With the support of MODERN HOUSING/uni2003/uni2003 PATRIMONIO VIVO

International committee for documentation and conservation of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the modern movement

Journal 51 – 2014/02

docomomo International is a non-profit organization dedicated to the documentation and conservation of buildings, sites and neighborhoods of the modern movement. It aims at:

- Bringing the significance of the architecture of the modern movement to the attention of the public, the public authorities, the professionals and the educational community.
- Identifying and promoting the surveying of the modern movement’s works.
- Fostering and disseminating the development of appropriate techniques and methods of conservation.
- Opposing destruction and disfigurement of significant works.
- Gathering funds for documentation and conservation.
- Exploring and developing knowledge of the modern movement.

docomomo International wishes to extend its field of actions to new territories, establish new partnerships with institutions, organizations and NGOs active in the area of modern architecture, develop and publish the international register, and enlarge the scope of its activities in the realm of research, documentation and education.
We accept three to six illustrations for short contributions (about zero to zero words) and illustrations referred in the text should be mentioned abbreviated as follows:

- A short resume of the author(s), in connection to the contribution, must be included.
- The name and version of the word-processing software containing the text and illustrations should be included.
- A copy on CD or an e-mail version of the text. The CD should be clearly mentioned on each page of the manuscript and the name, title, and version of the word-processing software containing the text and illustrations should be included.
- A hard copy on paper by postal mail. The title and author’s name should be included.

The title and author’s name should be included.

- Footnotes should be numbered and should follow the following style:

- Illustrations referred in the text should be mentioned abbreviated as follows:

Contribute to the next journal

02 The House, the Home and the Housing Question
   — BY ANA TOSTÕES

04 Housing and City: Old Problems, New Approaches
   — BY JOAN BUSQUETS

10 Modern Housing: Heritage and Vitality
   — BY JOSEP MARIA MONTANER AND ZAIDA MUXÍ MARTÍNEZ

12 Modern Housing Envisaged as a Patrimonio Vivo (Living Heritage)
   — BY JOSEP MARIA MONTANER

16 Robin Hood Gardens and the Rehabilitation of Post-War Mass Housing in London
   — BY ARANZAZU MELON

22 Citizen Activation in Contemporary Collective Housing. Barcelona Experiences
   — BY ISABEL APARICI TURRADO

28 How to Deal with Halen Estate
   — BY BERNHARD FURRER

34 Santa María Micaela Housing Cooperative in Valencia: a Critical Assimilation of the Modern Legacy
   — BY CARMEN JORDA AND MAITE PALOMARES

40 El Tunal Experimental: 40 Years Later an Experimental Housing Project in Bogotá, Colombia, 1972
   — BY RAMÓN BERMÚDEZ, JOSÉ ROBERTO BERMÚDEZ, DANIELA SANJINÉS

48 Paradigms of Social Housing in Buenos Aires. Lessons From Juan XXIII
   — BY SOLEDAD ARMADA

54 Social Housing in the 60s in São Paulo
   — BY MARIA LUIZA SANVITTO

60 From the Late 19th Century House Question to Social Housing Programmes in the 30s: the Nationalist Regulation of the Picturesque in Portugal
   — BY RUI JORGE GARCIA RAMOS, ELISEU GONÇALVES AND SÉRGIO DIAS SILVA

68 Poker Faces: Seeing Behind the Mask of Convention
   — BY ALICE T. FRIEDMAN

74 Women in Modern Neighborhoods: Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky; Jakoba Mulder, Lotte Stam-Beese; and Carmen Portinho
   — BY ZAIDA MUXÍ MARTÍNEZ

80 The Preservation of Authenticity and the Awareness of the Necessary
   — BY LUCIANA ROCHA

85 Two Mexican Housing Units developed by the Social Security Institute
   — BY JUAN PABLO RODRÍGUEZ MÉNDEZ

89 NEWS

94 BOOK REVIEWS

96 APPENDIX
The old picturesque city of Olhão © Coleção Estúdio Mário Novais. Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, biblioteca de Arte.
In the early 20th century in Portugal, a new architecture was produced as the offspring of different references, conforming to a process of "Portugueseness" based on the picturesque. From the beginning of the dictatorship in 1926, the State took advantage of that phenomenon to sublimate nationalist values. Through the first programs of mass housing construction, the single-family house became an object of consumption and a cornerstone of national identity. The search for identity brings together different architectures across the century featuring a renewed Portuguese sentiment infused with different perspectives on the "homeland", its history and its culture.

On Transition

In the early years of the 20th century in Portugal, amid debates over national identities and modernity, a new architecture was produced as the offspring of different sentiments including iconic sources such as the Casa Portuguesa (Portuguese House), reference to the chalet or the modernist approach. These hybrid proposals had to deal with the selection of formal elements and visual memories according to epochal architectural design systems of inclusion and exclusion. Regardless of the results, they conformed to a process of "Portugueseness" based on the mainly English picturesque character firstly introduced into Portugal by intellectuals not necessarily connected to the State intelligentsia. Even in the Primeira República (First Republican regime after the end of the Monarchy in 1910) but, particularly, when the dictatorial regime was imposed in 1926, the State took advantage of that cultural phenomenon to sublimate nationalist values. Therefore, the first Act issued by the government, which successfully achieved large-scale low-income housing programs in the main cities, appeared in 1933, the year the dictatorship consolidated the constitution of a corporative authoritarian regime — Estado Novo (New State). Throughout most of the last century, the State, facing profound social asymmetries, poverty and deplorable living conditions, developed a set of public programs that promoted affordable houses in different forms, raising a need for different architectural responses to housing design.

The transition from the widespread late 19th century private house (for the bourgeoisie or working classes) to Estado Novo social housing programs was realized in five working-class neighborhoods built between 1919 and 1922 by the Primeira República regime. It can be considered a major change, which aggregated new urban and domestic space legislation and a political setting, dominated by totalitarianism and the affirmation of a strong national identity. The climax was reached when the corporative State introduced different measures for space and resident control, in particular, building social houses and transferring land property rights to the new owners.

With the first social housing program announced only in 1933, a broader reflection of the low-cost housing problem was started, reframing the issue of national identity from the fragile experience of modern architecture's specific point of view. That cultural and political ambivalence, which reflects the conflict of being simultaneously Portuguese and modern, corresponded to a new setting for social housing and new urbanization solutions. This circumstance was matched with the first approach to mass housing production throughout Portugal, the development of design methods in order to standardize housing, the application of comfort and hygiene principles, the implementation of new strategies in land planning, as well as the creation of administrative and economic organizations as levers to build social housing and to establish new areas for expansion in cities. Although these subjects assumed the form of an authoritarian power, Pedro Vieira de Almeida (1933–2011) argues that, in an underdeveloped country, they also provided a true practical experience for a wide range of practitioners'. Among them, some engineers and architects were involved or particularly interested in issues pertaining to modern architecture in addition to their main effort to propose pragmatic solutions against slums. Therefore, the approach to social housing design did not prevent the natural and fundamental discussion about modernity or the aspirations of inhabitants regarding hygienic and comfortable homes. This discussion occurred under the transverse-sue of the interchanging process between chalet and Casa Portuguesa architecture.
In this way, in order to study Portuguese housing architecture in the 20th century it is relevant to understand the dynamics of hygiene or new home comfort standards, the approach to the relationship between interior and exterior space, or the arrangement of space to obtain minimum areas. It is particularly significant to analyze some experiments that took place when large bourgeois house resources were interchanged with standard popular house features. This approach brought out new practices including, for the first time, the idea of the house as an object of mass consumption. Connected to this point was the effort to fix rules and an order through administrative regulations. At the end of the 19th century, the national department of health created central authorities to develop a wide set of legislative measures with regard to housing, whose pinnacle was the Regulamento de Salubridade das Construções Urbanas (Urban Building Health Regulation) published in 1923.

As Carlos Sambricio (1945–) mentions, this transition period of impure solutions doesn’t prevent the identification of the deep roots of the modern architecture experience. For the first time in the western world, social architecture as an extended phenomenon was designed for a specific program, under a limited budget and to be built through precise processes, anchored in new words like economy, society and salubrity.

The Casa Portuguesa or the chalet, and even their hybrid variations (more or less modernized and destined for every economic and social stratum), can be pointed out as the first examples interpreted as mass consumer objects. Besides the subjection to the mechanisms of production, repetition and transaction, the house was no longer eternal in terms of use and users. These new conditions were decisive for the modern configuration of domestic space and furthermore for the architectural design project. The inclusion of architecture in the sphere of consumption objects is the prerequisite for popular and general acceptance of a new or reformed house. This fact, not always explicit, exceeds the understanding of the house design solely as an architectural issue. For example, it corresponds to the initiative of building “affordable houses” by building societies like the Companhia de Crédito Edificadora Portuguesa, which in 1920 presented a kind of catalogue with different house types and dimensions described as “national stylization”. After 1918, in the belief that the State should not be the sole entity responsible for solving the housing shortage, the establishment of subsidised loans by national legislation encouraged initiatives to build affordable houses for the working class. Also in 1928 (Salazar was already a minister under the two-year old dictatorship) there was still an effort to promote and to subsidize the private sector to construct cheap houses or to reduce room and house rents for the middle and lower classes. Like other legislation regarding the rent regime, land expropriations or cooperative enterprises, all these legal acts should be understood during those first years as decisive tools for house commoditization. In that context we must consider the house not just as a product but also as an architectural project vehicle related to real estate practices and typological investigations. All these phenomena should draw some attention to often ignored projects such as “Houses with 5, 6 and 9 rooms for the South” designed by the architect Cottinelli Telmo (1897–1948) in the early thirties. Intrinsic to philanthropic, industrial patronage or insurance companies’ initiatives, these solutions suggest a timid but nonetheless remarkable policy to support affordable housing construction for the poorer classes by the private sector.

On Program

After the military coup that ended the Primeira República in 1926, the new dictatorship decided to terminate the social housing initiatives of the previous regime. The Estado Novo distanced itself from those initiatives, but completed the neighborhoods already under construction and recovered part of the groundbreaking legislation from 1918 (Decree no. 4,137 and, from 1926, no.16,025 and 16,085). From the outset, the totalitarian state established an intricate bureaucratic network and issued laws prolifically in order to supervise daily life, namely in terms of political mobilization (União Nacional, 1932), monuments and public buildings (DGEMN, Direção-Geral dos Edifícios e Monumentos Nacionais — General Directorate of National Buildings and Monuments, 1929) and their protection areas (1932), good taste and fine arts (Conselho Superior de Belas Artes, 1932), urban renting and expropriation regime (1928), urban improvement works (1932) and housing programs (1933). Oliveira Salazar (1889–1970) and his minister Duarte Pacheco (1900–1943) sought a solution for the social ill-health of urban areas by means of laws supporting private and public-private initiatives in social housing; in the belief the State should not develop these initiatives alone.

Those endeavors failed to boost housing construction and in 1933 a new line was chosen, with the first Affordable Houses program (Decree-Law 23,252) and the direct intervention of the State in financing and managing housing. This program was based on a kind of single-family house with a Portuguese feel, in different areas according to social status and under a rent to own system. The house then became a fundamental factor in the development of a cult of the nation, a strong state and a corporative structure, the corollary of the institutionalization of the Estado Novo. The neighborhoods built under this program resorted to a set of nationalist repertoires, from national history and built heritage to popular tradition, producing and consuming new conformations to those cultural assets. The intervention of the State in social housing was seen as an instrument of power and the house and the neighbourhood as the aim of its strategy.

The way that Salazar modeled the house as a cornerstone of national identity and a core aspect of his political action that never changed should be emphasized. In an interview with António Ferro (1895–1956), Salazar stated: “working one’s own land is the great enemy of the tavern”. This statement was made in 1938 while strolling through the newly finished neighborhood of Affordable Houses in Alto da Ajuda, in Lisbon, and sheds some light on the manipulation of house and ownership as a prophylactic measure targeting undesirable social behaviors, as the promise of
Row houses in Oliveira Monteiro Street, Oporto, 1898; Rodrigo Teixeira Mendes d’Abreu neighborhood, Oporto, 1907. © Câmara Municipal do Porto. Divisão de Arquivo Histórico.
ownership was linked to acceptable political and social conduct. Salazar feared the people as a social group that, if set in motion, could not be stopped, and so the adoption of a regime of small proprietors controlled by the state made sense. Simultaneously, the choice for the single-family house reflects the opposition to the bad influence of the large workers’ phalansteries, the equivalent of having the people agglomerated in multifamily housing buildings. In the words of Salazar, the house is the great enemy of the revolution:

“It would be possibly easier to solve the housing problem in the vertical way, in the immense block. But the small independent house, and the quiet, the tranquility, the love, the righteous feeling of ownership, the family. The hive is promiscuity, revolution, hate, simultaneously in the individual and in the crowd.”

This growing fear of the people can be seen in the reorientation of the state’s identity discourse from that of the late 19th century, based on picturesque national culture, to a focus on a nationalist historical construction represented by its monuments.

The search for identity in architecture was therefore based more on setting up a historical artifact through a selection of collective memories rather than in its scientific and architectural confirmation. This confirmation had always been hesitant, since the first inquiries in the 19th century and in the transition to the 20th century. A truly Portuguese origin that could unite all that was sought and wished for, and it is only with Orlando Ribeiro, with a Portuguese origin that could unite all that was sought and wished for, and it is only with Orlando Ribeiro (1911–1997) that our diversity is definitely assumed and, later, confirmed, when José Mattoso (1933–) describes Portugal as a community of parts: “A country made of pieces that nothing can unify. It happens not only in socioeconomic structures, but also in cultural concerns, whose “norm” is the “discontinuity of generational leaps”.

The program of Affordable Houses moved the Portuguese House, manipulated according to its principles, into the State’s sphere of influence, using the small house and its picturesque features as a means of identity validation. This house that, as we have seen, was one of the inputs into the architectural problem of housing in the early years of the 20th century, then became a stereotype of the Portuguese House that should look like a house, much as a castle should look like a castle. This architecture of images was never intended to reproduce an authentic historical era, as that reproduction would not satisfy the needs of contemporary life. It intended, instead, to evoke a certain kind of homely environment, a solid domesticity of the house much as described by Bachelard (1884–1962), an environment we connote to our familiar past and to the image we carry of a primordial primitive house: “In a way, this should also be similar to speaking of a metonymic logic, according to which a single remnant of the past is more meaningful than a supposed recovery of its integrity (which will, actually, never be more than a sham)”.

It is, in fact, this purpose that would guide, from 1929, the work of the DGEMN in the reconstruction of a monumental heritage in ruins as part of the reinforcement of a cult of the nation, where the monument fully understood by all legitimizes its role in the recognition of a national identity. The work of the DGEMN on heritage may therefore be described as the transformation of the building or of its ruins into a product which can be easily classifiable historically and promptly consumed. This eloquent action is visible in photos of the time, such as those of the construction of Paço dos Duques in Guimarães (Rogério de Azevedo, 1934), with a method repeatedly disavowed in texts and interventions by Raul Lino (1878–1974).

It is also this metonymic side that brings together different architectures across the century. These architectures, whichever their style, feature a renewed Portuguese sentiment infused with different ways to see the “community”, its history and its culture (see Raul Lino, Keill do Amaral, Fernando Távora, Teotónio Pereira). But the success of the Portuguese House as an operation of identity, reinforced by nationalist practice and the Affordable Houses program, also shows the impoverishment of that perspective, exposing its problematic and discredited side in the appropriation of Popular Culture.

On Fragility

The debate concerning a national identity forged by romantic intellectuals of the 19th century and, later, through ethno-genealogical research, which deepened the material and immaterial domains of its representation in popular culture, would be decisive for the nationalist character of the Primeira República. But the “role of republican indoctrination and propaganda in the production of the fundamental ingredients of the end of the century Portuguese nationalism” was not only decisive in improving the republican position, as it also allowed the creation of different national identity discourses in the following decades. The fundamental symbols and rituals of the nation were conceived throughout the Primeira República and they would be ideologically absorbed by the totalitarian nationalist regime imposed after the military coup in 1926. Therefore, the new political system granted a sense of “national regeneration”, recovering from the conservative right of the early 20th century aspects such as the Lusitanian Integralism and the Catholic movement. After 1933, the Estado Novo maintained this appropriation, regulating it and placing it at the center of its action, entangled with the parochialism typical of the dictator Salazar. Until the sixties, the ferocity of national identity topics led to an “inability (or refusal) to consider their own culture in the big picture” which meant, in architecture, production based on image and determined by personal talents. These architectures, by recognizing their fragility, implicitly or explicitly, valued a kind of pastoral ideal linked to rurality, fluctuating between modern and regional, or taking historicist tendencies forwards to a monumental architecture.

Mapping those circumstances until 1950, meant tacitly accepting the possibility of a regional architecture, that is, a contemporary and heterogeneous transformation of the previous “Portuguese Style”: a hybrid and modernizing one, generally known as “Português Suave”. Over and above the recognition of the mass spread of the “Casa Portuguesa”


Affordable Houses Program: Paranhos neighborhood, Oporto, 1937. © Instituto da Habitação e da Reabilitação Urbana, IHRU.
country house model, introduced by the Affordable Houses Program, was assured by the regime from 1933 to 1972, from 1945 onwards it was to coexist with the new Affordable Rent Houses Program, which would allow for new architectural types, primarily the housing block.  

Notes
5 Cottinelli Telmo, “Projeto de Casas com 5, 6 e 9 Compartimentos para o Sul do País”, A Arquitetura Portuguesa, No. 6, 1933, p. 41–42; No. 7, p. 55–54; No. 8–9, p. 75–71.
6 Decree no. 4.137, from 1918, is considered one of the first legal provisions where the phrase “affordable house” for “low income classes” is used, referring to European and American examples.
9 From 1962, some of the neighborhoods built under the Affordable Houses Program included multifamily housing buildings, yet the single-family house model was still present. The neighborhood of Viso, Porto, is one example of the use of both types within the same neighbourhood.
11 Idem.
12 Another example is the cautious implementation of the Museum of Popular Art, created in 1936 but symbolically left to its own fortune, as is perceived from the electricity outage in 1952 or ceilings collapsing in 1962. See João Leal, “Da Arte Popular à Cultura Popular”, Residuos, Porto, Grupo Atlas da Casa, Centro de Estudos de Arquitectura e Urbanismo, PAUP, 2009, p. 7.
14 José Mattoso, “Uma Ideia para Portugal”, Público (P2), March 6 2010, p. 4. (With a quote from Eduardo Lourenço, in turn quoting Miguel Reis).
16 See Sé do Funcal, 1936, proposal for the refurbishment of the façade de Banco de Portugal em Évora, accredited to Raul Lino, c.1945.
19 Idem, p. 62.

22 This designation does not refer to the one set by José Manuel Fernandes in 2003, which relates this architecture to the formal marks of the Estado Novo. While not denying that relationship, this includes other productions, in line with the previous picturesque, archeological historicisms and also of modern renovation and critique. It seems this breadth could undo the misconception of the phrase, as was noted by José Manuel Fernandes, João Vieira Caldas and Nuno Teotónio Pereira in the radio broadcast Encontros com o Património, by TSF on March 28, 2009. José Manuel Fernandes, Português Suave: Arquiteturas do Estado Novo, Lisboa, Instituto Português do Património Arquitectónico, 2003.


25 Bandeirinha notes a relevant conjugation of purposes in those editions, stressed by the “absent” participation of these architects in the I National Congress of Architects, in 1948, where they informally indicate the necessity of another way of seeing modern architecture and Portuguese culture, a side aspect to the congress: José António Bandeirinha, Quinas Vivas: Memória Descriptiva de Alguns Episódios Significativos do Conflito entre Fazer Moderno e Fazer Nacional na Arquitectura Portuguesa dos Anos 40, Porto, FAUP publicações, 1996 [1993]. See also on this subject and on its repercussions: Eduardo Jorge Fernandes, A Escolha do Porto Contributiva para a Actualização de uma Ideia de Escola, PhD thesis, Guimarães, Escola de Arquitectura da Universidade do Minho, 2011.


Rui Jorge Garcia Ramos

(b. Portugal, 1961) is an Architect and Associate Professor with Habilitation at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Porto (FAUP). He is currently engaged in the Integrated Master’s Degree Program (MIARQ) and in the PhD Program in Architecture (PDA). He is a researcher at the Study Center of Architecture and Urbanism (CEAU) in the working group “Atlas da Casa”, financed by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT). His research interests include: the house; living spaces and lifestyles; culture and housing and identity in 20th-century Portugal.

Eliseu Gonçalves

(b. Portugal, 1966) is an Architect and Assistant Professor with Habilitation at the FAUP. He is a researcher at CEAU in the working group “Atlas da Casa”, financed by the CEF. Currently developing a PhD thesis about working-class housing in Oporto in the beginning of the last century. Part of this research has been presented at conferences and journals.

Sérgio Dias da Silva

(b. Portugal, 1982) is an Architect and a PhD Student at FAUP, currently developing a thesis on the Estado Novo’s Affordable Houses program. He is a researcher at the CEAU in the working group “Atlas da Casa”. 
docomomo International is a non-profit organization dedicated to the documentation and conservation of buildings, sites, and neighborhoods of the modern movement. Its aims are: • Bringing the significance of the architecture of the modern movement to the attention of the public, the public authorities, the professionals and the educational community. • Identifying and promoting the surveying of the modern movement's works. • Fostering and disseminating the development of appropriate techniques and methods of conservation. • Opposing destruction and disfigurement of significant works. • Gathering funds for documentation and conservation. • Exploring and developing knowledge of the modern movement.

docomomo International wishes to extend its field of actions to new territories, establish new partnerships with institutions, organizations and NGOs active in the area of modern architecture, develop and publish the international register, and enlarge the scope of its activities in the realm of research, documentation and education.