



10 [1857-1864], *Rua das Carmelitas*, Porto.
[1857-1864], *Carmelitas Street*, Porto.
Fotografia atribuída a Antero F. de Seabra
(coleção Nuno Borges de Araújo).

Roots and paths: Marques da Silva and 20th-century architecture

BETWEEN LOYALTY TO THE PAST AND THE URGENCY OF THE NEW

At the end of 19th century, Marques da Silva (1869-1947) completed his training as an architect at the *École Nationale et Spéciale des Beaux-Arts* in Paris, where he not only frequented the studio of Victor Laloux (1850-1937), but also showed great admiration for Ferdinand Dutert (1845-1906), even to the point of claiming him to be *his teacher*, as was to be made clearer later on.¹ These two Frenchmen were both architects engaged in intense professional activity, in a city that was alive with all manner of innovative large-scale projects, and Marques da Silva was to maintain close ties of loyalty with them throughout his life. In this way, his education in the canons of the *Beaux Arts* was augmented by a unique design-based experience that not only caused architects to revise the methodologies that they used for the conception and organisation of their production, but also led them to incorporate new techniques for dealing with the construction requirements of large-scale spaces. At the same time, architects were equipped with detailed functional programmes for mass use, and, above all, were able to share with the engineers a new multidisciplinary perspective of the architectural design. Paris, a cosmopolitan city and the epitome of modernity, established itself as the world centre of this new architecture; in 1900, Laloux was to inaugurate the *Gare d'Orsay*, which, at the dawn of the 20th century, stood as the hallmark of the new challenges now being placed before architecture and engineering. Challenges that were already clearly visible in 1889 in the *Galerie des Machines*, designed by the architect Ferdinand Dutert and the engineer Victor Contamin. Here, the metaphor of the building as a machine had never before been so literal², and it soon became the icon of the Paris Universal Exposition, together with the *Tour Eiffel*.

On his return from his stay in Paris, in 1896, he immediately dedicated himself to significant projects, such as the São Bento railway station (1896-1911)³, designed to give greater dignity to the rail service, with the arrival of the first

train in the centre of Porto taking place that same year, or the building of the workers' housing estate of "O Comércio do Porto" (1899), where he was faced with the serious problem of providing low-cost housing in the city, which was to become the central theme of 20th-century architecture.

The proposal that he presented for the São Bento station clearly demonstrates the firm conviction that he had at the beginning of his activity as an architect. On the one hand, this project included the technical challenges presented by the circulation of trains, the large number of passengers that they carried, and the problem of telecommunications. In sketch after sketch, the balance that he had to negotiate between monumentality and functionality ended up relegating to a secondary position the presence in the main façade of the metal structure designed to support the large glassed area that surrounded the platforms.⁴ On the other hand, the development of the project displayed his firm belief in *progress*, clearly expressed in the indispensable nature of this work, which led to the inevitable completion of the demolition of the Convento de São Bento de Avé Maria and its church, in order to redesign the *city center* in keeping with the new times.

Shortly after working on the centre of Porto, Marques da Silva designed the workers' housing estate of "O Comércio do Porto" in Monte Pedral, where he developed types of housing that derived from the contemporary international experiment of the Garden City,⁵ which he probably knew about through the European, and particularly French, debate taking place at that time. This project was a pioneering one in terms of low-cost housing in Porto, despite its reduced size and the fact that it had no direct repercussions on his body of work. It presented an innovative architectural solution for low-cost housing: in the domestic programme, the concern was with *health and hygiene issues*, while in the organisation of its volumes, he opted for a *quadripartite* and hierarchised joining together of houses. This solution, with its picturesque but somewhat unusual image, anticipated the question of the single-family house as the typological solution to the problem

¹ Marques da Silva suggested to the Portuguese authorities that they should award a decoration to Dutert, while at the same time the Count of Samodães proposed Laloux. CARDOSO, António, *O Arquitecto José Marques da Silva e a arquitectura no Norte do País na primeira metade do séc. XX*, (1992), Porto, FAUP Publicações, 1997, p. 42 and note 4.

² SARAIVA, Tiago, *Ciencia y Ciudad. Madrid y Lisboa, 1851-1900*, Madrid, Ayuntamiento de Madrid, Área de las Artes, 2005, p. 238.

³ In 1897, Marques da Silva exhibited the academic study "Une Gare Central" at the Porto Town Hall, a work that he had prepared in 1895-1896 in order to obtain his Architect's Diploma. From 1896 to 1897, he reformulated this work on his own initiative (a formal contract was signed for the preparation of the project in 1899), followed by countless alterations, which have been analysed in detail in the study by António Cardoso: CARDOSO, António, *Estação de S. Bento*, Porto, Instituto Arquitecto José Marques da Silva, 2007.

⁴ *Idem*.

⁵ In 1898, Ebenezer Howard published *Tomorrow, a Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, in which he questioned the development of the industrial city, proposing the solution to its greatest scourge, the problem of the housing of the working classes. This proposal, which was disseminated all around Europe, was known as the Garden City. Providing a continuation of the research and debate that had taken place in the second half of the 19th century, it was also the precursor of various solutions to the problem of housing, which, in the 20th century, were to be the driving force behind a new architecture, and especially behind the development of the Modern Movement in architecture.

6 As an example of this, one could mention António Cardoso's description of the lack of understanding with which the theme of his PhD thesis on Marques da Silva was received in academic circles (c. 1982), because of the fact that he was a 20th-century architect. Interviews with António Cardoso, conducted in Vila Nova de Gaia during 2009 and 2010. See also: DUBY, Georges, *A História Continua*, (1991), Porto, Asa, 1992.

7 FRANÇA, José-Augusto, "Prefácio", in *Arte em Portugal no Século XIX*, (1963), Lisbon, Bertrand, 1966, pp. 7-18.

8 PIZZA, Antonio, *La Construcción del Pasado: Reflexiones sobre Historia, Arte y Arquitectura*, Madrid, Celeste Ediciones, 2000.

9 SOLÁ-MORALES, Ignasi de, "Clasicismos en la arquitectura moderna", (1982), *Inscripciones*, Gustavo Gili, Barcelona, 2003, p. 145.

10 Tafuri and Dal Co adopt the expression Modern Classicism to identify this type of architecture.

TAFURI, Manfredo, DAL CO, Francesco, "Arquitectura Contemporánea", (1976), in Pier Luigi Nervi, *Historia Universal de la Arquitectura*, Madrid, Aguilar, 1978.

11 PIZZA, Antonio, *La Construcción del Pasado: Reflexiones sobre Historia, Arte y Arquitectura*, Madrid, Celeste Ediciones, 2000.

12 Modernity is a split phenomenon, marked by different understandings of the presence of the past. On this subject, see the work of Colin St. John Wilson, in particular:
WILSON, Colin St. John, "Gunnar Asplund and the dilemma of Classicism", in *Architectural reflections: studies in the philosophy and practice of architecture*, Butterworth Architecture, Oxford, 1994, pp. 138-155.
Idem, "The Historical sense: T. S. Eliot's concept of tradition, and its relevance to architecture", in *Architectural reflections: studies in the philosophy and practice of architecture*, Butterworth Architecture, Oxford, 1994, pp. 66-70.

13 ELIOT, T. S., "O que é um clássico?", (1945), in Maria Adelaide Ramos (ed.), *Ensaio Escolhidos*, Lisbon, Cotovia, 1992, pp. 129-146.

of low-cost housing, and, without denying the evident experimentalism of this project, it also guaranteed the participation of Marques da Silva in this debate, which had recently begun in the city and in the country as a whole.

The first activities of the young Marques da Silva were marked by his keen and assertive reconciliation of his Parisian lessons of modernity with the direction of a project, and, above all, with his interaction in the socio-cultural circles in which he wished to be recognised and live. This profound knowledge of both the larger world and the Porto context in which his clients were to be found, coupled with his recognition of the limits of each of them, enabled him to simultaneously maintain a relationship with the Parisian universe – where he had colleagues with whom he corresponded, from where he ordered books and catalogues and to where he returned on various occasions – and with the elite of Porto society, who were conservative in their behaviour and tastes, and who, while having a house in the city, dreamed of the pleasures of the countryside. While this dichotomy reveals the tension upon which modernity, and the Porto modernity in particular, was built (despite their obvious differences), it is also a feature that was clearly present in Marques da Silva's life and work as an architect in the 20th century.

in space, is seen to be inappropriate, leading to interpretations in which hybrid and sometimes contradictory phenomena emerge, in processes of continuity and not just ones of rupture, in series that are not always linear, and in which contexts and circumstances are decisive.

This is a proposal for study that, although it was first introduced into the Portuguese context by José-Augusto França only within the field of art history, has in fact guided international architectural research since the 1960s, when it was noted that the history of 20th-century architecture was a selective construction based on the unilateralism of the avant-garde, with the intention of justifying and disseminating their positions.⁸ Solà-Morales is completely clear about this question:

(...) the wish is to show that there is a clear discrepancy between the objectives formulated by the avant-garde — who, among other things, rejected the academic tradition understood as classicism — and the real programme of European and American architecture, which moved away from this tradition to a much lesser extent than these manifestos and programmes would have us believe.⁹

In this way, the work of Marques da Silva can be read beyond the academic canon of his training, which was characteristic of the decorative systems of the façades of his works, in order to focus on the substance of the spatial devices that he used, already viewed in terms of their rationality and functionality. This architecture, which displayed a continuity with the classical teachings, acknowledged its methodological traditions, while adopting a design-based guarantee in response to the new urban and constructive challenges that allowed it to be hybrid in its innovations.¹⁰

In interpreting Marques da Silva's work as a production of the 20th century, the modern is being considered, above all, as a series of controversies that followed different routes and strategies across the century. The acceptance of this amplitude makes it possible to interpret the impasses that we find in the repetition of

(and hesitation over) problems/solutions, in the classicism of the functionalist composition of architectural plans, and in the irregular hybrid design varying from work to work, not as constraints, but as a way of effectively implementing a profoundly developed modernity, demonstrating great tenacity in the design-based solution adapted to both the specific purposes of the work and the site itself. This position led to the widespread acceptance of his many years of work in different circumstances and at different historical moments.

The consideration of the modern architecture of the 20th century as a fixed and stable codification is an inappropriate one.¹¹ Opening it up to more comprehensive, and therefore more complex, readings, which include this generation of architects trained in Paris and other generations who remained on the fringes of the Modern orthodoxy – from Erik Gunnar Asplund (1885-1940) to José António Coderch (1913-1984) – makes it possible to take into account other areas of knowledge.¹² This other reading of the modern highlights certain aspects of its nature – seeing it as impure (contrary to the claims of the *avanguardia* movements), design-based (depending on a system of interactions) and polyphonic (involving the intersection and overlapping of different narratives).

Reflecting on this condition, by studying the work of Marques da Silva, makes it possible to arrive at different interpretations of Portuguese architecture from the first half of the 20th century. Observing its consequences implies the work of a cartographer, who, by successively redrawing maps, deals with the history of Portuguese architecture and with the history of others.¹³

A WORLD ARCHITECTURE

At the turn of the 19th to the 20th century, the architecture that spread across North and South America and Europe, from New York to Santiago do Chile, and from Paris to Istanbul, was marked by the desire for progress. This common aim, by being a reflection of the spirit of the time (an aspect that was stressed by the historiography of the period), derived, above all, from a common formative core that, based on the *Schools of Fine Arts*, on the teaching of the models of classicism and its historical cycles, had Paris as its central hub. This apparent paradox, between an academic training of continuity with the past and a professional practice geared towards guaranteeing a new project, working alongside engineers on functional programmes and rationalist buildings, came to demonstrate a fertile relationship between architectural debate and scientific research.¹⁴ In this relationship, architects, by not only dealing with relentless technological changes and design-based uncertainties, but also taking into account local circumstances, maintained their formative models as an unavoidable reference. The projects that resulted from such circumstances marked this period of western history, and cumulatively the 20th century, where new types of buildings redesigned the city, maintaining a surprising family-like quality that foreshadowed the development of a world architecture.¹⁵

The endurance of this set of values makes it possible for us to compare the works of architects that were quite distant from one another, such as the Chrysler Building in New York, by William Van Alen (1883-1954) and the São Bento Railway Station in Porto, by Marques da Silva (1869-1947), identifying, besides the same affiliations in terms of design and construction, the same method, based on compromise and hybridity, capable of innovating in response to the new functional programmes and construction systems. Despite their distinct solutions, not to mention their typological differences, these works reflect a definite aesthetics. For these two architects, amongst

14 PICON, Antoine,
*Architectes et ingénieurs au
siècle des lumières*, Marseille.
Parenthèses, 1988.

15 SILVA, Raquel Henriques
da, "Portugal 1900. Urbanismo e
Arquitetura", in Maria R.
Figueiredo (coord.), *Portugal
1900*, Lisbon, Fundação
Calouste Gulbenkian, 2000,
pp. 101-114.

DIAS, João Carvalho,
SARMENTO, Luísa (coord.),
*Evocações, passagens,
atmosferas: Pintura do Museu
Sakip Sabanci Istanbul*,
Lisbon, Fundação Calouste
Gulbenkian, 2007.

ÉPRON, Jean-Pierre,
Comprendre l'éclectisme,
Paris, Éditions Norma, 1997.

¹⁶ LECONTE, Marie–Laure, *Victor Laloux (1850–1935). L'architecte de la gare d'Orsay*, Paris, Editions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1987, p. 65.

¹⁷ SILVA, Raquel Henriques da, “Ventura Terra em contexto”, Ana Isabel Ribeiro (coord.), in Miguel *Ventura Terra: a arquitectura enquanto projecto de vida*, Esposende, Câmara Municipal de Esposende, 2006, pp. 11–29.

¹⁸ TAVARES, André, *O tráfico do moderno: Episódios da presença do betão armado nas estratégias de projecto dos arquitectos nos primeiros anos do século XX*, Livros 1, 2, 3 e tese, Porto, PhD Thesis in Architecture, FAUP, 2008.

¹⁹ SCHON, Donald A., *Displacement of Concepts*, Tavistock Publications, 1963.

²⁰ PINON, Pierre, “La Maison Turque”, in P. Saddy, C. Malécot (org.), *Le Corbusier: le passé à réaction poétique*, Paris, Caisse Nationale de Monuments Historiques et de Sites, 1988, pp. 165–173, as well as all the articles published here by different authors.

²¹ BURNS, Howard, “Una nueva arquitectura”, in Guido Beltramini, Howard Burns (eds.), *Palladio*, Fundación “la Caixa”, Turner, 2009, pp. 183–197.

And for a new historiography of Le Corbusier, particularly of his relationship with the classical and popular traditions, see the seminal works by:

ROWE, Colin, “The mathematics of the ideal villa”, *Architectural Review*, March, 1947.

MOOS, Stanislaus von, *Le Corbusier: Elements of a Synthesis*, (1968), Rotterdam, 010 Publishers, 2009.

²² SMITH, Anthony D., *National Identity*, Penguin Books, 1991.

²³ FIGUEIREDO, Rute, *Arquitectura e Discurso Critico em Portugal (1893-1918)*, Lisbon, Colibri, 2007.

many others, such as Ventura Terra (1866-1919), their apprenticeship and training had its central base in Paris, where all of those mentioned in this example frequented the studio of Laloux, the true international centre for the dissemination of a way of creating and thinking about the architectural design, through which there passed “more than 600 pupils, of which a hundred or so were Americans”.¹⁶

As a response to new paradigms, architecture was confronted with new dimensions. Not only those of the planned spaces, such as the great naves of railway stations and exhibition pavilions or the *grands magasins* and office buildings, but also the new dimension of its *modus operandi*, which had now become a collaborative professional practice undertaken in association with other technicians and specialists. This attitude, essential for guaranteeing the contracts of the *great works*,¹⁷ and which was already questioning the traditional organisation of work, placed the development of the project in a multidisciplinary international domain, open to the exchange of information and experiences, and based on the increasing mobility of its actors within an ever larger geographical space.¹⁸ The passage of the vital space of architectural creativity from a localist culture to a cosmopolitan culture – or, in other words, not recognising any limit or difference between countries – is known to have been the generator of *another* architecture, practised by Marques da Silva or Ventura Terra, in keeping with the dictates of art, technique and the emerging social practices that were beginning to shape modernity.

This displacement of concepts, which has been evoked here as taking place between distinct cultural spaces, and which also means between different contexts, was considered by Donald Schon to be one of the most sensitive and productive procedures in the analysis of creative processes.¹⁹ Putting forward this hypothesis makes it possible to interpret the projects of these architects as a way of transferring the materials that they had gathered from other contexts to the specific setting of their own work. This transfer, studied by Pierre Pinon and Alan Colquhoun, in the work of Le Corbusier,²⁰

or by Howard Burns, in Palladio,²¹ makes it possible for us to understand, through the use of the Corbusian concept of *collection particulière*, how the personal collection of material and immaterial objects was available to be called upon in response to new design-based situations. These elements were to emerge on the architect’s drawing board as points of support for the work, reshaping his architectural culture... and his project... and taking it to another dimension, one that was no longer imprisoned only within a local context.

In the first years of the 20th century, this transfer to the project of elements coming from different origins was imbued with cosmopolitanism, with a way of looking at the world and seeing in it the urgency of *progress* as an answer to the problems that affected life in the city – the networks of infrastructures underground, public equipment, transport and telecommunications, the new centralities and low-cost housing. Under such circumstances, architecture was to propose other scales and programmes, new constructive and typological solutions that, by opening themselves up to experimentalism, were increasingly invaded by an abstract sense of universal design, dictated by the rationalist and functionalist analysis of projects. Railway stations, high schools, theatres or new shopping precincts, of which Marques da Silva’s work is an example, transformed the western city through homologous processes in terms of design and social practices, while still providing a continuation with the old city. This leading role in transforming the city was to be appropriated by *avant-garde* movements in the ensuing decades, in a cycle of increasing mutations that would lead to profound ruptures with the past.

However, perhaps the most revolutionary attitude of these architects and of Marques da Silva himself was their rejection of all the different forms of provincialism that were characteristic of this time of transition from one century to another, a problematics that was to be associated with the question of national identity in architecture and with the politics that sustained it.²² The architecture that they practised had Parisian and internationalist

roots, and was sometimes referred to as a “foreign mixture”; it represented an aesthetic and ethical barrier to the pressure exerted by the nationalist debate that was taking place in Europe and Portugal, which made the counterproposal of an architecture with a regional and then parochial vocation, influenced by the variations of the *Picturesque*.

This position is central in Marques da Silva’s work. In Porto, unlike Lisbon, where the specialist periodicals of that time were published, stimulating a rather low-level architectural debate about the “foreign” architectures and then about the “Portuguese house”, that theme was ignored. Even though Ricardo Severo (1869-1940) built his house – a manifesto of Portugueseness – in Porto (1904), even though Rocha Peixoto (1866-1909), a researcher who undertook fieldwork studying the popular Portuguese house, analysed it as an incoherent corollary of styles, and even though it was in Porto that Joaquim de Vasconcelos worked, the first person to treat the popular arts as part of the Portuguese artistic tradition, the debate on identity and everything that it represented took place in the south. While, in Lisbon, Ventura Terra was debating with Raul Lino the problem of the “Portuguese house”,²³ defending the complete typological unsuitability of the single-family house as the answer to the problem of accommodation and its serious urban dimension²⁴,Marques da Silva, in Porto, seems to have ignored this question and others, not because of a lack of knowledge, but because he found this matter irrelevant for his design-based work and for the architectural debate since *this was not architecture*, and also, possibly, because he did not have any interlocutors.

The position of these architects and, concretely, of Marques da Silva, backed up by his training and his way of looking at the world, was one of disciplinary resistance, which did not mean avoiding negotiation and compromise. By being from Porto, this allowed him to *consider his own culture in the great context of the supranational history of its art*.²⁶

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PLACE

The cosmopolitan aspect of this architecture must not be allowed to detract from the importance of the place, which intervenes as a determinant factor, not only in its design, but also in the way in which we look at it.

In order to interpret the architecture of modernity, in which we wish to include the work of Marques da Silva and of those who had the same design-based affiliations as he did in Portugal, we must look closely at the hard core that unifies works that were produced in different times and places, besides the variability of the design, as, for example, between classicism and modernism. Not only does this mean understanding the Parisian academic training of the first architects of the 20th century, but also noting the tensions that this training was subject to, especially in regard to the place where it was put in practice. These tensions are decisive for our understanding the process of a project in the geographical space where it was received and for interpreting its meaning,²⁷ which in the case of Marques da Silva and in Porto became vital for establishing a firmly founded architecture. This disciplinary and socially committed solidity allowed him to play an active role, beginning immediately after his arrival from Paris, displaying multi-faceted and pragmatic capabilities in the reconstruction of the centrality of Porto. The list of his main projects and works built until the 1920s, such as the São Bento Railway Station (1896), the Porto High School (1902), the Four Seasons building (1905), São João Theatre (1909), the Monument to the Heroes of the Peninsular Wars (1909), the Nascimento Department Store (1914), the Alexandre Herculano High School (1914), the Rodrigues de Freitas High School (1918), the A Nacional building (1919) and the “Conde de Vizela” building/block (1920) demonstrate the full range and extent of his involvement. If one maps out the cartography of his works around the city, it is immediately possible to understand that his total (social, professional and architectural) involvement was supported by his firm belief that reforms of this nature would lead to the city’s transformation. In some cases, his works were major interventions in themselves,

because of their size and significance. Not only did they generate new infrastructure, but they also reshaped the urban fabric, demolishing the Porto downtown area and opening it up for the introduction of new functionalities. At the same time, he also undertook smaller, but no less important projects. He built countless single-family houses for the Porto bourgeoisie and took part in other works, not always completed, but highly significant for defining the full range of his social influence. Such an enterprising spirit enabled him to successfully manage both his current and future clients, as has been clearly shown by the research carried out by António Cardoso,²⁸ who draws attention to his participation, as early as 1898, in designing works and issuing opinions for the Associação Comercial do Porto, the Irmandade de Cedofeita, and, in 1904, his work as an architect for the city council.²⁹

These interventions made in the urban fabric, adding continuity to the old city, were expressed in a hybrid form of architecture dictated by his pragmatism and his fond attachment to the place, sometimes with a historicist streak. As we shall see, in the case of Marques da Silva, this did not lead to any theoretical dilemmas or problems in terms of design. In their different ways, the projects that he designed for the A Nacional building, the “Conde de Vizela” building/block and the (unbuilt) proposal made for the Lyceu Central do Porto are all examples of this.

The office building designed for the A Nacional insurance company (1919), situated on a corner whose volume was highly accentuated with a turret, had a composition and exterior decorative system that had their origins in the *beaux arts*, although this did not prevent Marques da Silva from proposing a functional and rational space for the interior. The organisation of the building’s interior was adapted to the needs of the modern office, where people circulated by means of galleries and bridges, which crossed over the empty central space with a quadruple ceiling height and zenithal illumination, connected to one another by means of a transparent lift with a surrounding staircase, aspects that openly

²⁴ RAMOS, Rui Jorge Garcia, “Modernity in the Domestic Architecture of Raul Lino and Ventura Terra at the beginning of the 20th Century”, available at http://hdl.handle.net/10216/21345.

²⁵ On several occasions, Raul Lino showed an opposite idea to this one, although it was nonetheless similar in its formulation: the Modern building is only a construction, so it is not architecture.

²⁶ FEIJÓ, António, “Um feixe de humanidades”, in António Feijó (curator), *Weltliteratur. Madrid, Paris, Berlin, S. Petersburgo, o mundo!*, Lisbon, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 2008.

²⁷ SAID, Edward W., “Reconsiderando a teoria itinerante”, (1994), Manuela Ribeiro Sanches (ed.), *Deslocalizar a Europa: Antropologia, Arte, Literatura e História na Pós-Colonialidade*, Lisboa, Cotovia, 2005, pp. 25–42.

²⁸ CARDOSO, António, *O Arquitecto José Marques da Silva e a arquitectura no Norte do País na primeira metade do séc. XX*, (1992), Porto, FAUP Publicações, 1997.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 124

demonstrate the use of reinforced concrete. It is the same design for the use of space as the one that can be found in present-day office buildings. However, none of these aspects in any way lessens the impact of its location on the western corner of the beginning of Avenida dos Aliados,³⁰ which, in a drawing from 1919, Marques da Silva had already presupposed would be symmetrical with what was to become another of his projects, the Joaquim Pinto Leite building (1922), where the Bank of London & South America was to be housed in 1930.³¹ Marques da Silva’s involvement in the project was exemplary, both from the point of view of the organisation of the building’s programme and in terms of the urban circumstances of the new avenue. He thoroughly understood the problems that would have to be faced, which always enabled him to develop a design-based negotiation that was capable of linking together apparently contradictory situations with a certain degree of pragmatism. In this way, the hybridity of his architecture became a distinguishing feature of his projects. Tradition and progress might best describe the multiple tensions to be noted in this and similar projects that he worked on, calling upon him to exercise his disciplinary, cosmopolitan and Parisian³² capacity to build a new city by adjusting the architecture to the place and, in parallel, to the needs of those who ran it.

In 1920, Marques da Silva directed the building works for the complex operation of constructing the Bairro das Carmelitas.³³ (figs. 3 and 4). As mentioned by António Cardoso, at that time he was also working on the building in Rua Conde de Vizela, which occupied the whole block, with an ambitious programme of shops and offices. Marques da Silva’s drawings for the extensive building/ block not only afforded unity to the design of the façade, but above all established a very strong rationality in the organisation of the floor plan. This organisation sprang from the regularity of the dimension of the shop front, accentuated by the use of cross walls, which, by modulating the whole floor plan, allowed for the exceptions corresponding to the entrances to the upper floors and the finishing touches to the corners. But the location of this project

enabled him to afford a substantially different treatment to each of the façades, which by being subordinated to the symmetrical arrangement of the floor plans, consisted of decorated stone facing Rua Cândido dos Reis, and of concrete with plain stone masonry covered with white paint³⁴ facing Rua do Correio (today Rua Conde de Vizela). Since it is a side street, this latter façade is completely devoid of decoration, which does not detract from its classical references and material, since it displays a regular geometry in its doors and windows and structural elements, which made it a unique example in the 1920s. In this case, the importance of the place also made it possible to see confrontation and pragmatism, by adjusting the solution to the expectations of the client and, certainly, also of the architect, demonstrating the possibilities of the design’s hybridity.

In the last example, Marques da Silva’s 1902 design for the Porto Central High School, one can once again notice how he engages in a study of model solutions, only to submit them, immediately afterwards, to the circumstances of his work.³⁵ (fig. 5 and 6). The plot of land on which this High School was to be implanted, situated in Rua do Triunfo in Porto (today Rua Dom Manuel II), had a very irregular perimeter, which called for an interpretation of the models that he had studied of regular floor plans in order to adapt them for the implementation of a trapezoidal design, while still maintaining the essential legibility of the original.³⁶ The work undertaken on this problem of form/deformation,³⁷ which was a common feature in design-based architectural practice, already appeared amongst the themes of his academic production for examination purposes (fig. 7), namely with the project for *Une Cité dans un quartier riche et élégant* (1894). This switching between international examples, academic practices and the adaptation of the design to the site enabled Marques da Silva to engage in a reflection about the architectural plan as a spatial device that gives shape to a pedagogical process, providing knowledge and the indispensable experience necessary for the realisation of the project and the building work, in Porto, for the Alexandre Herculano High School (1914) and the Rodrigues de Freitas High School (1918).

In these examples, it is possible to recognise the use of the architectural drawing with great malleability – an essential resource for the *art of projecting* – which also allowed Marques da Silva to reflect on the place and its circumstances. This skill cannot be dissociated from what was one of the keys to the system of an education in the *Beaux-Arts* and consequently to the influence of such an education in the 20th century: a design-based method that “is not originally constructed through a vocabulary of forms, but rather through a process of thinking”.³⁸

By being structured within the inherited classical tradition, as well as being based on a knowledge of history, this design-based capacity enabled him to interpret not only the circumstances of the places where he intervened, but also the social expectations of those who commissioned the work in terms of the response that was required by the new programmes. In the case of Marques da Silva, this link between action and work, which was common in the practice of his time, displayed an importance of the place that needs to be stressed, since it opened up another hypothesis about the meaning of classicism at the beginning of the 20th century in Portugal.

Raising this hypothesis implies that the theoretical knowledge acquired by Marques da Silva in the broad context of his academic training had to be transferred to the local context of interference with his work. Observing this movement, Edward W. Said drew attention to the fact that the historic moment when certain theories appeared is not the only aspect to be considered, nor is it the only one whose impact needs to be determined; instead, he stressed the importance of what he calls *travelling theory*.³⁹ In the particular case of architects such as Marques da Silva, and the training and experience that they gained in Paris and their later work, this observation about the journeys taken by theories, through time and space, allows us to state that, while an identical training can result in an identical work, it was the art of constructing on a certain site and the particular circumstances under which the design was negotiated that marked Marques da

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- ³⁰ Ibid., pp. 251-260.
- ³¹ Ibid., p. 272
- ³² The awareness of his Parisian training was markedly disciplinary and cosmopolitan, as can be seen in his 1916 criticism of Barry Parker’s project for Avenida dos Aliados. This proposal transposed the ideas of English picturesqueness to the design of the avenue in Porto, which, according to António Cardoso, Marques da Silva considered to be “mediaeval in nature, of a kind that cannot be applied to the grandeur of our customs and to the progress that modern locomotion demands”. Ibid., p. 253.
- ³³ Ibid., p. 288
- ³⁴ Ibid., p. 288
- ³⁵ In local observations, undertaken with different specialists, determining the exact nature of these materials is a difficult task. However, there exists a general consensus about this hypothesis, which can only be proved by boring holes.
- ³⁶ In the library and its collection of journals, it is possible to see how he highlighted with marker pens the published projects related with his work.
- ³⁷ BORIE, Alain, MICHELONI, Pierre, PINON, Pierre, *Forme et déformation des objets architecturaux et urbains*, (1978), Paris, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, 1984.
- ³⁸ ZANTEN, David Van, “Le Système des Beaux-Arts”, *L’Architecture d’Aujourd’hui*, nº 182, 1975, p. 96. Quoted by Gonalo Canto Moniz in *Arquitectura e Instruo*, p. 62.
- ³⁹ SAID, Edward W., “Reconsiderando a teoria itinerante”, (1994), Manuela Ribeiro Sanches (ed.), *Deslocalizar a Europa: Antropologia, Arte, Literatura e Histria na Ps-Colonialidade*, Lisbon, Cotovia, 2005, pp. 25-42.

Silva’s own work in a singular way. Thus works and designs, just like theories, travel and find their own safe harbour to dock in. By being confronted with other elements, reacting to them and remaining in a state of tension, they find the conditions for their full and definitive implementation, linked to the moment and the place to which they will henceforth belong.

This occurrence, observed at the beginning of the 20th century, makes it possible to go beyond the idea that these works, imbued with classicism ever since the training of their authors, were mere precursors of a Modern architecture that had not yet been implemented, and to claim that they already displayed their profound modern dimension. This interpretation that is now being proposed allows us to question the concept of Modern culture, already mentioned here, and raised by the historiography of the first half of the 20th century. Accepting his internationalist and simultaneously local affinities, recognising the pragmatism of his management of these projects without renouncing his erudite training in the classical tradition, as we note in the case of Marques da Silva, makes it possible for us to recognise the universalist irrelevance of the Modern at the dawn of the 20th century – an aspect that was only fully reconsidered by the history and criticism of architecture in the 1960s. This interpretation allows us to accept modern culture as a permanent tension of times and places, and therefore as something impure, process-based and polyphonic, which, by opening up another narrative from this period, contributes to another history, a *social history of architecture* in the 20th century.⁴⁰

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- ⁴⁰ The definition proposed by Dana Arnold is adopted here: the history of architecture as a dialectic between different epistemologies, not seen from a chronological and progressive perspective, but from an idea of a convergence of co-existing readings from architecture and social history. This proposal had already been made by Jos-Augusto Frana in 1963, when he stated, in his “Preface” to the history of 19th-century art, that the present work “thus dares to present itself, in the domain which it covers, as a possible pointer to a cultural anthropology of the Portuguese 19th century — and through this to a total knowledge of the same century.” This led him to conclude, in the same text, that “its elucidation could not come from anything other than a multidisciplinary work, only effectively achieved in a joint vision of the conclusions of studies undertaken in other cultural domains and in other historical series.” And he ended by commenting: “Which it is still early for us to be able to do in Portugal.”
- FRANA, Jos-Augusto, *Op. cit.*, p. 13 and p. 17.

DILEMMA-FREE

The 19th-century architect, trained in the *beaux arts*, flitted between different styles from the past in order to form an eclectic repertoire that was consistent with his culture. According to the common historiography of this period, the basis for this hybrid repertoire can be observed between a *historical style*, a reproduction of a code that was perfectly located in time, and a *19th-century style*, resulting from the rearrangement/sum of the parts drawn together from different codes. In this way, the architect was confronted with a dilemma of which style to adopt, knowing that this had to satisfy tradition and the canons of beauty, while, at the same time, seeking to be *appropriate* to the building that was being designed.⁴¹ Or, in other words, the architect was confronted with the choice of a style, an expression of artistic individuality, but above all of an architecture that was representative of the socio-cultural, political and economic aspirations of the world to which he belonged. Architecture is essentially a symbolic language in which one does not see any reflection of utilitarian aspects. Thus topics such as programme and function would be irrelevant in the conception of this architecture or, as Robin Evans⁴² points out, they would not be observed in the terms that they were to acquire in modern times, an aspect that is confirmed in the manuals and periodicals published at that time.

The alteration of this understanding of the architectural practice, in the transition to the 20th century, marked the acceptance of one of the paradigms of modern culture: effectiveness. This was a lengthy, polyhedral, and certainly non-substitutive process, in which there coexisted different ways of doing things, but where the urgency of other design-based practices was also imposed by the circumstances that were woven together in a time of change. By using *iron* and *concrete*, the architectures that were produced at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, but also the domestic architecture that followed the pattern of *English free architecture* and the *Picturesque*,⁴³ in the country house for example, called into question the classical order and

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- ⁴¹ CROOK, J. Mordaunt, *The Dilemma of Style: Architectural Ideas from the Picturesque to the Post-Modern*, The University of Chicago Press, 1987.
- ARNOLD, Dana (ed.), *Reading architectural history*, Routledge, 2002.
- ⁴² EVANS, Robin, “Figures, Doors and Passages”, (1978), in *Translations from Drawing to Building and Other Essays*, London, Architectural Association, 1997, pp. 55-91.
- ⁴³ SCULLY, Vincent, *The Shingle Style & the Stick Style*, (1955), Yale University Press, 1971.
- WATKIN, David, *The English Vision: The Picturesque in Architecture, Landscape & Garden Design*, London, John Murray, 1982.

^[44] FRANÇA, José-Augusto, *op. cit.*

^[45] COSTA, Lucília Verdelho da, *Ernesto Korrodi 1889-1944*, Lisbon, Estampa, 1997.

^[46] The same idea can be inferred from the “Final Note” to the history of *A Arte em Portugal no Século XX* by José-Augusto França, published in 1974, and from the research work that Rute Figueiredo has undertaken into architecture and critical discourse in the transition to the 20th century, or, more recently, from the writings of Paulo Pereira and João Pinharanda.

^[47] PEREIRA, Paulo, *2000 anos de arte em Portugal*, Lisbon, Temas e Debates e Autores, 1999, p. 319.

^[48] MILHEIRO, Ana Vaz, *A Construção do Brasil: Relações com a cultura arquitectónica portuguesa*, (2004), Porto, FAUP Publicações, 2005, p. 135.

^[49] *Idem.*

^[50] In exactly the same way, Pedro Vieira de Almeida considers that the activities of the young architect Raul Lino found a favourable terrain, at the time of his return to Portugal, at the dawn of the 20th century, after his training in Germany.

its styles as a factor determining the design of buildings and acknowledged the need for other attributes that characterised the space, in order to achieve greater effectiveness, ones that were better suited to other forms of life and use. If, first of all, this suitability was, more than anything, visual in nature, it would later imply the transformation of the built space through an adjustment to the programme, function, construction and use of the building.

While, in the 19th century, architectural culture was characterised by the dilemma of the choice of style, as a formal problem calling for an erudite and critical debate on the suitable adaptation of architecture to its purposes, the Portuguese question at the beginning of the 20th century was much more complex, defining what we consider to be its peculiarity. The transition to the 20th century in Portugal, in the field of architecture, presented particular signs that softened the impact of the dilemma, or even eliminated it altogether, either voluntarily or involuntarily, in view of the limited socio-cultural conditions for the commissioning, as well as for the enjoyment and criticism of the arts in general.^[44] The existence of this situation allows us to put forward the hypothesis of there being a dual singularity in the architectural production of this period, and particularly so in the case of Marques da Silva, but also in the work of Ventura Terra. One singularity had to do with the process of Portuguese architecture in the first half of the 20th century, while the other was related to the European context of that time.

Above all else, it is important to rapidly observe the context in which the work of these architects was received, as well as the general state of Portuguese architectural production at this point of changing from one century to another.

For Lucília Verdelho da Costa, it was in the limitations of the commission – and of the commissioner – of the architectural work that one was to find the reasons for its submission to debatable criteria of taste, far removed from the erudite dilemmas of style, as debated in international architectures, with the client’s satisfaction being regarded as a condition for the very survival of the architects themselves.^[45]

Together with this situation, it is also significant to note the absence of the appropriate instruments for a culturally broad reflection on architectural production, namely the absence of a creditable historiography of national architecture^[46] and of a criticism that, by not accompanying the professional practice of the architect, was to obscure the adoption of styles that arbitrarily presented themselves.

This situation described in the field of architecture is the inevitable reflection of the socio-cultural fabric that formed the backdrop to the 19th century in Portugal, which, without going into great detail about the subject, was to extend into the mid-20th century. This aspect is referred to by Paulo Pereira as a decisive factor in determining the specificity of the new century and ultimately for its understanding:

(...) the 19th century maintained its epochal flavour until quite late on. The progress brought by the belated and rather timid espousal of the industrial revolution seemed to be nothing more than a merely promotional importation that was not expressed in any fundamental change in the county’s essentially rural make-up. In the arts, traditionalism and conservatism were so heavily ingrained and inducive of inertia that it can safely be stated that the basic features of the 19th-century taste at the level of art education and consumption remained unchanged until roughly 1960... The 19th century was, in fact, the longest century in Portuguese history.^[47]

Various recent studies have confirmed this scenario, amongst which is the one written by Ana Vaz Milheiro, for whom the Portuguese situation “was an adjustment, which was linked to the 20th century (...),”^[48] a “permanent but unsustainable importation, incapable of recreating a formal repertoire that could establish an effective framework for the projection of a national culture and identity.”^[49]

It was in this Portuguese scenario that the architects trained in Paris, and, above all, Marques da Silva and Ventura Terra, found favourable terrain for affirming their ideals.^[50] The pragmatism of their response to these circumstances gave rise to the resolute

functionalism already referred to, and was realistically adapted to the lack of means and resources and the need to import them, as well as to the absence of any critical and in-depth examination of the question, all of which enabled them to overcome the dilemma of style. By taking them beyond the earlier stylistic problem that was characteristic of the 19th century, this aspect afforded them a freedom in the implementation of their projects that was unusual at that time, both nationally and internationally, making it possible for them to adopt a modern approach to the problems of architecture; or, in other words, it allowed for a form of architecture that distanced itself from the obsessive concentration of the styles that were to be adopted. Free of any such dilemmas, this architecture showed itself to be available to deal, above all, with the programmatic and functional aspects, acknowledging the hybrid nature of its design and construction as a necessary condition for its execution, in keeping with a cosmopolitan and progressist vision.

This hybrid or protomodern architecture was, tenuously but significantly, opposed to architectures of a historicist nature, which clung to the superiority of styles for the realisation of an *eloquent* work. It was, in fact, already dominated by rationalist values, albeit sometimes furtive ones, which were to dictate the paths to be followed by modern architectures over the ensuing decades.

This hypothesis questioned the historiography of the first half of the 20th century, which, by conferring upon this architecture the attribute of its being *conservative* and obedient to the dictates of the *beaux arts*, unmistakably sought to attribute a major role to the avant-garde movements of the 1920s. But, while the productions of Marques de Silva or Ventura Terra were distanced from this reading, as we have sought to demonstrate, it was similarly not the task of the avant-garde movements to assume sole responsibility for the progressist vision with which the modern movements were associated. Historically, this role of dissemination was to be performed by works and authors, as has been shown by the research carried out in the last decades of the 20th

century, which has also made it possible to note in this same process the importance of continuities as opposed to ruptures.

In the architectures of Marques da Silva or Ventura Terra, if we examine possible ruptures with previous spatial conceptions, such as the one motivated by the functionalist urgency in the response to the new programmes, we find that what did, however, make it possible for them to challenge their own limits was their design-based and disciplinary solidity, promoted by an interpretation of tradition that was wisely and knowingly continued. In Portugal, in the first decades of the 20th century, such a posture was singularly modern.

By overcoming the stylistic problem of the 19th century, and by opening up their work to the new times and the new formal territories, these architects displayed a modern availability that consequently would not be taken to any deeper level. Here, we note a Portuguese structural difficulty, already highlighted by José-Augusto França,^[51] which was to mark the identity of the Portuguese architecture produced by the following generations.^[52] This way of doing things in a modern style, observed in the work of architects such as Marques da Silva and Ventura Terra, did not accompany the debate and the international experience centred in Germany and France, nor could it even do so. And nor were the national elites sufficiently aroused as to be aware of the need to do this. This situation was to have inevitable consequences. Because of the reasons already discussed, the work of Cristino da Silva (1896-1976), Rogério de Azevedo (1899-1983) and Carlos Ramos (1897-1969), amongst others, was not supported by any theoretical or critical in-depth examination of the situation and of the respective cultural necessity, so that it encountered conditions that favoured an oscillation between a modern and non-modern production (or any other kind of production, for that matter), as pointed out by Manuel Botelho when examining the 1940s:

It is not therefore surprising to discover uncertainties about the direction to be followed in the formal research of some architects,

where the contents of the new architecture was diluted in the dialectics of appearances; nor is it surprising that the design-based approach could not be based on anything other than individual capacity, being dependent on personal talents of imagination and invention, capable of transforming the isolated testimony into a collective message; nor, furthermore, is it surprising that architectural research was situated within the traditional concept of the architectural object: metahistorical, a symbolic and metaphysical object seen as a completed and unrepeatable work.^[53]

Despite its not being an original feature in the process of Portuguese architecture,^[54] this question would continue to characterise it in different ways until the 1960s,^[55] and, as we shall see, it was to have widespread repercussions on the definition of our identity.

^[51] FRANÇA, José-Augusto, *op. cit.*

^[52] Cf. COSTA, Alexandre Alves, “Arquitectura Portuguesa”, *Vértice*, série II, nº 8, Lisbon, 1988, pp. 105-107; *Idem*, “Cem anos entre razão e gosto” [Prefácio], in Gonçalo Canto Moniz, *Arquitectura e Instrução: O projecto Moderno do Liceu 1836-1936*, Edições do Departamento de Arquitectura da FCTUC, Coimbra, 2007, pp. 11-17.

^[53] BOTELHO, Manuel, “Os anos 40: A ética da estética e a estética da ética”, *RA*, nº 0, Revista da FAUP, Porto, 1987, pp. 7-10.

^[54] Cf. COSTA, Alexandre Alves.

^[55] *Ibid.* See also: TOSTÕES, Ana, *Os Verdes Anos na Arquitectura Portuguesa dos Anos 50*, (1994), Porto, FAUP Publicações, 1997.

RAMOS, Rui Jorge Garcia, *A casa: Arquitectura e projecto doméstico na primeira metade do século XX português*, Porto, FAUP Publicações, 2010.

^[56] COSTA, Alexandre Alves, “Cem anos entre razão e gosto” [Prefácio], in Gonçalo Canto Moniz, *Arquitectura e Instrução: O projecto Moderno do Liceu 1836-1936*, Edições do Departamento de Arquitectura da FCTUC, Coimbra, 2007, p. 11.

^[57] CARDOSO, António, *op. cit.*

^[58] COSTA, Alexandre Alves, *op. cit.*

PATHS

Many people have considered the architecture of the beginning of the 20th century to be a direct consequence of the *Beaux Arts* system. Although this line of ancestry is important, as we have seen, it must be put into perspective; in other words, it must be placed in direct confrontation with the always wide-ranging and complex conditions under which the project and the work were produced, revealing a linear and biased reading of history that, in the Portuguese case, narrows the possibilities of interpretation. Alexandre Alves Costa refers to this very subject:

Traditional Portuguese historiography has always vacillated between the consideration that in Portugal everything is done just as well or even better than in Europe and the regret that we cannot find any real striking values of our production. It has bypassed the confirmation of unmistakable signs of our identity and therefore has not found reasons in it, nor even its own methods.^[56]

Recent research into this period, most notably the studies undertaken about Marques da Silva, published after the seminal work of António Cardoso,^[57] or, in a broader sense, about the re-examination of modernity, has reinforced the crucial significance, not just of the *importance of the place* or the *absence of a dilemma*, as has already been mentioned, but also of aspects that underline the continuity of Portuguese architecture over many centuries observed by Alexandre Alves Costa.^[58] Yet there is also the internationalist aspect of being available to modern culture – in other words, to a non-provincial culture. The conjugation of these aspects, in the first two decades of the 20th century, marks one of the most pertinent singularities of 20th-century Portuguese architecture.

However, while the beginning of the 20th century in this way, observed through the works of Marques da Silva or Ventura Terra, did not find its modern flow being deepened by the following generations, as we mentioned when discussing the previous topic, this cannot be understood as a failure of the *modern project*, nor even as

59 RAMOS, Rui Jorge Garcia, “Ser moderno em 1900: a arquitetura de Ventura Terra e Raul Lino”, in *Caminhos e identidades da modernidade: 1910, o Edifício Chiado em Coimbra*, Coimbra, Câmara Municipal de Coimbra, 2010, pp. 15–31.

60 CALDAS, João Vieira, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

61 RODRIGUES, José Miguel Neto, *O mundo ordenado e acessível das formas da arquitectura: tradição clássica e movimento moderno na arquitectura portuguesa: dois exemplos*, PhD thesis in architecture presented at FAUP, Porto, 2006. [photocopied]. See also: WILSON, Colin St. John, “Gunnar Asplund and the dilemma of Classicism”, (1992), in *Architectural reflections: studies in the philosophy and practice of architecture*, Butterworth Architecture, Oxford, 1994, pp. 138-155.

62 RODRIGUES, José Miguel Neto, *op. cit.*

63 SUMMERSON, John, *The Classical Language of Architecture*, (1963), London, Thames and Hudson, 1988.

64 *Ibid.*, p.4.

65 My thanks to Eliseu Gonçalves, who drew my attention to this hypothesis, which he went into in great detail in his research, in relation to the transition to the 20th century.

66 GUADET, Julien, *Éléments et théorie de l'architecture: cours professé à l'École nationale et spéciale des beaux-arts*, 4 volumes, Paris, Librairie de la construction moderne, Aulanier et C., Éditeurs, s.d. [1894].

67 What is a classical architecture? For a wide-ranging explanation, see the discussion of this idea and its genesis for a critical reinterpretation of the architecture of the Modern Movement in the “Introduction” to the thesis by José Miguel Rodrigues: “(...) the classical tradition cannot be reduced to a formal

codifiable world, as academics used to think, or to a purely formal language.” [...] “In our view, the possibility today of considering an architecture as belonging to the classical tradition is more a question of principles than of an unconditional adherence to a particular formal world.”

RODRIGUES, José Miguel Neto, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

68 COSTA, Alexandre Alves, “Cem anos entre razão e gosto” [Prefácio], *op. cit.*

69 FERNANDEZ, Sérgio, *Percurso: Arquitectura Portuguesa 1930-1974*, (1985), Porto, FAUP, Publicações, 1988. See also: ALMEIDA, Pedro Vieira de, “Arquitectura Moderna”, in *História da Arte em Portugal*, vol. 14, Lisbon, Alfa, 1986;

CALDAS, João Vieira, “Cinco Extremos sobre o Ambíguo Modernismo”, in A. Becker, A. Tostões, W. Wang (org.), *Portugal:Arquitectura do século XX*, Prestel, 1997, pp. 23-31; COSTA, Alexandre Alves, “A propósito de um percurso”, in *Textos Datados*, Coimbra, EDARQ, 2007, pp. 33-36; COSTA, Alexandre Alves, *op. cit.*; MONIZ, Gonçalo Canto, *op. cit.*

70 CATROGA, Fernando, *Entre Deuses e Césares. Secularização, laicidade e religião civil: Uma perspectiva histórica*, Coimbra, Almedina, 2006. In analysing T. S. Eliot’s book, Gualter Cunha also stresses, “The grandeur of *The Wasteland* in not in its fragmentation, but in its unity of fragmentation.”

CUNHA, Gualter, Introduction, in T. S. Eliot, *A Terra Devastada*, (1922), Relógio d’Água, Lisboa, 1999, p. 12.

71 Illustrated in water-colour in keeping with the academic tradition, which was repeated in countless works produced by Marques da Silva at the Laloux studio.

72 MONIZ, Gonçalo Canto, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

73 These aspects have already been stressed, amongst others, in the work of Canto Moniz.

Ibid., p. 182.

74 Paraphrasing the work of Harold Bloom, *Angústia de influência* (1973).

75 LECONTE, Marie-Laure, *Victor Laloux (1850-1935). L’architecte de la gare d’Orsay*, Paris, Editions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1987.

76 SILVA, Raquel Henriques da, “Ventura Terra em contexto”, in Ana Isabel Ribeiro (coord.), *Miguel Ventura Terra: a arquitectura enquanto projecto de vida*, Esposende, Câmara Municipal de Esposende, 2006, pp. 11-29.

77 HOBBSBAWM, Eric, *A Era dos Extremos: história breve do século XX, 1914-1991*, (1994), Lisbon, Presença, 2002.

78 SILVA, José Marques da Silva, “Comemorações do 28 de Maio de 1936 na Escola superior de Belas-Artes do Porto”, in António Cardoso, *op. cit.*, pp. 789-792.

79 CROOK, Joe Mordaunt, *The Dilemma of Style: architectural ideas from the Picturesque to the Post-Modern*, The University of Chicago Press, 1987.

80 SILVA, José Marques da Silva, “Comemorações do 28 de Maio de 1936 na Escola superior de Belas-Artes do Porto”, in António Cardoso, *op. cit.*, p. 791.

81 O *Atelier Abel Pifre* in Paris projected (1910), amongst other stage machinery, the “Rideau de Fer” for the Teatro de São João.

a rupture, but as a possibility for discovering other ways of affording continuity to modernity among historically diverse series. Which, if we accept this interpretation, involves the urgent reconsideration of the idea of the modern as a process, or series of processes, that were both impure and polyphonic.⁵⁹

This was to have consequences in the interpretation (briefly referred to here) of Portuguese architecture in the period from 1920 to 1960. Despite its rationalist, modern/non-modern, monumental or picturesque diversity, this architecture of the *generations of transition*⁶⁰ makes it possible for us to see a common root that keeps them close together. This implicit unity, to be noted more in the methodology of the project than in the succession of forms correlated with one another, finds roots in the classical tradition of the works that preceded those produced by the architects who were trained in Paris. It is thus possible to point to a line of inquiry in 20th-century Portuguese architecture lasting until the 1960s, in which it is significant to note the historical continuity of the transformations of the architectural phenomenon, understood as a transmission of the classical cultural legacy that, in this concrete case, is also (and above all) a tradition of construction.⁶¹ The attribution of this legacy, investigated in great depth in the thesis written by Miguel Rodrigues about the problems of *decoration, scale and tradition*,⁶² was, above all else, a pragmatic attitude of Portuguese architects, which afforded them greater security in confronting the various adverse circumstances that defined their possibilities of working in the context of these decades.

In critically dissecting the position of John Summerson (1904-1992)⁶³ in order to clarify the presence of the classical legacy in part of 20th-century architecture, Miguel Rodrigues states:

*Like us, Summerson believes that the classical legacy was continued by some its founders — Behrens and especially Perret — who, in his opinion, were its conscious heirs, and that Le Corbusier, by having “known” them, was its most recent follower.*⁶⁴

What needs to be underlined here, in the form of a brief note, is that this line of correlations can also be extended, for example, to Marques da Silva.⁶⁵ The existence of two editions of the treatise *Éléments et théorie de l’architecture* by Julien Guadet (1834-1908),⁶⁶ Professor of the Theory of Architecture at the *École* de Paris, which were to be found in the library of Marques da Silva, makes it possible to continue to consubstantiate this legacy in various series of encounters that (despite the fact that they did not apparently meet each other) occurred in a shared and significant positivist cultural context. Whereas Marques da Silva frequented the Laloux studio, Auguste Perret (1874-1954), who had been admitted to the *École* in 1891, a year after Marques da Silva, joined the studio of Guadet, who had been a pupil of Henri Labrouste (1801-1875), and, as his teaching model, followed the legacy of Jacques-François Blondel (1705-1774). This series could be extended even further, considering that, between 1908 and 1909, Le Corbusier worked at the architectural offices of the Perret brothers; and that these two architects were to become embroiled from 1923 onwards in one of the most famous controversies in modern architecture, centred around the question of the *fenêtre en longueur*.

The permanence of the classical tradition⁶⁷, observed in the series of architectural productions between 1920 and 1960, reinforces the idea of a modernity that had been tamed by the strength of its roots, which, in a certain way, by imposing on such productions a family-like quality, also afforded them a unity in the diversity of their nature. These *unmistakable signs of our identity*,⁶⁸ a hypothesis that has been developed from the work of Sérgio Fernandez,⁶⁹ allows us to recognise the founding sense of the work of Marques da Silva, and also of Ventura Terra – and, seen from another perspective, that of Raul Lino too. Or, in other words, it was through the work of these architects that the modern roots were to pass, along with the most cosmopolitan paths available for the architecture of the ensuing decades, not always developed or revisited, in a process of adjustments and maladjustments to Portuguese reality, which is, in fact, as Fernando Catroga says,⁷⁰ another form of community.

However, this hypothesis brings with it the doubt about what was the exact importance of tradition and, above all, of the classical tradition in the architectures of the 20th century, and about how these will evolve in the new century. Do these questions, which reveal the interpretations of the architectures of the 20th century, make it possible to form another kind of knowledge about Marques da Silva?

By being important for sketching out possible answers to these doubts, the study of Marques da Silva’s work, without overlooking its problematic condition, will require a thorough re-reading of his architectural drawings and working processes, but also of his diaries, library, correspondence and socio-professional life, as a process for gaining access to the architectural devices of the project, as well as to their meaning. For example, the simultaneous use of building techniques based on stone, concrete, iron and glass, observed in the sketches he made for the façade of the São Bento railway station, or in the constructive contrast of the façades of the “Conde de Vizela” building/block, or also the surprising horizontality of the asymmetrical façades⁷¹ in the project that he submitted to the call for tenders for the building of the Infanta Dona Maria High School (1931), in Coimbra, (fig. 8), and which was already permeable to the ideas of the works taking place in the building of the Serralves House (1927-1943) – none of these can be understood without an in-depth study of the contexts of production, as an indispensable source for recognising “*his design-based methodology that enables him to work in any style.*”⁷² This requires a knowledge of the architectural project to be reworked through the consideration of its suitability to the circumstances dictated by the programme, construction, client, taste, and, no less importantly, by the travels that he made or by the collaborators that he maintained at his studio.⁷³

While the modern architects of the following generations faced the dilemma of what paths to choose, i.e. the dilemma of choosing between modern and monumentality, or between modern and picturesque, or between being modern or not being modern, the same phenomenon

does not seem to have been noted in the work of Marques da Silva (or Ventura Terra), which remained at some distance from this *anxiety of choosing*.⁷⁴ Their erudite training, which brought together their experiences and international information, the flexibility of their method of design, (which enabled them to reconcile techniques and solutions), and their understanding of architecture as a social and urban practice that was open to negotiation and compromise, all of these aspects afforded these architects a disturbing design-based solidity in the Portuguese context, which kept them away from any dilemma. The dilemma that was experienced by their Parisian masters, for example, in deciding on the right style for a railway station, such as the Gare de Tours and the Gare d’Orsay (Victor Laloux, 1895 and 1898),⁷⁵ or that of their English colleagues preoccupied with *the Edwardian v. the Picturesque* in domestic architecture, was not to be noted in the work of Marques da Silva. And why is that?

The factors pointed out throughout this essay, however, are not in themselves sufficient to explain the reason for this. Only the great determination of Marques da Silva allows us to understand how he embraced the 20th century, in a time that was marked by uncertainty and negotiation,⁷⁶ through a professional practice that that was marked by reason and efficiency.⁷⁷ The 20th century entered into his work, above all, through his firm belief in the necessary submission of the project to the functional and rational aspects,⁷⁸ not forgetting the artistic and symbolic value of the design that, while being intended for a client, is nonetheless established within the context of the city. Function, as a central aspect of the design, while it was already stressed in academic teaching through the primacy that was attributed to the plan, was also underlined in the modern *Taylorian* concept of effectiveness as a functional diagram, which enabled Marques da Silva to direct all his efforts to what Mordaunt Crook refers to as atectonic thought. This enabled him, without abandoning the art of construction, to link effectiveness to beauty, an idea that he was also to link with simplicity: “(...) all works of art can contain, together with supreme simplicity, a sense

of balance, harmony, expression, in a word – beauty.”⁸⁰ In this way, he conducted his projects with complete formal freedom, indifferent to the question of style, open to different constructive systems in order to confront the problems that were raised, in keeping with the idea of progress. As has been said, we can see this in the evolution of the drawings for the São Bento railway station, where setting the modern *glass wall* further back was a secondary problem, in view of the symbolic value and effectiveness guaranteed by the large size of the spaces that were intended to shelter the crowds of people in transit; in the São João Theatre, where the adoption of the *modern machinery*⁸¹ (fig. 9) which was brought from Paris did not impede him from referring to the memory of the earlier theatres, with the citation of the *estípite*;⁸² or in the Liceus (high schools) of Porto, where the translation of hygienist and pedagogical criteria led to façades marked by verticality, although this did not impede him, in the following years, from presenting a project in Coimbra containing horizontal façades with abstract surfaces, which was a clear sign of other referents.⁸³

Viewed from this perspective, in the work of Marques da Silva, the travelling of the classical tradition cannot be regarded as a simple borrowing of a random and revivalist repertoire of decorative forms, but as a vigorous appropriation of the architectural tradition, in the creation of a pragmatic response to local circumstances, which produced a hybrid architecture that was capable of forming its own coherence and was available to reconcile within itself tradition and modernity.

The identity of this architecture was quite distinctive in the Portuguese panorama, standing out as one of the most erudite and articulate, possibly until the 1960s, when the work of Álvaro Siza was to be seen as “a radical critique of tradition, but also a radically new ordering of the present, and of the world.”⁸⁴

82 CARNEIRO, Luis Soares, *The Strangeness of the Estípite. Marques da Silva and the São João Theatre(s)*, Porto, Fundação Marques da Silva, 2010. *Portugal: Arquitectura do século XX*, Prestel, 1997, pp. 23-31; COSTA, Alexandre Alves, “A propósito de um percurso”, in *Textos Datados*, Coimbra, EDARQ, 2007, pp. 33-36; COSTA, Alexandre Alves, *op. cit.*; *Portugal: Arquitectura do século XX*, Prestel, 1997, pp. 23-31; COSTA, Alexandre Alves, “A propósito de um percurso”, in *Textos Datados*, Coimbra, EDARQ, 2007, pp. 33-36; COSTA, Alexandre Alves, *op. cit.*; MONIZ, Gonçalo Canto, *op. cit. Portugal: Arquitectura do século XX*, Prestel, 1997, pp. 23-31; COSTA, Alexandre Alves, “A propósito de um percurso”, in *Textos Datados*, Coimbra, EDARQ, 2007, pp. 33-36; COSTA, Alexandre Alves, *op. cit.*; MONIZ, Gonçalo Canto, *op. cit.*

83 MONIZ, Gonçalo Canto, *Arquitectura e Instrução: O projecto moderno do liceu, 1896-1936*, Coimbra, EDARQ, 2007.

84 CUNHA, Gualter, *Introdução, op. cit*, p. 12.