and evolution)* become

key lexical, semantic and metaphorical elements in the text, pointing to positive forward movement.

In sum, one can claim here that *revolution* has been metamorphosed into *evolution* because the government felt a need to reshape social memory in terms of orientation towards the future. The debate around this lexical change – including strong resistance and forceful agreement staged in the opinion articles – was, in part, a discussion of the meaning of discourse seen as language in use, or discourse seen as social practice. It also becomes clear that *language is, above all, social action*, since in this particular instance a new language use was coined to refer to this particular historical event.

In terms of socio-political practices, this reframing of the event and the erasure and transformation of the word *revolution* imply a move towards an (even) more liberalmarket-oriented society, where increasing economic turnover is synonymous with progress and well-being. These values are also constructed as European identity values. Bearing this in mind, as the debate proceeds in the press, it is possible to distinguish a dichotomy between those who discursively construct the *revolution* as a synonym of democracy, freedom and civic rights and undisputable stabilized national values, and those who construct the *revolution* as the turning point for overall national economic progress within a European context.

## 6. Analysis of articles

Under the major umbrella topic of the *30th anniversary of the revolution*, the opinion articles focus on six major topics. The (1) *commemorations* are used as a starting point to present, in most cases, a very specific perspective on the *revolution*, on *Portuguese democracy*, on *Portuguese society*, or on the *Portuguese [people]*. The topic of (2) *revolution vs. evolution* takes up a lot of textual space. As such, in order to legitimate what a *revolution* is/was or should be/should have been, the authors assess the (3) *revolution's (non)success* in terms of social and economic progress (*evolution*), and in terms of freedom and democratic practices.

Out of the forty-three articles, eighteen texts use the first person singular; however, only six produce a personal (partial) account or narrative. In all other instances, *I* is used as a rhetorical device to reinforce the argument, for instance:

*“Porestarazãonuncagostei das comemorações” (That is why I never enjoyed commemorations) or “Eu, então agradeço, estamesmo quemodestademocracia e revivo com gostotudo o que me foi dado testemunhar”(I for one thank even this modest democracy and relive everything I witnessed with pleasure). (4) Collective and individual remembering is thus either signalled as something unique and personal, or as a collective activity in which everyone should engage but from very specific perspectives. The remaining two macro-topics focus on comparisons; they evaluate the (5) country’s progress, relying on *life as a journey, rebirth* and *time as space* metaphors; and lastly, they compare (6) Portugal’s ‘progress’ with that of other western European countries. In order to sustain arguments and claims, various context-dependent topoi are employed<sup>8</sup> – topos of history, topos of freedom, topos of democracy, topos of progress, with a marked preference for relying on polls and statistics for argumentation purposes. To evaluate the revolution’s success, the articles rely on comparing: temporally – the past with the present; and geographically – Portugal with other western-European countries. Thus the texts present modes of (de)legitimizing social practices (van Leeuwen 2000; van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999), e.g. the revolution, by two main modes of representing social actors and activities: authorization and rationalization. Legitimation through *authorization* entails reference to authority – which takes the form of intertextual references to political theoreticians, historians, canonical writers, or by quoting opinion polls prominently, e.g. *“a maioria dos Portugueses afirma” (the majority of the Portuguese people state)*. Legitimation by *rationalization* entails “reference to the utility of social practice” (van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999: 105). In this case, phrases such as *“a Revolução de 1974 foicatalisadora da evoluçãonasociedadeportuguesanosúltimostrintaanos”(the revolution was the catalyst for the evolution of Portuguese society)* are instrumentalising practices involving rational justification of the revolution in terms of the utility of its outcome: *evolution*. Van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999: 105) argue that such types of instrumental rationalization, based on purposes and functions of practices, “usually turn out to take the form of what we have called ‘moralized activities’” (ibid.). These moralized activities or “teleological action” (van Leeuwen 2000: 29) are represented by means of abstract terms that imply “a quality that triggers reference to positive or negative values” (van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999: 105).*

### 6.1 Memories of the revolution

Since 1974, the concept of revolution within political, institutional and official discourses has carried a multiplicity of meanings, ranging from the end of dictatorship, through the reinstatement of democracy, a free economy, to the end of political and territorial isolation. Above all, it has been permanently associated with an abstract and diffuse concept of freedom as opposed to the *lack* of freedom before the 25 April revolution. The noun *liberdade* (*freedom*)<sup>9</sup> has been placed in a wide range of social, political and discursive contexts. In other words, one could claim that most Portuguese people have become familiar with the historical discourse on the 25 April revolution and have assimilated one or more (often contradictory) representations of freedom. And ever since then people have, in general, been reproducing and representing the past, the present and the future accordingly.

**Table 3 Self-declared position of each article in relation to the slogan**

Newspaper	'April is revolution'	'April is evolution'	'April was a coup d'état'	Do not refer to the debate/ consider it irrelevant	Total No. of articles
<i>Expresso</i>	8	1	---	3	16
<i>Público</i>	12	2	1	6	21
<i>Correio da Manhã</i>	---	2	1	3	6

Under the consensually-accepted umbrella concepts of *freedom* and *democracy*, there are different representations of the past. For those who agree with the government's new slogan, the revolution can be considered to have been a success, as it enacted the necessary evolution that allowed the country to be included within Europe's league of advanced countries. For those who believe in *commemorating the revolution*, the revolution was indeed successful, although at various levels and in different shades. As mentioned earlier, "there is not one single past, nor one unique narrative, quite the contrary, many narratives which are informed by different interests are in conflict with each other for hegemonic status" (Wodak and de Cillia, 2007: 339). In the present accounts, we notice both a collective heritage of the past, of

which different bits are selected as the authentic past, and the “anticipation of a particular future that is full of wishes, and fears, plans and visions” (ibid.: 343), such as “*finalmenteficamosEuropeus*” (*finally [we are] becoming European*). Thus, the data represent the polarity between “experiential space” and “horizon of expectation” proposed by Koselleck (1989, cited in Wodak and de Cillia, 2007: 343). Thematically, this polarity is visible in most of the articles, as the following extract illustrates:

(2) “No imaginário colectivo dos portugueses, a Revolução de 1974 foi catalisadora da evolução na sociedade portuguesa nos últimos trinta anos [...] Será que estas percepções coincidem com a realidade socio-económica dos últimos trinta anos? [...] já a ruptura económica e social é mais questionável.” (“Abril e evolução”. *Público*, 25.04.2004)

...in the collective imaginary of the Portuguese people, the 1974 Revolution was the catalyst for the evolution of the Portuguese society in the last 30 years. [...] Do these perceptions match the socio-economic reality of the last 30 years? [...] the economic and social revolution is very questionable.

Another major subtopic relating to the topic of remembering concerns who remembers/will remember the events, this being one of the major implications of the overall debate. Younger generations are portrayed as either valuing the revolution: “*quantomaisjovensmaisorgulhosos.*” (*the younger they are, the prouder they are [of the revolution]*) or not caring at all, “*amaior parte dos jovens não sabe o que foi o 25 de Abril*” (*the majority of young people do not know what 25 April was*). A third view insists on educating the young about the value of political institutions, along with teaching them about the value of the revolution: “*Tantocomo da «revolução de Abril» devíamos falar aos jovens da Constituição de Abril*” (*as much as talking about the «25 April Revolution», we should talk to the young about the Constitution*), reinforcing the established political *status quo*.

Another major issue in these texts is the concept of *único* (*uniqueness*). The predication of the revolution as *única* (*unique*) *singular* (*singular*), *extraordinária* (*extraordinary*) and *sui-generis* (*sui-generis*) is a linguistic means of reinforcing the collective identity imaginary, uniting the people as a nation.

(3) “A Revolução dos Cravos foi «sui-generis» não só porque não foi violenta, mas, sobretudo, porque a maioria *daqueles* que a fizeram não queria o poder para si. *Queriam* devolvê-lo à sociedade, dá-lo ao povo.” (“Onde foi parar o «R»?” *Expresso*, 24.04.2004)

The Carnation Revolution was «sui-generis» not only because it was not violent, but above all, because the majority of *those* who carried it out did not want the power for themselves. [*They*] *wanted* to return it to society, to the people.

In this case, the social actor *eles(they)* is neither nominated nor nominalized. In a different newspaper article, the revolution’s singularity is represented as a key foundational moment in contemporary world history: “*O primeiro de um conjunto de factos políticos que indicou o início de uma nova era de mudança no mundo.*” (*the first of a group of political facts that indicated the beginning of a new era of change in the world*). National singularity is thus foregrounded against the abstract category of *world*. Nonetheless, it is the revolution as a social actor, and not the *Portuguese people*, that is thus predicated as possessing a unique, special mentality that would allow it to achieve such an outcome. In fact, the noticeable backgrounding of collective human agency in terms of discursive strategies and linguistic realizations (e.g. national population or specific groups) in the “revolution” narratives is one of the major issues in the data.

The event is mostly portrayed as the great or foundational moment of change, of rebirth, and attached to strong emotional feelings, such as national pride or intense happiness. This consensual discourse on the revolution as the modern foundational moment is constantly reframed by distinct argumentative strategies and linguistic realizations. Whereas, in (4), predication dichotomies are chosen to convey the idea of the magnitude of the event, and modality conveys authority:

(4) “Ela aí está como grande e inexorável presença da nossa contemporaneidade: *grande susto, grande espectro, grande esperança, grande ensaio*, conforme se a encarar, certamente grande, ainda que tardio, momento de viragem do nosso país para a modernidade.” (“Abril é revolução”. *Público*, 14.04.2004).

There it is as the big and unmistakable presence of our contemporary times: *big scare, big phantom, big hope, big experiment*, depending on the outlook, certainly great, even if belated, moment of change of our country into modernity.

extract (5) relies on the authority stemming from opinion polls; unity is emphasized by reference to “all age groups” and political affiliation or preferences:

(5) “De acordo com o inquérito, essa visão da revolução como o momento mais importante da história é comum a *todos os grupos etários* definidos e a *todos os eleitorados partidários*.” (“Maioria dos Portugueses insatisfeitos com o estado da democracia”. *Público*, 25.04.2004)

According to the opinion poll, this vision of the revolution as the most important historical event cuts across *all age groups* and voters of *all political parties*.

Thus, the construction of national identity based on the foundational moment assumes two main forms: it may be based on the temporal/historical contrast of backward country vs. modern nation; or it may be based on the presentation of what is perceived as social practices and attitudes, and the *voice* of the people *authorizes* the perspective presented.

## **6.2 The discursive construction of the nation in Europe**

A strong uniform vision of *EUrope* (formerly the EEC, at the time Portugal became a member in 1986) stands out in the two broadsheets. The meaning of *Europe* is, however, abstract and vague, often presented as an ideal of progress and democracy - “*onde os padrões de cidadania e desenvolvimento humano estão na vanguarda da nossa civilização*.” (where the standards of citizenship and human development head our civilization) - to be emulated with no relation to its concrete member-states. *Europe* represents everything Portugal aimed for in 1974, hence this is a crucial historical turn, a foundational moment equivalent to other national mythic events: “*A restauração da independência em 1640 é vista como o segundo momento mais importante, logo seguido, de muito perto, pela adesão à CEE*.” (The restoration of independence in 1640 is regarded as the second most important event followed by becoming a EEC member) and “*E o essencial é que o 25 de Abril significava: Europa e, portanto, democracia*” (The crucial idea is what the 25 April meant: Europe and, therefore democracy). However, the human agent(s) responsible for this turn of events are usually omitted: “*a Revolução de Abril de 1974 e a adesão à CEE de 86 marcaram a viragem histórica de Portugal no final do século XX*.” (the Revolution of April 1974 and becoming a EEC member in 1986 marked a historic turning point for Portugal at the end of the 20th century).

Furthermore, Europe symbolizes the world in strategic political terms, in economic terms and as a rather abstract idea of modernity. All of these characteristics are conveyed by positive evaluation. The dichotomy of Europe-vision vs. Europe-reality, discussed in Oberhuberet *al.*'s (2005) study on representations of Europe in the newspaper coverage in several European countries, is therefore absent. The topos of comparison, reporting to the past, is used to contrast backward and closed-in 1974 Portugal (*poor, rural, isolated*) with advanced and open-bordered Europe (*economic and social evolution, the opening of borders*). The only exception to this highly-valued representation of Europe and of Portugal is an article from the more conservative tabloid where EU is represented as a threat to the national economy and agriculture: *"A abertura de fronteiras destruiu grande parte da agricultura portuguesa e muitas fábricas dos sectores tradicionais."* (*The opening of borders [due to EU membership] destroyed a great part of the Portuguese agriculture and many factories in the traditional sectors*).

Interestingly, the texts do not reveal a discursive in-group belonging to Europe in terms of constructive or transformative strategies as there are no occurrences of first-person plurals, indicating *we-Europeans* or *we-Europe*. Thus, in the particular context of national commemorations, and even though becoming an EU member is represented as such a crucial landmark that some texts even counsel the Portuguese population to *"deveria talvez celebrar com mais euforia [...] a adesão à então Comunidade Económica Europeia acima de todas."* (*celebrate with more euphoria [...] becoming a member of the EEC*), there seems to be a clear dividing line between *us the Portuguese* and *them in Europe*, as the European goals of broad welfare, education, justice (i.e. lack of corruption) and democracy are perceived as not yet having been achieved.

### **6.3 Representing social actors, social action and (de)legitimation**

The texts were scanned for the use of *we*, *I* and *they*, including their corresponding possessive pronouns and respective verb inflexions. All these pronouns have different referents, according to the respective authorial voice, context and co-text. As the theme is the same in every text, I expected a frequent all-inclusive *we*, comprising *all*

*Portuguese people*, including the author's voice. Contrary to this expectation, national in-group constructions were quite infrequent. In fact, we find abundant use of the third person, *os Portugueses (the Portuguese)*, and, with the added difficulty of the Portuguese language's impersonal-passive construction, with the agent replaced by an indefinite pronoun. The agent is replaced by the pronoun *se*: *Fez-se o 25 de Abril* which translates as *25 April was made* or *one made 25 April*, but literally it would translate as *it is made 25 April*. This sentence structure, which is neither passive voice, e.g. *a revolução foi feita (the revolution was made)*, nor active, e.g. *nós fizemos a revolução (we made the revolution)*, involves complex problems relating to backgrounding and foregrounding agency. Mainly used to delete or omit agency, both grammatically and semantically, this structure supplies the authorial voice with a useful tool for backgrounding or omitting his or her own perspective, allowing him or her to keep a distance from the proposition or statement:

(6) "Face ao descontentamento popular por um governo cuja acção se pauta pelo sistemático desmantelamento de tudo o que possa lembrar Abril." ("Abril entre a amnésia e a mentira". *Público*, 26.04.2004).

As one is facing popular dissatisfaction regarding a government whose action aims at systematically dismantling everything that might remember April

The high frequency of these constructions becomes a rhetorical strategy for distancing both the authorial voice and the *we*-group from the actions, activities and events being narrated.

However, the discursive construction of abstract nouns, such as *democracy*, *freedom*, *revolution*, *evolution* and *April*, still needed to be accounted for within a socio-semantic frame, beyond their lexical-grammatical realization (van Leeuwen, 2008: 55). Frequent nominalizations, such as *democratization*, *decentralization*, *consolidation*, *policy* and *opening*, contribute to bureaucratization and deagentialization of action, as well as more ideological features of positioning "reified concepts as agents and maintaining unequal power relations" (Billig 2008: 785). This deagentialization, "represented as brought about in other ways, impervious to human agency" (van Leeuwen 2008: 66), is emphasized by the use of impersonal

passive constructions. Evidently, there is no semantic perpetrator of actions; but neither is there a recipient of these actions:

(7)“Em 25 de Abril de 1975, realizaram-se pela primeira vez em Portugal eleições verdadeiramente livres e democráticas. Foi elaborada e aprovada uma Constituição. Apesar das tensões de 1974-75, conseguiu-se um largo consenso [...]; primado do social (democratização do acesso à saúde, segurança social, ensino e habitação); descentralização, com consolidação das autonomias regionais e do poder autárquico democrático; política de paz e abertura à Europa e ao mundo.” (“Ensaio sobre o 25 de Abril”. *Expresso*, 24.04.2004)

On 25 April 1975, for the first time in Portugal, truly free and democratic elections took place. A Constitution was written and approved. In spite of the 1974-75 tensions, one reached a large consensus[...] the priority of social welfare (democratization of access to a health system, social security, education and housing); decentralization, with the consolidation of regional autonomies and local democratic power; policy of peace and opening up to Europe and to the world.

Deagentialization removes traces of the human doer. Furthermore, these abstractions are presented as (positive) moralised actions. Hence, it is possible to regard these abstractions as a form of construing moral qualities, since “moralised actions are realized by means, not of generalizations, but abstractions” (van Leeuwen 2008: 70). Consequently, these discourses present teleological values of democracy, justice and liberty. These represent consensual values (or *topoi*, in terms of argumentation). How these values have been or are being accomplished, and to what degree, might be subject to debate; their inherent value, however, does not seem to be under debate. Deagentialization is associated with abstraction in order to legitimize actions (and not agents). Abstraction tends to include only the names of episodes, such as “the end of dictatorship, the establishing of liberties and democracy”, or whole social practices, such as “the change in working relationships”. The nation’s recent history is, thus, presented as *natural* and *generalized*: through verbs and nouns such as *to develop/development*, *to progress/progress* and *to increase/increase*; by the toponym *Portugal* used as metonymy or personification for the *Portuguese people*; and by use of political actionalisation devices (i.e. anthroponyms such as *voters* referring to persons in terms of political activities), wherein the in-group generalization, *the Portuguese people*, is associated with frequent passivization.

## 7. Conclusion

Drawing on DHA, I have examined issues surrounding national commemorations and collective memory and the inherent conflict in the discourse strategies aiming to represent and recontextualize the 25 April (r)evolution in the written media. The texts analysed present the political event as a *rebirth*, providing an initial metaphorical scenario in which Portugal is anthropomorphically represented as a newborn innocent child. The revolution is thus constituted as an event that opened the way to the values and goals that the nation aspired to, or should aspire to.

What was openly at stake in these texts were the different views on the country's new-born democracy and how to portray the commemorations to the contemporary nation. At the same time, the texts revealed a need to domesticate what is perceived as European ethics and values (e.g. social justice and equality, democracy). In terms of differences amongst papers, the tabloid *Correio da Manhã* revealed a very limited spectrum of political or ideological positions— more conservative and nationalist in terms of the relationship of Portugal vs. Europe – and less variety in terms of discursive strategies, which might be explained by the fewer number of articles collected. The textual content from the two broadsheets presents similar characteristics, which is not surprising since these are *opinion* articles and not editorials.

The commentators, relying often on political rhetoric, refuse to attribute agency, and therefore responsibility, to the national *we-group* in the events narrated. The right-wing government's programme kick-starts the debate by using dismantling and transformative strategies, and various topoi and fallacies directed at transforming the revolution into *evolution*. The texts, on the other hand, are clearly ambivalent with regard to the government's re-reading of the past, and engage in nominalizing the (perceived as European) values and reinforcing the (positive) topoi of (economic) progress and evolution. As such, the hegemonic narrative is one that flags evolution, progress, democracy, liberty and social justice within the context of what I would call a state of transitional national identity that is represented as being aligned with (Western) European ideals. The re-framing of these values within the commemoration event is a means of building unity and cohesion, and of explaining the nation's journeying over the last thirty years, over the backgrounding and deagentialization of the Portuguese people. The frequent occurrence of deagentialization,

objectivated naturalizations and passivized sentence structures preempt the democratic debate over what Portugal and/or the Portuguese might want to become or might have been so that what *we* want is decided for *us*. As such, whereas, semantically, many texts emphasize the need to pass on information to the younger generation, in fact, this passing on is not accomplished. Ultimately, the texts' concerns are not with the Portuguese people. As stated above, the overlapping of fields of action in the corpus (e.g. political and opinion discourses) blur distinctions and confuse the communication and pragmatic intentions of these texts as well as the reader's expectations.

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<sup>1</sup> On the morning of 25 April, people gathered at the Lisbon market, then stocked with deep red carnations. Some soldiers put these flowers in their gun-barrels, an image which was shown repeatedly on national television and around the world. The revolution, then, became known as *Revolução dos Cravos* (Carnation revolution).

<sup>2</sup> Photograph of a billboard displayed outdoors across the country (March-April 2004); in this image a man is adding an "R" before and an exclamation mark after the word "Evolution". Available at: <http://ressabiator.wordpress.com/2008/04/25/mao-ii-ou-uma-no-cravo/>. One of the articles collected states: "the government's billboards are ridiculous and pathetic" (*os cartazes do Governo são ridículos e patéticos*) (*Expresso*, 24.04.2001).

<sup>3</sup> These are broad generalizations; there are minor ideological differences between the newspapers. According to *Working Report No.8* (2007: 37), *Público* and *Expresso* are more frequently read by people with more years of schooling, whereas *Correio da Manhã* is preferred amongst a newspaper readership with fewer years of schooling.

<sup>4</sup> The *Estado Novo* created a political police under the direct control of Salazar who were responsible for ensuring overall censorship of the press, political arrests without trial, and torture both in Portugal and overseas.

<sup>5</sup> In the extracts quoted all emphasis is mine unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>6</sup> Portuguese is a null-subject language, i.e. a language whose grammar permits and sometimes mandates the omission of an explicit subject or pronoun. The grammatical subject is usually indicated by inflection of the verb.

<sup>7</sup> Aristotle provides a distinction between specific *topoi* (particular to certain species of rhetoric or in discourse analysis terms, a certain discourse type) and common *topoi* 'which are common to moral, scientific and political questions and to questions of many different specific characters' (Aristotle, I.2, 1358a).

<sup>8</sup> These *topoi* are mostly context-dependent, which means they are "characteristic for the particular context of the textual material analysed" (Oberhuber et al. 2005: 234).

<sup>9</sup> *Liberdade* is being translated as *freedom* in the sense of basic/fundamental/political freedoms.

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## Appendix

1 *"25 de Abril faz 30 anos. E 30 anos é a idade da maturidade. Queremos, por isso,*  
2 *destacar este ano aquilo que representa a maturidade, a evolução em Portugal.*  
3 *Todas as culturas, sociedades, países têm na sua história pequenos e grandes acontecimentos que*  
4 *marcam e constituem a sua identidade. Desses acontecimentos fica uma memória colectiva que,*  
5 *tal como os seus significados, é viva, dinâmica e evolutiva. Também o 25 de Abril é um elemento*  
6 *da nossa história, da nossa memória colectiva. As palavras de ordem, o cravo. O sinónimo*  
7 *de liberdade, o início de uma vida em democracia. Símbolos que jamais esqueceremos.*  
8 *Mas não queremos viver do passado. Não queremos que o 25 de Abril seja só*  
9 *uma memória. O 25 de Abril renova-se sempre que se celebra. O 25 de Abril de 1974*  
10 *marcou o início de uma viragem histórica em Portugal.*  
11 *Mas com a conquista da Liberdade, os Portugueses voltaram-se para outra conquista,*  
12 *a do Desenvolvimento. Em 30 anos, o 25 de Abril cresceu, como o país cresceu. Em*  
13 *30 anos, Portugal passou de um país triste, pobre, fechado e à procura de um destino...*  
14 *para um país aberto, social e economicamente, democrático, dinâmico. Um país*  
15 *onde vale a pena viver. Portugal tem hoje um lugar de destaque no Mundo.*  
16 *É membro das mais prestigiadas Organizações Internacionais. É um país tecnologicamente*  
17 *desenvolvido, com modernas infra-estruturas de transportes, onde a qualidade de vida média da*  
18 *população cresceu de uma forma marcante em apenas 30 anos. É esta a herança de Abril.*  
19 *Abril é, sobretudo, evolução. E decorridos 30 anos, seria estranho que*  
20 *a forma de comemoração não sofresse alterações. A data que marcou o início de uma era*  
21 *de desenvolvimento em Portugal, não deve, por isso, ser uma festa saudosista ou*  
22 *meramente ideológica. Deve sim ser uma Festa Nacional. Uma festa que através*  
23 *da noção de Presente nos dê uma visão de Futuro. Ao comemorarmos*  
24 *a noção de desenvolvimento, que marca o viver diário de toda a população, estamos*  
25 *a transmitir que a sociedade portuguesa cumpriu um desígnio. Que se orgulha do Presente*  
26 *acreditando no Futuro. As comemorações deste ano vão, assim, ser enquadradas num*  
27 *espírito da afirmação da auto-estima nacional. 2004 é um ano de mudança positiva do*  
28 *ciclo económico. Coincide com a organização do maior evento desportivo jamais organizado*  
29 *em Portugal, o Euro 2004. Vamos comemorar juntos os 30 anos de evolução*  
30 *do 25 de Abril."*