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# Sports and Revolution: Alfredo Melo de Carvalho and the Making of a Democratic Sports Program

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## Résumé

Fifty years after 25 April 1974, the Portuguese revolution continues to be the object of intense debate on the end of authoritarian regimes and the different models of transition to democracy. Despite substantial growth in historical research on a variety of social and political mobilisations carried out by various social groups and categories – workers, peasants, students and women, among others – concerning an enormous variety of social demands – struggles for housing or land reform, workers rights or the nationalization of the banking system – we still have a very incomplete picture on the role of sports in this process. Based on the work *Desporto e Revolução* (Sport and Revolution, 1976), by Alfredo Melo de Carvalho, General Director of Sports between 1974 and 1976, this communication aims to analyse the place that sport occupied in the revolutionary process that followed the 25 of April revolution. A detailed examination of this work, as a first step in a broader research project, allows us to integrate into historiographical narratives a theme that has remained largely marginal in the histories of the Portuguese revolution and, at the same time, to expand comparative research on the history of socialist and Marxist sports policies, introducing a series of new actors, institutions and problems. More specifically, this paper seeks to: 1) identify how the post-revolutionary General Board for Sports assessed the sports policy of the Estado Novo; 2) observe how a democratic sports policy was conceived and constructed, genuinely integrated into the ongoing process of social and political transformation; 3) map the main sources of inspiration and international links of Portuguese sports policy; 4) problematise the articulation between political power, popular associative movements and emerging local government power.

**Mots-Clés:** Portugal, Sports Policy, socialism, fascism, democracy

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