

Fernando Távora: The Struggle from Português Suave to the Shifting Aesthetics of Resistance from 1923 to 1953.

Ideology, Architectures, Periodicals, and the Role of Italy and CIAM from the First Salazar era to the Birth of the Third Way

Fernando Távora, Arquitetura Portuguesa e Cerâmica e Edificação, ICAT, Carlos Ramos, Português Suave

/Abstract

This paper explores the pivotal transformations in postwar Portuguese architecture, tracing the oscillation between traditional styles and modernist influences from 1923 to 1953. During a period marked by ideological conflict and cultural reassessment, Portuguese architecture experienced a profound metamorphosis, mirroring the nation's struggle between conservative nationalism and the burgeoning force of modernity. This study delves into the role of key figures such as Fernando Távora and the influence of international movements, notably from Italy and the CIAM, in shaping a new architectural ethos that navigated between heritage and innovation.

Through a meticulous examination of architectural projects, periodicals (*Arquitetura, Arquitetura portuguesa, Domus, Casabella*), and ideological discourses, the paper illuminates how architects negotiated with political and cultural currents to forge the architectural language. A form characterized by its duality, attempted to reconcile the traditionalist values imposed by the *Estado Novo* regime with a modernist vision inspired by global trends. The transition from the "Português Suave" aesthetic to a more resistant form of modernism, underscored by a critique of superficial stylistic nationalism, encapsulates a broader narrative of resistance and adaptation.

The findings underscore the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in understanding architectural evolution, revealing how shifts in political ideology, cultural identity, and international influences converge in the realm of architecture. The paper contributes to a deeper understanding on how the Portuguese architecture context surrounding Fernando Távora's formative years not only reflected but also contested and reshaped the socio-political landscape of mid-20th century Portugal.

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Gregorio Carboni Maestri, an architect, educator, and historian, leverages an interdisciplinary approach in architectural history, theory, activism, and practice. Born in 1977 and raised across Italy, Brazil, and Belgium, he now splits his time between Turin, Brussels, and Berlin. His education includes studies at La Cambre, the Facoltà d'architettura civile del Politecnico di Milano, and FAUP in Oporto, where he was deeply involved in urban rehabilitation efforts in its historic center, particularly through the now-defunct CRUARB.

He earned his doctorate in 2015 from the Università di Palermo with a dissertation on the American architectural scene of the 1960s and 70s, particularly in relation to social and civil rights movements, under the guidance of S. Scarrocchia and K. Frampton. Between 2013 and 2015, he was a visiting research scholar at Columbia University and received a research grant from the Graham Foundation to organize and study the Kenneth Frampton Archives. In 2017, he was appointed as post-doctoral visiting research scholar at the CCA.

Dr. Carboni Maestri has taught history of contemporary architecture, cities, and territories at UCLouvain and currently leads architectural studio courses at ULB. His professional practice integrates theoretical knowledge with practical application, connecting historical insights to contemporary architectural challenges. Beyond his academic contributions, Dr. Carboni Maestri is active delivering lectures and participating in symposia at various prestigious institutions (including UniGE, Belgian Royal Academy, UniBO, IUAV, Cardiff University, Newcastle University, Brera, Jana Matejki Academy, Università di Camerino, and Recyclart).

His research focuses on the theory of forms and their interaction with societal and ideological transformations, with a particular emphasis on post-war developments. An advocate for ethical and socially responsible architectural practices, he addresses pressing issues such as class inequality and the rights of the broader 99%.



In 1139, Portugal saw the roots of its unity plunge into an identity and linguistic crystallisation. This moment foreshadowed the emergence of a bourgeoisie that witnessed maritime expansion and positioned itself among the first lights of globalisation, alongside the Italian republican cities. These components shaped the uniform temperament of Portuguese architecture: first civil, then colonial, unique, replicable, like the Jesuit, neo-Palladian or neoclassical architecture that would follow [Fig. 1]. With its white walls and simple construction, waterproofed with azulejos, with details, corners, or stone ornaments, it embodied the synthesis of a national tradition, at least until the end of the 19th century.

This historical period witnessed an ambivalent idea of the nation-state, characterized by a double dynamic: its fragility combined with a contradictory strengthening. Formations and reunions, as in Italy; civil wars, as in the United States; or refoundation's, as in countries with ancient territorial continuity, such as China, France, or Portugal. In the latter case, the beginning of the twentieth century was marked by violent upheavals¹ [Fig. 2].

Despite its great unity, the nation was, and to some extent still is, perceived by its elite as fragmented.

In the words of the architect Alexandre Alves Costa (1939), in an interview with RTP2, it appears “not very consistent as a unit” and “in permanent dissolution”, “difficult to bear”². As in Italy, this is characteristic of a section of historiography that promotes the idea of a disunited and fading fatherland. Intellectuals of the calibre of Almeida Garrett (1799-1854) and J. Mattoso (1933-2023) elaborated on this theme. In 2010, Alves Costa declared:

Although Portugal thrives on the existence of a strong political power that guarantees its unity, despite everything there are many regional differences [...] there are many Póvoas de Varzim [...] when I come to Lisbon I am abroad, I mean, I love Lisbon, I don't say it in a negative sense, I say it in a positive sense, but I am abroad: the light, the colour, I am here and I am in Algeria, [...] and when people from Lisbon come to Oporto they feel the same way, they too are abroad, they too are elsewhere, it is another country... here we are in *Gallaecia*...³



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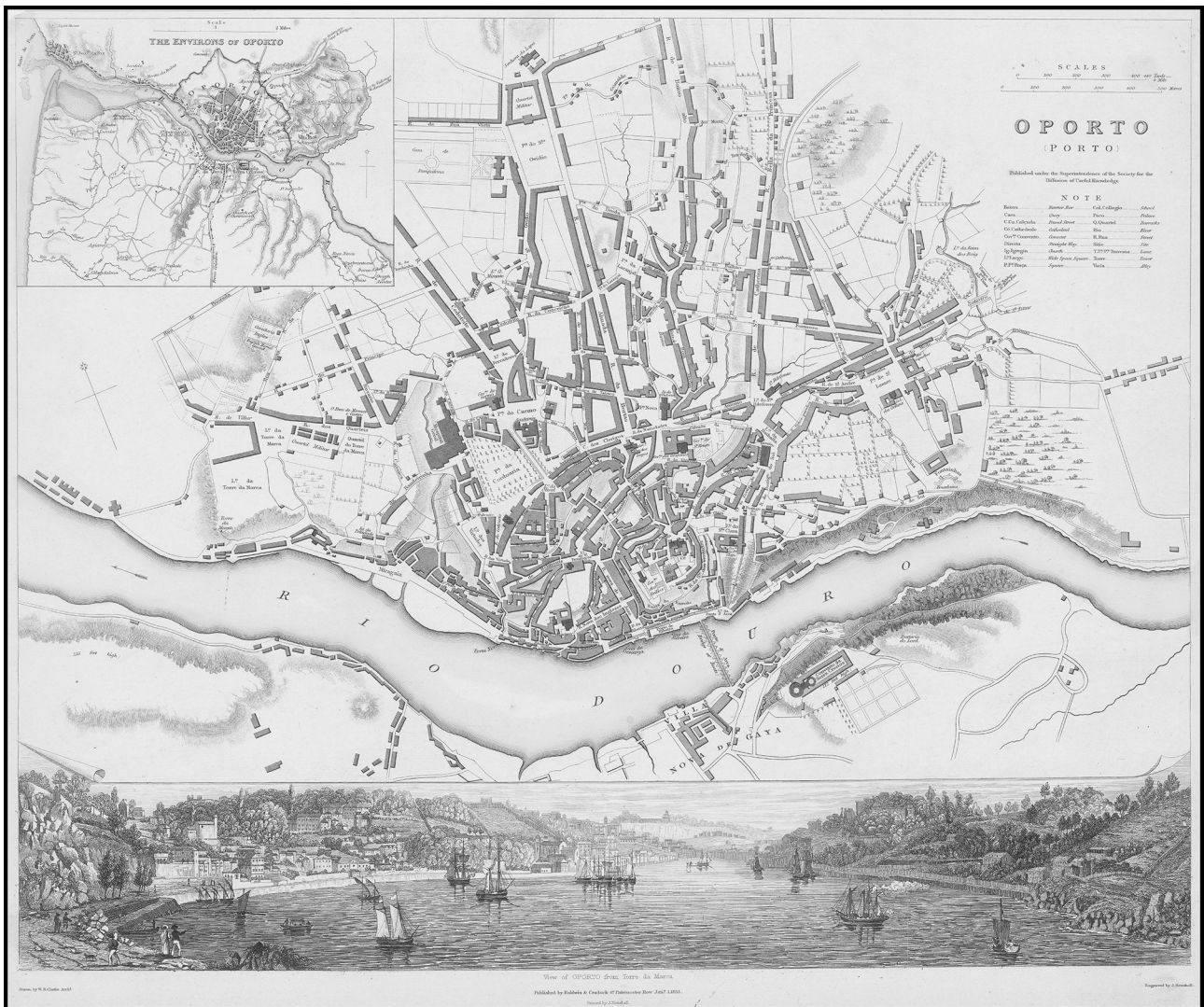
Fig. 1

Exemplary of this period but also of the constant relations with Italy is the Church of Aveiro's Mercy, whose initial design in 1585 is attributed to the architect and military engineer Filippo Terzi (1520-1597) and completion in 1653 by the Portuguese master Manuel Azenha (photo by the author, 2003).

1 Luís Reis Torgal, Heloísa Paulo, *Estados autoritários e totalitários e suas representações* (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2008).

2 Interview by Paula Moura Pinheiro with Alexandre Alves Costa on Portuguese architecture (2010-02-14) in RTP 2 – Câmara clara <https://arquivos.rtp.pt/conteudos/alexandre-alves-costa/> (last viewed March 2024).

3 Interview by Paula Moura Pinheiro (last viewed March 2024)



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As in Italy, these ideas infiltrated the national intelligentsia, which failed to understand the nature of its national fabric and the modernising impulses of the working classes, mistaking them for “difficulties” in maintaining national order.

The twentieth century, both in the Portuguese case and in other countries, was marked by a relentless effort on the part of the ruling classes to limit the progress of their subaltern castes. Between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the reconciliation that the elites were forced to make found a synthesis in republicanism, which produced traces of dissent between the different spirits of the possessors.

The republic germinated among some of the higher classes, but it was the expression of contradictions that were made manifest by an untenable situation among the hard-working people, crushed by misery and dissatisfied with a throne immersed in unsustainable luxury and a backward clergy. In 1910, several days of riots forced Manuel II (1889-1932) to abdicate and flee. The Republic was born, characterised by barely developed programmes of liberal democracy and the hegemony of the interests of the upper classes.

Despite some secular and republican reforms, the new government struggled to implement reformist policies. Democratic leadership became synonymous

Fig. 2
This 1:9500 scale map of Oporto by W.B. Clarke and J. Henshall for the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was published in 1833 (here in a 1849 print) while Portugal navigated through the Liberal Revolution in conflict with the absolutists following João VI's death, moving towards constitutional monarchy and marked by a series of coups, insurrections that would lead to the establishment of a republic in 1910. This era also witnessed the last expansion of Portuguese colonization in Africa and the Septembrist movement push for educational and cultural reforms.

with inefficiency rather than modernisation. The *lumpenproletariat* remained underdeveloped, and Portugal continued to have one of the highest illiteracy rates in Europe. This inability to address the inequalities of rural and proletarian groups led to the failure of the reformist project⁴.

The ruling class relied on the military to contain the modernising impulses of the people, especially after the trauma of the First World War, in which almost 3% of the male population died. The 1922 elections were characterised by a low turnout. The Democratic Party won 47%, followed by parties linked to the landed gentry, such as the Liberal-Republicans (21%) and those close to the Church and the landed gentry (Catholic Centre, 14%), without any democratic representation for the working world. Instead, the workers found a voice in the Communist Party, which had been founded a year earlier in 1921, arousing the fears of churchmen, merchants, and landowners.

It's in this scenario that Fernando Luís Cardoso de Meneses de Tavares e Távora was born in Oporto on 25 August 1923, from the noble house of Covilhã, descendant of Rozendo Hermigues (c. 985-1041), a member of the Lusitanian fundamentalist movement, expression of the monarchical-Catholic line⁵.

In the field of architecture, this moment of uncertain innovation was reflected in timid expressions of modernity in projects such as the Economic Complex for Fishermen in Olhão (1923-1925). An urban and architectural project with Mediterranean, neo-dialectal tones, and cubist intonations by the young Carlos João Chambers Ramos (1897-1969). A simplicity and systematicity of form that is surprising when compared to the eclectic and cloying froufrou of his Portuguese Pavilion of Honour at the International Exposition in Rio de Janeiro (1922), and that illustrates the sense of an ideological transformation taking place [Fig. 3].

This transformation came to a halt from 1926 onwards in the face of the contradictions and inadequacies of the weak reform project. With the rise to power of the economist Antonio de Oliveira Salazar (1889-1970), the liberal leadership began a process of disintegration and submission to the army, which took over the role of maintaining social control over the subordinate classes, pushing the country towards a military dictatorship disguised as a technical government. During that decade and the following one, Portugal followed a path that was shared by many other countries, most notably Italy: Hungary, Spain, Germany, Austria, Greece, and many others. Nations in which the nobility, clergy, bourgeoisie, and landowners, frightened by the rise of the subordinate classes, contributed to the rise of anti-labour governments, and militarised their national capitalism.



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Fig. 3

Also dating from 1923 is the design of the Rivoli Theatre in Porto, remodelled according to Art-Deco and a simplified eclectic tastes by Júlio J. de Brito (1896-1964), in which echoes of Auguste Perret's Théâtre des Champs-Élysées (1911-1913) (photo by the author, 2005).

4 Ernesto Castro Leale, *Republicanism, socialismo, democracia* (Lisbon: Centro de história 2010).

5 Giovanni Leoni, "Fernando Távora. Un anonimo del XX secolo", *Casabella*, no. 678 (2000): 10-13.

In this context, architecture would tend towards a serene modernity, as in the radiology pavilion of the Portuguese Institute of Oncology in Lisbon, designed by Ramos himself in 1927, the same year as the founding of the second Portuguese architecture magazine, *Arquitectura* [Fig. 4], in January (the other main periodical, *A arquitectura portuguesa*, was founded in 1907).

Salazar, for his part, became prime minister in 1932, adopting an anti-communist Mussolini-inspired constitution the following year, while Ramos was completing the rationalist radiology pavilion, with echoes of the façade elements of Oud's minimalist houses in Weissenhof (1927).

Like the Duce's regime, Salazarism began with a mild technical and formal modernisation in various areas. This modernisation took place in a profoundly backward and largely rural Portugal, i.e. under different conditions from Italy, where robust industrialisation was underway. In the first five years of the Salazarist era, the government gave support to architectural modernism⁶. But the growth of "modernised" architecture was more stylistic than typological, although there were exceptions such as the Fialho de Almeida High School (1931-1935) by Luís R. C. Cristino da Silva (1896-1976) [Fig. 5].

Examples of this phase include projects by Manuel Marques (1890-1956), José Marques da Silva (1869-1947), Cassiano V. Branco (1897-1970), António Varela (1903-1962), Arménio T. Losa (1908-1988), Januário Gsodinho de Almeida (1910-1990). And by Rogério dos Santos de Azevedo (1898-1983), with the car park of the newspaper *O Comércio* in Oporto (1932) [Fig. 6], soon after projects of similar taste, such as the Marbeuf garage in Paris (1929), the Wilemans-Ceuppens breweries in Brussels (1930) and the Press Palace in Baku (1932). This architecture was part of the repertoire of the nascent Modernism, whose expressions ranged from simplified Deco to Novecento, through languages purified by decoration⁷.

But for de Oliveira Salazar, the harmless instances promulgated by the nascent Modern Movement would have been viewed unfavourably, as interpreted as manifestations of internationalism. The publication *A arquitectura portuguesa*, which in 1935 merged with a periodical edited by the Lusitânia ceramics factory, changed its title to *A Arquitectura Portuguesa e Cerâmica e Edificação*

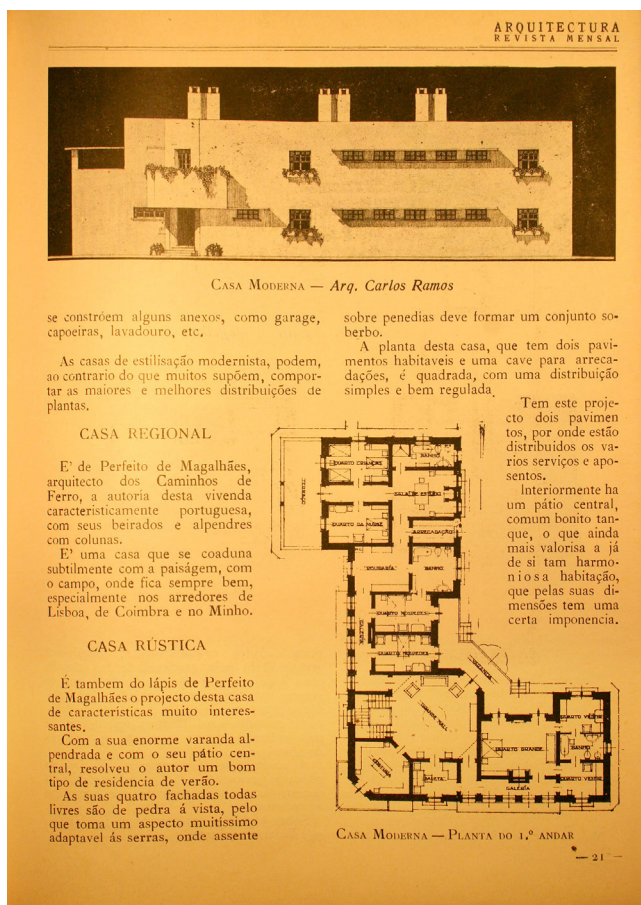


Fig. 4

Two years post-establishment, in November 1929, *Arquitectura, revista mensal* featured "Casa moderna" on pages 20-21, showcasing Casa António Moreira d'Almeida Pinto by Carlos Ramos. This design, conceived concurrently with Terragni's *Novocomun* inauguration, exemplifies Ramos's stylistic evolution of the era, in which a distant compositional reference to Le Corbusier's Villa La Roche-Jeanneret of 1923 are not entirely absent, as are echoes of the late architecture of Charles Rennie Mackintosh (Gregorio Carboni Maestri archives).

⁶ Alexandra Trevisan da Silveira Pacheco, "Influências internacionais na arquitectura moderna do Porto (1926-1956)" (PhD Diss. Universidad de Valladolid, 2013).

⁷ Opus Incertum. *Architectures à Porto* (Brussels: Mardaga, 1990): 36-46.



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Fig. 5
Liceu Nacional de Jacinto de Matos (Beja). Architect Luís Cristino da Silva. Col. Estúdio Mário Novais / FCG – Biblioteca de Arte e Arquivos. CFT003.101911.

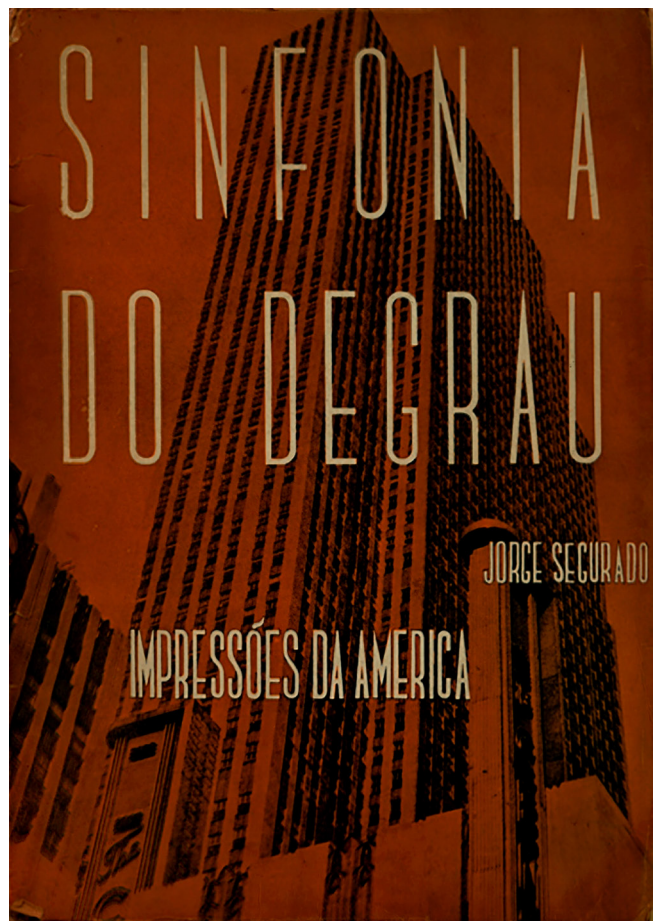
Fig. 6
 Garagem o Comércio do Porto designed by Baltazar de Castro and Rogério de Azevedo (1928-1932) in Oporto (photo by Francesca Fagnano, 2004).

(*Reunidas*). This was the beginning of the 3rd series, which from here on we will abbreviate to *Arquitetura portuguesa*. Closer to the regime, it manifested this slowdown in the field of modern architecture through titles such as 'Ancient and Modern Lisbon' (1935):

[...] it would be indispensable that Lisbon, finding itself, no longer lose itself; that, – just as Mussolini seeks a Fascist style, distinctly Italian and necessarily rooted in Italy's past, – we seek a Portuguese narrative, unrelentingly Portuguese, within which the refinements and improvements of the modern were conquests, in fact conquered, and not formal annexations that are only important guests.⁸

The retro temperament of the regime, baptised New State, would have embraced a nacional anti-modernist style, already foreshadowed in some ornamental detail of the insidious slow death prison camp in Tarrafal, Cape Verde (1936) by J. Â. Cottinelli Telmo (1897-1948). Similarly, one can detect this nascent manner in the Portuguese pavilion for the 1937 Universal Exhibition in Paris, by viscount F. C. Keil C. do Amaral (1910-1975). This pavilion stood in opposition to the purist currents still present in Portugal, such as the Honório de Lima house, built from 1939 by A. E. Viana de Lima (1913-1991), which had aesthetic connections with buildings such as Le Corbusier's Citrohan house in Stuttgart (1927), Leendert van der Vlugt's Sonneveld in Rotterdam (1932-1933), Figini in Milan (1934-1935), Terragni's Villa Bianca in Seveso (1936-1937) or Casa Cattaneo in Cernobbio (1938-1939).

From the '40s onwards, with increasing determination, there was a strengthening of the architectural strategies implemented by the dictatorship. Initially oriented towards modest projects, these stylistic approaches gained clarity in works dedicated to exhibitions and fairs⁹. This trend would have had a less obvious beginning in the context of public buildings, where various sensitivities could express with different levels of competence [Fig. 7]. An example of this contradictory dynamic was embodied by the policies of engineer Duarte Pacheco (1899-1943), mayor of Lisbon and Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. This sphere of autonomy would progressively thin out to minimal proportions. State institutions would then gradually employ architecture, ranging from the most domestic to the most extensive, to convey propaganda and shape a process of re-education¹⁰ [Fig. 8].



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Fig. 7

The lingering trace of this still-open breach can be observed in the 1940 publication by Jorge Segurado – who had contributed to the realization of the Portuguese Pavilion for the New York World's Fair since 1930 – titled "Sinfonia do degrau, Impressões de New-York e de outras terras do Estados Unidos da América do Norte". The publication was produced by Oficinas da Sociedade Nacional de Tipografia, spanning 185 pages with a collection of photographs and texts (Gregorio Carboni Maestri archives).

8 Tomaz Ribeiro Colaço, "Lisboa antiga e moderna", *Arquitetura Portuguesa*, no.3, (May 1935): 1.

9 Susanna Bortolotto, Nelly Cattaneo, Renzo Riboldazzi, eds., *Infrastrutture e colonizzazione: Il caso africano tra heritage e sviluppo* (Florence: Altralinea, 2020).

10 Dario Ramondetti, "Francisco Keil do Amaral (1910-1975). Architetto degli spazi verdi nella Lisbona salazarista" (PhD Diss. IUAV Venezia, 2018).



8

Colonial exhibitions were held in Africa, such as in Luanda, where the pavilions, including the Civilising Portugal building, embodied this new aesthetic. The most representative of those exhibitions was the 1940's Portuguese Empire exposition. In an era marked by the beginning of the Second World War, Portuguese isolationism, and limited resources available for a world-stage event, the regime took the decision to create a Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World. Only one country was invited, Brazil, overwhelmed by the pavilions of the regime in the purest Salazarism classicism¹¹. This new regime style had spread with triumph in this exhibition, formalising the *Estado Novo's* approach in architectural terms, thus initiating a turning point in the aesthetic-cultural policy of the elite. This was the event for which Cottinelli Telmo's well-known *Padrão dos Descobrimentos* was realised¹².

The stylistic evolution led towards an imposed official classical language, and this entailed rapid changes in the work of almost all the architects previously mentioned, including those that are now lauded in the historiographical mythology associated with Portuguese Modernism, such as Ramos. The Modern Movement was nipped in the bud.

The policies of the New State slowed down the country's technical-industrial, socio-economic, and political development, preventing any possible fertile

Fig. 8

Instituto Superior Técnico by Duarte Pacheco (engineer) and Porfírio Pardal Monteiro (architect) in Lisbon. Col. Estúdio Horácio Novais / FCG – Biblioteca de Arte e Arquivos. CFT164.1054

11 Marco Ferrari, *L'incredibile storia di António Salazar, il dittatore che morì due volte* (Bari: Laterza, 2020).

12 José Manuel Fernandes, *Português suave: arquitecturas do estado novo* (Lisbon: IPPAR, 2003).

environment for a modernity, if not ideological, at least technical-formal. It is easy to imagine how much bitterness longing for progress overwhelmed the generation – later called *dos Transigentes* – of compromise architects from that period, not to mention the subordinate classes.

In the years following the Portuguese World Exposition, Portugal's clerical-fascist regime engaged in debates about the essence of the Portuguese house. This period saw architecture increasingly fall under tight governmental control. The issue of Portuguese identity remained a persistent question in a nation where architects are first citizens of their homeland, deeply interested with matters of national identity. This engagement reflects a longstanding luso-mysticism, often in contradiction with the aforementioned inability to understand its reality. Two opposing aspects of a singular idealization: a national idealistic utopia versus the existing reality with its limits. A pattern that tends to emerge continuously in the dominant classes and that is imposed to the lower strata and often conflicting with the masses' desire for change in their objective existence¹³.

Out of this increasingly oppressive government-imposed straitjacket, a series of works emerged with diverse results historiography summarised under the ironic label of *Português Suave* (Mild or Suave Portuguese), a reference to the monopoly brand of cigarettes created in 1929. Rather than a style, the concept of Suave Portuguese emerged as a stylistic spectrum. A historical pastiche, with clumsy results, steeped in unintentional humour. Fluctuating between the grotesque, the tragicomic and the reactionary kitsch, it was a fusion of traditional elements and Portuguese clichés: tiles, arched windows, adorned balconies, and wrought-iron railings. These elements were combined with late Art deco aspects such as straight lines, essential geometries and symmetries. This laboured eclecticism merged with certain presumed Portuguese features, infiltrating the architecture of both prestigious and humble buildings.

It was at this time that a young Fernando Távora passed the entrance examination to the School of Fine Arts in Oporto (ESBAP) in 1941, having completed the second cycle of the Herculano Lyceum in 1940 with a mark of 16/20. He chose the specialisation in architecture, where Ramos had taught for a year. This conflicted with the decisions of the Távora's family. His father wanted his son to enrol in the engineering faculty, as his brother Dom Bernardo Ferrão, which was considered more in keeping with their position¹⁴. Fernando, who rejected the use of the hereditary title of Dom, said of his formative years:

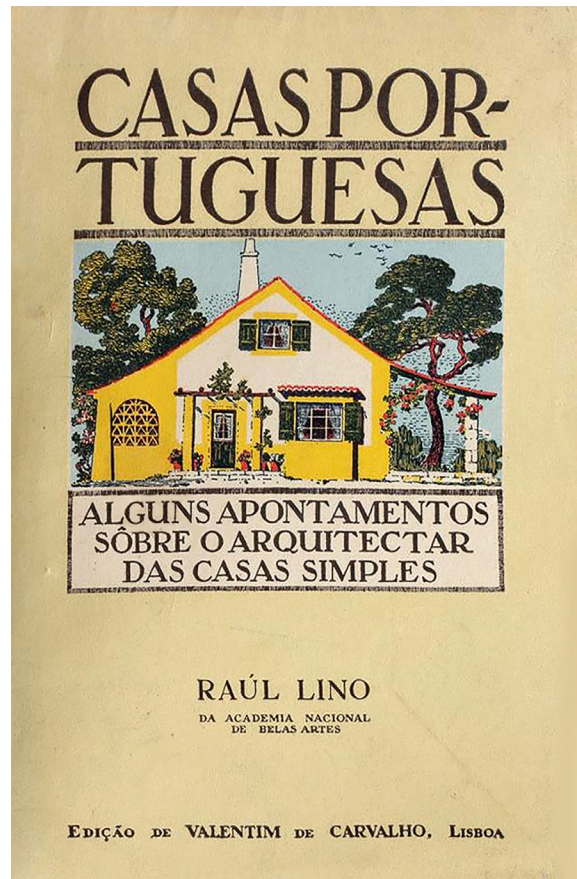
I received a classical and conservative education. I often say that I entered school enamoured with the Venus de Milo and emerged fascinated by Picasso. Thus, in my academic upbringing, there was a significant transformation from my family's education. At school, the instruction I received from the architect Carlos Ramos was very liberal, in the sense

¹³ Gregorio Carboni Maestri, "From Sé-Cathedral to the Self-Nation. About the architecture of the city and the Lusitan territory: historical and anthropological clues", in *Journey to Portugal: inside and outside the territories of architecture*, ed. Bruno Pelucca (Rome: Aracne 2010), 23-30

¹⁴ Luiz Trigueiros, ed., *Fernando Távora* (Lisbon: Blau, 1993).



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that we could use any language. He, as a professional, was a man who at the time was engaged in the official classical language, but nevertheless allowed his students to use a different, more free form of language. My early works were classical [...] the first one: a copy of a Roman temple [Fig. 9]. One day, I decided to create a modern building, and Ramos accepted it without any issues. I believe that my academic education was quite deficient, more focused on reading books and theory than on practical professional experience. This, in a sense, has instilled in me a complex that translated into an inability to design.¹⁵

In the school Távora turned to art history, as Giovanni Leoni expounds:

[... Távora] got to know the work of architect Raul Lino, the main representative of the *Casa Portuguesa* movement. An education [...] enriched by a knowledge of international contemporary art that was unusual in Portugal at the time. [...] Távora began to learn about international contemporary architecture through Ramos, [...]. All this takes place at a time that Távora describes as one of intellectual confusion, dominated by traditionalist positions, but where there are perceptible ferments oriented towards opposing the pursuit of the chilled and pseudo-authentic Portuguese architectural 'tradition', supported by the Salazar regime [...].¹⁶ [Fig. 10]

Fig. 9

Ink drawing of the Temple of Minerva made during an architectural drawing exam (1942-12). Fernando Távora. Opaque paper; 56.7x41 cm. (FIMS/AFT, ref. F5-pd0001).

Fig. 10

Cover of an original edition of *Casas Portuguesas* by Raúl Lino, first published in 1933 (Gregorio Carboni Maestri archives).

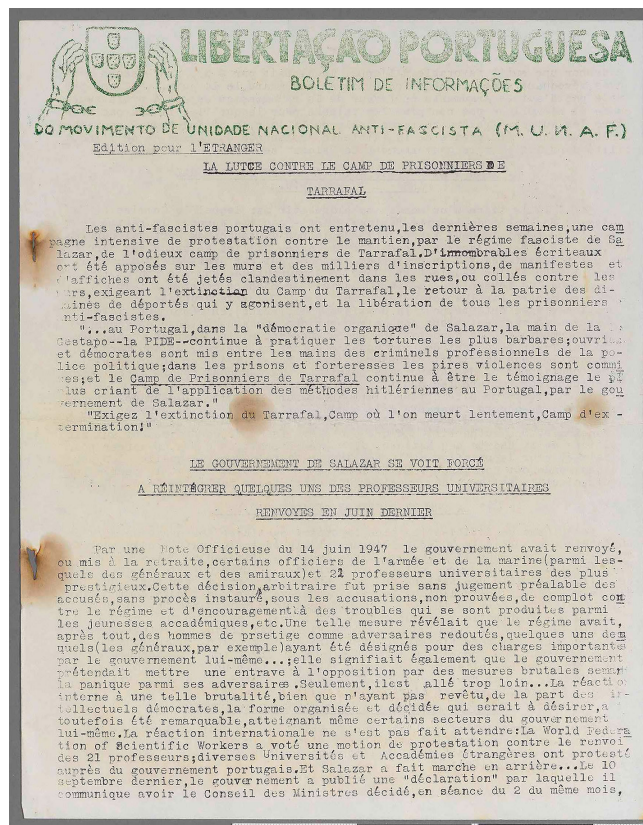
¹⁵ Author's translation of: Javier Frechilla, "Fernando Távora: Conversaciones en Oporto", *Arquitectura*, no. 261 (July-August 1986): 22-28.

¹⁶ Leoni, *Fernando Távora. Un anonimo del XX secolo*, 11.

Távora began his training within a framework in which the Suave was pervasive in the urban landscape, with projects such as Cassiano V. Branco's João de Seabra building of the National Wine Council (1940-1943), but also in the two main architecture magazines. In the latter, the few innovations not related to these styles consisted of foreign and mainly Italian projects. Projects such as the 'House on the Karst by Rogers-Belgioioso-Peressutti'¹⁷, 'Two mountain houses by architect Gio' Ponti'¹⁸, 'Mountain house by engineer Elio Frisia'¹⁹ or 'A house on the Mediterranean by architect Luigi Carlo Danieri'²⁰. The quality, in terms of composition, of these architectures differed from those found in other capitalist nations projects published. What seemed to emerge was an attempt on the part of the Portuguese magazines, especially *Arquitetura*, to use the Italian example to outline possible paths for the regime, that is, a "pluralist" fascist architecture.

In December 1943, three months after the start of the Partisan Revolution in Italy, a secret pro-Allied resistance coordination, the MUNAF (*Movimento de unidade nacional antifascista*) took shape in Portugal, set up by communists, anarchists, republicans, socialists, freemasons, catholic-democrats, military and members of the magazine *Seara Nova* [Fig. 11].

Until the end of the agitated 1944, the two Lusitanian magazines would reflect this confused political situation, publishing Italian and foreign structures with fluctuating frequency. While some issues were entirely dedicated to architecture from Italy or abroad, such as the October 1944 issue of *Arquitetura Portuguesa*, half of which was dedicated to the 'Olivetti nursery school in Ivrea, by Figini, Pollini and Barnasconi'²¹, this presence gradually diminished, manifesting increasing isolation with the progressive defeat of the Axis powers during the Second World War. Foreign architectural productions seemed to increasingly adapt to languages that were compromising with Modernity. Projects that we could sarcastically call 'Swiss Soave' or 'Belgium Soave'²².



17 "Vivenda sôbre o Carso, pelos arquilefos Belgiojoso-Rogers e Peressutti", *Arquitetura Portuguesa*, no. 108 (March 1944): 10.
 18 "Duas casas de montanha, pelo arquitecto Gio Ponti", *Arquitetura Portuguesa*, no. 108 (March 1944): 6-9.
 19 "Casa de montanha do engenheiro Elio Frisia", *Arquitetura Portuguesa*, no. 108 (March 1944): 11-13.
 20 "Uma casa sôbre o Mediterrâneo pelo arquitecto Luigi Carlo Daneri", *Arquitetura Portuguesa*, no. 144 (September 1944): 6-20.
 21 "Asilo-ninho Olivetti, em Ivrea, pelos arguileclos Figini, Pollini e Barnasconi", *Arquitetura Portuguesa*, no. 115 (October 1944): 2-9.
 22 Gregorio Carboni Maestri, *Tendenze Italiane, Vie Lusitane: Architettura Analoga: Inchiesta storico-critico-analitica sulle influenze e dialettiche fra architettura moderna e contemporanea portoghese ed italiana, dai primi del Novecento, ai giorni nostri* (Master Diss., Politecnico di Milano, 2007), 69.

Fig. 11
 "Libertação Portuguesa" MUNAF information bulletin, foreign edition in French. Archive Fundação Mário Soares / AMS – Arquivo Mário Soares.

It should be emphasised that styles linked to a conservative and regulated modernism, like the *Português Suave*, gradually spread into the current architecture of other contexts such as Belgium, which was also characterised by a conservative and colonial elite, albeit in a less generalised manner²³. The revival of old *Italia Soave* projects also emerged, with concepts related to the Novecento style or a domestic, anonymous, passively fascist Italy.

Several issues of *Arquitetura Portuguesa* consisted of translations of articles from old magazines on furniture and interior design. Design topics gradually gave way to articles on techno-ethical, legal, or domestic subjects: interior decoration, giftware, etc. *Arquitetura portuguesa* devoted entire issues to articles with titles such as 'Gardens', 'Legal Section' and 'The Tenancy Agreement', as well as 'National Electrification and the Development of Electricity in Switzerland, Prof. Dr. René Neesser'.²⁴

In the June '45 edition, the article concerning 'The War' was followed by articles concerning 'Weekend Homes' from the magazine *A casa*; [...] the durability of bricks' from the magazine *Claycraft* and 'Work Rooms'. In the July edition, articles were presented dealing with 'Why cork-based insulation?', 'Children's rooms' and 'Four interiors'. In November '45, 'Application of a special type of simple gantry crane' was joined by 'Interior studies' by Pierre Duverlie et Van Luppe. The interior settings seemed to reflect the gloom of the time with dark colours and rich ornamentation in the antique style. Entire issues were devoted to these themes. Towards the end of '45, it was rare to find publications about architecture belonging to Modernism or architecture tout court²⁵.

The Portuguese magazines that were leafed through by Távora and the architects at that stage saw the disappearance of any break from the monopoly of Soave boredom. This happened until the end of '45 when the editorial dominance of *Suave* became totalising. The hardening of Salazarist stylistic diktats was part of the context of the era, with rare exceptions, more related to infrastructure, such as the *Hidroeléctrica do Cávado* (1944-1964), which was under construction at that time to a design by J. Godinho.

With the conclusion of the Second War and the defeat of the anti-communist regimes, the Iberian Peninsula found itself isolated. Europe would be marked by social-democratic regimes in the north and in the east, in Italy and Yugoslavia, the working class now dominated the political scene. In Italy, the old model and friendly country, the cradle of fascism, hundreds of thousands of armed partisans stood on the brink of an uprising, close to continuing the revolutionary process.

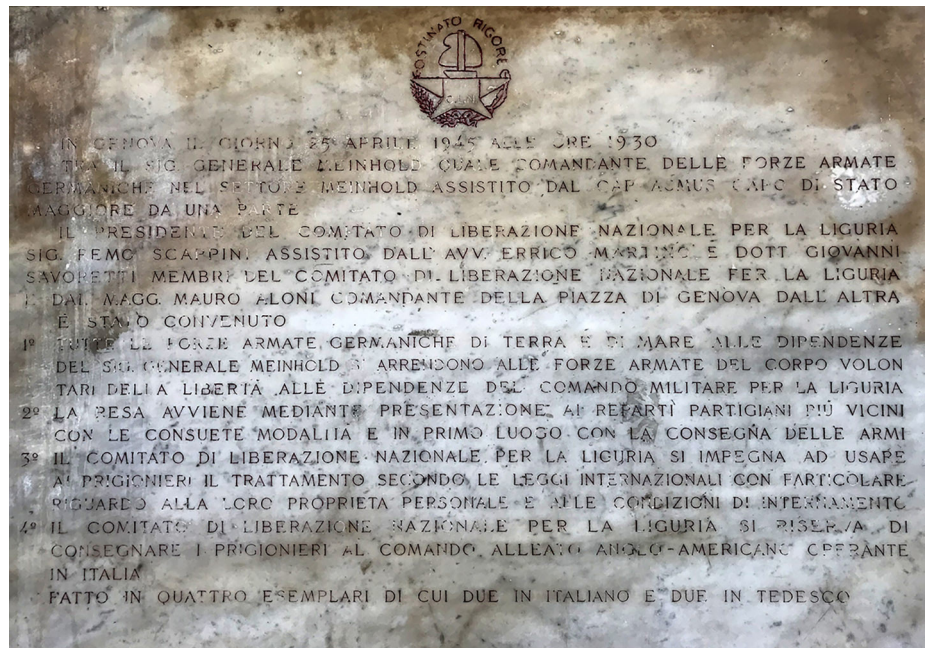
And while Europe discovered new democratic ways during the Reconstruction phase and witnessed the workers' victory over Nazi-Fascism, while Italy took new

²³ In this regard, the analysis of a Belgian magazine such as *Bâtir* is interesting, and especially issue 86 of January 1940, which presented rare architecture with full and ideological modernity, particularly residences of the upper middle class, as well as conservative architecture, especially related to state buildings.

²⁴ See *Arquitetura Portuguesa*, no. 150 (August 1944).

²⁵ Maria Luisa Neri, *L'altra modernità nella cultura architettonica del XX secolo: dibattito internazionale e realtà locali* (Roma: Gargemi, 2011).

political directions following the Liberation of April 25th, 1945, Portugal continued its dictatorial path, having as its only interlocutor the equally closed Spain, in a relationship of incommunicability²⁶ [Fig. 12]. Consequently, the Portuguese endured an even more severe repressive and isolationist process, involving cultural, economic, political, and social aspects: the country closed in on itself, isolating from any contact with the outside world.



12

Alone, with threats to the east, God in the sky, Fatima in the heart. And a new imperfect paradise to the west: the US empire²⁷.

In the two Lisbon magazines this period saw the definitive disappearance of any reference to Italy, by then antifascist and soon to be a Republic “founded on labour”. Some extremely rare and sporadic articles in ‘News’ on foreign affairs were devoted to reconstruction, with a particular focus on France²⁸.

A previously absent country that had an influence in this phase was Francoist Spain²⁹ with architectures in the language of the *Arquitectura de la Autarquia* with conservatism and compositional flatness even more pronounced than those of the *Suave Portuguesa*.

Projects with 19th century overtones by architects such as Manuel de Solà-Morales (1932-2012), as well as lesser-known architects such as Santiago Casullero, Juan Montero, Luis M. Escolà, Joaquim de Alcañiz, Ramon Aragò, Roberto Terrada and Marcel Schemitz. The sporadic foreign links, especially associated with advertisements – the same as in previous decades – mainly concerned Belgium³⁰, the United Kingdom, France, the United States and Germany.

From an editorial point of view, it was evident that the period 1944-1947 represented a lost three-year period for Portuguese architecture, in which a theoretical and design asphyxia could be observed. The articles, although not always openly pro-regime, rarely dared to contradict the status quo and consensus. A

Fig. 12

Commemorative marble stele placed by the National Liberation Committee “In Genoa on 25 April 1945 at 19.30” under the monumental bridge in Via XX Settembre in honour of the victory of the partisans over the Nazi occupiers. This stele was an ecstatic celebration not only of the triumph, but also of the centrality of the working class in the antifascist process. The choice of symbols such as the Phrygian cap, the hammer and anvil on the CLN symbol, with the words “obstinate rigour”, deliberately symbolised the revolutionary character of the historic event (photo by the author, 2020).

26 Serge Berstein and Pierre Milza, *Storia del fascismo* (Milano: Rizzoli, 2021).

27 Antonio Trogu, *Conseguenze della Seconda guerra mondiale* (Bruxelles: EIRC, 2009).

28 With articles such as, for example: M. A. Weber, “A habitação popular em França”, *Arquitectura Portuguesa*, no. 136 (July 1946).

29 With articles such as, for example: “Concurso de anteprojetos para a reforma e ampliação do edifício da Câmara Oficial da Propriedade Urbana da Província de Barcelona”, *Arquitectura Portuguesa*, no. 131, (February 1946).

30 With articles such as, for example: Auguste Vanden Nieuwenborg, “Igreja de Saint-Adrien, em Bruxelas”, *Arquitectura Portuguesa*, no. 137, (August 1946).

veil of fear and self-censorship seemed to descend on every sentence, every word, every design, not only within the editorial boards, but also in the professional sphere³¹.

An equally unfavorable judgement concerns the lack of building production, characterized by a deficiency of content, and limited stylistic development. Consensus reverberated in the cities, countryside, and colonies. This apathy also affected schools and cultural circles³².



13

There were a few exceptions in the editorial field. An article on school complex projects by Diotallevi (1909-1954) and Marescotti (1908-1991) appeared in *Arquitetura Portuguesa* in the December 1945 edition. The same year Távora, after completing the special architecture course, enrolled in the advanced course and did his apprenticeship with F. Oldemiro Carneiro.

Towards 1946, gradually, in the two architectural periodicals, the more autarkic phase again gave way to articles on 'artistic' decoration, with naive historical references, or uncritically dealing with mannerist building materials. The single-family house, especially in the suburbs, reconfirmed itself as an unconditional fetish and the mask of the periodicals' absolute lack of cultural content. Examples of this period include articles in *Arquitetura*, such as 'Baroque Architecture' and 'Art Interiors' by A. João Simões (1946/02); columns such as 'Architecture and Beauty', 'Decorative Arts' and 'Masonry Arches' (March 1946); and pieces such as 'Weekend Housing Project on the Beach of Costa da Caparica (Almada)' in the column 'The Picturesque in Villages', etc.³³

In May '46, the magazine *Arquitetura portuguesa* published a usual issue, but with a singular insertion. An issue that presented similarities to many of the previous and subsequent ones: 'Two dwellings' by Edmundo Tavares (1892-1983) [Fig. 13], a 'Photographic documentary' on 'Four dwellings' in the seaside resort of Estoril; two articles on 'Decoration' and 'Problems of training and activity of engineers'. And, in between, an extraordinary project for that flat period: a 'Villa sul Lario' by P. Lingeri (1894-1968). The project had already been published in *Domus* years earlier³⁴ and was linked to the Fascist era, but to the White

Fig. 13

In 1946, Tavares completed the *Escola Secundária Liceu Jaime Moniz* in Funchal in Portuguese suave style, one of his many public and private buildings on the island of Madeira, mainly designed in the 1930s, such as the Lavradores market, the Bank of Portugal branch or the *Vivenda Fátima*. © Núcleo museológico "O Lyceu" / Arquivo Regional da Madeira.

31 Carboni Maestri, *Tendenze Italiane, Vie Lusitane: Architettura Analoga*, 70.

32 Carboni Maestri, *Tendenze Italiane, Vie Lusitane: Architettura Analoga*, 71.

33 José de Lima Franco, "Projecto de habitação 'fim-de-semana' na praia da Costa da Caparica (Almada)", *Arquitetura*, no. 4 (May 1946): 74-78.

34 Pietro Lingeri, "Una nuova villa sul Lario", *Domus*, no. 72 (1933): 627-631.

Rationalism phase, with its references to naval architecture, machine building and the eminent exponents of the Como School such as Terragni, of whom the Portuguese knew little.

This therefore constituted an unusual article in a magazine that no longer made any reference to Mussolini and even less to modernism, now devoting itself almost exclusively to Iberian architectural inquisition, conforming to the aesthetics promoted by the Salazar and Franco regimes, as well as residential bourgeois architecture, interiors, and decoration.

Above all, this villa appeared rather out of place in a historical moment marked by the initial phase of post-war reconstruction, seeming almost like a nostalgic revival. Lingeri himself, in those years, was involved in much higher spheres, such as the General Regulatory Plan of liberated Milan and the design of the Casa Alta for the experimental district of the Eighth Triennale in Milan. *Arquitetura Portuguesa* omitted any reference to these latter projects of his.

The latter, up to 1947, with the exception of an '*Moradia italiana*' project by Mozzon (1915-2014) in the September issue, continued with its usual plethora of articles on "rustic furniture", "cement" and technological novelties such as "benefits of atomic energy", "thermal insulation techniques" and a spate of interior designs, both foreign and Italian. Issues devoted to baroque interiors, full of agrestic decorations, were followed, schizophrenically, by issues such as January 1947 on 'Foreign Houses' or February 1947 with pieces on Josep Antoni Coderch (1913-1984) 'House in Sitges'; on 'Colour Television', 'The Healthiness of Buildings and Waterproofing Materials' and 'Illuminations'. Followed by 'Architecture and construction in Switzerland' (March); 'A private swimming pool' by Attilio Corrêa Lima (1901-1943) in June; the 'Profession of the engineer' and 'A competition – Monument for Brazil at war' (the only articles in the October issue); 'Ideas for modern constructions of small houses', 'Colored glass', 'The fired clay brick from a technical-caloric point of view' (November or 'Modern sculpture' (December)...

As for the presence of Portuguese architecture, it was once again reduced to a virtual minority. In the few projects that were published, there was a gradual adaptation to what was being produced abroad. Some of the names associated with this period were directly or indirectly linked to regimental architecture, albeit with renewed forms. Names such as José Manuel F. M. Galhardo Zilhão (1869-1950), Porfírio Pardal Monteiro (1897-1957), Vasco Regaleira (1897-1968), António M. V. dos Reis Camelo (1899-1985), Raul Francisco Tojal (1900-1969), Luís Benavente (1902-1993), Lima Franco (1904-1970), João Guilherme Faria da Costa (1906-1971), João Simões (1908-1993), Paulo de Carvalho Cunha (1909-?), Cassiano Barbosa de Abreu and Lima Lopes Rodrigues (1911-1998), Lucinio Cruz (1914-1999), Henrique Albino (1921-2003), Francisco da Conceição Silva (1922-1982), António Pedroso, Cassiano V. Branco, Edmundo Tavares, Fernando Ferriera, Frederico Gorge, João de Brito, José Bastos or Nuno Carveiro Lopes.

In 1947, during which Távora continued his apprenticeship under F. O. Carneiro, the political dam of the regime that took over after the Axis defeat began to show its first cracks. Cracks emerged in a barrier weakened by excessive censorship control and the pushes of hushed internal political pressure, forcing the government to create a few relief valves to prevent wider breakdowns [Fig. 14].



14

One of these first outbursts manifested itself in the authorization, shortly before the beginning of 1946, of the foundation of the MUD, Movement of Democratic Unity, successor to the clandestine MUNAF and established with the aim of gathering dissent under one banner and promoting a collective debate on the electoral question. This movement gained wide public support, especially among the intelligentsia, the liberal professions, architects, and the more politicized proletariat. The threat posed by this success led the regime to ban the *Movimento de unidade democrática* shortly after its formation in 1946, denouncing its links with the Communist Party.

In 1946, the government also gave permission for the creation of the ICAT group, namely Cultural Initiatives Art and Technology. The latter was set up in Lisbon by a collective of architects involved in the political struggle against the New State, some of whom were linked to the MUD. The primary objective of this collective was the dissemination and support of professional opinions in the field of architecture and related socio-economic issues³⁵.

Some of the affiliated members had previously taken part in the development of the Portuguese architectural style imposed by the regime. Among them were João Simões, António M. V. dos Reis Camelo, Paulo de Carvalho Cunha, F. Keil C. do Amaral and Adelino Nunes (1903-1948). In contrast, other members had kept their distance from the ruling style, remaining faithful to the modernist current. Among them were Hernâni Gandra (1914-1988), Raúl Chorão Ramalho (1914-2002), Celestino de Castro (1920-2007) and S. Formosinho Sanchez (1922-2004).

Starting in 1947, ICAT began editing the magazine *Arquitectura*. Together with members of the Secret MUD, they participated in the organization of the General Exhibitions of Plastic Arts at the SNBA (National Society of Fine Arts)³⁶.

³⁵ Lourenço Jorge de Azavedo Ferreira, "O edifício Museu Gulbenkian e a sua importância na arquitetura moderna em Portugal" (Master thesis, Universidade Lusíada, 2014).

³⁶ António Luís Pereira da Silva Neves, "Arménio Losa e Cassiano Barbosa. Arquitectura no segundo pós-guerra. Qrquitectura moderna, nacionalismo e nacionalização" (PhD Diss. Universidade do Porto, 2018).

Fig. 14

1947 also saw the inauguration of the *Batalha Theatre* by Artur Andrade, in the square of the same name, on which Fernando Távora would work in later years (photo by Francesca Fagnano, 2004).

These multidisciplinary exhibitions contained works of representation, statuary, architectural composition, etc. From this moment on, the magazine *Arquitectura*, the exhibitions and the architectural sector in general became highly politicized. This constituted one of the few political outbursts authorized by the regime.

To give an idea of the political importance of this moment and the irritation it aroused in the mainstream media, it is useful to read the front-page headline of the newspaper *Diário da Manhã* (8 May 1947):

The 'Popular Front' of Art. Or Unity in Pessimism and Disorder manifests itself in an exhibition of the National Society of Fine Arts in which real bourgeois and pseudo-proletarians appear, and in which Mr. Falcão Trigoso's elastic bags and almond-box-shaped cover modernism are the backdrop for social uprisings.³⁷

Ramos, who in that 1947 inaugurated the Rovisco Pais leper colony in Tochan in the purest traditional Portuguese style, together with some designers adhering to the modernist culture and trained in Oporto between the start of the Spanish Civil War and the end of the Second War such as Viana de Lima and A. Losa, founded the Organisation of Modern Architects (ODAM)³⁸.

As well as for the ICAT its mission was to participate in the resolution of the immediate technological and collective difficulties that assailed the population of Portuguese cities, spreading the culture of urban plans traceable to the Athens Charter and Latin American experiences. A rare culture in a country where planning and territorial management were almost non-existent³⁹. This group would build the first genesis, with its share of compromises and contradictions, of the Oporto and Lisbon schools.

Two circumstances made explicit the deep discomfort of many architects with the autarkic stylistic approach, indicating to the regime possible alternatives to the clumsy *Português Suave* to answer the question of "what constitutes Portuguese architecture".

The first event manifested itself within the pages of *Arquitectura* in April 1947. In that issue, an article appeared on the children's colony O Século, in pure Suave Portuguese; an article on 'The Reconstruction of Saint-Nazaire' by the critic Léandre Vaillat (1876-1952) and 'A House in North America'. And, such lightning announcing a storm in an already grey sky, a proposal was made by F. Keil C. do Amaral – and consequently, by ICAT –, entitled 'A necessary initiative'⁴⁰. Amaral proposed to undertake a rigorous, methodical, and comprehensive research on

37 Translated by the author. Fernando Paulo Rosa Dias, "Memórias da arte pública em Portugal no século XX: 1945-1975: entre a retórica e a elipse". In *O Chiado, a Baixa e a Esfera Pública – Ensaios e Exposições de Arte Pública*, ed. José Quaresma, (Lisbon: Associação de Arqueólogos Portugueses, 2011): 129-138.

38 Maria Helena Maia, Alexandra Cardoso, "Portugueses in Ciam X" (paper presented at the 20th Century New Towns, Archetypes and Uncertainties, Oporto, 22-24 May 2014): 193-213.

39 Armando Minopoli, "Alcino Soutinho: cinque casi(e) di architettura", in *L'identità plurale: caratteri dell'architettura portoghese*, ed. Gabriele Szaniszló (Napoli: Alfredo Guida, 2002): 79.

40 Francisco Caetano Keil do Amaral, "Uma Iniciativa necessária", *Arquitectura*, no. 14 (April 1947), 12-13.

the various local expressions of architecture in Portugal. This proposal took as its point of reference the peculiarities of Lusitanian architectural jargon in their complete and complex internal diversity⁴¹.

The second episode occurred with the publication of the essay by the young 23-year-old Távora, entitled 'The Problem of the Portuguese House. False Architecture. For an architecture of today'. This essay was published in *Cadernos de Arquitectura* as a response to an article circulated by a historian expressing regret for the insufficient construction of typical Portuguese buildings. Távora advocated the principle later called the 'third way' or as 'realistic architecture'. He defended the principle of a building of modern composition, but with the capacity to connect and assimilate the characteristics of the Portuguese civilization in which it was developing⁴².

This strategic point encompassed an in-depth circumspection of certain directions in contemporary architecture of the time. Távora identified a certain inadequacy in solving many of the questions raised by the specific Portuguese situation, not only in terms of building. At the same time, he felt a revulsion towards what was happening in the sphere of official architecture, which at the time was going through a phase of increasing decline. Finally, he recalled the need to engage in ever more accurate learning about popular Lusitanian buildings⁴³.

Távora's contribution, as stated by G. Leoni, was in this sense precocious and not oriented towards a stylistic or eclectic reinterpretation, following the positions of Cassiano V. Branco. Rather, Távora's approach aimed to grasp the current lesson of functionality and coherence, in tune with the views of F. Keil C. do Amaral or Raul Lino da Silva (1879-1974)⁴⁴. In 'Falsa arquitectura' Távora wrote:

The study of Portuguese architecture, or building in Portugal, is not finished. A number of archaeologists have written and dealt with our houses, but, as far as we know, no one has made current sense of their study, making it a collaborative element of the new architecture. The past is a prison from which few know how to free themselves gracefully and productively; it is worth a lot, but it is necessary to look at it not in itself but as a function of ourselves. It is imperative that in the history of our old or working-class houses we determine the conditions that created and developed them, be they the conditions of the land or those of man, and study the ways in which materials were used and met the needs of the moment. The council house will teach us great lessons if it is studied properly, because it is the most functional and the least imaginative, in a word, the one that conforms most to new intentions. Today, it is studied for its 'picturesqueness' and stylised in exhibitions

41 Nuno Paulo Soares Ferreira, *Entrepasto frigorífico do peixe de Massarelos: um dos ícones da arquitectura modernista portuense*, (Master Thesis, Universidade do Porto, 2010).

42 Fernando Távora, "O problema da casa portuguesa. Falsa arquitectura. Para uma arquitectura de hoje", *Cadernos de Arquitectura*, no. 1, (1947).

43 Frechilla, *Fernando Távora: Conversaciones en Oporto*, 23.

44 Leoni, *Fernando Távora. Un anonimo del XX secolo*, 12.

for nationals and foreigners: there is nothing to be gained from this attitude, which leads to the blind alley of the most complete negation that could be achieved.⁴⁵

The prospectus did not make a wide impression among colleagues at the time; however, it was in a way a precursor of later events. It seemed to be a distant reflection of what was happening in Italy, where very similar debates were taking place, thus constituting an interesting parallel with the *Bel Paese*, where Távora was to travel that very year⁴⁶.

In 1948, the New State, indulging the turmoil that was agitating the world of Lusitanian architecture, arranged a large propaganda-exhibition dedicated to public residential policies. In the same year, in May-June, the innovative thrusts of the 1st National Congress of Architecture began. A meeting promoted by the National Union of Architects and held in Lisbon, resulting in tense controversy, and attended by some of the country's youngest progressive architects, including C. Ramos and the Compromise generation⁴⁷. A vast cultural resistance movement, which had remained silent until then, represented above all by ICAT and ODAM, which raised many of the questions discussed at the congress.

A movement of great symbolic and historical importance, which advanced in a unified manner the rejection of the government style, inviting the latter to commit to the serious housing difficulties of the population and to the function that contemporary architecture and urbanism could fulfil in this regard. The Congress also put its hand to the regime's debates on the national style, taking the latter in a less retrograde direction.

In essence, a position of rebellion against the Soave was adopted, but not giving carte blanche to the Modern Movement, discussing the inconsistencies that arose from an unconditional attachment to it. At the same time, it reaffirmed the right to adopt the principles and values of its architecture. LeCorbusian concepts were mentioned to mark the need for a renewed urban and construction method, while reintroducing natural properties into the Portuguese's living existence: light, adequate surfaces, vegetation, etc. A detailed discussion was arranged on the properties of architecture as a discipline and its assumptions. The right to use the most contemporary materials and structures developed by engineering was claimed and it was considered essential to strive for an aesthetic reversal to solve the many urban and housing dilemmas. Housing issues and the interdisciplinary nature of the arts were posed as fundamental⁴⁸. Equally advanced was the idea that the progress of architecture was indebted to the basic emancipations of the existence of the individual and the municipality: the

45 Author's translation.

46 Giorgio Liverani, "Contesto e progetto, influenze italiane sull'architettura di Fernando Távora" (PhD Diss., Università di Bologna, 2017).

47 Nuno Teotónio Pereira, Manuel Costa Martins, "Habitação Económica de Rejustamento Social" (paper presented at the 1º Congresso Nacional de Arquitectura, Sindicato Nacional dos Arquitectos, Lisbon, May-June 1948), 243-249.

48 José Manuel Pedreirinho, "O congresso dos arquitectos de 1948: uma oposição à Arquitectura de estado," *História*, no. 118 (1989): 44-53.

right to creative independence was affiliated with public order concerns arising from spatial planning. Rather than questions of form, comparisons of the architect's particular learning and general consideration for his creative independence and the limits of his work appeared⁴⁹.

Through these congresses and other ferments, albeit frustrated, veiled claims, discreet messages to power, shielded polemics and debates mediated by a certain amount of compromise, the abjuration of the regime's policies in architectural terms was nevertheless expressed. Claims that, for the circumstances of the time, constituted a real political mockery. Portuguese architects – a part of them – would no longer accept giving free rein to Salazarist stylistic diktats imposed from above. The years that historians would later call the Green Years of Lusitanian architecture were beginning. Changes that were not immediately noticeable in the built reality but emerged clearly in the periodicals, which, once again, became vitally important. The positions of the two major journals became radicalized, with an ideological reopening in both, albeit in increasingly distant ways and positions⁵⁰.

With regard to the periodical *Arquitectura*, the pulse and editorial expression of ICAT, the MUD and the movement triggered by the Congress, changes were seen from the January 1948 issue, with a new graphic and political version. In the editorial, F. P. da Costa explained, between the lines, the need for openness towards what was happening abroad – and in Portugal – “as far as we can go”. The *Português suave* disappeared, making way for projects of considerable compositive interest, with constructions by the *Transigentes* and the emerging School of Oporto. Projects by Adelino Nunes, Artur Andrade (1913-2005), Delfim Fernandes Amorim (1917-1972), Luís José Oliveira Martins (1918-1997), Alfredo Magalhães (1919-1988). And designers whose works had previously been characterized by a regime language such as A. Loza, C. Ramos, C. Barbosa de Abreu or Cottinelli Telmo.

In this new *Arquitectura*, articles and editorials encouraged the debate on concrete architectural problems, the in-depth study of various topics as the National Congress of Architecture and the CIAM. Form and content reflected the confused and exciting air of a succession of events and turmoil that was shaking the consciences of Portuguese architects. Amusing satirical cartoons appeared on the back cover, harshly and cheerfully criticizing the submission of architects to the whims of the private, bourgeois, and uncultured patrons of the time (and behind this patronage, it is not difficult to see who they were talking about). An underlying spirit of progressivism and resistance seemed to have contaminated the entire editorial set-up, not afraid to publish, in addition to satirical cartoons, articles, messages, telegrams and letters from architects complaining about pressure from mayors and the government to attempt to “deny their own era, their temperament and their taste, (...) imposing an aesthetic programme” or, more generally, about the “housing problem” in Portugal⁵¹.

49 Trigueiros, *Fernando Távora*, 27.

50 José Manuel Pedreirinho, “Arquitectura e fascismo”, *História*, no. 9 (1979), 56-64.

51 *Arquitectura*, no. 23-24 (June 1948).

In this context of rebirth, a common denominator would unite both magazines, again, as in the 1930s: Italy. And as during the pre-war period, Italy would be used as a litmus test for the defense of distinct programmatic visions by the two magazines⁵². Beginning in February 1948, in *Arquitectura*, if the most interesting articles were about what was happening in Italy, the novelty was not just what the magazine was showing, but how, with rather dangerous content in the political context of the time. A long and extensive series of reports on the Italian turmoil of those years. In contrast to its competitor, which focused its attention on the field of industrial design, interiors, informing the reader about small novelties and foreign curiosities uncritically and contradictorily inserted into a plastered editorial line, the magazine of “the Congress” proposed programmatic and critical-analytical novelties from Italy. It was a bolt out of the blue in the darkness of luso-fascism that seemed to want to bring the political and critical energy of Italian comrades back home, almost as if it wanted to unleash the winds of the CLN (National Liberation Committee) and its Brigades. *Arquitectura* proposed, not too subtly, in essence, to do ‘as in Italy’. It is not known to what extent if only in the field of architecture. They studied, observed what architects in the Italian Boot were doing, almost as if they wanted to understand how to apply the same recipes in Portugal: innovative, realist – neorealist – experiences that fitted well with the themes set by the Congress.

Neo-realism was discussed in explicit and official terms in the literary domain, in the identical years in which figures such as the communist poet Joaquim Vitorino Namorado (1914-1986), the storyteller José Gomes Ferreira (1900-1985), and the poet, art critic and musician João José de Melo Cochofel Aires de Campos (1919-1982) emerged. As in architecture, they polarised numerous energies in magazines and publishing series more or less allowed by the regime, such as *Seara Nova*, *Vértice*, *Sol Nascente*, *Novo Cancioneiro*, *Altitude*, *Gazeta Musica and Todas as artes*, *Mundo Literário*.

But it is interesting to note the plodding, perhaps fearful steps, the ambiguous and contradictory political way *Arquitectura* would present its new cultural project to readers through the Italian lens. As at the competitor, projects built during the years of the Fascist regime by architect’s unknown to the Portuguese were initially published, bringing the public up to date on the most daring contributions of that phase such as, for example, the design of the Santa Maria Novella station in Florence (Gruppo toscano, 1928). *Arquitectura* wrote that “although this building had already been constructed for many years”, it had been “decided to publish it, for the first time, in Portugal, because of its very high architectural quality”.

An equally surprising posthumous publication was that of the work of G. Terragni (1904-1943), an architect that the competing magazine also revealed to its readers in the same years. When the magazine published *Casa del Fascio* (1932-1936) in June 1948, *Arquitectura*, as often happened, got the location wrong, replacing Como with Lissone. The word fascio did not appear: the magazine took care to title the project with its new republican name: *Casa del*

52 Carboni Maestri, *Tendenze Italiane, Vie Lusitane: Architettura Analoga*, 72.

Popolo, People's house. This was followed, in the August-September 1948 issue, by publications of projects then in progress such as the Roma Termini station (Angiolo Mazzoni then the Montuori Vitellozzi group, 1939-1950) and projects by A. M. Delfino, Mario Terzaghi (1915-1998). In these early editorial choices, there seemed to be an underlying desire to make up for lost time in the previous years, wasted on castrated editorial choices. These editorial proposals perhaps had a pedagogical, formative, progressive attitude and squaring the political circle, creating a nexus between the fascist past and post-fascist reconstruction. A nexus of architectural continuity in political discontinuity.

The use of the Italian *casus belli* probably had a design character, a suitability for all political phases. At the same time, as before the Second World War, this model was used to propose to the regime a possible third way, a possible architectural policy. During Fascism, the Italian School was sibilantly cited as an example of possible linguistic and design pluralism within an authentic fascist doctrine (as opposed to the mummification desired by Salazar or the even more reactionary German policies).

In the democratic phase, on the other hand, the Italian way was proposed as a possible alternative and morally high to Modernism. In a posture that, as the Congress proposed, *faute de mieux*, was not perceived as irreconcilable with the regime. Showing projects from the Mussolini era perhaps made it possible to highlight how the projects of the post-1945 Italian school, linked by a continuity with the progressive and critical characteristics of the pre-25 di Aprile projects, were not in contradiction with the autarchic and reactionary political system of Portugal at the time.

It cannot be ruled out that the publication of pre-1945 Italian projects comforted the Salazarist wing, pointing a possible way forward for pluralistic architecture with design intensity and theoretical depth. Above all, of critical and dialectical openness towards Modernity. Almost as if to indicate, therefore, that the path traced by the Congress was not only not dangerous for the fascist regime but was, on the contrary, a path that had already been partly tested in Rome, the cradle of fascism. Thus, using the *continuità* of themes, authors, and projects between the pre- and post-war periods as a transition, without making explicit a political break or a connection with anti-fascism in the architecture of the post-CLN. The magazine could, through this editorial tactic, have then adhered to renewed artistic, formal, and spatial progressiveness in the wake of the Congress, publishing projects and themes from the First Italian Republic, fully opening the debates on international Modernity 'through' these projects. Doing politics without being labelled as communists. Finally, this extension, represented by the projects of Italian architects already active in the Thirties, matched that of the architects of the *Transigentes*, who were developing renewed critical-linguistic tensions despite having previously adhered to the Soave, as in the case of Carlos Ramos.

Through the Italian projects, both before and during the war, therefore, both Portuguese magazines seemed to indicate possible alternative paths to those

peremptorily desired by the New State, namely that of a variety of views, a linguistic multiplicity (in the case of *Arquitectura portuguesa*) and of debates, of a high critical, ethical, political, theoretical, social, collective and modernity profile (in the case of *Arquitectura*). But if in the Mussolini years the editorial line seemed to tend towards “we could be authentically fascist’ by doing ‘as in Italy’” (i.e. “– and not as in Portugal”), *Arquitectura* now seemed to point to the Italian comrades as a possible route to a critical and realist modernity: i.e. “as we want to do in Portugal, now!” And if in the 1930s the architecture of the *Bel Paese* aroused strong interest for aesthetic, formal and exquisitely architectural reasons and for the political proximity between Salazar and Mussolini, in the late 1940s Italy aroused interest for its critical intellectualism, for the socio-political and civic posture of its professionals. And, hissingly, for the anti-fascism and morality that the forms of the new Italian project emanated.

But the Italian architects, projects, themes, exhibitions and debates that *Arquitectura* would publish had a structural difference from Portugal that could not be exported. They were exportable in disciplinary and formal terms, but not in political terms. They were, in fact, expressions of idealistic impulses stemming from an Italy destroyed by civil war and a process of anti-fascist innovation, which allowed for a supreme cultural rebirth. And which would go on to experience the longest low-intensity pre-revolutionary process in a country with a market economy, helping to produce a critical mass unique in Europe, at least until the G8 summit in Genoa⁵³. Architectural ferment that was far from being implemented in a Portugal whose working class was paralyzed by Salazar’s efficient repressive machine and a lack of industrialization. This lymph, contained in many aspects of the schools of Turin, Milan, Venice, Genoa, Rome, etc., and which would appear in the pages of Portuguese magazines, would have expressed far more than a critical Modernity or a mannerist design Neorealism. This was probably understood by the politicized editorial team of *Arquitectura*.

Indeed, from the late 1940s and early 1950s, the most convulsive and interesting period of Portuguese architecture *ante-Revolução dos cravos*, *Arquitectura* published a little bit of everything. There was no issue that did not publish something related to Italy, with an interest that ranged from strictly architectural-compositional-design issues to more socio-political-programmatic problems, from the Canton Vesco quarter in Ivrea (1943-1963) to reviews of Italian books, such as Alberto Sartoris’s *Enciclopedia dell’Architettura Nuova* (1901-1998). The most progressive innovations related to the era of National Liberation would have been insistently proposed, with clearly politically identifiable words, on which the magazine took a clear field position.

While *Arquitectura portuguesa* used Italian projects for their exquisitely techno-popular interest (interior architecture, industrial design, objects of use, etc.), *Arquitectura* launched itself into a surprising militant analysis of what was

⁵³ Gianpasquale Santomassimo, “The public memory of antifascism”. In *L’Italia repubblicana nella crisi degli anni Settanta*, eds. Fiamma Lussana and Giacomo Marramao (Rome: Rubettino, 2003), 1-35.

happening in republican Italy. Like the eighth Milan Triennale (1948) and the experimental district, the QT8. The magazine that the 25-year-old Távora read in addition to Italian names and projects published the Athens Charter of the CIAM in parts, issue after issue. *Arquitectura* did not skimp on praise for the experience of the Triennale (here in its first issue of '48):

[...] The character of this exhibition, completely opposite to the usual concept of large exhibitions, is that it is not an ephemeral exhibition and that it exploits the credits placed at its disposal for social purposes.

Arquitectura, translated words that were certainly not welcome in a political regime like Carmona-Salazar's, then quoting passages from the Milan Triennale programme for the new Triennale 8 district:

[...] the new quarter will be a permanent, experimental, and living exhibition of Modern Architecture [...] all processes of perfect organisation of work will be in favour of unification and prefabrication. All new means and materials of construction and decoration will be experimented with! [...] The Triennale came out of the long period of the war with the same dilemmas faced by all the organisations and institutions of Italy and Europe: to review its own functions and means of organisation in the light of the harsh social reality, or to die. [...] For the industrial professions, give as much scope as possible to the production of large series parts (which can be produced by industry) so that they can be more economical and, consequently, contribute greatly to the needs of reconstruction. For artistic handicrafts, develop industrialisation through collaborative and cooperative forms of production, which – [...] – avoid the dispersion of energies and [...] of raw materials that are so scarce.

And to those who did not understand the message, he proposed, unabashedly:

[...] The eighth Milan Triennale will have to be an expression of the new social-political climate created by democracy. It will have to deal with the issues that relate to the less wealthy classes and bring solutions, in the same way that during the 7 [previous] exhibitions the Triennale dealt with the issues that affect the wealthy classes. Consequently, the single theme will be housing, a theme that is the truest, the most heartfelt, the most dramatic, a source of anguish, desire, and hope for millions of Europeans. The Triennale will refrain [...] from dealing with retrospective problems or set design, office furniture, shops, swimming pools, restaurants, etc., or exhibiting exotic flowers. All the works exhibited must be considered saleable and susceptible of being reproduced [...].⁵⁴

Towards the end of the 1940s, when the sweet Portuguese language was reaching its terminal phase even in the context of the magazine *Arquitectura Portuguesa*, the more progressive architectural current was confronting new themes that were considered forbidden by the very concept of Modernity. This

⁵⁴ Leoni, "Fernando Távora. Un anonimo del XX secolo", 12.

was done through typically Italian studies that explored the role of history, continuity with the past and theoretical aspects related to decoration, and so on. It was almost as if the themes introduced by the *Domus* directed by Rogers (1909-1969) and the influence of post-war Italian culture continued to roam through the pages of the magazine. However, rather than representing a mere contribution, it was a seed that found fertile ground. This soil consisted of the experiences of two generations who had experienced restrictions and dictates, and who were moving towards teaching and reflection. These cohorts identified Italy as a theoretical light shining at the end of the tunnel.

The very aesthetics of *Arquitectura* in the post-Congress period recalled much of the pictorial research post-Liberazione Italy. Neorealist graphics, derived from late critical modernism, which sought, perhaps unconsciously, a link with built architecture, with a discipline understood as a craft, beyond ephemeral fashions. Even the Portuguese research architectures proposed in the pages of *Arquitectura*, of great interest, seemed to respond to the themes raised by the Congress and the Italian debates. In the January 1949 issue, a translation of the article 'For architecture students' (which had appeared in '46 in issue 213 of *Domus*) was published. In this manifesto article, Rogers beautifully explicated what, decades later, would become evident in the eyes of many: Modern architecture could not survive based solely on hatred for tradition; instead, it had to draw nourishment from the past.

In the June-July issue of the same year, *Arquitectura* published reports on the 7th International Congress of Modern Architecture, held in Bergamo and organised by Rogers, Bottoni (1903-1973), Peressutti (1908-1976) and Spini (1923). In a short biography on Rogers, the magazine wrote about the "[...] Main works of this group [Rogers, Banfi, Belgioioso and Peressutti]. (...)" like "The monument to the Italian fallen of World War II, already without the collaboration of Banfi, who died on 12 April 1945 in the Mauthausen concentration camp, paying with his life for his courage in belonging to the Italian Resistance".

A further aspect of considerable importance referred to the attention *Arquitectura* paid to accompanying the internal issues of the Italian editorial debate, as frictions, tensions and, as was the case in many sectors of Italy at the time, contrasts, and stances in favor of one or the other contender evolved. *Arquitectura* showed particular affection towards the magazine *Domus*, under the direction of Rogers (from 1946 to 47). In the May-June 1948 issue, along with the continuation of the Congress proceedings, an interesting article appeared, in which we could read:

[...] Italy. Architect E. N. Rogers relinquished the editorship of the magazine 'DOMUS', which he had taken over since the Italian Liberation. Rogers, one of the architects most aware of the problems of our time, made the magazine an admirable and unique publication. In the letter in which he bids farewell to his readers, Rogers soberly and movingly explains that he is leaving the magazine against his will. We quote: "It was with good

grace that we accepted the designation of 'humanists' that they gave us, and of which we take pride as of a cavalry rod (...). Giò Ponti, who directed 'DOMUS' before the war, resumed his post [...].⁵⁵

From these sentences it was clear which side *Arquitectura* had chosen to be on. This would, moreover, be confirmed over time. The same was true for the competitor, which represented the Portuguese expression of Gio' Ponti's editorial field. *Arquitectura* continued to publish translations of the Trieste architect even after his resignation from *Domus*, and many of the articles on international architects were taken directly from the editorial line of Rogers' *Domus*. Articles such as 'Homeless Men'⁵⁶, 'The Peoples' House: the U.N. Competition'⁵⁷, 'Two Leonardi and Architecture'⁵⁸, 'Royal House and Ideal House'⁵⁹, some of which would go down in history, such as 'Open Letter to the President of the Italian Republic (The State of Art)⁶⁰, the aforementioned 'For Architecture'⁶¹, 'Reconstruction: from the Object of Use to the House'⁶² to name a few. It was thus through Rogers' eyes that a part of international architecture was seen by the readers of *Arquitectura* in a still closed country. Even the articles about Neutra (1892-1970) that appeared in June-July 1949 were the result of pieces that *Domus* dedicated to the architect in no less than six articles from November 1946 to November 1948⁶³.

The relationship between the themes developed by *Arquitectura* seemed to draw nourishment from the Rogerian perspective, situating itself in a panorama that was as distant from functionalist purism as it was from an uncritical reception of the Athens Charter, although the latter was not explicitly questioned. This distancing manifested itself in disagreement with the editorial orientation of magazines such as *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, which represented one of the opposite poles to the Italian anti-Frigidaire keepers⁶⁴. The relevance of the publication dedicated to *Modernisme optimiste* initially remained marginal during the Green Years, with a tendency more inclined to focus on Milan rather than Paris. And, as we shall see, until the partial clearance of such consensual modernism by the Portuguese regime. However, the weight of *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* in the firmament of Lusitanian architecture Green years was subsequently overestimated by the preeminent historiographical discourse, which artfully forced the Portuguese gem to be embedded in the rosary of the French Modern Movement.

55 *Arquitectura*, no. 23-24 (May-June 1948).

56 Ernesto Nathan Rogers, "Uomini senza casa", *Domus*, no. 206 (1946), 2-3.

57 Ernesto Nathan Rogers, "La casa dei popoli: il concorso dell'O.N.U.", *Domus*, no. 207 (1946), 2-5.

58 Ernesto Nathan Rogers, "Due Leonardi e l'architettura", *Domus*, no. 208 (1946), 2-3.

59 Ernesto Nathan Rogers, "Casa reale e casa ideale", *Domus*, no. 209 (1946), 2.

60 Ernesto Nathan Rogers, "Lettera aperta al Presidente della Repubblica Italiana (lo Stato dell'Arte)", *Domus*, no. 210 (1946), 2-3.

61 Ernesto Nathan Rogers, "Per gli studenti di architettura", *Domus*, no. 213 (1946), 2.

62 Ernesto Nathan Rogers, "Ricostruzione: dall'oggetto d'uso alla casa", *Domus*, no. 215 (1946), 2-5.

63 Translation by Ettore Sottsass: "Coerenza di Neutra", *Domus*, no. 215 (1946), 6-11; Gio Ponti, "Spettacolo del mondo", *Domus*, no. 227 (1948), 1; Gio Ponti, "I materiali 'dello stile' di domani", *Domus*, no. 229 (1948-07), 46-49; Gio Ponti, "L'alluminio e l'architettura", *Domus*, no. 230 (1948), 31-33; Gio Ponti, "Scultura all'aperto", *Domus*, no. 231 (1948), 32.

64 Reference here is made to the article Ernest Nathan Rogers, "L'evoluzione dell'architettura. Risposta al custode dei frigidaires", *Casabella Continuità*, no. 228 (1959), 2-4.

Such a discourse, particularly outside Portugal and Italy, still holds the concept of the Third Way with little sympathy and even less the link of this Lusitanian current with the Italian tendencies⁶⁵.

Instead, the opposite seems to have happened. *The Anos verdes* blossomed with a great refalling in love with Italian schools, with the first sprouts of extraordinary projects such as *bairro das Estacas* (1949-1954) by Formosinho Sanchez and Ruy Jervis d'Atouguia (1917-2006) in which one glimpses links with Luigi Cosenza's (1905-1984) Neapolitan projects such as the Social housing for homeless citizens (1949-1950) or the *Rione D'Azeglio in Barra* (1946-1947); or with linguistic elements by Luigi Carlo Daneri (1900-1972) as well as some details of the Harvard University Graduate Centre (1949-1950) by Walter Adolph Gropius (1883-1969). But shortly afterwards there would be a kind of return to order also in the context of the *Transigents*, clearly visible in *Arquitectura*.

The more political, cultured, and subversive vocabulary of a text 'written half in Latin and half in Russian'⁶⁶ of the Italians would gradually give way to more accentuated functionalist naivety and a uniformed Euro-Anglo-Saxon mannered Modernism, more acceptable to the regime. It was in this context that the French magazine would make an increasingly insistent *entrée en scène* in Lusitanian publishing. To become substantially hegemonic in the following phase.

In *Arquitectura portuguesa*, the articles of the 1940's last years were inspired by more innovative themes from a technical and formal point of view, thus constituting small flashes of inspiration after the three years of 'dull boredom'. Topics concerning interior architecture emerged comprehensively in the magazine, addressing topics such as studies on the quality of rooms or issues related to living spaces, without neglecting objects. Articles on 'Tiles', 'Juan Mirò's Ceramics', 'Interior Wall Decoration', 'Coloured Glass and Glassmakers', 'The Acoustics of Indoor Swimming Pools' and industrialization in architecture 'at the service of the national economy'. In addition, some rare architecture was examined, such as hospitals in Melbourne and Basel, a brewery and some 'country' houses in the 'Ajuda housing estate'.

This phase coincided with the symbolic march of 24 August 1949 when, thanking the regime of the extreme right-wing dictator Salazar for its help in the anti-communist struggle, the "Free world" welcomed Portugal with open arms into the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation), turning a blind eye to the abuses of the Lisbon despot⁶⁷. By joining the anti-workers-international, not only was domestic oppression not relaxed, it was enriched by a new Atlanticist and global

65 Bruno Gil, "Many Voices: Intertextualities as an Underlying Cultural Theory of 'Escola do Porto'", *Writingplace Journal for Architecture and Literature*, no. 1 (2018): 10-28. The work, in line with many of its kind, speaks of an 'improbable' Third Way, proposing instead a concept of a Third Voice.

66 Antonio Baldini (1889-1962), who collaborated with the members of the Constituent Assembly to find the clearest expressions for the Constitution, worked hard in this direction. At the beginning of his term of office, he is reported to have said: "[...] How can one translate into correct Italian a Constitution written half in Latin and half in Russian? [...]", thus highlighting the challenge of linguistic synthesis between the two main political currents. Ombretta Fumagalli Carulli, *A Cesare ciò che è di Cesare, a Dio ciò che è di Dio* (Rome: Vita e Pensiero, 2006), 68.

67 Giorgio Di Giusto, *1945-1952 – The United States at the Conquest of World Hegemony: The Novelty of the Truman Administration's Grand Design and the Perception of Foreign Policy in American Society*, (Master Diss., University of Trieste, 2005).

matrix, which strengthened and legitimised the government. Lisbon's inclusion in the *pax americana* brought about an international opening of the country that was more formal than, of course, internationalist. It corresponded with the beginning of a slight economic loosening and an opening up to a more corporatist capitalism, of some of the consumerist ways of life (music, clothes, objects of use, etc.)⁶⁸ without, however, any democratic relaxation. A process that contributed to openings in the architectural field mask-



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ing, in reality, a new stylistic numbness, a new straitjacket of apparent formal freedom: that of a certain *Modernus felix*, of International Style and of an inoffensive corporatist functionalism. The dazzle for the suave Portuguese faded away, leaving room for new glare, by means of more shrewdly designed mirrors, without questioning any aspect of the ideological context.

Political interference in the field of architecture continued for some years. However, this new economic phase and the resistance of the most active factions among the architects of the Green Years contributed to weakening the legitimacy of the regime in the field of architecture. Thus began a period that we could call Contemporary suave: aesthetic adaptation to the regime's alignment with the global diplomatic and economic network and the consequent clearance of the CIAM. And of a certain consensus modernity, consistent with Salazar's and neighboring Franco's enthusiasm for a promising new economic sector with little conflict in terms of class struggle: tourism. And, with it, star-studded lifestyles.

This new period brought with it a series of tourism-related urban planning projects, such as the one that involved the degraded and impoverished center of Porto, which had become a veritable ghetto of poverty. These plans stimulated destructive and invasive restoration works, with massive demolitions of dilapidated buildings [Fig. 15]. Equally devastating strategies were adopted, disguised as picturesque reconstructions of ancient complexes, complete with historical fakes and reconstructions in style. Of course, there was no shortage of imposing hotel complexes along the Iberian coasts with a Latin

68 João Medina, "Salazar e Franco: dois ditadores, duas ditaduras", in *Espanha e Portugal. O fim das ditaduras*, ed. Osvaldo Coggiola, (São Paulo: Xamã, 1995), 11-34.

Fig. 15

The *Torre da cidade* in Porto: a case study of historiographic revisionism for tourism and propaganda. This landmark underwent extensive restoration and reconstruction in the late 1940s under the direction of Rogério de Azevedo, exemplifying the transformation of historical sites to serve national narratives (photo by the author, 2003).

American flavour. South America (and speculative skyscrapers) made their way into Portuguese architecture through various articles by Brazilian architect Ulysses Burlamaqui (August '48 and July '49) and, later, with the new layout adopted in October '49, with articles in 'The Brazilian architecture' by architects Aldary H. Toledo (1915-1998) and by Daniele Calabi (1906-1964), who had fled Padua after the racial laws, alongside titles such as 'The shop window as a cultural element' and 'The conception of American office buildings' (January '50) followed by pieces on 'Hygienic architecture and human geography in Brazil' or 'Stockholm, the New York of the Nordics'⁶⁹.

It was in this context that, in 1950, a young Álvaro Joaquim de Melo Siza Vieira (1933) enrolled at ESBAP, while Távora, who would become his teacher, was completing his training. Of that period, the protagonist of the story recounts that:

[...] when I was finishing my degree I decided to go down the road of urban planning, assuming that the design commitments in urban planning were less than in architecture [...] with that certainty that urban planning is not for realisation [...] When I finished my degree I went to work at the Municipal Chamber of Oporto[...] where I did my first urban planning job. Since our main contacts were with Italians and my education, therefore, was more oriented in that direction, I went to Italy, to Milan. I think the Milanese influence is clearly perceptible in the works of this early period. It was later – somewhat through urban planning – that I started to design. But that was very late. I went two years without being able to realise any projects. So much so that some friends commissioned me to design a house and I, who felt totally incompetent to do it, passed it on to a colleague and pretended to do it myself. [...] these professional beginnings are the Campo Alegre and Ramalde projects [...] these works represent the strength and intellectual vigour I had at that time [...] because I was a great fighter against the official status quo... The Campo Alegre work has a curious history. Muzio and Piacentini worked there. They even planned a city centre in that area, in the idea of Italian business centres. The project was gradually betrayed and bastardised in its execution by the municipal administration. It was then that we were asked to adapt the Italian plan to the new circumstances. I felt that it could not be done, that we had to solve the problem in a different way. So I drew up this plan [...] in secret. One day I showed it to the boss and he decided to go ahead with it. It did not develop further because, shortly afterwards, during a visit, the Minister of Public Works thought it was a disaster, that the municipality could not work that way. He got angry with the mayor and... They almost threw me out. However, from the point of view of professional colleagues – because there was a group that encouraged this modern stance – the work was somewhat successful.⁷⁰

69 Issue of May 1951.

70 Author's translation by Frechilla, "Fernando Távora: Conversaciones en Oporto", 22-28.

On 31 March 1950, at the end of his specialist apprenticeship, F. O. Carneiro, notified that Távora was 'competent to do the job'. A year later, in 1951, F. Távora was chosen to be one of the few to represent the Portuguese wing of the eighth CIAM⁷¹, whose main Portuguese connection was Viana de Lima, thanks to his contacts with Le Corbusier's studio. Távora thus encountered architects from all over the world.

That year the CIAM was to be held in Hoddesdon, England. Despite the timid international openings, we mentioned earlier, Salazarist Portugal continued in a condition of autarchic closure, censorship, and lack of written information. In this sense, international exchanges were of enormous importance for a young man like Távora. And it was with this CIAM that Távora's "man of two worlds" really began. A Congress in which his reflections on a modern architecture with traditional formal and spatial values would be reinforced. About this Congress, he said:

It was a post-war CIAM in which Le Corbusier said things like: 'Well, we thought houses didn't need locks and today we are convinced they do'. It was the Le Corbusier of Chandigarh, of Indian architecture, of that great green space full of spontaneous manifestations. And it was the CIAM where when Tange presented his Tokyo buildings, Rogers said they were intensely Japanese. I felt that something was changing profoundly. CIAM, the Athens Charter... everything was in crisis and discussion. There was a strong contestation. It was not the case with the Portuguese, we came from a small country, we were appearing for the first time at the congress, but there was a feeling of change, of transformation... and it was very clear, even in the figure of Le Corbusier himself. Gropius was already in the United States and starting to make his little American betrayals, and Le Corbusier was evolving in the direction we all know. [...] Le Corbusier was an unsympathetic character. His report was always listened to; he was really the character of congress. In a way distant, – apparently – from the mediocrity of the other groups of architects [...] I only greeted Le Corbusier once in my life. I met him by chance, half-awake, in his room and said: 'Good morning'. That was the only verbal contact. The atmosphere was a bit like that: a group of wise men chaired by the oldest wise man. There were many other characters. At the first congress I attended, the new generation of Englishmen around the Smithsons emerged. Also the Italians, Rogers, Albini, Gardella, less likeable...⁷²

On Távora, the Italians and CIAM, Siza tells us:

Yes, Távora was a great admirer of Rogers. Of the BBPR, whom he knew directly through CIAM [...] [and] he witnessed those polemics within CIAM that in fact ended CIAM... [...] [Regarding] Italian culture, there was also

⁷¹ Nuno Portas, "Arquiteto Fernando Távora, 12 anos de atividade profissional", *Arquitectura*, no. 71 (July 1961): 22.

⁷² Author's translation. Frechilla, "Fernando Távora. Conversaciones en Oporto", 22-28.

a very active encounter, a turning point, a revision, on the part of Italian architectural culture [...] Italian works, in general, in the post-war period [...] were the great influence here.⁷³

Italian architecture was again the subject of another Portuguese editorial revolution that, this time, in the November-December 1950 issue, blossomed in the pages of the traditionally conservative *Arquitectura Portuguesa* with an atypical issue. For the first time in years, the editor, Martins, was breaking out of his thematic obsession with the single-family holiday home, interiors, decorative elements and building materials, with an issue dedicated to the IX Triennale di Milano, 'Italian Ceramics' and 'Modern Italian Architecture' with, on the cover, a 'high school in Biella' (the Biella boarding school in Pella palace) by Giuseppe Pagano (1896-1945). However, it is interesting to observe the different ways in which both magazines treated the Triennale theme. *Arquitectura Portuguesa* emphasised the decorative products presented at the event, the expositive and exhibition aspects, in contrast to the periodical enemy, which, as we have seen above, highlighted the political and social aspects of the event.

Typical examples of the vast set of thematic and formal innovations of an Italy that was preparing for the economic miracle, hyper-industry, the democratization of consumption and a creative capitalism driven by the state investments of the First Republic⁷⁴. What is still surprising today is the bursting formal contemporaneity of many of the published Italian projects, a popular modernity present in every colour, shape, and graphic, the expression not only of a new lifestyle, but also of a new democratic model. A scent of a techno-democratic future evoked in articles about prolific Italian professionals, such as the two very interesting buildings published in November 1950: one in Rome by Ugo Luccichenti (1899-1976), the other in Milan by Giulio Minoletti (1910-1981). A new editorial course, a belated reflection of what had been happening for years in the underground and among the new generation of Portuguese architecture, and which Martins spread sparingly. Designers whose *modus operandi* itself evoked this happy, refined and dense factory of thought that represented the Italian peninsula. With debates-research that touched on issues concerning the production of objects of use for serial manufacture and mass consumption⁷⁵ and that, although they passed as politically inoffensive and perfectly publishable in the Salazarist context, nevertheless seemed to emanate a real breeze of fresh air from their forms. These novelties, such as the Villa Conti in Piacenza, by Gian Giuseppe Mancini (1881-1954) – issued in August 1950 – or the Missori cinema in Milan by Emilio Lancia (1890-1973) – April 1951 – at the same time, allowed *Arquitectura Portuguesa* not to criticise the capitalist system in its essence, not to question the ideological *status quo*, if not, indeed, the superstructures of the everyday.

⁷³ Gregorio Carboni Maestri, private communication with Alvaro Siza Vieira (audiocassette recording 2004).

⁷⁴ Patrizia Dogliani, "An Alternative Image of Italy? Socialist Italy", *Mélanges de l'école française de Rome*, no. 109, (1997), 35-44.

⁷⁵ Paola Di Biagi, *La grande ricostruzione: Il piano Ina-Casa e l'Italia degli anni Cinquanta*, (Roma: Donzelli Editore, 2001).

We can, however, try to imagine how much these images caused astonishment and wonder among the Portuguese readers of the magazine. Innovative images, almost from another planet, different in their themes, shapes, colours...⁷⁶ Imageries, however, that had nothing to do with the Portuguese reality of the time, which was little or not at all industrialised, where there was a feeble domestic market and weak mass consumption. But, above all, in which there was no debate on objects of use, and where social emergencies were far removed from issues such as ergonomics, the quality of chromaticity or the choice of materials for the kindergartens of the children of the workers of Italy at the time.

In addition to the *Boota* large number of countries progressively entered the magazine, which went from the gloomy and boring Iberianism of the regime, to an obsessive foreignness, which had, perhaps, the objective of not revealing the turmoil that agitated Portuguese architecture, as well as serving as a cover for a perceived inadequacy of the homeland, instead of its political and economic model. Most designers and authors of articles cited in this phase of the magazine's life were foreigners. First and foremost Spaniards, who were soon to start looking towards Italy⁷⁷, architects such as Hermando Acosta Sanchez, Hermando Benincore Cortes, Juan Menendez, Yalmar Elsin Londono and Colombians (such as Cuellar, Serrano, Gomez & Cia), the latter of which would be of great importance in the years of the magazine's fourth series.

In general, these were projects of medium to high aesthetic quality, but with a low theoretical profile, and very much anchored in professionalism and the emerging International Style. Architects such as the Swiss Hans Hofmann (1897-1957), Marcel Portevin, Georges Goldber, Vischer, Herman Badr'Brauning Leu Durig; or French, such as Georges Massé (1907-1994), Jean Ginsberg (1905-1983) and M. A. Weber; Belgians, such as Jacques Dupuis (1914-1984), Auguste Van den Nieuwenborg (1933-1968) or R. Cartine. But also, Brazilians such as Ângelo Bruhns de Carvalho (1896-1975) or Albary Toledo and Anglo-Saxon architects such as Neutra, Rodney Walker (1910-1986), Hugh Asher Stubbins Jr. (1912- 2006), M. Stephenson and Turner.

The magazine also placed a certain emphasis on exhibitions, as early as August '48, with articles such as 'XLVI Annual Exhibition of the National Fine Arts Society', 'An Exhibition of Modern Decoration' (January '51) or 'The Exhibition of Missionary Sacred Art' (July '51). In fact, it was precisely architecture exhibitions that were one of the tangible novelties of the Green Years, and it was ODAM that was one of the most active organisations in this field along with the ICAT collective, organising exhibitions for almost six years and publishing texts whose aim, in the case of ODAM, was also to oppose many of the policies of the *Camara municipal do Porto*. In addition to criticising the low quality of some popular

⁷⁶ Marta Boneschi, *Poveri ma belli: I nostri anni Cinquanta* (Milan: Mondadori, 1995); Nicola Tranfaglia, *Crisi sociale e mutamento dei valori: L'Italia negli anni Sessanta e Settanta* (Torino: Tirrenia-Stampatori, 1989).

⁷⁷ José Manuel Pozo, Ignasi López Trueba, *Modelos alemanes e italianos para España en los años de la post-guerra* (Pamplona: T6, 2004).



housing projects, ODAM opposed the municipality's plan to prescribe an Oporto style for architects [Fig. 16]. Perhaps this excess of critical spirit led to the closure of ODAM in 1952, with its last exhibition being held in 1951 at the Ateneu Comercial do Porto. In 1952, it was ICAT's *Exposições Gerais de Artes Plásticas* that were closed by PIDE, *Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado*, i.e. the Portuguese political police.

Within this framework of political realignment, F. Távora, on his way to Venice for the international conference of UNESCO, published 'Architecture and Urbanism, the lesson of the constants' in the second issue of the cultural magazine *Lusíada* (1952). *Arquitetura portuguesa*, after the monographic issue on the Triennale, progressively ceased – in a somewhat schizophrenic move – any reference to the experiences related to the Italian reconstruction. After a few projects with a light tone, as in the March 1952 issue on the painter Modigliani and the Milan offices of Ippolito Malaguzzi Valeri's *Farmitalia* (1857-1905) and Gianluigi Giordani (1909-1979), the Portuguese periodical most historically linked to Gio' Ponti ceased any glance towards Milan and Rome. A country where the working class, more and more organized, active, had voted 36% to the Communist, 11% a Socialist party – whose symbol was a hammer and sickle –, and another 7% a Democratic Socialist party with the socialist son as its emblem. Reference to Italy were by now probably too connoted, putting Julio Martins in an uncomfortable situation, associating himself with third ways and political upheavals that were unbecoming to him. Martins therefore turned definitively towards the Atlantic and the Washington consensus, the CIAM of the Frigidaire's keepers and the formalities now prevailing among the Portuguese elites and ruling classes.

Arquitetura Portuguesa thus fully resumed its role as a conservative magazine linked to the government's cultural aspirations. In issue 167, for its 44th year (April '52), it was given a new graphic design with an aesthetic leap framed in the scenario of formal normalisation, of a modernist-corporatist stamp, towards

Fig. 16
A view of the city center of Porto, showcasing its diverse architectural styles (photo by Francesca Fagnano, 2004).

which the regime would move, hesitantly, in the context of the Atlantic Pact. But the change of trend also seemed to be a necessity, with the aim of adapting to the publishing market. The avant-garde graphics and 16x23 format were accompanied by a drastic reduction in the number of issues. No more explicit references to the compromise with national-populism appeared, although the Salazarist Júlio Martins remained in charge of the magazine.

For the first time since its foundation, the articles reached levels of quality and readability almost comparable to those of *Arquitectura*. Without, however, ever reaching it. A symptom of a context that was beginning to enrich and demand more even from a moderate, traditionalist and governmental periodical, but whose investigative articles remained superficial and politically controllable, avoiding theoretical in-depth analysis, rare when compared to its more cultured, critical and tendentious competitor.

Pieces with harmless and in some ways naively populist theoretical articulations, such as '*Por que é o povo arquiteto?*' [Why are the people the architect?] and surveys such as the one conducted over three years, in which professionals, artists, directors and middle management (but never the working class) were asked what they thought of Portuguese architecture. In order to avoid any theoretical, humanistic and political insight into the city, history and architecture, so to speak, the magazine chose to drown its pages in a confused and cheerful interdisciplinary manner. It distracted the reader from disciplinary matters in an air of joyful Breuerian freshness: photography, cinema, mathematics, mind maps, diagrams, painting, etc. This tactic was coupled with semblances of attention to the social, without bothering, *ça va sans dire*, historical materialism or class visions, with an American style sociologism. Gesticulations of a faux progressivism that in nothing determined a shift in the editorial political axis.

Although there was an apparent intellectualisation of the product, there seemed to be no cultural project. *Arquitectura portuguesa* seemed to seek an attractiveness and an existential reason that had been lost. Inadequate, in a framework in which the political bar was moving ever further to the left. The architectures proposed in this fourth series ranged from uncritical and flattened late-modernist and late-functionalist currents through corporate brutalism, winking at commercial and speculative building and passing through the formalisms of the American matrix. With the exception of a few sporadic articles, there was a total disregard for heritage, for history, for historic centres, for the urban, for questions of continuity and for architecture as an autonomous discipline and, ultimately, for Humanism. Historic centres whose complete destruction was proposed in many projects in typical *bruxellisation* operations. A paradox, considering the insistence with which the magazine sought the eternal essence of its national architecture.

The Portuguese projects published seemed to tend towards an adaptation to the growing diligence of Lusitanian architecture, responding to the intellectual alacrity of *Arquitectura* without, however, bothering with debates and Third

ways. Projects by architects such as Rogério Martins, José Rui Gomes Joaquim Bento d'Almeida (1918-1997) or Victor Manuel Catum, today fallen into relative oblivion. Professionals who corresponded to international formal cannons, but with limited theoretical depth. Little or nothing of what was happening in Oporto was disseminated.

Távora, in his participation in the Competition for the Architect's Diploma (CODA) in 1952, presented a House by the Sea in the Douro Mouth, where he resided, as the conclusion of his design process, revealing remote references to the styles of Breuer (1902-1981), with vague allusions to the imagery of the House by the Waterfall (1936-1939), the Canvas Weekend House (1933-1934) or, in some proportional aspects, the Tugendhat (1928-1930). However, the main links are to be found in a dwelling built in the very same year, to which the author could hardly have been forewarned, namely Bo Bardi (1914-1992) Glass House. The Casa no mar, scored 19/20, alas remaining at the project stage. Simultaneously, Távora inaugurated the residential structure at the mouth of the Douro (avenida do Brasil 136, Oporto, 1952)⁷⁸ and started planning for Ramalde. Regarding the latter, he shared a small episode that sheds light on the peculiar atmosphere that pervaded Portugal at the time, often bordering on the ridiculous:

[...] Ramalde's project was designed [...] with shadows. One day the director general of urbanization came to order them to be removed "because the minister will not approve it with shadows". For him, the shadows had a terribly Corbusian and modern meaning. [...]⁷⁹

However, 1953 seemed to be a watershed year for the architect's national and international visibility, with an apparent benevolence even from the New State. In fact, an early article on Távora's work was published in *Arquitectura portuguesa*, which seemed to contrast the more artificial modernist syntax embraced by her northern colleagues and many of the projects published in the magazine. *Arquitectura*, for its part, published a series of articles about – and written by – Le Corbusier: 'Letter from Le Corbusier to the architects of southern Africa' (April), 'The proportions of the ideal dwelling – Comparison between Palladio and Le Corbusier' (August); 'Chandigarh – Le Corbusier and the new capital of Pangjab' (October) and 'Housing units in Marseilles – Le Corbusier' (November). The latter building had recently been visited, in addition to Fernando Távora, by architects such as C. de Castro, F. Sanchez, R. Athouguia, N. Teotónio Pereira, J. Carlos Loureiro⁸⁰.

At the same time, perhaps the first major international event in architecture was coming to Lisbon with the 3rd Congress of the International Union of Architects and an exhibition on Brazilian architecture, along with photographs of modern Portuguese works such as the Quartier das Estacas, which was nearing completion in those months.

⁷⁸ "Bloco de habitações na Av. do Brasil", *Arquitectura*, no 71, (July 1961). 14.

⁷⁹ Frechilla, "Fernando Távora: Conversaciones en Oporto", 23.

⁸⁰ José Fernando de Castro Gonçalves, "Edifícios modernos de habitação colectiva-1948/61. Desenho e standard na arquitetura portuguesa" (PhD diss. UPC, 2007), 85.

In that turning point year, in which Távora celebrated his marriage with Dona Maria Luísa Rebelo De Carvalho Menéres (1930), the construction of the *Mercado Municipal de Santa Maria da Feira* was also started, which was completed in 1959 in the same place where his father was born.

Although other research projects saw the light in those years, the predominant design environment of the first Fifties could be summarized with what was the most popular architect in the magazines around '53-'54, reconciling both *Arquitectura* and its rival (and perhaps the regime as well): Neutra. The Austrian American author seemed to synthesise the ultimate response to the theme of the upper-class villa in *Estilo internacional*. An atmosphere that seemed to infect contemporary architectural projects, such as the mansion on the Costa da Caparica by Artur Pires Martins (1914-2000)⁸¹.

An international style reiterated in the confirmed interest of the 4th series of *Arquitectura portuguesa* towards Latin America, especially Argentina, Brazil and Colombia, with designers such as Roberto Burle Marx (1909-1994), Juan Kurchan (1913-1972), Jorge Ferrari-Hardoy (1914-1977), Charles Chen, E. Garcia, José Joaquín Angulo, L. Amurocho, L. I. Convers, A. O. Wills, C. Martinez. Experiences of *tropical-international* modernity, à la page, in authoritarian Latin American contexts and under US hegemony. Architectural landscape, therefore, which, despite appearances of techno-formal openness, remained asphyxiating.

Of that period – which was around '52-'53 –, of thirst for foreign and above all Italian periodicals, Siza himself, in an interview granted to me in 2004, rendered the idea in the following words:

That is. [...] Before, here, there was *Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*. And that's it! [...] when I was studying, when I started the course, and up to the middle of the course, it was *Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* and that's it! [...] Then *Domus*, *Controspazio* started to appear...⁸²

In this context of American openings that were more apparent than real, in a situation of exasperation of the New State with repeated returns to order, symptomatic was a journey that turned into an almost tragicomic myth, symbolizing the aspiration of so many Portuguese to leave the country's impermeable borders. The legendary escape to Italy of the artists Jorge Vieira (1922-98), Rolando Sá Nogueira (1921-2002) and the architect Duarte Castel-Branco (1927-2015) made, it is said, in a rickety Lambretta. Equally mythical was the return, in the same scooter, with, on board, materials, books, magazines and novelties – prohibited by censorship –, from the lively Italian workerist debate⁸³.

This was the setting, until the early years of the 1950s, in which Fernando Távora spent his formative years and launched his career. The *Anos Verdes*

81 "Casas de férias na Costa da Caparica, autoria arqs. Artur Pires Martins, Cândido Palma de Melo", *Arquitectura*, no. 64 (January-February 1959), 15-18.

82 Gregorio Carboni Maestri, private communication with Alvaro Siza Vieira (audiocassette recording 2004).

83 The materials from this famous journey were exhibited from 6 October 1999 to 2 January 2000 in the *Jorge Vieira, Homem-Sol* exhibition at the *Parque das nações*, Lisbon.



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were soon to blossom, and the *Inquérito* survey would serve as a catalyst for a transformative era in the Portuguese built environment. Távora's expeditions, while not involving a Lambretta, would also take on a mythical quality, characterized by both physical and intellectual journeys, including several to Italy. Like his fellow architecture students and colleagues, the countless unemployed workers who would soon emigrate, driven by the specter of hunger, or those who stayed, Távora remained resolutely committed to his homeland. Rather than succumb to apathy or bitter oikophobia, he embarked on a path of patient effort, weaving a tapestry of enduring cultural resistance, helping to found a school and, over the next two decades, standing shoulder to shoulder with millions of unsung compatriots as they embraced their own *25 Aprile*.

Dedicated to Jean-Louis Cohen.

Fig. 17
Auditorium of the Law Faculty of the University of Coimbra, designed by Fernando Távora: A view of the interior as it receives the final touches before its official opening (photo by Gregorio Carboni Maestri, 2001).

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