

**Museums and Temporary Exhibitions as means of propaganda:  
the Portuguese case during the *Estado Novo***

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by

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## **ABSTRACT**

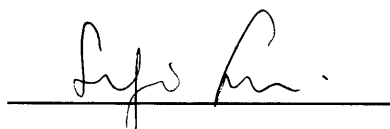
**Name:** Sérgio Lira

**Title:** Museums and Temporary Exhibitions as means of propaganda: the Portuguese case during the *Estado Novo*.

This thesis aims at understanding how museums and temporary exhibitions were used for the purposes of nationalist propaganda during the Portuguese *Estado Novo* (1926-1974). The dissertation is therefore centred in the analysis of several museums, which are presented as significant case studies of the Portuguese museological reality, as well as in the presentation of all temporary exhibitions of the period where clear propagandistic goals were detectable.

According to the plan of the research the methodology to be used was mainly that of the historians. Therefore, after the establishment of a core of concepts, which is presented in the first chapters of the thesis, research was conducted by collecting, analysing and interpreting a body of information that resulted from archive material which was grasped from national, museum and private archives. The materials used range from official documentation of the museums to letters and photographs. The latter were particularly useful for the visual reconstitution of parcels of the temporary exhibitions or even of some permanent exhibition rooms of the museums. Complementary, oral testimonies of former directors and workers of some of the museums were used. The legislation of the period was also grasped for collecting all important laws and decrees concerning museums. All through the research, the establishment of documental evidence to ground any conclusion to be reached was a permanent concern. Hence the case studies and the temporary exhibitions were first presented in order to enable the reader to picture each museum as a case.

The final chapter moves into a deeper level of interpretation, by trying to read the articulation of the dominant ideology of the period with the discourse of museums and of temporary exhibitions, and finally elaborating on the theoretical standpoints of the Portuguese museum practice of the epoch.



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(Sérgio Lira)

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### Abbreviations:

AAM	American Association of Museums
DGEMN	Direcção Geral dos Edifícios e Monumentos Nacionais
DGESBA	Direcção Geral do Ensino Superior e das Belas Artes
ICOM	International Council of Museums
MA	Museums Association
MAB	Museu do Abade de Baçal
MAP	Museu de Arte Popular
MAS	Museu de Alberto Sampaio
MJM	Museu de José Malhoa
MMC	Museu Monográfico de Conímbriga
MNAA	Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga
MNE	Museu Nacional de Etnologia
MNSR	Museu Nacional de Soares dos Reis
NMC	National Museums of Canada
SNI	Secretariado Nacional da Informação, Cultura Popular e Turismo
SPN	Secretariado da Propaganda Nacional

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# Chapter 1 - Introduction

## 1.1 - Subject

The subject of this dissertation is the analysis of the political and ideological use of museums and temporary exhibitions as means of propaganda in Portugal, during the regime that is known as the "New State" (*Estado Novo*). It was a nationalistic and dictatorial regime that started in the late 1920s and lasted until the mid-1970s. Propaganda was then considered a crucial function of the State and therefore almost every means available (either literature, architecture, fine arts, music, cinema or cultural institutions) was used for that purpose. As far as nationalism was concerned, museums and temporary exhibitions were considered to be particularly efficient means of propaganda. Hence, as the *Estado Novo* was deeply grounded in nationalism, museums and temporary exhibitions must have had a very important role in the propaganda of the regime.

Recent research in the academic field of history has made some important contributions to the knowledge on the *Estado Novo*, but the role of museums and temporary exhibitions has not been regarded as a major theme. Moreover, although temporary exhibitions have already received some attention from historians, in particular those that were prepared to play a spectacular role from a propagandistic point of view, no systematic research has yet been made. The link between the role of museums and that of the temporary exhibitions in the 'theatre' of propaganda has not been made by historians.

One main objective of this research is to describe the propagandistic uses of museums and temporary exhibitions. A further objective is to evidence that the *Estado Novo* used museums and temporary exhibitions as means of political and ideological propaganda in many different ways; furthermore, there will be an attempt to answer the "how" and "why" questions on the political and ideological uses of museums and exhibitions.

## 1.2 - Methodology, Sources and Bibliography

In order to achieve these objectives three different kinds of sources had to be explored. In the first place, the bibliography on the *Estado Novo*, which is vast and provides

the means for a global understanding of the epoch, was used as background material. Secondly, the legislation produced during the period under analysis, as well as the documents of the archives of the museums and Salazar's<sup>1</sup> political speeches are, as primary sources, of indisputable interest for an in-depth view of the subject. Thirdly, a significant number of persons who worked in museums during the *Estado Novo* are still alive and some were able to produce direct testimonies about the period under analysis.<sup>2</sup>

The methodological procedure developed for the research divides those materials in two parts. Bibliography was used as a means for establishing the theoretical framework. Primary sources, as well as oral testimonies, were used as sources for producing original results. The thesis is divided in chapters. Chapter two discusses the main theoretic concepts underlying the research. Chapter three grounds its basis in nationalism and nationalist historiography but then presents, in historical terms, the main features of the Portuguese case, especially on what concerns plans and legislation for the museums. Chapter four, five and six present with some detail characterisations of eight Portuguese museums of the period. Chapter seven presents the temporary exhibitions. Finally chapter eight summarises the information previously presented and attempts to theorise on the standpoints of the museum practices of the *Estado Novo*.

A theoretical framework is never definitive and complete, yet an attempt was made to include all relevant concepts related with the theme of this thesis. The epistemological concepts of *history* and *historiography*, as well as the substantive concepts of *state*, *nation* and *nationalism* had to be clarified.

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<sup>1</sup> António de Oliveira Salazar was the leader of the *Estado Novo*. He was a professor of economics at the University of Coimbra and began his political career in government as Minister of Finance; then he became *Presidente do Conselho* (Prime Minister) and remained in the post until he was too old to govern, late in the 1960s. On Salazar's biography see NOGUEIRA, Franco - *Salazar*, Porto, Livraria Civilização, 1977/81. On the recent Portuguese History refer to MATTOSO, José (dir.) - *História de Portugal*, Lisboa, Ed. Estampa, vols. 7-8; see also SERRÃO, Joel and MARQUES, A. H. de Oliveira (dir.) - *Nova História de Portugal*, Lisboa, Ed. Presença, vols. XI-XII. References in English: KAY, Hug - *Salazar and Modern Portugal*, London, Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1970; EGERTON, F. C. C. - *Salazar, Rebuilder of Portugal*, London, Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1943 (this book is almost a panegyric; nevertheless it is of some interest on what concerns the political ideas of Salazar in p.157-199 and on what concerns the analyses of the Portuguese Constitution of 1933, in p.199-241.). Also of interest GALLAGHER, Tom - *Portugal, A Twentieth-century interpretation*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1983, which has a very poor analysis of the Portuguese history before 1910 but gives detailed information of the period after that date; about the dictatorship before 1933, p.38-57; Salazar's period of power is referred in p.62-154. See also GRAHAM, L. S. and MAKLER, H. M. (eds.) - *Contemporary Portugal, The revolution and its antecedents*, Austin and London, University of Texas Press, 1979, p.3-47. MARQUES, A. H. de Oliveira - *History of Portugal. Volume II: From Empire to Corporate State*, New York and London, Columbia University Press, 1972 for a Portuguese history of Portugal written in English.

<sup>2</sup> The methodology used to gather information through oral testimonies is the one developed for oral history. The main references are: CONNERTON, Paul - *How Societies Remember*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995; DUNAWAY, David K. and BAUM, Willa K. (eds.) - *Oral History. An Interdisciplinary Anthology*, London, Altamira Press, second ed., 1996; PERKS, Robert and THOMSON, Alistair (eds.) - *The Oral History Reader*, London, Routledge, 1998; THOMPSON, Paul - *The Voice of the Past. Oral History*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2<sup>a</sup> ed., 1988; also used: *Oral History. Journal of the Oral History Society*, vol. 26 number 1 and 2, vol. 27 number 2, vol. 28 number 1, 1998/2000; KAVANAGH, Gaynor (ed.) - *Making Histories in Museums*, London, Leicester University Press, 1996.

Chapters 4 to 7 provide an analysis of the museum case studies. As for temporary exhibitions, the decision was to include all those that had had nation-wide relevance and that had been seen by the regime as propagandistic events. The number of such events (approximately thirty) and the individual importance of each one in terms of the ideological discourse justify this criterion. The choice of museums to consider as case studies was much more difficult. Since it was impossible to include all Portuguese museums some criteria had to be defined. The intention was to produce an image, as complete as possible, of the Portuguese universe of museums. Three criteria were used to select the museums to be considered: the national importance of the museum (that included geographic location), the type of museum and the wealth of its archives. Within these criteria eight museums were chosen. They are: National Museums - *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga* – MNAA (Lisboa); *Museu Nacional de Soares dos Reis* – MNSR (Porto); *Museu de Arte Popular* – MAP (Lisboa); Regional Museums - *Museu do Abade de Baçal* – MAB (Bragança); *Museu de Alberto Sampaio* – MAS (Guimarães); *Museu de José Malhoa* – MJM (Caldas da Rainha); Specialised Museums - *Museu Monográfico de Conímbriga* – MMC (Conímbriga); *Museu Nacional de Etnologia* – MNE (Lisboa).

Despite their differences in organisation, quantity and importance, the archives of these museums include far more documents than it is possible to use in a research of this type. Furthermore, a number of those documents are of minor or no interest at all for the purpose of the present work. It was imperative, therefore, to select the archive material in order to have core documentation that would provide useful information. In some cases, the archives are so huge it is impossible to read all documents; in these cases the selection was based on the typology of the documents (e.g. a letter sent to the Ministry should be of more interest than an invoice regarding gardening material). This was the case of the National Museum of Soares dos Reis. In other archives the lack of organisation and the non existence of an index or catalogue made the task even more challenging (this was the case in the Museum of Abade de Baçal, Museum of Alberto Sampaio and Museum of Popular Art). In one incidence (the National Museum of Ethnology) bureaucratic and political/institutional questions prevented the access to the archive of the museum.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> During the research process of this thesis it was never possible to have access to the archive of the National Museum of Ethnology. In 1996 and 1997 permission to work in the archive of the museum was formally requested but there was no reply from the director; in 1999/07/28 the director of the museum gave the author an interview. There is no tape record of that interview because the director expressly asked not to use the tape recorder; then he explained why he would not allow the research in the archive of the museum: due to some institutional confusion he was uncertain about the hierarchical responsibility over the museum and was not sure whether he could

The National Museum of Ancient Art is a completely different case. The archive of this institution is huge, far bigger than all the others used in this thesis. The main sections of the archive are the inventories, the bureaucratic section, the photography section and the folders of private documents of the former directors. Some of the main inventory books were made in the 1920s and the 1930s; others, however, were produced in different periods. The bureaucratic section includes all kinds of documents: copies of the letters sent and received, books of synopsis of those letters in chronological order, invoices, receipts, documents related with the payment of salaries, and other documentation that resulted from the normal administrative activity of the museum. The photography section includes a collection of photographs that documents the different epochs of the museum by showing the inside of the rooms, temporary exhibitions and special events such as official visits or conferences. It also includes a collection of negatives. Finally, there are several folders containing private documents that once belonged to the former directors of the museum (private letters, diaries and other documentation). It would have been an impossible task to study all the documentation of this archive.<sup>4</sup> However difficult, the decision of excluding part of the documentation had to be taken. One of the richest sections of the archive is the one where mail and mail copies are collected. During the period under research mail was the most common way of communicating and now, the reading of these letters allows an in-depth view both of the museum's internal life and of its relations with other institutions, including the governmental departments. For that reason, this part of the archive was the object of a much more intense research than the others, although some research was also undertaken in other sections.

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officially allow the use of the archive; besides, he wanted the archive to be organised prior to any research. As a consequence, the text about this museum will not have the support of primary documentary sources. The only exception is the book, available in the library of the museum, where all acquisitions of the library were registered. Information about the National Museum of Ethnology was gathered from bibliography as well as from an interview with one of its 'makers', Benjamim Pereira, who belonged to the original team that developed the museum in the early 1960s. The main bibliographical sources are: DIAS, Jorge - "Museu Nacional e Museus Regionais de Etnografia" in *Cadernos de Etnografia I*, Barcelos, Museu Regional de Cerâmica, 1964; "Museu Nacional de Etnologia" in *GRANDES Museus de Portugal*, Lisboa, Editorial Presença - Público, 1992, p.137-168; OLIVEIRA, Ernesto Veiga de - "Ainda a propósito da Exposição de Instrumentos Musicais Populares Portugueses na Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian", in *Revista de Etnografia*, nº 12, Porto, Junta Distrital do Porto, Museu de Etnografia e História, 1966; OLIVEIRA, Ernesto Veiga de - "Exposição de Alfaia Agrícola Portuguesa do Museu de Etnologia do Ultramar" in *Revista de Etnografia*, nº 26, Porto, Junta Distrital do Porto, Museu de Etnografia e História, 1968; OLIVEIRA, Ernesto Veiga de - "Museu de Etnologia do Ultramar" in *Revista Geographica da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, nº 29, Lisboa, 1972; OLIVEIRA, Ernesto Veiga de - "Museus e colecções de etnografia de Angola", in *Garcia da Orta*, vol. 19, nº 1 a 14, Lisboa, Junta de Investigação do Ultramar, 1971, p.25-46; OLIVEIRA, Ernesto Veiga de - "O Museu de Etnologia", in *II Encontro de Museus de Países e Comunidades de Língua Portuguesa*, ICOM, Palácio Nacional de Mafra, 1989, p.55-68; OLIVEIRA, Ernesto Veiga de - "Perspectivas museológicas do Museu de Etnologia", in *Informática e Museus*, Lisboa, Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, Museu Nacional de Etnologia, 1989; OLIVEIRA, Ernesto Veiga de - *Apontamentos sobre Museologia. Museus Etnológicos*, Lisboa, Junta de Investigação do Ultramar. Estudos de Antropologia Cultural, nº 6, 1971; OLIVEIRA, Ernesto Veiga de - *Povos e Culturas - Catálogo da Exposição*, Lisboa, Museu de Etnologia do Ultramar, Junta de Investigação do Ultramar, 1972; PEREIRA, Benjamim - "Ernesto Veiga de Oliveira e o Museu de Etnologia" in *Estudos em Homenagem a Ernesto Veiga de Oliveira*, Lisboa, INIC, Centro de Estudos de Etnologia, 1989.



Another important source is the legislation concerning museums, national heritage and historical documents. It would be impossible (or at least fastidious) to analyse all the legislative pieces concerning museums that were produced during the period under study. Thus, it was decided to choose the decrees that had nation-wide importance and were really decisive for the existence of museums and for the organisation of temporary exhibitions.

The *corpus* of documents gathered due to this archive research is a coherent body of information that enabled an in-depth understanding of the internal life of the museums and of their external relations. A complete list of the documentation used and quoted in the text is available in the Sources and Bibliography section.

In order to obtain personal perspectives over the period under analysis, it was decided to use oral history techniques by interviewing some of the people that had been involved in the museums profession during the *Estado Novo*. Some of the interviewees are still working in museums while others have already retired. As the objective was to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the life inside each museum, different kinds of museum workers, from directors to guards, were asked to give their testimony. The interviews were not limited to a specific range of questions. On the contrary, the interviewees were left free to talk about what he/she considered of relevance; however, some questions were asked in order to understand particular points. The interviews varied in duration and in the themes explored, but all were relevant to understanding the internal ambience of the museums under analysis. A synopsis of each interview is available in the Appendix number two.

In order to complete the image of the museums and temporary exhibitions used as case studies, research in several archives of photography (both national and private) was undertaken. As a result, it was possible to include in the thesis copies of photographs that document different aspects of the description. Photographs were used as documents, and not as illustrations, as a significant part of the knowledge about museums and temporary exhibitions is due to their analysis. All use of such documents had proper authorisation for academic purposes from the copyright owners.

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<sup>4</sup> The archive of the National Museum of Ancient Art does not have a catalogue that would enable the researcher to access the total number of documents. Yet, for the sake of illustration, it should be enough to say that the number of letters sent during one single year, may amount to several thousands.

### 1.3 - Chronological Limits

The chronological limits of the study were also carefully established. A choice had to be made about whether to include the whole period commonly known as the *Estado Novo*, that is from 1926 to 1974. Two major difficulties had to be faced: firstly, and from a strictly institutional point of view, the *Estado Novo* only began in 1933, when a national referendum approved the Constitution; secondly, the final decade of the *Estado Novo*, starting in the middle sixties, is a very different period. The colonial war had begun in the early years of the decade. Salazar was then a very old man and became incapable of governing in 1968. But, most of all, the legislation on museums deeply changed in 1965.

Despite the formality of the approval of the Constitution, it is possible to affirm that the ideology of the *Estado Novo* and the roots of the regime had had their start in 1926, after the revolution that put an end to the First Republic. Some of the decisive legislative alterations concerning the museums that the *Estado Novo* implemented were produced between 1926 and 1933. It is therefore important to include that period for the present purpose. Hence, the chronological period under analysis in this study begins in 1926.

The final years of the regime are interesting because of all the changes museums were involved in. During the 1960s the legislation on museums suffered such important changes that it could be argued that this period marked the end of the long cycle that had connected the reality of museums to the political and ideological establishment of the *Estado Novo*. The number and importance of the changes is huge, in terms of legislation, mentality, political and economic facts and even in terms of propagandistic goals and intentions of the regime. As it was necessary to choose a *terminus ad quem* for the research and as this is a thesis on museums, the year of 1965 was chosen. It is a symbolic date because it registered two major events in the Portuguese museological field: the approval of an entirely new legislation concerning museums and the foundation of the Portuguese Museums Association.

These chronological limits are not the result of an indisputable decision. It could be argued that the period of the First Republic (1910-1926) should be considered (because of its significant legislative improvements both in terms of cultural heritage and museums) and it is possible to sustain that the year of 1965 is not really a frontier (as, in spite of the new legislation, a significant number of political options and institutional decisions remained).

But this study focuses on the *Estado Novo*, and that necessarily excludes the First Republic. As for the legislation of 1965 it did introduce, in a formal manner, absolute changes on what the definition of museums and museums role was concerned. These changes were, in part, the results of the international influence Portugal received via some national museums directors and they implied options that would have been unacceptable for the political and ideological settlement of the former decades.

It is imperative in a text of this sort to define limits. Even if no other arguments were relevant, the abundance of the primary sources would necessitate the establishment of such boundaries. The archives of the museums keep thousands of documents, and the more recent the dates the more abundant they are. It was imperative to make choices. The criteria used were defined according to a combination of three main aspects: relevant facets of the Portuguese political and ideological changes (as this is a text mainly about the political and ideological uses of museums), legislative aspects concerning the Portuguese museums (as they reveal political and ideological trends and intentions) and the quantity and quality of primary sources available. The delimitation of the period between 1926 and 1965 results from those criteria. Mentions to events prior to 1926 will only occur in the text to explain particular issues or events that would otherwise be incomprehensible. As for the period after 1965 and for some of the case studies it was necessary to extend the chronological limit in order to explain the results of actions and decisions taken before that year.

#### **1.4 - Quotations and References**

As this thesis is about a Portuguese theme, an important part of the bibliography and all the primary sources are in Portuguese. This situation makes quotation problematic, because it would be unacceptable only to quote in Portuguese. Nevertheless, it could also be considered as a lack of rigour to quote a Portuguese reference or primary source translated into English, without giving the reader the possibility of confirming the accuracy of the translation. Therefore, it was established, as general criterion for the Portuguese quotations, to translate them into English while mentioning the original text in italic within the text, or in a footnote. This criterion was adopted for references and primary sources (either printed material and manuscripts). Main theoretical references are in English. However, some bibliography was used from the original in French or from a Portuguese

translation, whenever there was no English translation available. In some special cases Portuguese originals are translated into English; in these cases the quotation indicates the Portuguese original and the English translation.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> All references in English are between quotes " "; italics were used for all quotations in other languages, including Latin; when it was necessary to break the quotation the symbol [...] was used; when it was necessary to add words to a quotation they are in italic and between [ ]; all words that needed to be emphasised or have a particular meaning in context are between ' '.

## Chapter 2 - Museums and the Making of History

The discussion to be introduced in this chapter is about the relevance, for the study of museums, of the subjacent concepts of history and historiography in museological constructions. For the purpose, some basic concepts of history and historiography will have to be analysed.

'Things that happened in the past'... 'important deeds of the past'... 'battles'... 'wars'... 'main political decisions'... 'important people of the past'... or just 'the past': these are the most common ideas, sentences and words usually associated with the concept of history. If the word historiography appears in a normal conversation almost everyone will use it as a synonym of history, with no further thought. Nevertheless, the concepts of history and historiography demand deeper discussion, as the bibliography produced on this matter during this century easily proves.<sup>6</sup>

The purpose of this chapter is not to discuss from scratch the concept of history and historiography, others have already done so. What is thought to be fundamental, when dealing with museums, and in particular with history museums, is to have clearly in mind the main problems raised by the use of basic concepts. In further chapters there will be the need to return to this problem, analysing concepts as 'state' and 'nationalism'; but it is arguable that history and historiography, as far as these terms are used in museum context, are essential concepts and that they must be discussed in order to enable further and correct use.

The ancient or recent uses of the word history will not be discussed, on the contrary, the discussion will be focused on what the word means in the present. 'What is History?' is, in fact, a very old, but still present, question, with very different answers. Nevertheless, even before engaging on the attempt of gathering the most significant definitions on history and historiography and trying to achieve a suitable definition, another concept must be analysed. When we deal with history, when we speak about history, or when we just think

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<sup>6</sup> See note 10.

about it, the idea of 'time' is ever present in our minds, even if we are not aware of its presence.

## **2.1 Time**

We usually accept that time is divided into three different kinds: past, present and future. The existence of a 'present' is easy to deny from an epistemological point of view. The absolute 'present' is not a scientific fact, it is not measurable, cannot be defined, has no importance whatsoever when dealing either with experimental science or with human science. A further difficulty when we try to define the 'present' is to be able to verify the simultaneous nature of different events. This applies, especially, to experimental science. From an epistemological point of view, we can however generalise the conclusions: if we cannot prove the existence of simultaneous events (and in a strict scientific sense we can not), we cannot accept the existence of 'present'. Therefore it does not exist. The 'future' can be accepted in two main different ways: a spiritual, religious or eschatological way or a statistic one; certain or uncertain, both are a matter of belief (a religious belief or a scientific belief) and both are of poor interest on what concerns this text.

And what about the 'past'? What kind of 'past' do we have? In other words, what kind of 'time' do we, as human beings, conceive? In the western history of man, two opposite conceptions of time are significant: time that cycles, as the Greeks understood it, or time that flows, as Saint Augustine described it. In the first time never reaches an end, and the existence of a very defined beginning is barely accepted; the other is an understanding of time that includes a very obvious and well marked beginning. In this case, 'time' could be described as a path, with several main stations, through which mankind goes before it arrives to the inevitable destination: the end of time. The latter is the understanding of time now commonly used, even not thinking about it. The marxist interpretation of history, as well as the Christian, uses this concept of 'time'. It represents almost all current perceptions of time. It is interesting to notice that time ends in Christian belief with a final judgement, after which there will be no more time as we humans conceive it. Marxian time ends by human social, economic and political evolution in a status where nothing changes anymore. The communist society has no reason to change once the 'motor' of history, the struggle

between classes, will have ended. And time, in a situation like that, makes no sense: if nothing changes, time does not exist. The 'end of history' is, in both cases, similar: a situation in which time is of no importance at all.<sup>7</sup>

Time is, in our way of thinking, linear. Science, as we understand it, describes time this way, it looks for the 'beginning' and tries to predict the 'end', or, at least, the probable evolution of events. We are not only thinking of experimental science such as physics or astronomy; economics, politics, sociology and demography, all use this understanding of 'time'. When historians work they deal with past events and they never imagine those events as repeatable: an historical event is always unique.

What must not be forgotten, when trying to define 'time' or 'past' (or other related concepts) is that how we conceive them is only one of several different, legitimate ways of understanding those realities. We must be aware that scientific thought and common sense are, frequently, incongruous. Everyday life provides evidence for this. Religious ceremonies tend to acknowledge time in a cyclic perspective, ritualising deeds, repeating events in symbolic ceremonies, and by doing so, renewing the act. We constantly hear people saying that 'history repeats itself', when referring to politics or economic trends. Sometimes we have the feeling that we have already lived that particular experience, said that particular sentence, or heard that particular conversation. Perhaps we have some difficulty in accepting that somewhere in the future the end of time will occur. In fear of this, we return to that convenient, safe and reassuring pattern of time that repeats itself: good or bad the future is something we already know because we have already experienced it.<sup>8</sup>

So, when we try to define history, or historiography, we have to use the word 'past'. What understanding of that concept are we referring to? It is almost obvious that authors<sup>9</sup> have in mind the linear kind of time when they mention the past, trying to understand what history is. In this text, that one will be the subjacent conception of time: the present scientific way of understanding time as linear. Nevertheless some of the ideas above are not

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<sup>7</sup> See GILSON, E. - *Introduction à l'étude de Saint Augustin*, Paris, Etudes de Philosophie Médiévale, 1943; see also two of the main texts of Saint Augustin, the *Confessions*, (section eleven, *Man and Time*) and *De civitate Dei*. See also MARX and ENGLES - *Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei*, London, 1848, section I.

<sup>8</sup> Scientific experiments are example of such events.

<sup>9</sup> See note 10.

despicable: the awareness of definitional difficulties is the only way acceptable, if we want to reach an objective use of words. As we will see in a few paragraphs, dealing with history is, inevitably, dealing with men: and those men, gone long ago, about whom we say things and dig out information from documents and archaeological evidence, they too had their conception of time, not necessarily equal to ours. The only possibility of having a chance to understand those men is to be aware of their conceptions, time included.

Museums use this linear kind of time too. History museums are often organised in a chronological manner. Others, that could use different criteria in their displays, tend also to be chronological: art museums presenting objects organised by epochs or styles; natural history museums presenting specimens organised in the chronological order of appearance in natural history; ethnographic museums presenting collections 'from the oldest known up to the present one'; regional museums reporting the history of their region beginning with the most remote known trace of human life in the area and proceeding chronologically until reaching the present. Most museums are 'addicted' to time and to chronological order. Being an institution that often deals with the past, museums frequently use this linear time as the most important criteria to impose on the organisation of objects. In this sense, among others, museums are a picture, an image, produced and presented as the truth, not being more than one possible truth between lots of others.

## 2.2 History

Let us now go back to a central point of this chapter: 'What is History?'. Many authors<sup>10</sup> already tried to answer this 'simple' question, but it is hard to find a concise, satisfactory, complete and understandable definition. It is easier to say what history is not, to dispute about who makes history and to argue about purpose or meaning, than it is to

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<sup>10</sup> Main references are: BENSON, S. P. et al. (eds) - *Presenting the Past: Essays on History and the Public*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Temple University Press, 1986; BLOCH, Marc - *The Historians Craft*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1954; BRAUDEL, Fernand - *On History*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980; BURKE, Peter - *History and Social Theory*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1992; CARR, E. H. - *What is History?*, London, MacMillan and Co. Ltd, 1962; CONNERTON, Paul - *How Societies Remember*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995; EVANS, Richard J. - *In Defense of History*, London, Granta Books, 1997; FEBVRE, Lucien - *Combats pour l'Histoire*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2<sup>th</sup> ed., 1965; GARDINER, Patrick - *Theories of History*, The free press of the Glencoe, Oxford University, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., 1963; JENKINS, Keith - *On "What is History?"*, London, Routledge, 1995; JENKINS, Keith - *Re-Thinking History*, London, Routledge, 1995; SALMON, Pierre - *História e Crítica*, Coimbra, Liv. Almedina, 1979; URRY, John - "How Societies remember the past" in MACDONALD, Sharon and FYFE, Gordon (ed.) - *Theorizing Museums*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1996, p. 45-65; VEYNE, Paul - *Como se escreve a História*, Lisboa, Ed. 70, 1983.



produce a clear definition. Nevertheless, all this may contribute to our understanding of the concept.

In the first instance, it is important to understand that 'the past' and 'history' are not the same thing.<sup>11</sup> The past is something we can never absolutely know, as extensive and as deep our analyses goes into the documents and remains. We can be absolutely sure that the past, as a complete entity, cannot be reached by our knowledge. This idea is present in the sentence of Jenkins when he says "[...] using the term 'the past' for all that has gone before everywhere, whilst using the word 'historiography' for history, historiography referring here to the writings of historians".<sup>12</sup> That the past is a different thing to history is not just an issue of acquiring knowledge: we cannot lessen the gap between the past and what we can know about the past. Quoting Jenkins once again "[...] history is composed of epistemology, methodology and ideology. Epistemology shows we can never really know the past; that the gap between the past and history (historiography) is an ontological one [...]".<sup>13</sup> If we accept this as true, what is the point of producing a necessarily incomplete result? Our research will never be able to consider all past events; the story will always be an incomplete one, so, why bother?

This leads to another question: "What is the use of History?". This is the question that underpins Marc Bloch's book, *The Historians Craft*. A young boy asks his father, an historian, this question, and his immediate answer is a very simple one: history entertains. This history that entertains is conceived as the "[...] science of man in time [...]".<sup>14</sup> Perhaps this kind of answer does not include all that historians mean when they work. We can find a different answer in the introduction to Daniel Thelen's book *Memory and American History*: "The challenge of history is to recover the past and introduce it to the present."<sup>15</sup> This sentence brings to the discussion the meaning, the purpose, and the responsibilities of the act of making history. Bringing to the present traces of facts of the past, things long ago forgotten or shadows of events that still remain in social memory may appear dangerous or

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<sup>11</sup> JENKINS, Keith - *Re-Thinking History*, London, Routledge, 1995, p.5.

<sup>12</sup> JENKINS, *op.cit.*, p.6.

<sup>13</sup> JENKINS, *op.cit.*, p.19.

<sup>14</sup> BLOCH, Marc - *The Historians Craft*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1954, p.3.

even pernicious. Connerton considers history as an indispensable activity<sup>16</sup>. He argues that history is a way of remembering, a way of creating knowledge about the past. Answering the question above, history is about getting to know about the past.

Words like 'produce', 'make' or 'construct' are being used when referring to the acts of the historian.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, Jenkins goes as far as to say that "History is produced by a group of labourers called historians when they go to work"<sup>18</sup>. History is a product, something we make. History is not the past, the whole past, the complete and ultimate truth. We could admit that history, once it is impossible to know all the past, could be, at least, a small part of that past, the truthful account of that piece of past. But we are confronted with a different definition. History is a construction, a picture, an image, something historians make.

This gap between history and the past is an ontological one. We are deemed not to reach the past. Not even a small, insignificant part of the past could be ontologically present. So, what do historians do when they go to work? In Michel de Certeau's words, "What do historians really fabricate when they «make history»?"<sup>19</sup> They produce what they consider an understandable, scientific and critical text using information from the past,<sup>20</sup> but do not reproduce the past or even part of the past. It is simply not possible to bring the past into the present. One way or the other all museums have to face this difficulty when producing their exhibitions. Museums represent the past but do not make it present, as "the past, as it is materially embodied in museums and heritage sites, is inescapably a product of the present which organizes it".<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> THELEN, David (ed.) - *Memory and American History*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1990, p.vii.

<sup>16</sup> CONNERTON, Paul - *How Societies Remember*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, p.14: "*Historical reconstruction is thus not dependent on social memory [...] But historical reconstruction is still necessary even when social memory preserves direct testimony of an event.*".

<sup>17</sup> Tony Bennett also uses the word "constructed" referring to Beamish Museum: "costumed museum workers act out their parts in this constructed past"; BENNETT, Tony – "Museums and the People" in LUMLEY, Robert (ed.) - *The Museum Time Machine*, London, Routledge, 1995, p.67.

<sup>18</sup> JENKINS, *op.cit.*, p.21.

<sup>19</sup> CERTEAU, Michel de - *The Writing of History*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1975, p.56.

<sup>20</sup> Issues concerning 'information' will be taken under consideration in some paragraphs.

<sup>21</sup> Tony Bennett uses the concept of "model" when he refers to the production of historical sites, arguing that who produces such sites aspires to make them "*coincide as closely as possible (...) with an earlier model*". BENNETT, Tony - *The birth of the Museum. History, theory, politics*, London, Routledge, 1995, p.128-129.

## 2.3 Producing History

History is a 'production', something historians make. How they make it and whether they can achieve a 'truth' are important issues. Producing history is not a positivist activity because 'facts' do not speak for themselves and historians are not the human link between a tangible past and the present. Bearing this in mind, the use of methodology is the only way out, on what concerns the 'truth' problem. Making history is, in this strict sense, to follow a precise and acknowledged methodology, respecting rules that all scientific community recognises and accepts. The 'truth' that historians achieve this way is no more and no less than other scientific truth: not the absolute and only truth, not a positivist truth or the truth of a believer.

Paul Veyne<sup>22</sup> defines history as a narrative of events; then he includes the word 'truth' in the definition. He argues that history is a narrative of truthful events.<sup>23</sup> We can find almost the same argument in Carr when he claims that history "consists of a corpus of ascertained facts".<sup>24</sup> However, we may challenge this by admitting the difference between historical facts and interpretation of those facts.

These considerations lead us to another difficult point: we must deal with 'things' we call events or facts. What are they and how do historians use, interpret and present them is worth some thought. What is an historical fact? Is it everything and anything that happened in the past? Some are well known, some are almost unknown, about many we do not have information at all. The degree of knowledge about an historical fact depends on the existence of documents. Our understanding will also depend on the depth of the study made into the documents and on the scientific and public dissemination of the research.

In addition to the limited nature of the raw material used to make history, we should also be aware of how the historian decides what facts to use. Through what documents should the historian work? In other words, to whom and with which criteria, the choice of what part of the past to study? Carr affirms that "The belief in a hard core of historical facts existing objectively and independently of the interpretation of the historian is a preposterous

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<sup>22</sup> VEYNE, Paul - *Como se escreve a História*, Lisboa, Ed. 70, 1983, p.14.

<sup>23</sup> VEYNE, *op.cit* , p.22.

fallacy, but one which it is very hard to eradicate". He adds "The facts speak only when the historians calls on them: it is he who decides to which facts to give the floor, and in what order or context".<sup>25</sup> Adrienne Kaeppler uses almost the same idea in museum context, when she affirms: "To paraphrase Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, "all museums are stages, and the artifacts are merely players. They have their exits and their entrances, and each artifact in its time plays many parts."<sup>26</sup>

Another problem arises of this way of conceiving history: is it possible, is it legitimate, for an historian to choose some facts and ignore others? Lucien Febvre argues that this need to choose demands criteria; he says that this act of choosing is (or could be interpreted as being) the denial of the scientific construction. He concludes that it is inevitable that all history is a choice.<sup>27</sup> Obviously, as Braudel emphasises,<sup>28</sup> the historian that follows the lessons of Lucien Febvre and Marcel Mauss, will always aspire to understand the whole of the social phenomenon. However, a certain difficulty remains. When historians choose some facts, some documents, and not others, they are not only electing a part of the past to be known, but also excluding other parts of the past. They present their criteria, they justify their choice and attempt to make their work scientifically acceptable; but they can never claim they can present a complete 'truth'.

What historians produce is an image, their own version, of the past. That image is based on historical documents but is also based in personal values and judgements. Choosing the documents (and therefore choosing the facts) and interpreting them, in order to make the material evidence intelligible, produces different results depending on the subjectivity of the person involved. This is why history can be seen as a 'production' and not as the ultimate truth. Historians must present the result of their work in acceptable forms: the image must make some kind of sense. In order to do this, they adjust facts, fill in the

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<sup>24</sup> CARR, Edward Hallet, *What is History?*, London, MacMillan And Co. Ltd., 1962, p.3.

<sup>25</sup> CARR - *op.cit.*, p.5-6.

<sup>26</sup> KAEPLER, Adrienne L. - "Paradise Regained: The Role of Pacific Museums in Forging National Identity" in KAPLAN, E. S. Flora (ed) - *Museums and the making of "Ourselves"*, London, Leicester University Press, 1996, p.20.

<sup>27</sup> FEBVRE, Lucien - *Combats pour L'Histoire*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2<sup>th</sup> ed., 1965, p.7-8; 116-117.

<sup>28</sup> BRAUDEL, Fernand - *On History*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980, p.76.

blanks scrupulously and, by using examples from other parts of the past and their own judgement, provide an apparently coherent description of events.

Pierre Salmon claims that history is a critical reconstruction of the past that was lived by man in society.<sup>29</sup> The word 'critical' reveals his concern with scientific criteria and 'reconstruction' points out the importance of the historian in the process. Peter Burke elaborates this concept and states: "History is better defined as the study of human societies in the plural, placing the emphasis on the differences between them and also on the changes which have taken place in each one over time."<sup>30</sup> The concern here is with the diachronic characteristic of history. Another perspective is presented by Carr. He describes history as "a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the present and the past".<sup>31</sup> Lucien Febvre produces a definition of history that includes some major ideas: history, for Febvre, is a research, scientifically controlled, about human past activities and creations.<sup>32</sup> Finally Jenkins also introduces a definition that covers a number of different aspects; they include the consideration of who makes history, how it is made, for whom is history made and how history is used.<sup>33</sup> All these aspects are fundamental to his definition, clearly revealing that the author considers history a very complex activity. The introduction of the idea that history is made for others, and not necessarily for personal satisfaction, is very important specially if considered alongside the idea that history is *used* in some way. If historians make history for other peoples employment, then the act of making history is not only scientific but also becomes political.

In this sense, making a museum can (and must) also be conceived not as an ingenuous process but as a social active one, where politics, ideology, economy and social differences play an important role.<sup>34</sup> With this in mind, analysing museums becomes a much

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<sup>29</sup> SALMON, Pierre - *História e Crítica*, Coimbra, Liv. Almedina, 1979, p.20.

<sup>30</sup> BURKE, Peter - *History and Social Theory*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1992, p.2.

<sup>31</sup> CARR, *op.cit.*, p.24.

<sup>32</sup> FEBVRE, *op.cit.*, p.20.

<sup>33</sup> JENKINS, *op.cit.*, p.26.

<sup>34</sup> As examples it is worth referring the Spanish museums that were used to proclaim the "popular soul" (*alma popular*) during the 1930s, and in particular the "Museum of the Spanish People" (*Museo del Pueblo Español*) and another example is the political use of museums under the regime lead by Franco in Spain; see BOLAÑOS, Maria - *Historia de los museos en España*, Gijón, Ediciones Trea, 1997, p.351-355 and 375.

more complex activity. As this thesis is dedicated to the analysis of Portuguese museums and exhibitions of a particular epoch (the *Estado Novo*), it is very important to remember that during that Portuguese nationalist period, museums were organised as pieces of a propaganda program.<sup>35</sup> This idea is one of the principles underpinning this research and links directly to the notion that history does not exist if historians do not write it. Writing history, that act of making public the work of the historian, demands choices. Museums, as historians, must interpret their material and make it understandable to others.

## 2.4 The presentation of History: interpretations.

The words of Keith Emerick summarise the discussion presented above. Emerick stated that "Today we understand that we create our own past".<sup>36</sup> Indeed we do create it, and this observation raises numerous and pertinent issues. For example, does the accuracy of history only depend upon the historians methodology? If so, is there a generally accepted method or do historians use different methodological and/or ideological tools? What role do the historians' religious consciousness, social and economic background and political beliefs play in making history? When we 'create' our past are the results the truth (or part of the truth) or are they the product of ideology, religion and idiosyncrasy? Or, as Anthony Buckley once said, with regard to museums and exhibitions "Given the pressure to produce histories which serve particular causes, some hard questions arise. [...] Is the truth even possible? [...] Can one take 'authenticity' seriously? Does truth matter at all?".<sup>37</sup>

The first two questions raised by Buckley, are relatively easy to answer. If historians do not follow an accepted method, a scientifically recognised method,<sup>38</sup> they are not producing history. Whatever it is they are doing (literature, romance, fiction) it cannot be

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<sup>35</sup> LIRA, Sérgio - "Portuguese legislation on museums during the *Estado Novo*: from the First Republic inheritance to the changes of the sixties." in *Museological Review*, Leicester, Museum Studies Department, vol. 6, 1999, p.73-87.

<sup>36</sup> EMERICK, Keith - "Sir Charles Peers and After: From Frozen Monuments to Fluid Landscapes" in ARNOLD, John, DAVIS, Kate and DITCHFIELD, Simon (eds.) - *History & Heritage. Consuming the past in Contemporary Culture*, Dorset, Donhead, 1998, p.187.

<sup>37</sup> BUCKLEY, Anthony D. - "Why Not Invent the Past We Display in Museums?" in KAVANAGH, Gaynor (ed.) - *Making Histories in Museums*, London, Leicester University Press, 1996, p.43.

<sup>38</sup> The next question would be 'who defines the scientifically recognised method?'. The answer is 'the scientific community'; otherwise science would be impossible. This does not mean the method is a static true; it means the method is *the method accepted in a particular period of time by a particular group of scientists*.

classified as 'history', because it is not the result of 'historiography'. Issues of religious consciousness, social background, economic position and political beliefs are of a very different nature. When historians serve particular causes of any type such as economics, political, religious or social needs, the result will not be neutral. Historians do not exist outside this world and pressure will always be present, and it will take different forms.

Such pressures are also present in museum work. Anthony Buckley has written about the challenges of interpreting and presenting history to the museum visitor . He asked his readers the question: "Is truthful history merely boring, of no interest to the paying customer?" <sup>39</sup> This raises, again, the question of what is historical truth. As discussed above, the answer is to accept the validity of a particular method in a particular time. This implies that historical truth can, therefore, be revised. But if visitors are not interested in historical truth, as Buckley suggests, the work of historians in museums is continually challenged. To resolve this, historians must either please the public by disregarding historical truth, or they must find the right metamorphosis of that scientific and 'boring' truth so that it seems relevant to the public.

The question of what visitors want and of what they get from museums, exhibitions and heritage is critical to the success of museums. This kind of pressure can influence display decisions, application of research budgets, acquisition policy and choices of staff members. Even when institutions do not recognise these kind of influences, the pressure is still present. Sometimes "Visitors are not primarily looking for scientific historical evidence. [...] Visitors to historic sites are looking for an experience, a new reality based on the tangible remains of the past".<sup>40</sup> From a financial point of view, the role of the business department of an heritage centre is to make this 'experience' desirable, to create demand. As the economic imperative gains momentum, "Dangers arise because it is relatively easy to invert history and to turn heritage into a marketable product without proper regard for rigour, honesty and factual accuracy".<sup>41</sup> If this is what happens in heritage centres, we must

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<sup>39</sup> BUCKLEY, Anthony D. - *op. cit.*, p.43.

<sup>40</sup> SCHOUTEN, Frans F. J. - " Heritage as Historic Reality" in HERBERT, David (ed.) - *Heritage, Tourism and Society*, London, Pinter, 1997, p.21.

<sup>41</sup> HERBERT, David (ed.) - *Heritage, Tourism and Society*, London, Pinter, 1997, p. xi. West, referring to the Ironbridge Gorge Museum affirms that he "[...] will discuss the Trust in terms of the development of historical tourism, arguing that it is deeply involved in the

ask if this is also the case of museums and exhibitions. For many the question is undoubtedly awkward: museums have long presented themselves as the paradigm of truth. Except for a few, most museums, prior to the mid 20th century presented themselves as temples of knowledge.<sup>42</sup> Even today museums have the aura of being respectable, solid institutions. Still, the question is asked: "Why should historians and curators spend valuable time and money getting their facts right when the general public doesn't always seem to mind very much what it is told?"<sup>43</sup>

If we consider all the historians' personal difficulties of achieving the truth, even without the pressures of external influences, the task of creating our past is very complex. The truth is subject to so different and distinct pressures that it becomes almost a vain word. That is why we combine truth with other words such as 'scientific', 'statistic', 'historical', thus portraying the idea that the proclaimed truth is only valuable in a very specific context. If this is valid from an epistemological perspective, it is also valid in museums. The 'truth' museums present is a particular one; it is one 'truth', an 'history', a 'story' with a date, a method and a human interpretation attached to it. An important example is given by Maria Avgouli when she affirms that "the founding of the first museums in Greece - those of the 19th century - coincided with the founding and subsequent consolidation of the new Greek state." One of the purposes of those museums was "to reinforce the sense of national identity".<sup>44</sup>

One of the pressures which acts upon the construction of history is that of politics<sup>45</sup>. What historians produce, including their work in museums, is always influenced by their political context. The historian is not immune to political discussion, propaganda, and ideology. However, this political pressure can be considered as minor because "History, as we know, has always been political [...]"<sup>46</sup>. In this sense, 'political' is not necessarily

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*history-making business.*" WEST, Bob - "The making of the English working past: a critical view of the Ironbridge George Museum" in LUMLEY, Robert (ed.) - *op.cit.*, p.38.

<sup>42</sup> HOOPER-GREENHILL, E. - *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*, London, Routledge, 1995, specially p.197-215.

<sup>43</sup> BUCKLEY - *op.cit.*, p.46.

<sup>44</sup> AVGOULI, Maria - "The First Greek Museums and National Identity" in KAPLAN, E. S. Flora (ed) - *op.cit.*, p.261.

<sup>45</sup> MACDONALD, Sharon (ed.) - *The Politics of Display*, London, Routledge, 1999 is dedicated to prove and explain this assertion in museum context.

<sup>46</sup> PHILIPS, Robert - "Contesting the Past, Constructing the Future, History, Identity and Politics in Schools" in ARNOLD, John, DAVIS, Kate and DITCHFIELD, Simon (eds.) - *op.cit.*, p.224.



synonym of 'false' or 'untruthful' or even 'demagogic'. History is always a political construction because we, humans, are political entities.<sup>47</sup>

Yet, the word 'political', with reference to the work of historians and museums, may also be used in a pejorative sense. This is the case when politics is combined with science, when the historical construction is influenced by the political discourse or when exhibitions in a museum depend on political agendas.<sup>48</sup> Political constraints over historians and museums may come from several sources. In Matelic's words, the bureaucratic machine is influential because: "with growth has come additional bureaucracy and a clear recognition that 'the institution is a political animal'".<sup>49</sup> History makers and museum workers can find themselves surrounded by political intrigues and depending on 'political' money. Despite any struggles to be independent and scientifically honest, the interpretation of history and its presentation in museums is never neutral. 'Interpretation' and 'neutrality' are, indeed, opposite concepts: when we interpret we are not neutral. As Carol Duncan said, "[...] a museum is not the neutral and transparent sheltering space that is often claimed to be."<sup>50</sup>

The past is, in this sense, an interpretation of events. When historians present the facts, they are not really just presenting them: they are selecting ones while neglecting others. The process involves interpreting, trying to make sense out of the information provided by documents, artefacts and industrial remains. "So it is really never a matter of the facts *per se* but the weight, position, combination and significance they carry *vis-a-vis* each other in the construction of explanations that is at issue."<sup>51</sup> This is also true if we think in terms of museum objects. It is not conceivable that a museum exhibition (either permanent or temporary) can be neutral. In every moment of the exhibition construction process (such as the selection of the objects or their labelling) choices are made and interpretation is necessary. "It seems axiomatic that it is not possible to exhibit objects

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<sup>47</sup> Or, as Aristotle said in the Introduction to his *Treaty of Politics*, "political animals".

<sup>48</sup> An interesting example are the issues raised by the exhibition about the *Pithecanthropus* described by BOUQUET, Mary - "Strangers in Paradise. An encounter with fossil man at the Dutch Museum of Natural History" in MACDONALD, Sharon - *op.cit.*, p.159.

<sup>49</sup> MATELIC, Candace Tangorra - "Forging a Balance. A Team Approach to Exhibit Development at the Museum of Florida History" in AMES, Kenneth L., FRANCO, Barbara and FRYE, L. Thomas - *Ideas and Images. Developing Interpretative History Exhibits*, Nashville, American association for State and Local History, 1992, p.189.

<sup>50</sup> DUNCAN, Carol - "Art Museums and the Ritual of Citizenship" in KARP, Ivan and LAVINE, Steven D. (eds) - *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, Washington, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991, p.90.

<sup>51</sup> JENKINS, Keith - *Re-Thinking History*, London, Routledge, 1995, p.33.

without putting a construction upon them. [...] To select and put forward any item for display [...] is a statement not only about the object but the culture it comes from".<sup>52</sup> This process of constructing a new reality, the display reality, gives sometimes the opportunity to gather objects that otherwise would never be found together. As a consequence, the museums 'truth' is a constructed one since "Museums are locus of dislocated fragments [...]".<sup>53</sup> This is why we can agree that "The document value of a museum object is manifested only in the museological context [...]".<sup>54</sup> And, as Bennett argues, that museum objects "become, on the plane of meaning, facsimiles of themselves".<sup>55</sup>

Opening a history book, or visiting a museum, is not an innocent act. Despite Buckley's suggestions,<sup>56</sup> readers and visitors are not expected to be naive. However, the possibility of someone entering a museum in the expectation of been given the 'absolute truth' remains. The task of the historian and the responsibility of the museum is, therefore, a heavy one. Those presenting history in museums must remember that any presentation of history may be seen as the absolute truth. Many museum visitors will not necessarily be aware of the "museum as a potent force in forging self consciousness, within specific historical contexts".<sup>57</sup> In fact, history books, films, museums and other forms of presenting history are often used to transform a belief, an ideology or a political idea into 'truth'.<sup>58</sup> Exploiting the power of the written word and of the museum display is patent in many societies. Examples of the use of history and museums for nation building can be found world-wide. Wood discusses the Scottish example and concludes: "The use of the past to assert national identity, and the enjoyment of stories from the past that bear little relation to

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<sup>52</sup> BAXANDALL, Michael - "Exhibiting Intention: Some Preconditions of the Visual Display of Culturally Purposeful Objects" in KARP, Ivan and LAVINE, Steven D. (eds) - *op.cit.*, p.34.

<sup>53</sup> BOON, James A. - "Why Museums Make Me Sad" in KARP, Ivan and LAVINE, Steven D. (eds) - *op.cit.*, p.258.

<sup>54</sup> MAROEVIC, Ivo - "The museum message: between the document and information" in HOOPER-GREENHILL, E.(ed.) - *Museum, Media, Message*, London, Routledge, 1995, p.25.

<sup>55</sup> BENNET, Tony . *op.cit.*, p.129.

<sup>56</sup> BUCKLEY, Anthony D. - "Why Not Invent the Past We Display in Museums?" in KAVANAGH, Gaynor (ed.) - *Making Histories in Museums*, London, Leicester University Press, 1996, p.43.

<sup>57</sup> KAPLAN, E. S. Flora (ed) - *Museums and the making of "Ourselves"*, London, Leicester University Press, 1996, p.1.

<sup>58</sup> Examples can be found in KAEPLER, Adrienne L. - *op.cit.*, p.29-30 on the museum role in the Easter Island under Governor Rapu and in KAPLAN, Flora - "Nigerian Museums: Envisaging Culture as National Identity", in KAPLAN, Flora - *op.cit.*, p.55-58 on the "manifestation of local ethnic pride" performed by the National Museum, Benin in Nigeria.

historical truth are not, of course, activities that are peculiar to Scots".<sup>59</sup> In a very different context, Morales-Moreno, discussing nationalism in Mexico, reinforces this idea by quoting Bernard Deloch, affirming that "[...] the Museum [*the National Museum of Mexico*] contributed to an ideological process of sanctifying the history of the fatherland and, above all, providing a new basis for national identity".<sup>60</sup> For the Portuguese case there is preliminary evidence that nationalism had a major influence over museums during the 20th century.

According to Kavanagh, history is written in three main different ways: the narrative, the descriptive and the analytical methods: "The narrative tradition comes closest to story-telling [...] Descriptive concentrates on presenting a visual image or impression of a person, idea or event. [...] Analytical history is the most common form and the most difficult to write. It seeks to lay bare the true nature of an event or episode".<sup>61</sup> These three different perspectives are often used together in history books. In museum exhibitions "History [...] tends to be offered in a descriptive form".<sup>62</sup> In some museums history is a description of past events illustrated with political dates, names of 'important' people and objects presented without any interpretation at all.<sup>63</sup>

Recent changes, such as a new perspective of what a museum should be,<sup>64</sup> more and different public coming to museums and social and educational tasks assigned to museums, have meant that museums have had to alter their way of dealing with communication and public needs. These changes have demanded a different approach to the presentation of history. The 'past' can no longer be that cold and distant thing to be observed in a very secure and innocuous museum room; it is now presented as a part of ourselves, made by us

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<sup>59</sup> WOOD, Sydney - "Issues of National Identity and the School Curriculum in Scotland" in ARNOLD, John, DAVIS, Kate and DITCHFIELD, Simon (eds.) - *op.cit.* p.213.

<sup>60</sup> MORALES-MORENO, Luis Geraldo - "History and Patriotism in the National Museum of Mexico" in KAPLAN, E. S. Flora (ed) - *op.cit.*, p.181.

<sup>61</sup> KAVANAGH, Gaynor - *History Curatorship*, Leicester, Leicester University Press, 1990, p.131.

<sup>62</sup> *Idem, ibidem.*

<sup>63</sup> For instance the museum of the *Abade de Baçal* in Bragança (Portugal). Objects are on display in a chronological order with non-interpretative labels.

<sup>64</sup> All the discussion over the definition of "museum" during the last three decades involving the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and national associations of museums (Museums Association (MA), American Association of Museums (AAM), National Museums of Canada (NMC) for example) is proof enough that this is a relevant issue. On the evolution of the role of interpretation in

and for us. In this sense "Historians working in museums have possibly the most creative and complex roles of all history-makers".<sup>65</sup> Perhaps, because of this, they "have an extraordinary and compelling task. They have not only to create the record, [...] but also to make meanings from this material".<sup>66</sup>

These ideas are centred on the notion of 'interpretation'. In very simple words, the past does not make any sense if we do not 'interpret' it.<sup>67</sup> It is not enough to have a museum room full of 'objects' from the past. Even if those objects are very precisely identified, dated and described, they are simply objects. As objects they lack the work of the historian in order to establish their relationship to man.<sup>68</sup>

It is important to have a clear idea about what is meant by 'interpretation'. "Interpretation is the act or process of explaining, translating or presenting a personal understanding about a subject or object."<sup>69</sup> The first issue raised by this definition is the idea of 'personal understanding'. Whose understanding are we referring to? It is hard to justify that only historians, or museum curators, are able to interpret. We will necessarily conclude that everyone will have a personal understanding about a subject or object. Therefore, who is in charge of interpreting? Interpretation is both 'official' and 'unofficial'. As noted by Fiona Watson "interpretation of past events are debated, contested and revised in all forums of life, from the family gathering to the academic tome".<sup>70</sup> Nevertheless, as far as history and museums are concerned, interpretation is normally the official one. Produced in a scientific forum, by qualified personnel and with scientific intents, this interpretation is

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museums see ROBERTS, C. Lisa - *From Knowledge to Narrative. Educators and the Changing Museum*, Washington, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997, p.60-79.

<sup>65</sup> KAVANAGH, Gaynor (ed.) - *Making Histories in Museums*, London, Leicester University Press, 1996, p.5.

<sup>66</sup> KAVANAGH, - *op.cit.*, p.xi.

<sup>67</sup> An interesting point on the role of interpretation in the exhibition *Food for Thought* (Science Museum London) is made by MACDONALD, Sharon - "Supermarket Science? Consumers and 'the public understanding of science'" in MACDONALD, Sharon - *op.cit.*, p.120: "Although the six women who constituted 'the exhibition team' were experienced curators [...] to work on the exhibition their job title was 'interpreter'".

<sup>68</sup> HOOPER-GREENHILL - *op.cit.*, p.198.

<sup>69</sup> DEAN, David - *Museum Exhibition. Theory and Practice*, London, Routledge, 1996, p.6. Another definition can be found in ALEXANDER, Edward P - *Museums in Motion*, London, Altamira Press, 1996, p.195 quoting TILDEN Freeman - *Interpreting our Heritage*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1967: "An educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information".

<sup>70</sup> WATSON, Fiona - "Braveheart: More than just Pulp Fiction?" in ARNOLD, John, DAVIS, Kate and DITCHFIELD, Simon (eds.) - *op.cit.*, p.129.

the institutionalised, professionalised, *status quo* interpretation. This kind of interpretation responds not only to the need to understand a subject or object but also to the need to understand it in the accepted scientific way.

On the other hand it could be argued that interpretation should be a question of personal freedom; that no one should have the power to impose a particular interpretation. Yet, this concept will hardly work inside a museum. Someone will have to take the responsibility of making interpretation, because it is not possible to know history without interpretation. "How much of its underlying history or meaning does a painting reveal without interpretation?"<sup>71</sup> Without interpretation we do not have history; it can be argued that without interpretation we do not really have 'objects' to present in museums: we just have 'things' that are not museum objects. As Schouten says, "Interpretation is the act that makes history 'real'".<sup>72</sup>

The need for interpretation is an imperative as "Historical reality does not pop out from the remains of the past; it has to be created".<sup>73</sup> This process of creation is a complex one: it responds to scientific demands but is confined to human (in the sense of personal) realities. "Heritage as a historical reality can only exist by virtue of interpretation. But that interpretation is - like the study of history itself - subject to fashion, taste, ideology and, last but not least, personal preferences".<sup>74</sup> This is also true for history, in its written format, and for museums. Therefore, interpretation is no longer an individual act; interpretation must be performed in professional ways, the 'interpreter' being aware of these epistemological difficulties. What historians working in museums do (as well as historians in general) is assuming the role of interpreters. Historians aim to make history understandable. By giving meanings to subjects and objects they want to make knowledge about past events accessible. "Historians are able to reject something explicitly told them in their evidence and substitute their own interpretation of events in its place".<sup>75</sup> 'Interpretation' becomes more valuable than 'evidence'. This may appear to be illogical or even unacceptable but we must

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<sup>71</sup> DEAN - *op.cit.*, p.5.

<sup>72</sup> SCHOUTEN - *op.cit.*, p.31.

<sup>73</sup> SCHOUTEN - *op.cit.*, p.30.

<sup>74</sup> *Idem, ibidem.*

have in mind that the historian cannot accept responsibility for evidence. He/She can and should only accept, responsibility for interpretation. As Schouten affirms, "The historical reality is not an independent identity because it is subject to interpretation, both scientifically and psychologically".<sup>76</sup>

However, if all history depends on interpretation, what is the role of past events and of material remains? Jenkins asks this question in a pertinent way: "are these historical facts that we can definitely know or is history 'just interpretation'?"<sup>77</sup> We can accept the ontological existence of past events or objects (as they exist) but we must affirm that that existence does not erase the gap between those events or objects and our capacity for obtaining knowledge about them. The gap between the 'present' and the past is, in fact, an ontological one. The past cannot be transferred into the present in its fullness and therefore our possibility of knowing the past depends upon interpretation. So, in a sense, history is 'just interpretation', even if some material parcels of the past remain. That is why it is defensible that a museum room with objects, material evidence of the past, and nothing else, does not make any sense at all from an historian's point of view. This would only be acceptable from an aesthetic perspective. In this case, we do not understand and we do not want to understand, but we enjoy.

In history museums objects are often presented in chronological order and when something is not in that order (if we find a Roman helmet under a map of the Napoleon conquests) we have an unconscious and immediate negative reaction. The feeling that 'it is out of order' corresponds to the normal chronological order of display that we have come to expect. Perhaps someone wanted to compare the Roman and Napoleon's Empires, or to compare weapons, or battle strategies. But we need some explanation to the fact that an object that we recognise as two thousand years old is placed near a map of something that we know that happened two centuries ago.

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<sup>75</sup> CONNERTON - *op.cit.*, p.13.

<sup>76</sup> SCHOUTEN - *op.cit.*, p.23.

<sup>77</sup> JENKINS - *op.cit.*, p.32.

Other kinds of 'natural' order include those which are based on geographical, ethnic or religious factors.<sup>78</sup> These arrangements create our expectations of what a museum should be before we enter. These expectations are often fulfilled, otherwise visitors would experience disorientation and would not understand the exhibit. Other museums observe the same kind of order: museums of art do not usually mix Da Vinci with Monet; ethnographic museums do not usually mix hand-made objects with industrial objects; natural history museums do not usually mix dinosaurs with dolphins, and so on. And when museums do mix these things they may have a purpose in mind: the purpose of creating a display that is not natural, obvious and expected. This basic step of interpretation, this 'natural order', is always present although most of the time we do not notice its existence. In Ames' words, neither do some museums: "The place of interpretation remains unclear in part because many institutions have only a vague notion of what 'interpreting' means".<sup>79</sup>

Another degree of interpretation is suggested by Ames when he says that "to truly interpret the story, we have to dare to suggest what it means".<sup>80</sup> Museums have to face the challenge of choosing a story to tell and to make a meaning out of it. This is why objects, documents and facts are not enough: a museum display demands ideas, something that makes a coherent link between objects and leads the visitor through the exhibition. Even so, we must be aware that re-creation in museums is always incomplete. Even the most complete scenario will have its mistakes and will lack authenticity. We can add a multi-sensorial environment to the exhibit (with light, images, sounds, smells and hands-on displays) but there will be always something missing. Kath Davies refers an exhibition on Welsh mines: "The result is a re-created workplace which fails to interpret working conditions [...] Such misinterpretations are in part overcome by the use of ex-miners as guides".<sup>81</sup> The failure to interpret working conditions is seen by Davies as a misinterpretation. This kind of difficulty is even more evident when the documentation has gaps, objects are missing or the historical record is scarce. Davies observes that an alien

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<sup>78</sup> See comments of BENNETT, Tony - *The birth...*, p.131-133 on this matter.

<sup>79</sup> AMES, Kenneth L. - "Finding Common Threads" in AMES, Kenneth L., FRANCO, Barbara and FRYE, L. Thomas - *op.cit.*, p.314.

<sup>80</sup> *Idem, ibidem.*

<sup>81</sup> DAVIES, Kath - "Cleaning Up the Coal-Face and Doing Out the Kitchen: The Interpretation of Work and Workers in Wales" in KAVANAGH, Gaynor (ed.) - *op.cit.*, p.109.

would have a very distorted vision on women and work in Wales by just studying documentation from the National Library, "yet this interpretation might serve to draw attention to past and present shortcomings in documentary and material representations of Welsh history".<sup>82</sup>

Finally, museums interpret primarily those facts, stories, events and objects that are related to the public that visits the museum or to the public that the museum wishes to attract. It is not common, for instance, for a museum in Norway to be particularly interested in interpreting the aboriginal life in Australia, although it is not impossible and is potentially interesting. The process of interpretation depends, at least partially, on the public demand. It is not a selfish exercise that museum workers do just to enjoy themselves or for the sake of science. Interpretation exists for the public. This is why Matelic affirms that "the Museum of Florida History collects, preserves, exhibits and interprets the material record of human culture in Florida. [...] The museum [...] is primarily concerned with interpreting those events and conditions that are unique to Florida's population".<sup>83</sup>

The study of museums and temporary exhibitions during the Portuguese nationalistic period must also include an analysis of political and ideological interpretations. The Portuguese nationalistic regime had ideological and propagandistic interest in museums and temporary exhibitions because history could be interpreted in such a way that it would serve the regime. The *Estado Novo* used museums and temporary exhibitions in many ways, one of the most significant of which was for the presentation of an ideological version or propagandistic interpretation of Portuguese history.

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<sup>82</sup> DAVIES - *op.cit.*, p.105.

<sup>83</sup> MATELIC, - *op.cit.*, p.187.



## Chapter 3 - State, nationalism and historiography

This chapter does the connection between theoretical and historical issues. Departing from the concepts of state and nation, an attempt to present the ideological characteristics of the *Estado Novo* will be made.

When trying to define the term 'state', authors, in general, tend to refer to the political organisation of a community and to the inherent 'monopoly' of political power. Seton-Watson says that the state is "a legal and political organisation".<sup>84</sup> When nationalism is the subject of discussion, the definition of state does not commonly occur, and the concept is usually used, either implicitly or explicitly, in the general sense mentioned above. According to the thesis of Joseph Strayer<sup>85</sup> the contemporaneous European 'state' is an invention of the Middle Ages. The political formations of the Greco-Latine antiquity were no longer known and the Oriental political experiences were geographically too far away to be used as models. Medieval Europe built the new state on the manorial and feudal institutions. Through the modern age political power was progressively centralised in the person of the sovereign, thus giving rise to absolute monarchies. Theories of power, sovereignty and state were produced. State formations crystallised and revolutions arose. The political regime changed but the state continued. The European state of the present is a legacy from that past.

To others the modern state is only to be found after the major political, social and economic revolutions, late in the eighteenth century.<sup>86</sup> Paul James, for example, says that it was in the ultimate period of Absolutism that a new type of state emerged, which he describes as an "abstract state", that is "a structure of power independent of rulers and ruled". It was grounded on a new national basis, a new type of social relations within the

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<sup>84</sup> Quoted by GRILLO, R. D. (ed.) - *"Nation" and State" in Europe. Anthropological Perspectives*, London, Academic Press, 1980, p.6.

<sup>85</sup> STRAYER, Joseph R. - *On the medieval origins of the moderns sate*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1970.

<sup>86</sup> This is the position held by GELLNER, Ernest - *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1993, by GRILLO, R. D. (ed.) - *"Nation" and State" in Europe. Anthropological Perspectives*, London, Academic Press, 1980 and by JAMES, Paul - *Nation Formation: Towards a Theory of Abstract Community*, London, Sage, 1996, among others.

political construction, that the author calls "abstract relations" (i.e., a "national community of strangers",<sup>87</sup> people who exercise mutual recognition of *membership* without actually knowing each other). This was, for the author, the birth of the nation-state of our epoch.

For the purpose of this chapter it is arguable that a broad concept of state, that is, a political, legal and powerful organisation of people, is the most adequate. The intention is not to analyse all known forms of the political and ideological use of historiography by the state, but it is important to mention some of the most important ones. Even if we only intend to study the use of historiography by the *Estado Novo*, some examples of prior types of manipulation can be relevant for the analysis.

Both for classical Athens and for republican or imperial Rome, it is very difficult to argue against the existence of some sort of a 'state'. Writing history was then for the purpose of the telling of past events. Yet some of these 'stories' were intended to be faithful to the facts, while others were dominated by the state power, telling what political interests determined should be told. This way of recording history is apparently the most ancient of all: the one that serves some interests other than what we now call 'scientific' aims. The purpose of this type of history production can be of a personal, economic, political or ideological nature, or even of any other kind. What they all have in common is the fact that the pursuit of 'truth' is less important than what the message of the 'story' is intended to be.

The state, as defined above, always tried to keep power in its hands, and historiography was frequently used to bolster this. The past, seen as a moral lesson, is a powerful weapon to induce others to believe that the state is the one and the only representative of a great, heroic, and glorious past. In order to do so, the state, has always needed to have 'history' told in a way that supports certain objectives, that is, in a way that will support its own agenda. Under economic, political or ideological strain, some 'historians' did in fact write it distortedly. This chapter will focus on nationalism and on the kind of historiography that a nationalist state produces in order to credit its ideas.

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<sup>87</sup> JAMES - *op.cit.*, p.39-40.

### **3.1 - Nationalism and nationalist historiography.**

The word 'nationalism' must be defined so that it can be used in a precise rather than in a common way. Defining is made easier by analysing some examples of recent nationalism, though cases of nationalism are not exclusive to the 20th century.<sup>88</sup> It is arguable that 20th century nationalism is different from that of earlier times. It is consequently necessary to define quite clearly how the term nationalism is understood in this research.

The concept of nationalism is strongly connected with the political ideologies of the 1920s and of the 1930s, and it played a very important role in the European political scene of that period. The dominant political ideologies were German Nazism, Italian Fascism, Soviet Stalinism and all those other political regimes that followed approximately similar principles. Despite the differences in these mentioned regimes they had a political basis in common: a powerful state that ruled the citizens and their wills, that was the conductor of the society and the 'redeemer' of economy and of national honour.

At this time, nationalism took two main forms: political nationalism and economic nationalism. Political nationalism arose from a variety of specific national situations, which make it difficult to produce a general view over the events, at least at a first glance. On economic matters such diversity is not typical. On the contrary, financial and economic crisis were, in general, one of the causes of the emergence of nationalist movements or regimes, since these proclaimed their capacity for solving the crisis. During the first half of the twentieth century, nationalism also took an economic form based upon protectionist policies, which gave the nations a great potential of economic aggressiveness. This situation led to political tension and finally broke out into a war. Germany is the most obvious example of this process and is therefore the first item of our subsequent analysis.

Despite differences, regional nationalisms of the 20th century tended to converge on some main political and economic options. The economic crisis of 1929 brought about rivalry between nations. Keynes' analysis and the application of his theories, raised inflation and monetary depreciation in Europe and in the United States which led to protectionist

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<sup>88</sup> Further in this chapter some different opinions will be discussed when presenting a theoretical approach to the concept of nationalism. Fundamental bibliography will be quoted.

policies. Economic antagonisms were ferociously and aggressively settled on the industrialised world of the 1930s. Overseas colonies were seen as fundamental pieces of the world puzzle: important sources of raw materials and preferential or exclusive markets for the surplus of the industrial production. 'Centre' and 'periphery'<sup>89</sup> could then be drawn quite precisely on the political map of the world.

From a political point of view it is important to remember that the wounds of the First World War had not been healed by the time of the 1929 crisis. Resentment towards Germany remained among the victors. Whereas, a sentiment of humiliation, due to the terms of Treaty of Versailles, affected the German people that hopefully faced the possibility of overcoming it (this is obviously one among other roots of the German nationalism, some dating from a distant past).<sup>90</sup> On this basis Hitler's ascent to political power was not a surprise. His 'excessive' and 'ostentatious' political speech with no remaining vestiges of the humility of the war losers was very appealing for the Germans. His ideas on the state and on state policy showed an authoritarian and directive vision of both politics and economy. Suddenly, and again by means of war, Germany was claiming for its 'vital space'. It was an attempt for political and economic hegemony, of spreading German nationalism in order to attain world-wide domination.

Mussolini's Italy, at first showing some hesitation but then demonstrating total adhesion to nationalist ideas, was also seeking for a powerful state and for a strong Nation. In the East, once political dominion had been attained, and the opponents eliminated, Stalin ruled, with an iron hand, the enormous country he had conquered out of the political games of the post-revolutionary period. Stalin acted as if he was the state himself. Individualism was banned from economy, the state now having the entire capacity of initiative and decision. In international terms this powerful nation could be a threat for Europe, if Stalin faced the possibility of spreading his empire. Hitler took advantage of the fear that this Eastern threat was throwing upon his nation, by presenting himself and his political options as the only possible defence towards eastern communism.

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<sup>89</sup> PERROUX, François - *L'Économie du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, P.U.F., Paris, 1961; LÉON, Pierre (ed.) - *História Económica e Social do Mundo*, vols. 4-5, Lisboa, Sá da Costa Editora, 1982.

<sup>90</sup> HUGHES, M. - *Nationalism and Society. Germany.1800 - 1945*, E. Arnold, London, 1988 and SCHULZE, H. *The Course of German Nationalism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993. Both give a broad perspective of the issue. See also GELLNER, Ernest - *Nation and Nationalism*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 1993, p.98-99, about German and Italian models of nationalism.

The Civil War in Spain (1936 to 1939) led Franco to political power. After a fratricidal and sanguinary war Spain met an authoritarian nationalist regime that sought for economic development based on state direction. That regime found support abroad, both ideologically and materially, from Nazi Germany. In spite of his victory, Franco had difficulties in re-establishing internal peace because of all the remaining rivalries and hatred from the war. Spain, although under a central, unifying and nationalist government, maintained a great deal of regionalisms and potential for local autonomies, that only by the end of Franco's regime regained their space. Yet, in a few decades, Franco managed to overcome the economic crisis resulting from the war, by improving agriculture and industry, and by building a modern and efficient road system, in short, by moving Spanish economy away from the difficulties of the 1930s.

The examples of nationalism discussed above are the best known forms of nationalism of the 20th century. A number of important theoretical issues are raised by these examples of European nationalism. For instance, is nationalism only a phenomenon of the 20th century? If not, what other kinds of nationalism can we isolate? Did nationalism give rise to nations, or is it the other way round? Can we use the concept of nationalism when talking about non-industrial or pre-industrial societies? These questions have several different answers depending on the theoretical framework adopted. André Blas Guerrero<sup>91</sup> emphasises the idea that nationalism is necessarily based on language, racial characters, religion and economy as structural elements of societies. So does A. Smith<sup>92</sup> whose "ethnicist approach" to nationalism is based on the idea that long lasting ethno-cultural identities set the grounds for the nations. Meineck's<sup>93</sup> distinction between the "political nation" and the "cultural nation" is also relevant, as it tries to elucidate the differences between political bonds and cultural (ethnographic) identities. Although trying to provide an explanation to some of the characteristics of the feeling and of the perception of the nation, this differentiation does not refer to any other further essential elements to join those mentioned by Blas Guerrero. However, it points out the essential difference between the

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<sup>91</sup> BLAS GUERRERO, Andrés - *Nacionalismos y naciones en Europa*, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 1995, p.32-34.

<sup>92</sup> SMITH, Anthony - *Nations and nationalism in a Global Era*. Cambridge, Polity Press, 1996.

<sup>93</sup> MEINECK, F. - *Cosmopolitanism and the National State*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1970.

awareness of the 'nation' while conceived as a political construction and the existence of the 'nation' while the result of a cultural legacy.

The definition of nation is not straightforward and depends on a multitude of variables such as the singularity of the building process of each nation.<sup>94</sup> What is then a 'nation'? A 'nation' depends on the historical conditions of its building process<sup>95</sup> and should not be understood as a synonym of 'state'. They are distinct concepts, functionally different and cause diverse feelings and behaviours amongst people.<sup>96</sup> Nevertheless, common sense seems to associate them so closely that they tend to be used interchangeably. Also it can be argued that 'stateness' is a necessary condition for the rise (or at least for the accomplishment) of a long lasting nation. This is the view held by Karl Deutsch who stated that a nation ought to be "independent, cohesive, politically organised, autonomous and internally legitimate".<sup>97</sup> It is also the idea expressed by Jenkins and Sofos when they state that a nation is an "unstable and «decentred» complex of social meanings constantly being transformed by political struggle" and that nations are also "«political» artefacts called into being by nationalist ideologies and movements".<sup>98</sup> Furthermore they say that for the existence of a nation a requirement is "some sort of aspiration to achieve statehood or some sort of recognition of sovereignty".<sup>99</sup> The notion of nation is closer to feelings, emotions and sentiments, and more distant from institutions, than the notion of state, at least in its origins. A 'nation' requires the self-consciousness of its existence by its own members.<sup>100</sup> It requires 'time' and a 'place': time enough to sediment a national sentiment and a stable territory to ground the same sentiment. The birth of a 'nation' is, usually, difficult to locate

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<sup>94</sup> See opinion of GELLNER, *op.cit.*, p.55.

<sup>95</sup> In his article JAFFRELOT, Christophe, "Los modelos explicativos del origen de las naciones y del nacionalismo. Revision crítica." in DELANNOI, Gil e TAGUIEFF, Pierre-André (eds.) - *Teorías del Nacionalismo*, Barcelona, Ediciones Paidós, 1993, p.220, points out as a historical condition for the birth of nations the political and economic antagonisms towards other nations.

<sup>96</sup> GELLNER - *op.cit.*, p.3-6. KUPCHAN, Charles A. (ed.) - *Nationalism and Nationalities in the new Europe*, London, Cornell University Press, 1995.

<sup>97</sup> According to Carl Friedrich's definition of nation quoted by DEUTSCH, Karl (ed.) - *Nation -Building*, London, Atherton Press, 1963, p.11-12.

<sup>98</sup> JENKINS, Brian and SOFOS, Spyros (ed.) - *Nation and Identity in Contemporary Europe*, London, Routledge, 1996, p.11.

<sup>99</sup> JENKINS and SOFOS - *op.cit.*, p.19.

<sup>100</sup> GELLNER - *op.cit.*, p.7: "Two men are of the same nation if and only if they recognize each other as belonging to the same nation.". The same idea of mutual recognition is postulated by James - *op.cit.*, p.31 to 37, when he describes what his "abstract community" and by Grillo - *op.cit.*, p.9, based on the concepts of identity of culture and language.

in the past. 'National sentiment' or 'national honour'<sup>101</sup> are quite commonly associated with the former concept.

On the origins of the nation two opposite theses are usually sustained: one is the 'modernist approach', the other is what we might call a 'historical approach'.<sup>102</sup> The first identifies the rise of nations and of nationalism as a modern phenomenon, resulting of the circumstances of industrialism, urbanisation, economic growth, mass communication, among others. The second argues in favour of the existence of long lasting national characters, the roots of which are to be sought in a distant past. Partially, at least, this last approach covers the arguments of the 'ethnicist approach' mentioned above, since the relevant characters for the definition of the nation are of the same nature (i.e. language or culture). Another theoretical perspective concerns the future of the nation. Smith calls it the "global culture approach".<sup>103</sup> The general idea is that the nation-state is about to die in an era of globalisation, an hypothesis that stands on the possibility of the globalisation of politics as is said to be happening to economy and culture. Theorists can also be divided according to their materialist or idealist basis.<sup>104</sup> For materialists the nation materialises in a specific type of social relations.<sup>105</sup> For idealists nations are an ideological product of nationalism. Kedourie argued that nations are part of a cultural identity, not of a natural one.<sup>106</sup> This idea meets another one, expressed by Gellner, when he states that "it is nationalism which engenders nations".<sup>107</sup> For Hobsbawm, traditions are "invented

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<sup>101</sup> GELLNER - *op.cit.*, p.1-2: "Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent. [...] Nationalist sentiment is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle [...]". On national consciousness ANDERSON, Benedict - "Old Empires, new nations" in *Imagined Communities, reflections on the origins and spread of nationalism*, London, Verso, 1993, p.50-65, points out the fact that Comecom or EEC do not create those sentiments on people. He asks whether anyone would be willing to die for those organisations.

<sup>102</sup> An overall view of the different theses on the subject can be picked from BESSEL, Richard - *Nation*, [Oxford], Open University, 1996, p.13-15, from JAMES - *op.cit.*, p.103 and from SMITH - *op.cit.*, p.1-7. See also DELANNOI, Gil e TAGUIEFF, Pierre-André (eds.) - *Teorías del Nacionalismo*, Ediciones Paidós, Barcelona, 1993 and SMITH, A. - "History and Modernity: Reflections on the theory of nationalism" in BOSWELL, David and EVANS Jessica (eds.) - *Representing the Nation: a Reader*, London, Routledge, 1999, p.45-61.

<sup>103</sup> SMITH - *op.cit.*, p.1-7.

<sup>104</sup> JAMES - *op.cit.*, p.39.

<sup>105</sup> This is the thesis of JAMES - *op.cit.*, p.39. He also argues that Benedict Andersen, in his *Imagined Communities*, does not empty the concept of nation of a material basis.

<sup>106</sup> Referred by BESSEL - *op.cit.*, p.13.

<sup>107</sup> GELLNER - *op.cit.*, p.55

traditions", ideas rather than realities.<sup>108</sup> This thesis presupposes an ideological intention behind the making of a national consciousness and therefore behind the making of history.

Let us now focus on nationalistic historiography. Some examples of German or Soviet historiography could be brought in but, since this work is on the Portuguese reality, it seems preferable to analyse Portuguese examples. Two fundamental types of historiographic texts must be considered: textbooks and academic issues. During the *Estado Novo*,<sup>109</sup> nationalist ideals underpinning the narrative of history in school textbooks and history books for children are quite evident. These books represent the first images of a national history that was meant to build a national conscience. These first 'lessons' tended to be unforgettable and were meant to build a nationalistic adhesion, even if subconscious.<sup>110</sup> It is important to mention that for the first four grades (children from 6 to 10 years old) there were official textbooks, one per grade. This policy began in 1936<sup>111</sup> and lasted until the end of the *Estado Novo*, in 1974.<sup>112</sup> These textbooks included all subjects taught during the four 'primary' school years (*ensino primário*). Even for the *liceu* (meaning the next seven years of school, before entering University) students had to use official textbooks. Once again the ideological charge of nationalist historiography was present there. The first history lessons in Portuguese schools consisted of a succession of separate remarkable episodes most of them conducted by heroic protagonists. Some of the subjects were: the resistance to Roman invasion led by *Viriato*, the fight for independence conducted by *Afonso Henriques*, the war against *Castilla* in the late years of the fourteenth century whose heroes were *D. João Mestre de Aviz* (who became King John the First) and *Nuno Álvares Pereira*, the

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<sup>108</sup> HOBBSBAWM, Eric and RANGER, Terence (eds) - *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983.

<sup>109</sup> *Estado Novo* is the name of a regime that began formally in 1933 and lasted until 1974, when a military revolution put an end to it. Nevertheless the period between the military action that, in the 28<sup>th</sup> May 1926, ended the *First Republic*, and 1933 is also considered *latu sensu* part of the *Estado Novo*.

<sup>110</sup> DIOGO, Américo António Lindeza - *Literatura infantil. História, Teoria e Interpretações*, Porto Editora, Porto, 1994.

<sup>111</sup> The law that determined this decision dates from the 24<sup>th</sup> November 1936 (*Decreto-lei 27279*) but its implementation occurred only in 1937 with the *Decreto 27882*.

<sup>112</sup> The following are some school textbooks of the *Estado Novo*: GASPAR, Joaquim - *Livro de Leitura da 4ª Classe*, 5th ed., Coimbra, Atlântica Editora, 1968; LIMA, Augusto C. Pires - *Portugal, Livro de leitura Classes I e II*, Porto, 1933; LIMA, Augusto C. Pires - *Portugal, Livro de leitura Primeiro Ciclo anos 1º, 2º e 3º*, Porto, 1937; LIMA, Augusto C. Pires e LIMA, Américo Pires - *Leituras para o Ensino Primário, terceira classe*, 18th ed., Porto, Porto Editora, 1948; *LIVRO de Leitura para a 3ª Classe*, 4th ed., Porto, Porto Editora, 1958; MELO, Manuel de - *História de Portugal, Ensino Primário e Elementar*, 5th ed., Porto, Domingos Barreira Editor, 1941.



discoveries of the fifteenth century co-ordinated from *Sagres* by the *Infante D. Henrique*.<sup>113</sup> In these books the facts of history were presented out of their context.<sup>114</sup> As well as this, the events were always narrated in chronological order, with no regard to structural explanations or interpretations. These history lessons had a moral and nationalist purpose. If those Portuguese of the old times had been able to dignify their country, and were remembered for their heroic deeds, so would the achievements of the present be remembered. The message was that any Portuguese could, and should, take the example of those of whom Camões, the famous poet of the 16th century, said "*Of those whose brave acts have been releasing them from the rules of death*".<sup>115</sup> These heroes were presented as models, the stories of their lives being treated as public heritage.<sup>116</sup> Any Portuguese could attempt to follow their example although not all would become heroes. Those led to such position by their personal character and tireless effort could hope to be celebrated side by side with historic heroes in the future.

This idea suited, of course, the nationalist tendency to exalt the leader. Salazar was proclaimed as a national hero, side by side with the great achievers of the past. Tributes to the dictator celebrated most commonly his achievements of the 1930s, when he had solved the economic crisis. Salazar was frequently compared with Afonso Henriques,<sup>117</sup> the first King of Portugal. Following a chronological sequence, Portuguese history presented Salazar as the 'last but not least' hero. This was common in both school textbooks and books read by children for leisure. These books created an image in which Salazar was identified with the destinies of the nation and, like past heroes, was capable of leading the country to an age of prosperity. The expression: "*Who lives? Portugal! Portugal! Portugal! Who rules? Salazar! Salazar! Salazar!*" used to be shouted in political demonstrations but was

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<sup>113</sup> Other examples, all of the same nature, are provided in PAULO, Heloisa - *Estado Novo e Propaganda em Portugal e no Brasil. O SPN/SNI e o DIP*, Coimbra, Minerva, 1994; see p.106-107 on the use of history as propaganda, specially with young children.

<sup>114</sup> LEAL, Olavo d'Eça - *História de Portugal para meninos preguiçosos*, Porto, Livraria Tavares Martins, 1943, p.260, states: "*As it happened to Viriato [during the Roman conquest], Sidónio Pais [during the «First Republic»] was killed by Portuguese betrayers*".

<sup>115</sup> "*E aqueles que por obras valerosas se vão da lei da morte libertando [...]*", CAMÕES, Luis Vaz de, *Lusiadas, Proposição*. Camões was one of the celebrated "heroes" of Portuguese literature, frequently quoted during the *Estado Novo*.

<sup>116</sup> There is a book dedicated to children where the "lesson" is quite obvious: COSME, José de Oliveira (1977, reed.) *As lições do Tonecas - diálogos humorísticos*, Lisboa, Editorial Presença, p.110-111.

<sup>117</sup> MAIA, Rui Leandro A. da C. - "História e Política: O uso da imagem de D. Afonso Henriques durante o Estado Novo" in *II Congresso Histórico de Guimarães - D. Afonso Henriques e a sua época*, Guimarães, 1996, (to be published; by courtesy of the author).

also reproduced in books designed for children.<sup>118</sup> Soon the children's minds were imbued with the message.

Other type of books where we can find nationalist historiography are 'scientific' publications.<sup>119</sup> A significant example is a book<sup>120</sup>, written by João Ameal in 1940, and published during the year of the official celebrations of the *Descobrimentos* (the maritime discoveries of the fifteenth century). In this book João Ameal aimed to rewrite the history of Portugal, as stated in the preface.<sup>121</sup> He stated that "history is a science, an art and an ethic and something more than that": history is, to the real historian, an "exam of consciousness".<sup>122</sup> Ameal aimed to write the history of Portugal, beginning in the prehistory, proceeding to the formation of the state and the military process of the 'Reconquest';<sup>123</sup> moving on to the maritime discoveries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and the spread of Christianity; studying, one by one, the great kings that built the motherland; "painfully" documenting the decline of traditions during the 19th century and the victory of revolt and destruction over monarchy. He ends 'his' history on a hopeful note: Portugal climbed the hill once again during the 1930s. He states that his enthusiasm is defensible, because "making history is making a judgement", not on grounds of personal principles but on superior, universal and eternal truths, those that the Portuguese had always known how to defend.<sup>124</sup> Another theme stated in Ameal's book is that Portugal had maintained a part of its great past: one of the major overseas Empire and the dignity of prior examples that could still claim for universal respect.<sup>125</sup> The author's will was to write a history denying what he

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<sup>118</sup> For instance: LEAL- *op.cit.*, p.267: "[...] -Paulo Guilherme! Who lives? [...] -Portugal!! -Paulo Guilherme! Who rules? [...] -SALAZAR!!!" and CASTRO e ALMEIDA, Virginia de - *História de Dona Redonda e da sua gente*, 6th ed., Lisboa, Clássica Editora, 1989, p.23-24: "[...] Everybody was shouting: Portugal! Portugal! Portugal! [...] - Who rules? [...] - Salazar! Salazar! Salazar!".

<sup>119</sup> Some of these texts were not propagandistic texts in their forms or intentions: their authors believed they were producing scientific work.

<sup>120</sup> AMEAL, João - *História de Portugal das origens até 1940*, Porto, Livraria Tavares Martins, 7ª ed., 1974.

<sup>121</sup> AMEAL - *op.cit.*, p.VII-XV.

<sup>122</sup> AMEAL- *op.cit.*, p.VII and VIII: "*Que é a História? Uma ciência? Uma arte? Uma ética? [...] Tudo isso, e mais que tudo isso. [...] a História constitui, para o verdadeiro historiador, - um exame de consciência.*".

<sup>123</sup> Soon after the Muslim invasion of the Iberian peninsula (in 711 a. C.) the Christian people remaining there started the reconquest of the territory. That process is commonly known among Portuguese and Spanish as *A Reconquista* ("The Reconquest").

<sup>124</sup> AMEAL - *op.cit.*, p.X-XI: "[...] *historiar é julgar.*".

<sup>125</sup> AMEAL - *op.cit.* p.XII: "*A par de um Império ultramarino que ainda é dos maiores do Mundo, alguma coisa mantivemos: a irradiação espiritual da dignidade, dos belos exemplos [...] que [...] ainda agora nos impõem ao respeito universal.*".

considered to be the trend to diminish the Portuguese greatness (and he quotes Oliveira Martins<sup>126</sup> as an example of that): this was, he thought, a necessary project.<sup>127</sup>

The same themes emerge from the table of contents of João Ameal's nationalistic history of Portugal. The third part that goes from 1385 to 1521 is called "The Golden Age" (*A Idade de Ouro*); the fourth part, from 1521 to 1621, is titled "Lights of Crepuscle" (*Fogos de Crepúsculo*); the fifth part that corresponds to the end of the Spanish domination, is called "Portugal Reborn" (*Portugal Nasce de Novo*). When referring to the influence of the French Revolution, the author opens a chapter by writing "Bad winds from France" (*Maus ventos sopram de França*); the beginning of the liberal period (after the revolution of 1820) is called "The Hell is broken loose" (*O Diabo à solta*); finally, the Republic is a "Bloody Mess" (*Balbúrdia sanguinolenta*) but the military dictatorship after the 28<sup>th</sup> May 1926 is the "Reconquest of the Order" (*Reconquista da Ordem*).<sup>128</sup>

It is also revealing the way João Ameal refers to Salazar.<sup>129</sup> The end of his history of Portugal is a tribute to Salazar. The achievements in the financial and economic fields,<sup>130</sup> as well as the reconstruction of the Portuguese dignity, were the major topics. Salazar is presented as the most recent national hero, his political points of view representing the only way for Portugal to regain its place in the international scene. Ameal compares Salazar to other dictators of his time: Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler and Franco. Yet Salazar was presented as someone who disliked public spectacle, preferring a lonely, tranquil, methodical and ascetic life. These were seen as virtues, as the public interest was the only real concern of the leader of the regime. All his work and all his effort were presented as focused on the recovering of the nation and none on his personal vanity. Finally, the author concludes that

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<sup>126</sup> Oliveira Martins is one of the Portuguese historians of the nineteenth century. He wrote a Portuguese History disregarding some of the "myths" of Portuguese tradition. As an example he 'disrespected' the memory of the first king, *D. Afonso Henriques* comparing him with a wild pig (Cf. MARTINS, Oliveira - *História de Portugal*, Lisboa, Guimarães e Cª Editores, 1977, 17ª ed., p.75: "*Vivia dentro do seu Portugal como um javardo no seu refoio [...] possuía apenas a tenacidade brava e bronca do javali.*").

<sup>127</sup> AMEAL - *op.cit.*, p.XIV: "[...] a empresa a que nos volámos [...] é uma empresa que se impunha."

<sup>128</sup> AMEAL - *op.cit.*, p.843-846.

<sup>129</sup> AMEAL - *op.cit.*, p.718-727.

<sup>130</sup> AMEAL - *op.cit.*, p.718.

"the greatness of Salazar is at the reach of the most myopic: his achievement is the reconstruction of the homeland, high and pure, as History made it".<sup>131</sup>

This is one out of many examples that can be used to illustrate this type of history written during the *Estado Novo*. These works were not naive productions, neither did their authors pretend them to be so. On the contrary, authors openly proclaimed their nationalist point of view and their engagement with the political *status quo*. The history they produced could be classified as "an imaginary history", and it was intended to be effective in terms of cultural intervention.<sup>132</sup> It is important, however, to point out that not all historians were at the service of state propaganda. During the *Estado Novo* some historians were working very seriously on scientific issues, unaware of political tendencies. This attitude must not be confused with aversion or opposition to the political regime. Although there was some historical research guided by opposite ideological positions, there was a number of researchers who did not involve themselves in the debate. One example of this is the labour of those, writing about the medieval period, who conducted in publishing entire collections of medieval documentation, without expressing political preferences or intentions at all.<sup>133</sup>

### 3.2 - The political ideology of the Portuguese *Estado Novo*.

In order to understand the evolution of the Portuguese political changes during the 20th century, it is essential to consider the political history of the last decades of the previous century.<sup>134</sup> Since 1820 some radical transformations occurred in the Portuguese political scene. In that year, under the influence of the ideas of the French Revolution, a revolution led by Liberals took place, transforming the absolute monarchy into a constitutional one. The opposition to that radical change led to civil war that ended with the victory of the liberal forces. Portugal became a constitutional monarchy. This was however,

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<sup>131</sup> AMEAL - *op.cit.*, p.726: "*A grandeza de Salazar já está ao alcance da vista, ainda dos mais míopes. [...] A Pátria, aí a temos, de novo erguida - pura e alta como a história a fez.*".

<sup>132</sup> Using Bennett's concept, when he refers to the example of Beamish Museum, BENNETT, Tony – "Museums and ...", p.69.

<sup>133</sup> Among many others, one name emerges: Avelino de Jesus da Costa, who was a professor in the University of Coimbra.

<sup>134</sup> Further information on Portuguese History of this period: SERÃO, Joel e MARQUES, A. H. de Oliveira (dir.) - *NOVA História de Portugal*, Lisboa, Editorial Presença, 1990, vol. XI.; MATTOSO, José (dir.) - *História de Portugal*, Lisboa, Editorial Estampa,

short lived. Republican ideals quickly spread through the country and some crucial decisions put the King in a very difficult position. It is the issue of what the Portuguese usually called the 'Pink Map' (*Mapa Cor-de-Rosa*<sup>135</sup>) which opposed in 1890 Portuguese and British diplomacy over the control of African territories between Angola and Mozambique. British diplomacy insisted that Portugal had no right to occupy those territories and demanded the withdrawal of all Portuguese troops. The incident remained diplomatic and no significant military confrontation took place, but the King of Portugal came to accept British demands. This victory of the British position and the 'humiliation' imposed by D. Carlos to Portugal became powerful weapons in the hands of the republicans. Other difficulties, of political, financial and economic nature, also made the task of ruling the country impossible: parliamentary powers completely overruled Royal will to impose stable governments, and Portugal had an average of more than three governments per year. After a badly organised and unsuccessful insurrection in Porto (the *31 de Janeiro*) in 1891, the Republican Party saw the continuous growth of the number of its members. D. Carlos and his son were murdered in Lisbon in 1 February 1908. In 5 October 1910, after a short battle in Lisbon, the Republicans defeated the royal troops and the Republican period began.

The Portuguese *First Republic* (from 1910 until 1926<sup>136</sup>) was a "disastrous" experience.<sup>137</sup> Republican governments made the same mistakes as their predecessors. Due to the parliamentary regime no governments lasted long enough to define continuous and congruous policies. The President of the Republic had no power over crises, as the constitutional text conferred him very limited authority; some bloody rebellions, which opposed different political forces, took place and the country lived years of great social, economic and financial difficulties. After endless political arguments, Portugal entered the First World War which was a painful and apparently pointless experience. The main reason to enter the War, it was argued, was the acquisition of a good diplomatic position to discuss the future of the colonies, among the victors; however, the constant changes in Portuguese

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vols. 5-6-7. On museums see SANTOS, Maria Alcina Ribeiro Correia Afonso dos - *Aspectos da Museologia em Portugal no século XIX - Lisboa*, Direcção Geral do Ensino Superior e das Belas-Artes e Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisboa, 1970.

<sup>135</sup> The map has this name because the area between Angola and Mozambique, the one in question, and the areas of the two mentioned colonies, were colored pink.

<sup>136</sup> The *First Republic* was the result of a revolution (1910, October the 5<sup>th</sup>) that put an end to the monarchy. This regime ended with another revolution, that began a military dictatorship (1926, May the 26<sup>th</sup>)

<sup>137</sup> SERÃO, Joel e MARQUES, A. H. de Oliveira (dir.) - *NOVA História de Portugal*, Lisboa, Editorial Presença, 1990, vol. XI.

government made the national participation in the conflict a very dubious action and even that goal was not achieved. A significant number of Portuguese soldiers died in France.

After the War, Portuguese economy faced bankruptcy. On the 28th of May 1926 a military rebellion broke out and a military dictatorship was established. Discipline and public authority, although seen as necessary to reinstall political order, were not sufficient to solve economic and financial problems.

António Oliveira Salazar, a teacher of Economy and Finance at the University of Coimbra who believed in his own capacity for solving the Portuguese economic problems, was then invited to become minister of finance. He actually resigned from government soon after he had joined it. He was asked to return, but he imposed conditions to accept the charge. His main demand was that every governmental decision implying expenditure or affecting the national economy and finance could not be taken without his approval. His conditions were accepted and so were his policies.<sup>138</sup> He was successful in his attempt to overcome the Portuguese economic crisis and this assured his political support. As a consequence Salazar became *Presidente do Conselho* (Prime Minister) and extended his authority from Finance to the entire control of the government, a situation that lasted for several decades. He founded the so called *Estado Novo* by grounding it on a legal basis, which became the new Constitution of 1933. From then on, the Portuguese state was standing on a strong, authoritarian, corporative and nationalist Constitution. These were the basic principles of the new regime. The *Estado Novo* was intended to be a regeneration of Portuguese cultural, moral, political and historical values and a way to a peaceful and prosperous era. Nevertheless, Salazar always said that the first years would be difficult ones.<sup>139</sup> The major problems were economic and financial. Salazar explained the situation to

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<sup>138</sup> The text of Salazar's speech during the ceremony of acceptance of the Ministry of Finance is very important. There is a English version: SALAZAR, A.O. - *Doctrine and Action: internal and foreign policy of the new Portugal, 1928-1939*, translated by Edgar Broughton, London, Faber, 1939. The quotation of the speech dated 27<sup>th</sup> April 1928 is as follows: [Salazar's demands to accept the Ministry of Finance] "a) That each Government department shall undertake to limit and to organize its services within the total amount allotted to it by the Ministry of Finance; b) That any measures adopted by the various Government departments which may directly affect the State's receipts and expenditure shall be discussed beforehand and an agreement arrived at the Ministry of Finance; c) That the Ministry of Finance shall be entitled to place his veto on all increases of current and ordinary expenditure, as well as on expenditure for development purposes, for which the necessary credit operations shall not be undertaken without the knowledge of the Ministry of Finance."

<sup>139</sup> SALAZAR, A.O. - *Discursos e notas Políticas*, Coimbra Editora, 2ª ed., vol. II, 1946, p.146-148: when Salazar opened an exhibition commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Revolution he made a speech evoking the idea of *era of restoration, era of development*; he stated that the past ten years had been necessary to rebuilt the nation: the following ten would be of economic and financial wealth.

the country in very simple terms: he said<sup>140</sup> that the circumstances were so serious that the government could not admit the luxury of mispending a single *centavo*.<sup>141</sup> Salazar's assertion that [the Portuguese must] *produce and save*, which summarised the dictator's basic economic idea and also his most important political decisions on economic matters, became a national example, repeatedly quoted. Salazar, as a good housekeeper,<sup>142</sup> would not ask for loans and would administrate the finance of the country exclusively within the national income.<sup>143</sup>

Salazar was, undoubtedly, the head of the regime. During the military dictatorship, which lasted from the revolution against the Republican regime (1926) until the approval of the new constitution (1933), Salazar had the opportunity to prove his political ideas in government. But, as he said, politics and government were not his personal ambition.<sup>144</sup> Even though he claimed this, his previous active political and ideological life prove the contrary. When he was a student in Coimbra his activities were well known among those who resisted Republican ideas of a secular society.<sup>145</sup> His political tendency is not easy to define. It is nevertheless known that Salazar was a member of the *CADC - Centro Académico de Democracia Cristã* (Christian Democracy Academic Centre<sup>146</sup>). Later he gathered political support as a result of his action as a Minister of Finance. Being considered as the 'redeemer' of the home-land he was able to ground the basic institutions of the *Estado Novo* on the Constitution of 1933.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p 97: "O Tesouro não tem um centavo que possa ser mal gasto."

<sup>141</sup> *Centavo* is the hundredth part of the *escudo*. In the context, one *centavo* was an insignificant amount of money.

<sup>142</sup> FERRO, António - *Salazar - O homem e a sua obra*, Lisboa, Empresa Nacional de Publicidade, 1933, p.5, establishes that comparison. Salazar himself makes the comparison, more than once; for instance in SALAZAR, A.O. - *Discursos*, vol. I, Coimbra ed., Coimbra, 1935, p.10 and 11. These ideas, however, are not original ones: in a selection of literary texts published in 1902 to be used in Portuguese lessons in the *Liceu* (from the fifth to the eleventh grade) there is one entitled "The Influence of domestic economy in manners and in public happiness" in *Nova Selecta Portuguesa*, 5ª ed., Livraria Académica, Braga, 1902, p.5-8.

<sup>143</sup> SALAZAR, A.O. - *Discursos e notas Políticas*, Coimbra Editora, 2ª ed., vol. II, 1946, p 18.

<sup>144</sup> Salazar refers his one day presence in the parliament and the five days of his first participation in government. Salazar, *apud* AMEAL - *op.cit.*, p.723.

<sup>145</sup> On Salazar's youth and on his activities as a student see his biography by NOGUEIRA - *op.cit.*, vol. I, p.83-90.

<sup>146</sup> MARTINS, Moisés de Lemos - *O Olho de Deus no Discurso de Salazar*, Lisboa, Afrontamento, 1990, p.56.

<sup>147</sup> FERRO, António - *Salazar - O homem e a sua obra*, Lisboa, Empresa Nacional de Publicidade, 1933. António Ferro's description of Salazar is worthy of quotation: "[...] a modest house [...] an office without an ante-chamber; one desk; a single suit made by an obscure tailor; [...] pure clear eyes, ordering an entire people's disorder. That is all". Also of interest: GOMES, F. Matos - *Salazar. Professor e educador de um povo*, Porto, Edições Além, 1953 and LIMA, Fernando Castro Pires de - *Salazar no vértice de oito séculos de história*, Porto, Domingos Barreira Editor, 1940.

Salazar's political speeches became an ideological and doctrinaire reference to the regime.<sup>148</sup> If read now it is quite obvious that it was precisely one of his aims. Some other relevant personalities of the regime also had an important political intervention, but Salazar was always the key reference. Consequently, in order to understand the formation of the *Estado Novo*, it is important to analyse the earlier speeches and political notes written by Salazar, shortly after the approval of the new constitution. The *Estado Novo* was still being built, but Salazar had already a firm position in power. As we are tracking the building of an ideology, we will observe the period between the official beginning of the *Estado Novo* and the end of the 1930s;<sup>149</sup> then the war partially destroyed Salazar's plan of ten years of development. We will only take into consideration the most relevant statements concerning politics and ideological concepts. It is possible to divide the contents of Salazar's speeches into six major themes: what he thought about the revolution of the 28<sup>th</sup> May 1926, his ideas on nationalism, his major concerns on internal politics, his guidelines referring to economic matters, his discourse about the overseas colonies and what he thought Portuguese external politics should be.

Salazar saw the 1926 revolution as the only way to a peaceful recovery from so many years of Republican instability.<sup>150</sup> Only the army had the necessary strength to lead the revolution, so Portugal had a debt towards it.<sup>151</sup> Nevertheless Portugal needed a civil government, not a military one. Salazar believed that the revolution raised the necessary conditions to the development of "an honest administration and to a moral way of doing politics".<sup>152</sup> As Salazar said "the previous disorder was more than the lack of order: it was the accumulation of all the elements of national ruin, degradation and dissolution".<sup>153</sup> Another of his convictions was that the "Portuguese people would appreciate the possibility

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<sup>148</sup> PAULO, Heloisa - *Estado Novo e Propaganda em Portugal e no Brasil. O SPN/SNI e o DIP*, Minerva, Coimbra, 1994, p.83. FERRO - *op.cit.*, p.5. Ferro considers Salazar as a steersman who leads the country to redemption. Another comparison is made on pages 164-165: Salazar is like D. Henrique (the famous son of King John the First who begun the Maritime Discoveries); D. Henrique worked on the maps trying to find the way across the dangerous Atlantic; Salazar worked on Portuguese budget trying to find the way across financial and economic problems.

<sup>149</sup> See note 134.

<sup>150</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.28.

<sup>151</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.75.

<sup>152</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.3-4; p.11-12; p.72.

<sup>153</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.24: "a desordem que não era apenas falta de ordem mas o conjunto de todos os elementos positivos de desagregação, de ruína, de dissolução nacional".



of believing that the State was, indeed, an «Honest Person»".<sup>154</sup> In 1935 he recognised that the possibility of rebellion was still a threat against the *Estado Novo*. In his words, "not only does a past of indiscipline weigh on us, but also the fact that all the ones who lost their positions of command or profit because of the national revolution will try to recover their influence and previous interests in any way".<sup>155</sup> Yet, Salazar believed that the right way was the one pointed out by the militaries. Order, discipline, honest administration and honest politics, these were, according to Salazar, necessary elements for the redemption of Portugal.

For Salazar nationalism was among the most important items for the Portuguese recovery after the Republican period. The participation in the First World War, and the disaster of the political indifference towards the Portuguese troops abandoned in France,<sup>156</sup> among other external political decisions of the Republican period, lead Salazar to sustain that Portugal should seek its way into international politics, though bearing in mind that the Portuguese interests were to preserve and that Portugal should never again take any decisions under pressure from other countries.<sup>157</sup> Looking back into history and analysing the independence crises of 1383-85 and 1579-80 Salazar divided the Portuguese people in two different groups: those who always struggled for independence, putting their motherland above all; and those who only thought of their own interests, disregarding the superior importance of the country.<sup>158</sup> This dichotomy was part of a rhetorical and moral discourse, which demanded all Portuguese to be faithful to nationalistic principles. This intention is very clearly stated in another part of his speeches, where he says that institutions and laws should almost force everybody to be patriot "when one is not by discipline or

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<sup>154</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.30: "*O Povo [...] aprecia a certeza de que o Estado é uma «Pessoa de Bem»*".

<sup>155</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.67: "*Nem temos de admirar-nos de que exista permanentemente uma certa agitação: não só pesa sobre nós longo passado de indisciplina, como todos os que perderam posições de mando ou de lucro, por efeito da Revolução nacional [...] hão-de tentar por vários modos reconstituir as influências e interesses anteriores*".

<sup>156</sup> The discussion for and against the Portuguese participation in the World War gained a political nature. After the decision of sending troops to France, the change of government led to power those who were not in favour of Portuguese participation. So Portuguese troops were almost forgotten and died in France because of the lack of support. This is one of the most "*indecent*" events of the First Republic, ever since remembered and a cause for popular repulsion. On this subject see SERRÃO, Joel and MARQUES, A. H. de Oliveira (dir.) - *op.cit.*, Vol. XI, p.709-722.

<sup>157</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.26.

<sup>158</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.52-53.

virtue".<sup>159</sup> One of the strongest reasons presented to respect Portuguese national independence was the long lasting stability of its borders. They were eight centuries old and, as such, they were the oldest stable frontiers of Europe. Salazar strongly emphasised that fact by affirming that Portugal would not be separated from any of the territories under its sovereignty.<sup>160</sup> For him, "the national consciousness and the cohesion of the Portuguese people were the essence and the reason of being of the nation".<sup>161</sup> This nationalism was the basis, the indestructible basis, of the *Estado Novo*.<sup>162</sup> Nevertheless Salazar had the perception that nationalism, if aggressive, might not be the best way. He feared international conflicts and always sustained that nationalism should not be a willing to conquer other nations. Portugal was not disturbing the peace of other nations and therefore wanted to be left in peace. However, Salazar affirmed that even an "aggressive" nationalism was better than the "internationalisms" of that time<sup>163</sup>, in a clear allusion to communist ideals.

As far as internal politics were concerned Salazar had firm ideas: order, discipline, financial and economic sanity, redemption of cultural and moral values. One of the major problems Salazar found once he took control of government, was what he called "administrative immorality".<sup>164</sup> The Portuguese administration was invaded by civil servants who were said not to have any other interest but filling their own pockets with public money. To stop this chaotic situation, Salazar ordered a national inquest in order to establish the role of each civil servant and the salaries paid.<sup>165</sup> For Salazar this was fundamental: as he said, despite being against violence in government (that is using excess of force, with no moral and no legality<sup>166</sup>), he believed that it was worse not to be obeyed

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<sup>159</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.170-171: "Mas as instituições e as leis devem funcionar para que se seja patriota por necessidade, quando se não é por disciplina ou virtude."

<sup>160</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.132.

<sup>161</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.128: "[...] a coesão dos portugueses [...] a consciência Nacional, quer dizer a essência e a razão de ser da Nação [...]".

<sup>162</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.132: "Sem receio colocamos o nacionalismo português na base indestrutível do Estado Novo [...]".

<sup>163</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.223: "[...] piores que nacionalismos, mesmo agressivos, são alguns internacionalismos da hora presente."

<sup>164</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.70: "[...] tenho sido, até onde chego, absolutamente inflexível contra a desordem, a imoralidade administrativa, o compadrio nacional, o assalto dos interesses ilegítimos [...]".

<sup>165</sup> SALAZAR, - *op.cit.*, p.100.

<sup>166</sup> SALAZAR, - *op.cit.*, p.70.

than not to let others criticise his orders.<sup>167</sup> A ministerial commission designed to study the problem of different salaries for similar tasks in public administration, did not perform as he expected; Salazar concluded "Unfortunately, there are lots of things that only I am capable of doing".<sup>168</sup> This way of thinking lead Salazar to another conclusion: "I am not even interested that everyone thinks I am right; it is enough for me that the country knows my reasons".<sup>169</sup> Those reasons were about some fundamental issues: "We [*Portuguese*] do not discuss God; we do not discuss the Motherland; we do not discuss Authority; we do not discuss Family; we do not discuss Work".<sup>170</sup> In 1937, after an attempt against his life, Salazar demonstrated that he was aware of some criticisms towards the regime. As he said: "This regime that they still call a dictatorship, and now nicknamed as fascist, is as gentle as our manners, as modest as the life of the nation, friend of work and of the people".<sup>171</sup> Salazar knew that, despite being constitutional, the regime was indeed authoritarian. The power rested in his hands, he would not tolerate insubordination and he demanded the control over administration, government and all civil servants.

Economic matters were another of Salazar's major problems. He spent the first years in government solving the severe debts Portugal had inherited from the Republican regime. His ideas were simple and effective: the country and its people should not spend more than they were capable of producing.<sup>172</sup> The implications were obvious: Portugal should never get international loans and Portugal should live within national production. The government and all national administration should keep the expenses under control, and the State should

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<sup>167</sup> SALAZAR, - *op.cit.*, p.133: "[...] *há menos dano em não me deixar criticar do que em não me fazer obedecer*".

<sup>168</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.102: "*Promovi a constituição de uma comissão interministerial para estudar o caso [disparidades dos salários] [...]. Se os deixo trabalhar mais, os resultados seriam contraproducentes [...]. Infelizmente há muita coisa que parece que só eu posso fazer*".

<sup>169</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.103: "*Também não me interessa que todos me dêem razão; basta-me que o País saiba as minhas razões*".

<sup>170</sup> These ideas are explained in SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.130-135. As far as *family* is concerned, it is useful to mention some concepts Salazar explained in his interview to António Ferro (FERRO - *op.cit.*, 137-138): Those who were not married, with very few exceptions, were considered non valid citizens because that proved that they were not able to keep regular human relations, that they could not produce enough to keep a family. A very good analysis on this questions is produced in MARTINS - *op.cit.*, p.94 to 96

<sup>171</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.302: "[...] *este regime a que ainda chamam Ditadura, e agora carregado com o apêdo de fascista, é brando como os nossos costumes, modesto como a própria vida da Nação, amigo do trabalho e do povo*". On the use of the word "fascist" to classify the Portuguese regime, see PINTO, António Costa - *O Salazarismo e o Fascismo Europeu. Problemas de interpretação nas Ciências Sociais*, Lisboa, Ed. Estampa, 1992.

<sup>172</sup> SALAZAR - "Duas Economias" in *Estudos*, Coimbra, nº 71, Março de 1928, p.577 to 600, explains his ideas about saving. Again the image of the good housekeeper is evoked in page 591.

be the first to give the example.<sup>173</sup> As a result, most governmental economic measures were intended for the Portuguese state to "receive more and to pay less".<sup>174</sup> This is reflected in the title of one particular speech: "in order, to work in favour of Portugal".<sup>175</sup> Salazar's project included an important role for public initiative. The State would take responsibility for the major national projects (as electrification) but the economy needed public investments, in the European territory as well as in the colonies.<sup>176</sup> Another problem that concerned Salazar was the high demographic growth. As he saw it, only two solutions could face this problem, because agriculture would not absorb all demographic surplus: industry should develop and people should emigrate to the colonies. He considered absolutely obvious that colonies should sell raw materials to Portugal and buy industrial products with the money thus obtained.<sup>177</sup>

The colonies were an important question in Salazar's political and ideological discourse. Whenever Salazar affirms Portuguese identity he always includes overseas territories in the definition. After the threats to the Portuguese colonies before and during the First World War (the German military actions near Angola's frontiers caused the Portuguese first armed reaction) the *Estado Novo* never ceased to proclaim the colonies as a fundamental part of the Portuguese territory. Salazar identifies Portugal as an "Atlantic nation", attached to the ocean by economic and political links.<sup>178</sup> Portuguese governance of the overseas territories was established after the discoveries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the subsequent occupation of the land was presented as based on historic rights of ownership.<sup>179</sup> Another important issue was in Salazar's mind when he discussed the colonies: he wanted a significant place for Portugal in the international political scene. Despite the importance of its colonies, Portugal had had no international influence during

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<sup>173</sup> SALAZAR - *Discursos e notas Políticas*, Coimbra Editora, 2ª ed., vol. II, 1946, p.18, 89-93 and 97.

<sup>174</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.99: "[...] as minhas reformas são em geral para pagar menos e receber mais [...]".

<sup>175</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.45: "Na ordem, pelo trabalho, em prol de Portugal."

<sup>176</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.159-166.

<sup>177</sup> SALAZAR, - *op.cit.*, p.157-159.

<sup>178</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.79-80.

<sup>179</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.XXIII and p.44. The ideology of the regime also stated that the Portuguese were a people capable of good social relations wherever they went; see CASTELO, Cláudia - «O Modo Português de Estar no Mundo» O luso-tropicalismo e a ideologia colonial portuguesa (1933-1961), Porto, Afrontamento, 1998.

the former decades, because of internal disorder.<sup>180</sup> However, in Salazar's hands, the colonies were to become decisive pieces to be played on the international chessboard. In this game, the UK had a particular role. As the UK and Portuguese were allied, it was absolutely necessary for Salazar's international policy that the UK recognised the colonies as an integral part of Portugal.<sup>181</sup> It was also important for Salazar to get international recognition that the political reality of the Portuguese Colonial Empire was not new: before being a political reality the Empire had been a political thought, an idea, sustained by generations of Portuguese. Therefore, the colonies had not only economic but also political importance. Salazar upheld the idea of a global economy, including the European territory and the colonies. He believed that the colonies were not to be luxury properties that would sustain absent and lazy owners; on the contrary, all Portuguese territories, with no exception, should contribute to the national economy.<sup>182</sup> Furthermore, Salazar would not accept the possibility of the disposal of any part of the national territory. When, at the beginning of 1937, a rumour about the possibility of a contract with Germany in which Portugal would rent out Angola spread, it provoked a violent reaction from Salazar. He said that Portugal would never sell, rent or by any other way share its colonies. The Portuguese constitution formally forbade this kind of bargains, and even if that was not the case, national consciousness would prevent it.<sup>183</sup> This would remain as the basis of colonial policy during the *Estado Novo*. Even after the Second World War, and when all the colonial countries of Europe were decolonising, Portugal remained attached to the former position: all overseas territories were formally part of the Portuguese territory. It was said that the Nation was one and the same in Europe, Africa or Asia and Portuguese citizenship was recognised in each of those territories.

During the 1930s, after overcoming the threat of financial bankruptcy, one of Salazar's priorities became the improvement of Portuguese foreign affairs. At the beginning of the decade the world was still recovering from the 1929 crisis, following Keynes' advice and developing aggressive monetary policies. Portugal, due to its ancient agriculture, poor

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<sup>180</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.76.

<sup>181</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.147.

<sup>182</sup> SALAZAR, - *op.cit.*, p.155.

<sup>183</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.264.

industrial development and colonial Empire did not suffer much with the 1929 crisis.<sup>184</sup> Salazar was concerned with the balance of Portuguese foreign policy, between the necessity of external support and good relations and the need for self decision, away from other countries' pressure. When Salazar refers to the alliance with the UK these ideas are clearly stated: "as we have to give, we will also know how to demand something in return".<sup>185</sup> The end of the decade was marked by the Spanish civil war and Salazar made every necessary effort to prevent Portugal from any kind of direct participation. But he understood that war in Europe, either close to the Portuguese borders or far away, could potentially draw the country into a conflict against its own interests. The Portuguese position became more and more difficult. When asked about how to maintain Portuguese policy, Salazar said that he was counting on "our moral force and our material strength".<sup>186</sup> In fact, the Portuguese army was receiving financial support, new weapons and equipment, the navy was being equipped with new ships and land forces were being remodelled. Salazar defined his strategy in simple words: to be strong enough to argue and to keep political initiative.<sup>187</sup> In October 1936 the fear that the Spanish war might spread to all Europe made Salazar announce that "Portugal does not disturb the peace in the world and will not tolerate anyone who disturbs Portuguese peace".<sup>188</sup> Finally, war in Spain could no longer be seen as a regional or national conflict. The growth of German interest in the Spanish war, Hitler's intention to rule the world (or at least Europe) and the politics and desires of Stalin to create a world revolution resulted in another world war. Salazar feared Communism as a threat to civilisation, and once said that a great and violent struggle was being prepared in Europe: "order against disorder, nation against internationalism, communism against civilisation".<sup>189</sup> In fact the Second World War changed all Salazar's plans for the next ten years: he had planned for them to be years of economic growth, once the nation had been

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<sup>184</sup> SILVA, Duarte *et al.* - *Salazar e o Salazarismo*, Lisboa, Pub. D. Quixote, 1989, specially: ROSAS, Fernando - "Salazar e o Salazarismo: Um caso de longevidade política", p.13-31 and BRITO, José M. Brandão de - "Sobre as ideias Económicas de Salazar", p.33-58 and ROSAS, Fernando - *O Estado Novo nos anos trinta: 1928-1938*, Editorial Estampa, Lisboa, 1986.

<sup>185</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.81: "[...] visto que temos de dar, havemos de saber exigir."

<sup>186</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.85: "[...] e se me perguntarem como conto fazê-los valer, direi que, [...] conto conosco - quere dizer, com a nossa forma moral e com a nossa força material."

<sup>187</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.149.

<sup>188</sup> SALAZAR, - *op.cit.*, p.216: "[...] Portugal não perturba a paz no mundo nem a ninguém pode permitir que perturbe a sua".

rebuilt, but they turned out to be years of difficulties and hard struggle to keep Portugal neutral. However, by the end of the 1930s the ideological construction of the *Estado Novo* was completed. From then on only minor adjustments were introduced. Until the 1960s, Salazar kept to a great part of his original political and ideological positions. But then he became too old to govern. With Salazar the regime of the *Estado Novo* remained almost the same for more than thirty years.

### 3.3 - The nature of Portuguese Nationalism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Nationalism is not independent from its chronological context. Despite the fact that Portuguese nationalism of the twentieth century had specific characteristics it is useful to take a look over the Portuguese nationalism of the previous century: some of the long lasting realities of Portuguese culture can be found that way.

One of the most important cultural references of Portuguese nineteenth century is the so called 'Generation of the 1870s' (*Geração de setenta*). Under the strain of international literary tendencies, the last thirty years of the century in Portugal were times of great changes. Young writers rebelled against the romanticism of previous decades and proclaimed new ideas in their writings. One of the best known is *Eça de Queirós* who, in different novels, exposed the dissolution of life in Lisbon and criticised politics and politicians in a very caustic manner. One of his major themes was the lack of strength in Portuguese positions towards Spain, the 'eternal' enemy. Corruption and constant changes in government, the impossible balance between a powerless King and a parliamentary regime, provoked some of *Eça's* most sarcastic excerpts.<sup>190</sup> The disbelief in traditional values, underestimating national history and allowing the degradation of civic conduct among politicians, were some of the major criticisms made by *Eça* and shared by a large number of intellectuals.

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<sup>189</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.282: "[...] *uma violenta luta está desenhada [na Europa] [...] entre as forças da ordem e as da desordem, entre a nação e o internacionalismo, entre o comunismo e a civilização.*".

<sup>190</sup> As example: QUEIRÓS, *Eça de - Os Maias*, Lisboa, Livros do Brasil, s.d., p.169. (The novel describes life in Lisbon in 1875): One of the characters, *Dâmaso Salcedo*, who believed that only in Paris civilization could be found, declares that Lisbon is a pigsty. The same *Dâmaso*, when discussing the possibility of a Spanish invasion, affirms the intention of escaping to Paris. Another character, *João da Ega* answers *Dâmaso* violently: for him the constitutional regime was the responsible for that lack of honor and self-respect; the Portuguese

Another important aspect of the Portuguese literature of the 19th century is the renewal of an ancient 'myth': the belief in the possibility of the return of *D. Sebastião*, the young Portuguese King who had died in 1578 in Africa, in a senseless battle against Muslims. The death of the King at 24 and with no descendants provoked, two years later the Spanish domination. Between 1580 and 1640 the Portuguese crown was held by Spanish Kings. The corpse of *D. Sebastião* was never found, and people began to say that he would come back in a misty morning to restore the kingdom and defeat the Spanish. After the return of *D. Sebastião* the *fifth Empire* would begin and Portugal would then know years of greatness again. During the second half of the seventeenth century, this myth became a literary theme in the writings of *Padre António Vieira*. From then on the *sebastianismo* (a national myth that stands on the belief in the coming of someone who will solve all problems and redeem Portugal) has become part of the Portuguese mentality. In the late 19th century and in the first twenty years of the 20th century a group of writers (*Teixeira de Pascoaes*, *Jaime Cortesão*, *Leonardo Coimbra*, *António Carneiro*, *António Sérgio*, *Fernando Pessoa*, among others) gave new attention to this idea. *Fernando Pessoa* in particular became one of the best known writers who proclaimed the need of redemption for Portugal, as well as he defended the national values and the greatness of national history.<sup>191</sup> Some important literary journals of the epoch echoed this tendency.<sup>192</sup> Portuguese cultural agenda was dominated by nationalistic ideals. Many believed in the idea of the downtrodden country that urgently needed to be rebuilt by someone who would take the lead and show the way. This ideas and feelings held by the intellectuals reinforced the myth of *D. Sebastião*. With the reinforcement of its literary use the myth grew to the status of a 'national thesis'.

The *First Republic* raised the peoples hope for a real change for better. These expectations, however, were rapidly defeated. The political program of the Republican party included many promises that were never accomplished. The First World War, and all difficulties that Portugal went through during those years, produced the feeling that the

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were, he said, "*the most weak and coward race of Europe*". There is a English translation: PATRÍCIA McGowan Pinheiro and ANN Stevens, London, Bodley Head, 1965; the above quotations are in p.141-151.

<sup>191</sup> The best example of *Fernando Pessoa* 's book of this thematic is *Mensagem*. For an example of Salazar seen in the role of *D. Sebastião*, see PINTO, Pereira - *Salazar. O novo desejado*, Porto, author's edition, 1971.

<sup>192</sup> One of these is *The Eagle (A Águia)*. See BARREIRA, Cecília - *Nacionalismo e Modernismo. De Homem Cristo Filho a Almada Negreiros*, Lisboa, Assírio e Alvim, 1981 and PAULO - *op.cit.*, p.13.



country had to change. The political ambience was favourable to a revolution, and it did occur in 1926. The positive results obtained by Salazar in this field, along with propaganda,<sup>193</sup> transformed him into the '*D. Sebastião*' that had been long waited. Finally Portugal had found the leader, the one (and only) able to solve all the problems, so that Portugal would find its way to the future. Perhaps more than ever nationalism was necessary as a political support for Salazar's regime. It was urgent to 'organise' all the amalgam of sentiments, to make them converge in one direction: the rebuilding of the motherland, that is a collective effort leading to the redemption of Portugal.<sup>194</sup> It is therefore interesting to consider how nationalism gained momentum and to look at the fundamental themes and subjects that the *Estado Novo* used in its nationalist propaganda. The main subjects of the Portuguese nationalism of the *Estado Novo* were: 'territory', 'nation', 'history', 'traditions' and 'mother-land'. These gathered arguments, passions, political and military decision as well as diplomacy.

Territory was one of the key ideas to the nationalistic discourse of the *Estado Novo*. The national territory consisted of the metropolitan parcel plus the Atlantic archipelagos of Azores, Madera, São Tomé and Príncipe and Cape Verde, the African territories of Guinea, São João Baptista de Ajudá, Cabinda, Angola and Mozambique, the Indian state of Goa, Damão and Diu, and part of the island of Timor. Macau had a different statute because, although being under Portuguese administration, it was not strictly a Portuguese colony. All these parcels were considered integral and fundamental parts of the national territory, and the possibility of alienating them was completely out of question. The official political discourse always stated that the country would object to all foreign interest in those territories.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> SALAZAR - "A Lição de Salazar" - Gravuras dos quadros distribuídos pelas escolas do ensino primário, in *Escola Portuguesa*, ano IV, nº 181, 1938. MAIA - *op.cit.* on the way Salazar was compared with the first king, *D. Afonso Henriques*. This was deliberate propaganda. Also PAULO - *op.cit.*, p.58.

<sup>194</sup> This can also be interpreted in terms of culture, power and resistance; as Tony Bennett argues, "the accommodation between the working-class and ruling-class cultures which had characterised the 1930s and the 1940s was profoundly disturbed by the intrusive invasion of the postwar ideologies" (see BENNETT, Tony - *Culture: A Reformer's Science*, London, Sage, 1998, p.173). . The *Estado Novo* used this "accommodation" to impose its ideas; a real resistance to the regime, from both a political and cultural perspective, only occurred after the War.

<sup>195</sup> Refer to the *Colonial Act* added to the Constitution of 1933. See SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.264. As an example of Salazar's firm ideas on what concerns overseas territories it is worth referring to what happened in the early 1960s when India invaded Portuguese territories of Goa, Damão and Diu: Salazar considered that military invasion as an unacceptable act of war and appealed to the UN. Even having a majority of countries willing to vote against India, the veto of the URSS denied Portuguese request. See the analysis of KAY, Hug - *Salazar and Modern Portugal*, London, Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1970, p.294-328.

The nation was another important issue in Portuguese nationalism.<sup>196</sup> The definition of the idea raised a number of arguments and several theses on the foundation of the nation were written and debated.<sup>197</sup> The very fact that Portugal had had approximately the same frontiers for eight hundred years was regularly celebrated by politicians, as well as in schools all over the country. A common argument was that the identity of such an ancient nation should remain intact. It was seen as a reason for national pride and the conservation of its integrity as a duty of the state and of each citizen.

History and tradition were also main concepts and considered directly related to territory and nation. Portuguese history served as state propaganda and was presented as a sequence of heroic acts, showing the nationalistic self sacrifice of some mythical characters. Those were presented as a succession of unique and extraordinary deeds which could only have been achieved by the Portuguese people. Of course, not all historians agreed with such an ideological view of history but this was what was mostly disseminated. History was then a succession of events, of facts, of episodes, that were evidenced by material vestiges, documents and monuments. History and archaeology museums of the time wanted to present the real objects<sup>198</sup> to the public, authentic and rare, rather than to explain their functions or provide information about their contexts. Museums, as history, tended to describe or narrate, instead of explaining or commenting.<sup>199</sup> The labels identifying objects consisted of name and date of the object, authorship (if any), owner or collection of origin, but hardly any interpretation.<sup>200</sup>

Some of the great exhibitions held in Portugal during the *Estado Novo* focused either on Portugal as a nation or on some particular characteristics (such as industry). Those exhibitions were held to magnify the nation, its glorious past and present events and its

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<sup>196</sup> As an example, Salazar's prologue to the book of FERRO, António - *Salazar - O homem e a sua obra*, Lisboa, Empresa Nacional de Publicidade, 1933

<sup>197</sup> For a summary of the main theses, see PERES, Damião - *Como Nasceu Portugal*, Vertente, Porto, s.d.

<sup>198</sup> On the notion "the real thing": PEARCE, Susan - *Museum Objects and Collections. A Cultural Study*, Leicester, Leicester University Press, 1992, p.24.

<sup>199</sup> On the characteristics of museum communication see MAROEVIC, Ivo - "Between the document and information", p.30 in HOOPER-GREENHILL - *Museum, Media, Message*, Routledge, London, 1995, p.24 - 36.

<sup>200</sup> On museum objects labels see SERRELL, Beverly - *Exhibit Labels - An Interpretative Approach*, Altamira Press, Walnut Creek, 1996. The example of a buffcoat that is said to have been worn by King John the First in the battle of Aljubarrota. Despite the difficulties of identification of a garment's owner it is worth to point out the fact that museum labels describe it as a unique object, which it is, but never refer to its functionality or chronological context.

heroes. Portugal was shown as a large motherland for the extension of its territory and of its history. A motherland that dignified its past and followed its 'lessons' at the present. Overseas territories were of great importance in these displays. The Portuguese European territory was narrow and had a small number of inhabitants. Yet, there was plenty of land and of people scattered all over the world to prove the capacity of a tiny country to expand. Portugal was therefore a country of a world-wide dimension. The language, spoken in every continent, reaffirmed the past and present world-wide role of Portugal. In 1940 the "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World" (*Grande Exposição do Mundo Português*) gathered both the European and the overseas territories to show the past and present place and role of the country, not only in its history but also in the World's history .

Tradition was very much emphasised in museums. Subsequently, whenever a definition of the Portuguese character was attempted, a great deal of attention was given to custom or repeated habits of doing things, to ancient ways of working and of surviving. Old agricultural artefacts, traditional costumes, songs, festivals, gastronomy were collected and kept as precious parts of the Portuguese national identity. Despite their differences, regions were shown as complementary parts of a whole. There were tourist maps and school maps that showed Portugal as a patch-work of regions that fitted together. Strong emphasis was also put on traditional economic activities such as agriculture, grazing sheep and fishing. What was extracted from land or sea was presented to the Portuguese people as symbols of national identity. Ethnographic museums were developed by the *Estado Novo* and used to provide material evidence of the Portuguese nation. They displayed the traditional material culture of most Portuguese regions, always taking into account the bonds that tied it to nationality.<sup>201</sup>

Fig. 1. Poster of the Bureau of Propaganda (*Secretariado da Propaganda Nacional - SPN*) used in the Portuguese pavilion of the International Exhibition of Paris (1937) illustrating the diversity of popular culture in the European continental territory.



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In 1940 the *Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World* included a pavilion of *Popular Art* that became the *Museum of Popular Art*. The original exhibition, which is organised geographically, presented the country in its cohered diversity.

The *Estado Novo* also 'invented' tradition, in the style discussed by Hobsbawm.<sup>202</sup> Official celebrations and political 'ritual' were developed or changed to suit the regime. New military and civic holidays were introduced (for instance the 28th of May became an annual celebration), others were extinguished. Some street names were changed and even some *liceus* (high schools) had their names changed. Republican revolutionary names of the previous era were no longer acceptable for public places. The protocol of certain public acts was altered, many public buildings were readapted and others were built in a grandiose new style. In essence, a 'new' tradition was being made.

Another example of the establishment of Portuguese national tradition was the importance given to typical Portuguese houses. From north to south the use of traditional architectural styles was emphasised and those models were spread as the ideal for the independent families' own house.<sup>203</sup> Salazar claimed the importance of possessing an intimate home, humble but comfortable.<sup>204</sup> The diversity of traditional forms and traditional constructive solutions was seen as an interesting characteristic of Portuguese popular architecture. Nationalism highlighted the values of traditional ways of living. What was 'really' Portuguese was worth a reference and deserved national interest. This idea was applied to a play garden in Coimbra called the 'Portugal of the Children' (*Portugal dos Pequenitos*). The garden was built to present Portugal to the children in a miniaturised way. In this garden the children were to play inside and around miniatures of Portuguese monuments and typical houses. While going in and out of traditional houses, looking at farm animals or at watermills, or climbing to a castle tower, children experienced an entire laboratory of Portuguese 'reality' and absorbed a subliminal message of nationalism. The garden is a condensed combination of all major aspects of the Portuguese nationalism and was planned in five main areas.<sup>205</sup> After the main entrance there is the Colonial Section with a pavilion for each colony and huge statues of Africans, symbolising the Portuguese possession of the overseas territories; separating this section from the section of "Continental Portugal" was the Insular Section, where Azores and Madeira are represented.

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<sup>202</sup> HOBBSBAWM and RANGER - *op.cit.*, p.1-14.

<sup>203</sup> MARTINS - *op.cit.*, p.71.

<sup>204</sup> SALAZAR - *Discursos I*, (1928-1934), Coimbra ed., Coimbra, 1935, p.202.

<sup>205</sup> See end of chapter for plan and photographs. The Garden is still open; photographs were taken by the author in July 2000.

This first part of the garden ended with a world map mounted on a wall<sup>206</sup> showing the major deeds of the Portuguese sailors of the maritime discoveries with a statue of one of the official national heroes of the *Estado Novo* (Infante D. Henrique who promoted the maritime discoveries). The castle of Guimarães (the mythical birthplace of the nation) and all other important national monuments were miniaturised in the next section of the garden called Monuments of Portugal. The castle is important as the setting for a statue of the first King of Portugal, D. Afonso Henriques, who is 'defeating' the Muslims (the dates of famous battles are on the sides of the statue). The last section is devoted to popular architecture and includes models of the main types of Portuguese traditional architecture. The *Estado Novo*, by gathering in one space all 'crystallised' forms of typical architecture, invented a tradition and proclaimed the existence and the importance of such thing as traditional architecture.<sup>207</sup> As well as other traditional ways of living, traditional architecture became a 'cultural' feature. Portuguese diversity was seen as a fertile ground producing results of unique quality. The people became aware that what were previously seen as 'normal', 'popular' and 'poor'<sup>208</sup> houses had, in fact, a high cultural value that should be preserved and respected.

The ideas of territory, nation, history and tradition were the main inseparable parts of Portuguese identity. These ideas were to be taught to the younger generations. This was the only way to be sure that the ideology would remain. Therefore great part of the nationalist campaign was directed to youngsters. School books, teachers' lectures,<sup>209</sup> maps, museums, exhibitions<sup>210</sup> and monuments all repeated the same national 'lesson' that congregated people around their *mother-land*. A nation-wide organisation gathered all the students from fifth to eleventh grade. It was the 'Portuguese Youth' (*Mocidade Portuguesa*) that gave to youngsters their first paramilitary instruction side by side with sports and games. This

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<sup>206</sup> The legend of the map is a celebrated sentence from Camões, the epic poet of the 16th century: "*E se mais mundo houvera lá chegara*", which signifies that the Portuguese spread to all over the world.

<sup>207</sup> MARTINS - *op.cit.*, p.88-89. Studies on traditional Portuguese architecture, as well as other studies on ethnology, had a great development during the *Estado Novo*. On traditional Portuguese architecture see: *Arquitectura Popular em Portugal*, 3 vol., Associação dos Arquitectos Portugueses, s.d.; OLIVEIRA, Ernesto Veiga de e GALHANO, Fernando - *Arquitectura Tradicional Portuguesa*, Lisboa, Pub. D. Quixote, 1992; OLIVEIRA, Ernesto Veiga de, GALHANO, Fernando e PEREIRA, B. - *Construções Primitivas em Portugal*, Lisboa, Pub. D. Quixote, 1988.

<sup>208</sup> This was in total coherence with Salazar's ideas about nationalism and independence: *poor but honest* ("*pobrezinho mas honesto*") was one of his most divulged principals, that applied to individuals as well as to the country.

<sup>209</sup> A "good" teacher was a nationalist one; a "bad" teacher was a Bolshevik and a laic one. See MÓNICA, Maria Filomena - *Educação e Sociedade no Portugal de Salazar*, Lisboa, Ed. Presença, 1978, p.146.

organisation had its own anthem, the words of which exalted patriotism and devotion towards the nation.<sup>211</sup> In primary schools the photographs of the President of the Republic and of the Prime Minister would hang on the wall, above the teachers' chair (this became a legal imposition after 1935). And as the country was Catholic, the crucifix had to be hung in all classrooms (this was also imposed by a reform in primary school laws known as *Carneiro Pacheco Reform*, in 1936). The crucifix was to be put between the two photographs mentioned above,<sup>212</sup> thus giving Portuguese political leaders similar relevance and respect as religion.

Mother-land was another main subject of the Portuguese nationalism. The mother-land has a history to be proud of, with past and present heroes, with monuments and documents proving its authenticity and showing its grandiosity. It had to be respected and honoured as it had been capable of heroic deeds in the past which could be repeated in the present. The *Estado Novo* was presented as a period of the national history designed to recover the magnificence of mother-land that had decayed during the previous decades.

Nationalism was also seen as an individual issue.<sup>213</sup> Salazar's idea that the people should be nationalist "by discipline or virtue".<sup>214</sup> was mentioned before. In fact the *Estado Novo* wanted all citizens to be nationalist, to believe that 'God, Motherland and Family' (*Deus, Pátria e Família*) were the fundamental values to defend.<sup>215</sup> After God, the Motherland was the most important thing in a person's life and was worth personal sacrifice. Nationalism became one of the most important aspects in Portuguese life and, at length and with the exception of religious values, overwhelmed all others. Family values were seen as part of nationalist ones, the family being the primary and ultimate cell of education, protection and survival.

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<sup>210</sup> As an example see PAULO - *op.cit.*, p.91, about the *Historic Parade of the Portuguese World* ("*Cortejo Histórico do Mundo Português*") in 1940.

<sup>211</sup> Just a short part of it: *When the country rises / also God whit it goes forward* ("*Quando a Pátria se levanta / também Deus com ela avança*"). See PAULO -*op.cit.*, p.59 and MARTINS - *op.cit.*, p.77-79.

<sup>212</sup> MARTINS - *op.cit.*, p.101.

<sup>213</sup> On the expected qualities of individuals see MARTINS - *op.cit.*, p.73.

<sup>214</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.170-171.

<sup>215</sup> This expression, *God, Motherland and Family* ("*Deus, Pátria e Família*") was used as the resume of the all ideology of the regime.

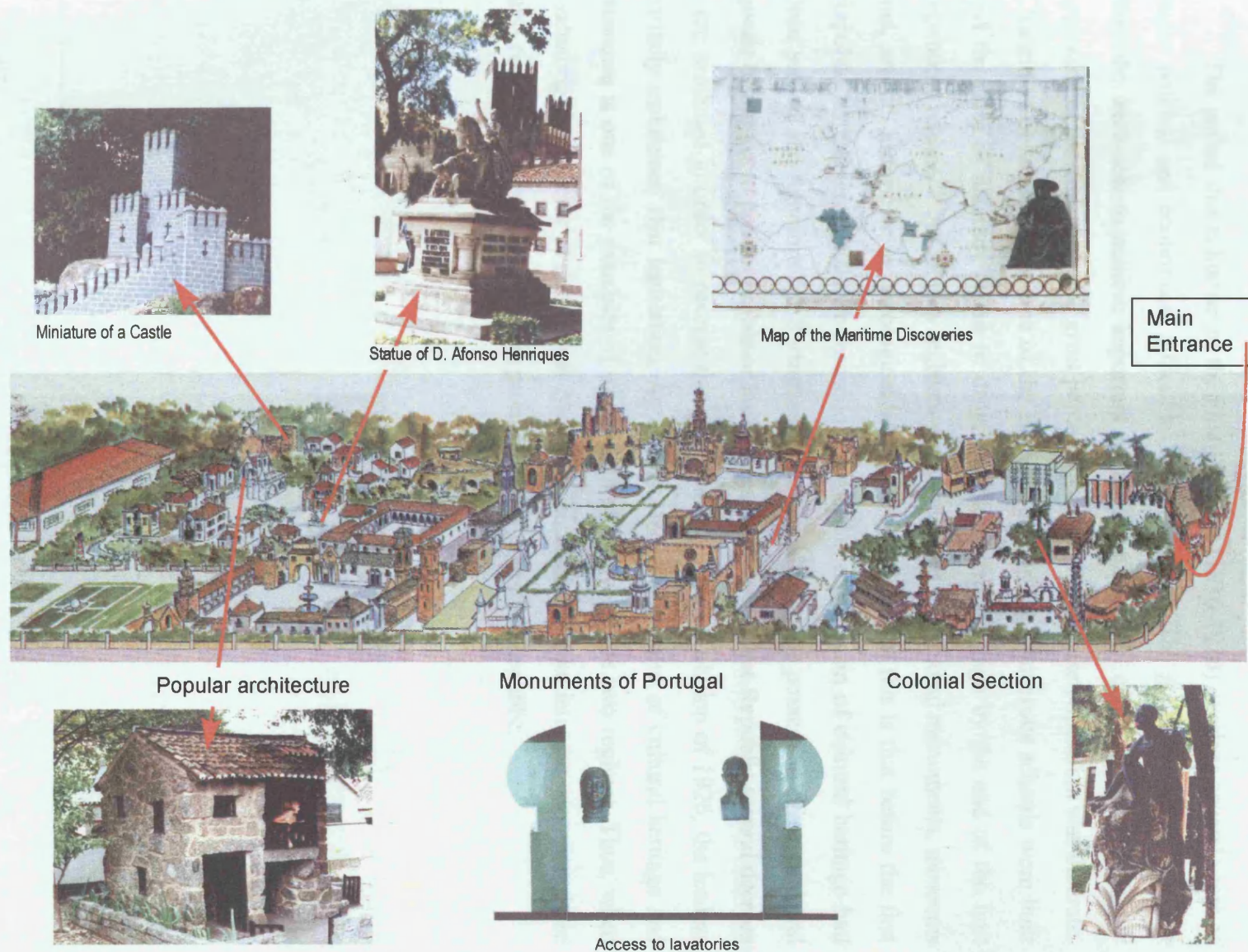
This is the political and cultural ambience within which the significance and role of museums will be analysed. As cultural and educational institutions,<sup>216</sup> museums played an important part in the *Estado Novo* project. Early in the process of building the *Estado Novo*, legislators turned their attention to matters related to museums and monuments and implemented new and important legislation, which had nationalist objectives.

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<sup>216</sup> In 1931 a law (*decreto* 19414, 5<sup>th</sup> March 1931) changed the rules of access to state museums, imposing entrance charge. Nevertheless, to enable the access of the poorest, the entrance was free on some days of the week. The main reason given to explain this option was that museums were important educational institutions.



Fig. 2 - Portugal dos Pequenitos





### 3.4 - The politics of museums in Portugal (from the 1930s to the 1960s)

#### 3.4.1 - Inheritances from the First Republic

The period that is known as the First Republic (1910-1926) overlaps several years of major political and economical difficulties.<sup>217</sup> Despite this, the governments of the First Republic were able to achieve important results in cultural and educational issues. In the beginning of the 20th century a great percentage of the Portuguese population was illiterate. Changing that situation was one of the Republic's priorities. Numerous schools were built and the rates of illiteracy began to drop, but they were still high by the end of the first republican regime.<sup>218</sup> An all new legislation was designed for national monuments, museums and, artistic, historic or archaeological heritage. An example of this is that before the first Republic no efficient legislative restrictions regarding exportation of cultural heritage had been settled and therefore the Portuguese State could not take possession of any cultural goods belonging to private people or institutions. During the First Republic several decrees were produced in order to reverse this situation. After the revolution of 1926, the leaders partially maintained that legislation. As a result, the management of cultural heritage and museums is one of the examples of some continuity between the two regimes. Thus, when evaluating the policies of the *Estado Novo* it is necessary to take into consideration those laws concerning museums that were produced during the First Republic.

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<sup>217</sup> See AMEAL, João - *História de Portugal das origens até 1940*, Porto, Livraria Tavares Martins, 7ª ed., 1974; MATTOSO, José (dir.) - *História de Portugal*, Lisboa, Ed. Estampa, s.d., vols. 5-6-7-8; NOGUEIRA, Franco - *Salazar*, Porto, Livraria Civilização, 1977/81; SERRÃO, Joel and MARQUES, A. H. de Oliveira (dir.) - *Nova História de Portugal*, Lisboa, Ed. Presença, vols. XI-XII.

<sup>218</sup> MATTOSO - *op.cit.*, vols. 7-8. Some statistics are presented.

In this text, two diplomas that were produced before the revolution of 1926 will be considered.<sup>219</sup> The first is the law number 1700 (1924, December the 18<sup>th</sup>) which organised the "Superior Council of Fine Arts" and the "Art and Archaeology Councils";<sup>220</sup> it also focused on national monuments and on the preservation and inventorying of national cultural heritage, also having museums among its concerns. The second is the decree number 11445 (1926, February the 13<sup>th</sup>) that was published in order to complete the aspects of that previous law which had been considered insufficiently developed. Then, in 1932 during the military dictatorship, this legislation was partially changed and partially repealed.



Fig. 3. Art and Archaeology Councils

The law number 1700 is divided into seven chapters (some of which with internal sub-divisions) and had an important role in matters related with fine arts, art and archaeology, museums, protection of art and archaeology heritage, and finally, monuments and national palaces.

The main concerns which related to the management of museums were those of inspection and supervision. The Art and Archaeology Councils' Chairmen of each region were instructed to verify the normal work of museums under Government subvention in their respective areas. This inspection would be specifically concerned with organisation and administration, good care of art objects and respect for security rules. Government was to be immediately informed of any action disregarding what was established or that could jeopardise the terms of cultural heritage protection against illegal trade and exportation. Acquisitions were another responsibility of the Art and Archaeology Councils: museums were always to ask for their opinion and respect it, on this matter. Sometimes it was the Council itself that should take the initiative for an acquisition, the museum being expected to accept the decision with almost no possibility of interference. Government was

<sup>219</sup> It could be of interest to take into consideration other laws produced in the early phase of the First Republic, for example the decrees of 19 November 1910 and 20 April 1911. On this subject see ROCHA-TRINDADE, Maria Beatriz (coord.) - *Iniciação à Museologia*, Lisboa, Universidade Aberta, 1993, p.44-49 and MOREIRA, Isabel M. Martins - *Museus e Monumentos em Portugal*, Lisboa, Universidade Aberta, 1989. This legislation began the trend that is still present in the law number 1700.

<sup>220</sup> This decision created three different areas with "cultural Capitals". From South to North: Lisboa, Coimbra and Porto.

responsible for choosing most of the museum staff; directors and curators depended on governmental decisions for nearly everything. Internal organisation of museums and fundamental rules for functioning were absent from this law. The Superior Council of Fine Arts had the final word on the foundation of new museums, acquisition, building of new museums and adaptation of already built museums. The Art and Archaeology Councils were responsible for the study, conservation and enrichment of museum collections; they should organise temporary exhibitions and should also determine what objects were to be in permanent exhibition or kept in reserves. They were also responsible for conservation and restoration decisions. The Councils had financial power over the budget of museums, expenses and acquisitions. This arrangement appears to be a very difficult one, but it must be kept in mind that museum directors were necessarily permanent members of the Art and Archaeology Councils. Finally, another very important aspect of this law concerned the rules and limitations on cultural heritage trade and exportation. A national list of objects with historical, archaeological or artistic value was determined and all the objects belonging to that list could neither be exported nor transacted without prior notice to official entities.<sup>221</sup> The Portuguese State would always be given preference in acquisition. If its decision was not to buy, the private buyer had to be informed that the item to be transacted was in the list mentioned above. That information was essential, as the item was subject to the inherent trade limitations. This law determined that all transactions disregarding these terms should be considered of no legal value.

The legislation passed in 1926, to update the 1924 law, introduced some minor changes for museums management. Museum directors were to inform the Ministry about their needs regarding preparation and publication of catalogues and inventories of national and regional museums and the Superior Council of Fine Arts was committed with the task of preparing general regulation for museums. As for cultural heritage, this decree adds some important definitions to the previous law. Under national protection against illegal trade or exportation, it clearly stated what should be considered artistic and archaeological heritage. Article number 47 of this decree states:

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<sup>221</sup> The resemblance between what this decree stated and the system introduced in the United Kingdom in 1952 and known as the "Waverley Criteria" is worth a reference. See FAHY, Anne (ed.) - *Collections Management*, London, Routledge, 1995 and MAURICE, C. and TURNOR, R. - "The Export Licensing Rules in the United Kingdom and the Waverley Criteria" in *International Journal of Cultural Property*, n° 2, vol. 3, 1994.

"For general purposes of the law are considered works of art and archaeological objects any sculptures, paintings, sketches, draws, pieces of furniture, china, glazed and painted pottery, goldsmithery, glasses, enamel ware, carpets and tapestries, laces, jewellery, embroideries, tissues and textiles, cloths, armoury, objects of forged iron, bronzes, fans, medals and coins, inscriptions, musical instruments, manuscripts with illuminations, and, in general, all objects that can constitute model of art or represent valuable teaching for artists, or, by their merit, are worth being in public art museums and yet, all of those that can be classified as historical objects".<sup>222</sup>

Furthermore, every and any object for sale in public auction was considered cultural heritage if, before the final decision of the buyer, a legal representative of the Government declared the State's intention of buying it (this legal representative could be any of the national museum directors, or their deputies). Finally, and for purpose of exportation, this decree established taxation on artistic and archaeological objects in possession of non-official institutions. This taxation was of 50% *ad valorem* and in some circumstances this value could be exchanged by objects offered to national museums.

By the time of the military revolution of the 28<sup>th</sup> May 1926, this was the principal legislation for museums and cultural heritage. Two aspects of this legislation are of relevance: in the first place, the Republic treated the cultural patrimony as a national concern, this principle being applied even when objects were of private possession; secondly, both national and regional museums were considered of major importance, as keepers of historic, cultural and artistic values. Nevertheless, economic difficulties made it impossible for Republican governments to implement an actual operative policy for museums and cultural heritage. Some of the legislative principles never became effective and sometimes (as it can be perceived through documentation of museums) museum directors complained about some disrespect of the law.<sup>223</sup>

These are the guidelines of the First Republic legislation for museums. But what kind of museums existed in Portugal during this period? Two major types were significant: those considered "national" museums and those classified as "regional". Most of the national

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<sup>222</sup> Original text: "Para os efeitos gerais da lei consideram-se obras de arte ou objectos arqueológicos: as esculturas, pinturas, gravuras, desenhos, móveis, peças de porcelana, de faiança e de ourivesaria, vidros, esmaltes, tapetes, tapeçarias, rendas, jóias, bordados, tecidos, trajos, armas, peças de ferro forjado, bronzes, leques, medalhas e moedas, inscrições, instrumentos musicos, manuscritos iluminados e de um modo geral todos os objectos que possam constituir modelo de arte ou representar valiosos ensinamentos para os artistas, ou pelo seu mérito sejam dignos de figurar em museus públicos de arte, e ainda todos aqueles que mereçam qualificação de históricos."

<sup>223</sup> As examples, two letters from the director of the Museum of Alberto Sampaio, (15/03/1933, 20/09/1933).

museums (five) were in Lisboa; in Porto the museum Soares dos Reis, although not classified as a national museum, repeatedly claimed that status, but obtained it only in 1932; in Coimbra, the museum Machado de Castro (an art museum) had the role of national museum. These national museums were thought to be representative of Portuguese cultural values, especially with regard to art. National collections, or objects with national importance because of their value or significance, were to be kept in these national museums.

Regional museums were another concern of the First Republic policy.<sup>224</sup> In fact, regional museums received a great deal of attention during this period and a significant number of these museums were established during the First Republic. Between 1912 and 1924 thirteen new regional museums were instituted. They were devoted to art, history, archaeology and numismatics. From a financial point of view, they depended on public money, either from central government or from local authorities. The designation as 'regional'<sup>225</sup> had nothing to do with funding: these museums were regional because of their collections and because they were meant to serve a regional area, a regional community. One of their major objectives was to receive and preserve the results of archaeological research. Ever since the last decades of the nineteenth century archaeological activities were producing important collections that needed a place to be held and displayed. Regional museums were seen as the ideal solution.

An important objective for regional museums was to receive and preserve the treasures that had belonged to the Church (art collections, goldsmithery) and that the First Republic had nationalised. A strong movement against the Catholic Church occurred in Portugal during the last half of the nineteenth century and intensified during the Republican period. The Republic legitimated an ambience of anticlericalism with few precedents in Portuguese history. The Church was deprived of important material heritage (buildings, treasures, archives) and part of that heritage was sent to regional museums. Regional museums also had an important role caring for ethnographic material. The interest in

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<sup>224</sup> Regional museums were planned since 1836, when a law determined that in all major cities (*capitais de distrito*) were to exist a public library and a "cabinet of rarities". This determination was never accomplished. See MOREIRA - *op.cit.*, p.54-62.

<sup>225</sup> Central administration took charge of several regional museums that could no longer exist only on local resources.

ethnography grew during the first decades of the 20th century,<sup>226</sup> so material was being gathered and there was a need for places to display it. Once again regional museums had an important role in this matter.

As a consequence, many of these regional museums became a complex mixture of very different collections. The lack of coherence in their acquisition policies, imposed by the nature of their objectives, became one of the major future problems for museum management.<sup>227</sup> They were seen as important means of preserving cultural heritage in danger of disappearance. Thus, regional museums were to collect in different fields, gathering collections of different natures. Their directors contributed more than once to this, by collecting everything that was considered of cultural value and that was in danger of being sold to private foreign collectors.

In 1926, when the First Republic came to an end, the country had several national museums and a significant number of regional museums. Legislation for museums, monuments and cultural heritage was settled and considered as potentially efficient. A major problem was, however, the lack of money. Museums, monuments, implementation of cultural legislation, all had associated costs, and the Portuguese state's financial condition was such that there was no availability of money for that sort of expenditure. The legacy of the Republic was more a package of good intentions than of effective results.<sup>228</sup> However, legislation on museums, monuments and cultural patrimony was absolutely essential, and the governments of the military dictatorship that followed the First Republic found a lot of work done in this field. What the Republic had accomplished in terms of laws was considered enough and well done, and great changes would only occur in 1932.

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<sup>226</sup> The Portuguese Society of Anthropology and Ethnology was founded in 1918.

<sup>227</sup> Even today Portuguese museums have collections which correspond to this period. As a consequence they have to deal with very different and incoherent sets of objects.

<sup>228</sup> See MARQUES, A. H. de Oliveira - "A 1ª República", in *Sociedade e Cultura Portuguesas*, nº 2, Lisboa, 1990, p.292, quoted in ROCHA-TRINDADE, Maria Beatriz (coord.) - *Iniciação à Museologia*, Lisboa, Universidade Aberta, 1993, p.44-45.

### 3.4.2 - The Estado Novo policy concerning museums: political definitions of museums role and specific legislation.

In the late 1920s (after the revolution of 1926 and even before the new Constitution of 1933) Portugal was still under the military dictatorship and, after a period of some revolutionary agitation, governments (specially after Salazar's entry into politics) were putting legislation in place in preparation for the *Estado Novo*. Legislation was, indeed, one of the major concerns of these governments protected by militaries. "Law and Order" (*Lei e Ordem*) was one of the slogans, associated with "Progress and Work" (*Progresso e Trabalho*). Hence, museums and cultural heritage also had the attention of these governments and a number of laws concerning these areas was produced. It is important to consider the legislation produced during this period, as it was to become the basis of all the policy of the *Estado Novo* regarding museums until the 1950s.

The most relevant laws produced between 1926 and 1933 concerning museums date from:

- March 1928<sup>229</sup> (a decree reorganised all artistic and archaeological services);
- April 1929<sup>230</sup> (a new department in government was created called the "General Department of National Buildings and Monuments" - *Direcção Geral dos Edifícios e Monumentos Nacionais* - DGEMN);
- March 1931<sup>231</sup> (the end of free access to museums was decided)
- December 1931<sup>232</sup> (legislation was intended to protect all cultural heritage that had not been referred in previous legislation);
- March 1932<sup>233</sup> (some changes occurred in important parts of the previous legislation, in particular that of 1924);
- January 1933<sup>234</sup> (a regulation for the courses for museum curators and tyrocinium was published).

The decree of 1928 was intended to reorganise artistic and archaeological national services. However, the introductory text of this decree emphasises that the previous

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<sup>229</sup> Decree number 15216 - 14<sup>th</sup> March.

<sup>230</sup> Decree number 16791 - 30<sup>th</sup> April.

<sup>231</sup> Decree number 19414 - 5<sup>th</sup> March.

<sup>232</sup> Decree number 20586 - 4<sup>th</sup> December.

<sup>233</sup> Decree number 20958 - 7<sup>th</sup> March.



legislation (after 1911) had proved its value. Bearing this in mind, the government only intended to change minor aspects, in order to improve the work and accomplishments that had resulted from previous laws, rather than changing everything and carrying the responsibility of inventing an entirely new organisation.<sup>235</sup> There was only one main change with this decree: prior to it free entrance in every national and regional museum was a national policy. Now, access to museums was to be charged on some days of the week; yet on two days per week, at least, access was to be free. This principle became only effective in 1931. The fee to access any national or regional museum amounted to 2\$50 on paying days,<sup>236</sup> Sundays and Thursdays were free admission days. This was meant to "benefit lower classes that wanted to visit those museums and instruct themselves".<sup>237</sup> All art teachers and students had free access, and anyone who wanted to study a particular piece of art could get permission for free entrance from the museum director. Teachers and students, of any public or private school, could also ask for free entrance and obtain it.

An important decision, as far as monuments are concerned, was the creation of a specific governmental department to deal with all decisions related with buildings of historical value and public monuments. Most Portuguese national and regional museums were (and still are) installed in such buildings. Everything concerning the museum building had to be dealt with through the government department known as DGEMN. The department, during the 1930s and the 1940s, became one of the most important pieces of cultural propaganda of the *Estado Novo*.

The decree introduced in 1931 demonstrates the great concern dedicated to the safeguarding of cultural heritage by the military dictatorship governments. Following the previous legislation on this matter, this decree reinforced state rights over private objects considered of public interest. The list of objects in the national inventory was extended and

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<sup>234</sup> Decree number 22110 - 12<sup>12</sup> January.

<sup>235</sup> Original text: "*Nestas condições o Governo entendeu que o que se impunha era, não a confecção de novas leis, que ofereceria, pelo menos, os riscos de tudo o que é novo e imprevisto, mas sim modificar e melhorar a antiga, [...]*".

<sup>236</sup> An architect working in a public service would earn 1.333\$50 per month; a museum servant between 360\$00 and 501\$00; the Director of the MNAA received circa 1.500\$00. See decrees 11445 and 21514.

<sup>237</sup> Original text: "*favorecendo assim as classes pobres que desejem instruir-se e visitar esses museus*". This justification coincides with what Bennett refers about the 19<sup>th</sup> century museum: "of 'improving' the people by exposing them to the beneficial influence of middle-class culture" (see BENNETT, Tony – "Museums and... - p.73) . See also BENNETT, Tony - *Culture: A Reformer's Science*, London, Sage, 1998, p.148.



any object corresponding to the criteria of the inventory was now under the protection of the law, even if its existence had not been declared to the State. Article number 2 of this decree stated:

"The Portuguese incunabula, xilographyc and paleotipic specimens, cartularies and other old manuscripts membranaceous or chartaceous, parchments and sundry papers of diplomatic or paleographic interest; books and booklets considered rare or precious; bibliographic nucleus recommended for the value of their cimelia or because of their collection value." <sup>238</sup>

In 1932 another important decree on museum matters was published. This decree introduced important changes in national policy concerning museums, cultural heritage and monuments. The introductory text of this decree stated that the previous legislation was too "complex". Despite the good results achieved during the previous two decades, the legislator considered that the good will, dedication and hard work of museum staff had been more relevant to achieve positive results than the quality of the existing legislation. In order to simplify the administrative scheme, the three "Art and Archaeology Councils"<sup>239</sup> were extinguished and some of their functions moved to the Superior Council of Fine Arts. Museum directors became more important in this Council and a new section, entirely dedicated to museums, was created. Acquisitions, transference of objects, internal organisation of museums, conservation and restoration of museum objects became responsibilities of this Superior Council. This Council was also responsible for the foundation of new museums, the acquisition, building or adaptation of buildings and monuments to be used as museums, and the authorisation for temporary exportation of museum objects (to be displayed in international temporary exhibitions). This decree also opened the possibility for the existence of county councils of art and archaeology, depending on local will and capacity of organisation. This was the 'way out' for the government's need to reduce public expenses: financial responsibilities were transferred to these county councils that were supposed to depend on private donations to accomplish their tasks.

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<sup>238</sup> Original text: "[...] os incunábulo portugueses; as espécies xilográficas e paleotípicas estrangeiras; os cartulários e outros códices, membranáceos ou cartáceos; os pergaminhos e papéis avulsos de interesse diplomático paleográfico ou histórico; os livros e folhetos considerados raros ou preciosos; e os núcleos bibliográficos que se recomendam pelos valor dos seus cimélio ou simplesmente pelo seu valor de colecção." This legislation can be compared with the Spanish policy on cultural heritage protection and museums; there too is a list of valuable objects; see BOLAÑOS, Maria - *op.cit.*, p.343-344.

<sup>239</sup> See note 220.

For the first time in the legislation of this period museums were divided into three different groups: "national museums", "regional museums" and "other museums" (which included "county museums, treasures of religious art, other collections with artistic, historical or archaeological value").<sup>240</sup> Directors were always to be chosen by the government and were responsible for the valuables kept in the museum; the regional museums directors should perform a three year tyrocinium in the National Museum of Ancient Art (*Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga* - MNAA). Also related with this issue, and to set the rules of this tyrocinium, the decree introduced in January 1933 established that the MNAA was the national 'school museum' and that the future directors and curators had to spend three years working there, under direct supervision of the museum director. The certificate obtained was a necessary requisite to apply for staff positions in national and in regional museums under national administration.

The types of objects that were kept in Portuguese museums at this time relate to the dominant concept of museum object of the period, especially in its legal definition.<sup>241</sup> Of the documents discussed above it is possible to grasp quite a precise idea of what was considered a "museum object". It is not of great relevance to differentiate between legislative periods on this particular subject. Politics changed, legislation changed, but the general idea of what was to be considered as museum object remained. The laws and decrees mentioned above refer to museum objects in general terms. The law introduced in 1924 uses abundantly such terms as "artistic", "archaeological" and "historical" as if the definition of these terms were clear and unquestionable. This procedure is commonly repeated in subsequent legislation. Only twice, during the period under analysis, was a definition of museum object produced: the decree introduced in 1926 specifies what can be considered a work of art or archaeological object. A list of such specimens includes very specific designations, as well as very vague ones: in fact, everything that could be classified as "historical" is protected by this decree. The 1931 decree,<sup>242</sup> without contradicting this

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<sup>240</sup> Original text: "Art. 49º [...] a) *Museus Nacionais*; b) *Museus regionais*; c) *Museus, Museus municipais, tesouros de arte sacra e outras mais coleções oferecendo valor artístico, histórico ou arqueológico*." The decree specified which museums were National and Regional.

<sup>241</sup> If compared what was considered museum object under the law and what was really in museums, it will become evident that museums used to collect outside legislation definition. To this would contribute both the narrow legislative definition and the will of some directors that were the "soul" of the museum: they had initiated the collection, and treated the museum almost as a personal matter. In this case are, for example, the Museum of Alberto Sampaio and the Museum of the Abade de Baçal.

<sup>242</sup> Number 20586.

definition, adds other very specific objects that had been left out by the previous decree.<sup>243</sup> The 1932 decree established that all objects with recognised artistic, archaeological or historical value, or very important to the national artistic, archaeological or historical patrimony, should not leave the country without proper authorisation. When referring to acquisitions by museums, once again, only fine art and archaeological objects deserved mention.

Another source to understand what was considered a museum object, is the nature of the professional training museum staff was supposed to have. Most of the specific training of museum professionals was in the areas of art and history. In 1953 one of the exams established in order to achieve recognition as museum curator, for all of national and regional museums, was a practical one: the candidates had to prepare an exhibition using objects of the reserves of the MNAA. Those exhibits were, obviously, about art or history of art. This perspective of what a museum object was is reinforced by some documents dating to the 1950's. During the Cold War, and under the perspective of another European or world conflict, the government decided the formation of a committee that was in charge of preventing major damages to cultural heritage during the war. Correspondence exchanged between this committee and museum directors is very interesting and shows that the intention was to preserve objects of "exceptional value" and "specimens of artistic and historical interest".<sup>244</sup> Nevertheless, it is not specified what those objects were.

In 1965 with the "General Regulation for Art, History and Archaeology Museums" (*Regulamento Geral dos Museus de Arte História e Arqueologia*) the permanent and overwhelming importance of art, history and archaeology as fundamental sources of museum objects had not changed. One of the first objectives of museums, according to that decree, was the preservation and enlargement of collections of "objects with artistic, historical or archaeological value".<sup>245</sup> This was the paradigmatic conception of museum objects during the *Estado Novo*. Obviously, there were other objects in museums, as some had very different kinds of collections, yet these were not worth of legislation. The

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<sup>243</sup> See note 238.

<sup>244</sup> As examples, letters sent by Director of the MNAA (18/05/1953, 03/08/1953 in Archive of the MNAA); see also a copy of a letter received in the MNSR, from the National Committee responsible for the safeguard of art objects in case of war, dated 1954 (Archive of the MNSR).

remarkable importance given to artistic and historical objects, as *real* museum objects, must have an explanation. For some reason the *Estado Novo*, even before the approval of the 1933 Constitution, was very concerned with cultural heritage and gave much attention to legislation regarding these matters. Perhaps the point, the hidden reason, was common to both questions: propaganda.<sup>246</sup>

As we have seen, museum objects were protected by law against illegal trade and exportation; but at the same time they were used politically as objects of propaganda. Museums, seen as institutions where historical and artistic objects should be preserved and exhibited, functioned as places of propaganda: the official nationalism needed historical material to support the myths of a past of greatness and glory. Some particular objects - like the sword of D. Afonso Henriques<sup>247</sup> (the first King of Portugal) - were frequently requested to be exhibited in temporary exhibitions. In 1940 this sword was requested to be displayed in the "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World" (*Grande Exposição do Mundo Português*) that took place in Lisbon; a few years later the sword was again borrowed to be in the exhibition that was held to celebrate the conquest of Lisbon.<sup>248</sup> Against all precautions and conservation guidelines, museum objects shifted from one place to another in order to be used as propaganda material, frequently disregarding directors' advice and disapproval. On different occasions, political power overwhelmed the best interest of museums conservation policy and sometimes it happened that objects were returned to museums in poorer condition. In a letter from the director of the MNAA to the responsible of the "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World" (dated from 20/04/1940) the director expressly disagrees with the request of one particular object (the chair of King *Afonso V*). He explained that the conservation conditions necessary for the long term care of this chair were incompatible with its removal from the museum; consequently the director affirmed that he could not assume any responsibility, if someone decided to take it away from the

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<sup>245</sup> Decree number 46758.

<sup>246</sup> See PAULO - *op.cit.*.

<sup>247</sup> This sword was part of the collection of the MNSR.

<sup>248</sup> Archive of the MNSR, copies of the mail sent (25/04/1940 and 13/05/1947).

museum.<sup>249</sup> In another letter to the government, dated 09/12/1948, the director, once again, protested against the use of museum objects (in this case French silverware of the eighteenth century) in official ceremonies.<sup>250</sup> These objects were frequently returned to the Museum damaged.

As the *Estado Novo* strengthened its political power, these impositions on museums became stronger and more evident. In 1936, for an exhibition called "Historical Exhibition of Occupation" (*Exposição Histórica da Ocupação*) a decree was introduced that gave powers to the commission in charge of the organisation to ask for assistance from various institutions, including museums and public archives. In 1938, while preparing the "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World", another decree determined that all necessary assistance would be "demanded" by the commission. This included requisition of museum and archive material, and directors of museums or civil servants could not deny whatever was demanded. The explicit terms of this authority, expressed in this decree, are extraordinarily precise. Concerns with security and proper conservation procedures, however, are almost absent; the text only stated, vaguely, that objects should be held in an adequate manner.

Even before 1933, the official starting point of the *Estado Novo*, important changes had taken place in legislation concerning museums and cultural heritage. Keeping some of the previous organisation at first, and changing a lot of it in the early 1930s Military Dictatorship governments, especially after Salazar's entry to government, led to solutions that announced the *Estado Novo*. In 1933 almost all the legislation on museums had already been set up and was working. It is obvious that cultural heritage in general, and monuments and museums in particular, were one of the greatest concerns (together with financial and economic problems) of these governments of the late 1920s. In two of his public speeches (in 1935 and 1936)<sup>251</sup> Salazar reaffirmed the importance of monuments and museums. Propaganda was certainly an important issue for the building of a new ideology, and, as far as it can be noticed, cultural heritage and museums, had an unquestionable part in that

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<sup>249</sup> Archive of the MNSR, copies of the mail sent Another example: letter from the director of the MNAA (08/01/1941) to the responsible of the "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World": the director emphasises that museum objects should never leave museums and he uses the example of two chairs borrowed to the Exhibition and returned in very poor conditions.

<sup>250</sup> Archive of the MNAA.

process. After 1933, and until the 1950s, almost nothing changed in the legislation concerning museums. Major changes would only occur in the 1950s and especially in the 1960s.

After 1933, the *Estado Novo* turned its attentions to matters other than museums and monuments: the previously defined guidelines were considered to be operative and efficient. The use of national cultural heritage as propaganda was well established. Portuguese nationalism, that demanded a great deal of investment in the care for the national monuments and museums, was the official discourse, strongly affirmed by the incontestable leader of the country. The nationalistic ideology demanded historical material to found a "reinvented national tradition" to quote Hobsbawm.<sup>252</sup> The improvement of the finances and of the economic status of the country, which was accomplished by the end of the 1930s, enabled Salazar to prepare some of the greatest events of the *Estado Novo*: the exhibitions that took place in the late years of the decade.

It is however important to examine some of the legislative activity of the *Estado Novo* during the period between 1933 and 1940, even if not directly related with museums, before moving on to the analysis of the next period of museums development in Portugal. The changes that occurred during that period and the consolidation of the regime are essential to understand the subsequent museum policy of the *Estado Novo*. In September 1933 a decree was introduced that created the National Bureau of Propaganda (*Secretariado de Propaganda Nacional* - SPN). The introductory text of this decree stated that propaganda was a national necessity and that all modern countries recognised this. The need for internal and external propaganda was justified with the international situation and with the necessity of integrating all Portuguese citizens in the moral orientation of the nation.<sup>253</sup> The internal section of the Bureau of Propaganda had some very important tasks to accomplish. The first one was that it had to rule over the press, controlling the news that were to be published and improving the publication of everything that could be beneficial for the Portuguese image. Then it was also their responsibility to organise national educational events or public demonstrations in favour of the regime. They were to fight

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<sup>251</sup> SALAZAR, António de Oliveira - *Discursos e notas Políticas*, Coimbra Editora, 2ª ed., vol. II, 1946, p.73, 146-148

<sup>252</sup> HOBSBAWM and RANGER - *op.cit.*

every idea considered to be against the national interest. The maintenance of internal unity was another task of this Bureau. This decree also stated that all media (radio, cinema and theatre) should be used to fulfil that task and that all national administration, all government sections, all national services should provide all the assistance demanded by the Bureau of Propaganda.

Between 1935 and 1936<sup>254</sup> two fundamental decrees were produced. The intention of this legislation was that of excluding of all national services and all governmental and administrative institutions any person that was not totally in accordance with the regime. The first decree determined that all personnel that had demonstrated any kind of opposition towards the Constitution should be retired or dismissed. The second one was more radical: everyone willing to become a civil servant or working in direct relation with the State interests was constrained to declare, under word of honour, that he or she agreed with the National Constitution and with the social order thereby established, and also that he or she was active against communism and all other subversive ideas.<sup>255</sup> A hierarchical responsibility was then set and all superior staff had to denounce any activity suspected of being against that declaration taking place in his or her services. Even private enterprises were under this constraint. If any subversive activity perpetrated by anyone working in a private company became public, the government would immediately end any commercial relation with that company and even public funds would be terminated at once. In December of 1936 the Portuguese Youth (*Mocidade Portuguesa*) had its formal beginning: this was a paramilitary organisation that gathered all Portuguese youngsters, providing a first military training as well as leisure-time activities, such as sailing, horse-riding, gymnastics and camping. This organisation was to form good, loyal, nationalistic citizens, that were to be ready to die for their country if necessary.

During 1937 other laws were published which are of some interest to understand the political ambience that the *Estado Novo* installed in Portugal: in July a decree determined that, from 1 January 1939, all typewriters transacted in Portugal ought to have the national

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<sup>253</sup> Original text: "[...] integrar os portugueses no pensamento moral que deve dirigir a Nação."

<sup>254</sup> Decrees 25317 (1935/05/13) and 27003 (1936/09/15)

<sup>255</sup> Original text: "Declaro por minha honra que estou integrado na ordem social estabelecida pela Constituição política de 1933, com activo repúdio do comunismo e de todas as ideias subversivas."

keyboard<sup>256</sup> and not the international one. If someone wanted a typewriter with the international keyboard it was absolutely necessary to prove that that particular machine was to be used for typing in a foreign language and not in Portuguese. Another decree was published to end up with freedom of choice on what concerned basic school books. Until then teachers in every school could choose what books to use. This decree determined that all schools in Portugal ought to use the same book for each class. The legislator affirmed that this was meant to put an end to the freedom of expressing personal ideas in books that should form young minds. The moral unity of the Nation was more important than the freedom of speech.<sup>257</sup>

If the chronological succession of decrees and laws about cultural heritage and museums as a whole is considered, and if compared with other legislative measures that were seen as fundamental to build the *Estado Novo*, it becomes quite clear that concerns with cultural heritage were established in an early phase of the regime. During the late 1920s and the early 1930s governments had solved the question of cultural heritage management. Only thirty years later, and under external influences, the *Estado Novo* focused legislative attention once again on cultural heritage and museums.<sup>258</sup> Only in the 1950s and the 1960s did major legislative changes alter this *status quo*. New concepts of museums, contacts with European experiments in exhibition techniques and a new importance given to the public, made new legislation necessary.

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<sup>256</sup> The international keyboard (AZERT) was not convenient to type in Portuguese because of the use of the letter A, the most used letter in Portuguese. The national keyboard organised the letters in such a manner as that the ones more frequently used were easily at reach of the central fingers. HCESAR was the denomination of the national keyboard.

<sup>257</sup> See decree 27882 and BIVAR, Maria de Fátima - *Ensino primário e ideologia*, D. Quixote, Lisboa, 1971.

<sup>258</sup> During the late forties and the fifties the director of the MNAA participated in several international conferences and produced formal reports; other member of museums staff went abroad specifically to observe what was being done in other countries on what concerns temporary exhibitions and display techniques. Archive of the MNAA, mail sent 1948-1955.



## Chapter 4 - Portuguese Museums under the *Estado Novo*

### *Novo* - National Museums

As explained before and in order to understand the situation of Portuguese museums during the *Estado Novo*, some case studies were chosen. They are significant examples of what the Portuguese museums during that period were.

Fig. 4. Approximate location of the museums and name of the cities where they are installed.

(MAB) *Museu do Abade de Baçal*, Bragança

(MAS) *Museu de Alberto Sampaio*, Guimarães

(MNSR) *Museu Nacional de Soares dos Reis*, Porto

(MMC) *Museu Monográfico de Conimbriga*, Conimbriga

(MJM) *Museu de José Malhoa*, Caldas da Rainha

(MNAA) *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga*, Lisboa

(MAP) *Museu de Arte Popular*, Lisboa

(MNE) *Museu Nacional de Etnologia*, Lisboa



It was common for the museums to combine collections of national importance with others of regional relevance - this is the case of the *Museu do Abade de Baçal* (MAB), *Museu de Alberto Sampaio* (MAS) and the *Museu de José Malhoa* (MJM). This is due to the origin of these museums. A significant number of the Portuguese museums have their origin closely related with the cultural policy of the First Republic. These museums were intended to represent regional values and to have regional importance. However, due to the directors' acquisition policies or to central political influences, some acquired important

collections of national relevance. Long after their institutional creation some of these regional museums became 'national', the importance of their collections being recognised by the governmental department in charge.

The Museu Nacional de Soares dos Reis (MNSR) had a different history. The *Estado Novo* had planned for it to be a national museum that would represent decorative arts in the north of the country. This museum inherited the collections of at least two previous museums of the city and has been seen, since the 1930s, as 'the' national museum of Porto.

The Museu Monográfico de Conímbriga (MMC) is a very special case: the museum exists because of the archaeological site that gave it the name. Conímbriga is a very important and well-preserved Roman site, commonly referred as one of the most important Roman remains of the Peninsula. The architectural importance of the buildings, the numerous and very well preserved mosaic pavements, the rich stratigraphy and the relevant archaeological remains, provided a place for the development of scientific work and the organisation of permanent exhibitions in close connection with the archaeological site.

The museums in Lisboa are of a very different nature. The Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga (MNAA) is always referred to as the most important Portuguese art museum. Due to its characteristics, it was a national museum. Another Lisboa museum, the Museu de Arte Popular (MAP), originated from the Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World.<sup>259</sup> It inherited the building, the collections, the organisation of the Pavilion and almost the same name that had been used in that Exhibition. Because of the nature of the collections, by the time it became a museum it was established as a national museum, which should represent the whole country in one museographic space. Finally, the Museu Nacional de Etnologia (MNE), was established as a national museum in the early 1960s, and resulted from the strong influence of the ethnographic studies developed both in the European and in the overseas territories.

For the purposes of the research, these museums were organised according to a tripartite division. The first group, the presentation of which follows in this chapter, is that of the national museums (MNAA, MNSR and MAP). For the *Estado Novo* these should be

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<sup>259</sup> This Exhibition will be the topic of analysis in chapter 7.1.

exemplary museums, both for the techniques used and for the accomplishment of the propagandistic objectives set for them in the legislation. They were expected to receive a broad public, either local or national. If compared to other museums, they were favoured in budgetary terms. Their directors were closer to the places of the political power and might be able to exert influence upon it. Besides, the new professionals of museums who introduced some of the new concepts and methodologies for museum work in the 1950's and 1960's came from these museums.

The second group is that of the regional museums (MAB, MAS, MJM). These were mainly dedicated to the local public and were only expected to receive other visitors exceptionally. The communications inside of the country were difficult and slow and few people, and only rarely, would travel between main towns – for example from Oporto to Bragança. Hence the museums were planned for the preservation of local and regional heritage (and this partially describes their collections) and for the inhabitants of the specific regions where the museums were located. They were nevertheless in the propaganda plans of the State, although they did not receive the same amounts of money as the national museums.

A third group is that of what we called specialised museums, for the specificity of their themes, for the specialisation of their collections and for their connections with specialists coming from the universities. The cases chosen (which are the MMC and the MNE) were created at a late stage of the *Estado Novo*. The MMC was the result of the national concern with an exceptional archaeological site. The MNE was intended to be a national museum that would portray and enhance the image of the Portuguese empire.

At the departure our working hypotheses were that there would be substantial differences between national and regional museums, due to their different aims, different connections, different budgets. The guiding questions were on whether both had made the propaganda of the regime, and on its efficacy. From a different point of view, specialised museums were particularly stimulating for the research, as they might contain some of the elements of intellectual resistance, that the work of some specific cultural elites sometimes produces, especially under governments that tend to “order” society's self-reflexive capabilities.

The search for evidence of propaganda in the museums archives was not an easy task. Specific methodological criteria were mentioned in the Introduction. Yet a criterion directly related with the contents of the sources had also to be introduced. The fact is that propaganda is sometimes evident and sometimes not. Either only clear cases of propaganda as such were considered (for instance, the combination of museum objects with nationalistic symbols, in the rooms of the exhibitions) or I looked deeper into the museums and tried to find other indirect forms of propaganda in the day-to-day life of the museum. I took the second option. Hence, I searched the museums according to five main topics that are: statistics of visitors (rather uncommon for the period analysed); information on the collections, objects and display techniques (that is not very often available); material conditions (buildings, budget, acquisition policies); personnel (from the directors to the workers); data on the day-to-day life of the museum (especially evidence of the internal and external social and political networks established). Whenever it was possible, the information was completed with the testimonies of former workers and directors of the museums. Unfortunately, and as was mentioned before, the archive of the MNE was inaccessible.

#### **4.1 The *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga* (National Museum of Ancient Art)**

All through the period of the *Estado Novo*, the MNAA was always referred to as the most outstanding of all the national museums of the country.<sup>260</sup> The museum was the biggest national museum in Portugal, both with regard to its collection and buildings. In addition, its director had a fundamental role in institutions with direct responsibilities over other museums in the country<sup>261</sup> and an important number of future museum directors and curators made their first professional training in the MNAA.<sup>262</sup> Furthermore the laboratory for restoration of art objects (*Instituto José de Figueiredo*), which was the only one in the country for many years, was under the supervision of this institution. Finally, it was the director of this Museum who undertook the task of establishing ICOM-Portugal relations,

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<sup>260</sup> Letters of director (1937/08/19 and 1937/09/18); he affirmed that the MNAA was "the first museum of the country" and that it "owned the most important art collection of the country".

<sup>261</sup> See Chapters 3.4.1 and 3.4.2



in the 1950s. For these reasons, the MNAA can be described as the first national museum, as a model, that others tended to imitate.<sup>263</sup> The value of its collections and the role of its director in the museological and cultural domains in Portugal easily explain its importance.

The MNAA was the result of the division of another national museum. In March 1911 the National Museum of Fine Arts (*Museu Nacional de Belas Artes*) was divided into two different national museums: one for Ancient Art and other for Modern Art. The first one remained in the building of the former institution,<sup>264</sup> where it is still located today.<sup>265</sup> Because of the importance of its collections the MNAA was one of the institutions the First Republic decided to modernise. In order to do so a new director (José de Figueiredo) was appointed in 1911. After his death in 1937 one of his curators, João Couto, was appointed director a place he occupied until the early 1960s. These two men were central to the major decisions in the museum during the period discussed in this chapter.

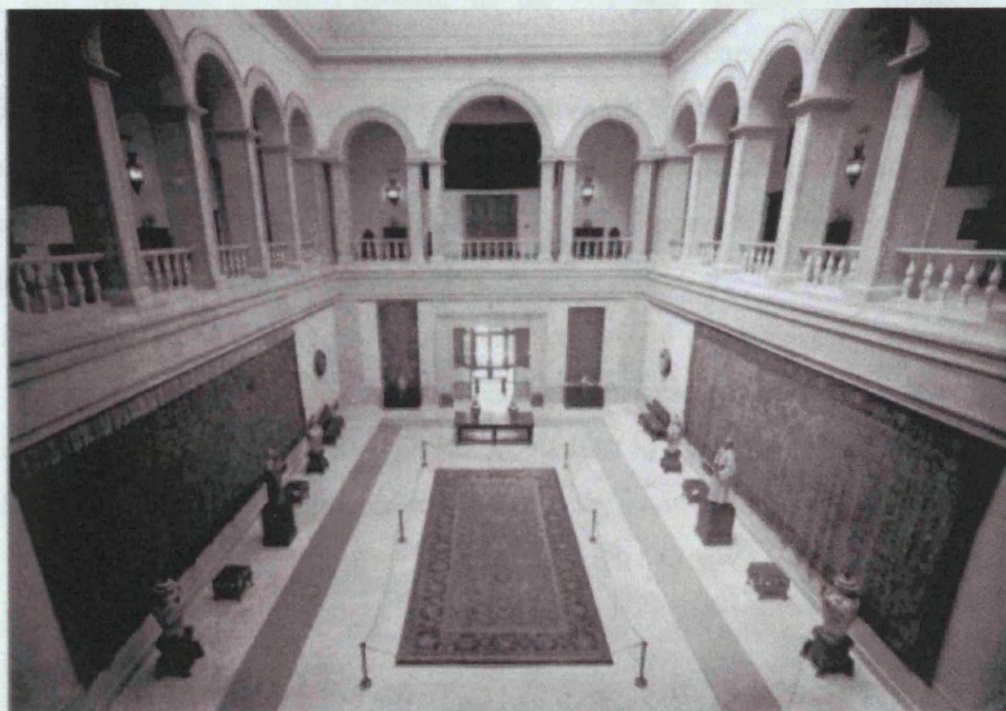


Fig. 5. Main Hall of the MNAA. Photograph of Alvão, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisboa.

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<sup>262</sup> E.g.: in 1937, sixteen future curators were learning the profession in the museum.

<sup>263</sup> E.g.: the MNSR followed the system of inventory the MNAA developed; even the internal regulations of the MNSR were, in part, copied from MNAA's (letter of director -1941/01/13).

<sup>264</sup> The National Museum of Fine Arts had its first location in another building; in 1884 the museum was transferred to the definitive location. See report sent by the director to the President of the Art and Archaeology Council (1930/03/31).

<sup>265</sup> Traditionally the window frames of the palace were painted in green and the museum was, and still is, often referred to as the "Museum of the Green Windows" (*Museu das Janelas Verdes*).

The following are examples of the difficulties the director had to face. They are significant as they show his permanent struggle to keep the museum open to the public. The museum had to face many difficulties not because the directors neglected it but because the governmental decisions were bureaucratic and consequently very slow. The directors had to get governmental approval for almost every decision. Budgetary issues were particularly sensitive, especially when the results would have no ideological or propagandistic impact.

During the second half of 1926, the director of the museum repeatedly informed the DGEMN that the museum urgently needed some repairs. In July, he stated that the external walls of the museum needed to be painted; in October, he reported that he feared the rain would enter through the roof. Another of his concerns was the very poor state of the house of the guards.<sup>266</sup> In 1930 the director was still claiming for the urgent need for repairs in the roofs and in the house of the guards.<sup>267</sup> In March 1930 the director wrote a comprehensive report that was sent to the President of the Art and Archaeology Council.<sup>268</sup> This department had no direct responsibility for the decisions concerning the repairs in the museum, but the director was exerting all the strength he could in trying to convince the government that the museum really needed some attention. In this report he stated that the museum had improved significantly since 1911. In his opinion, the rooms that had been completely remodelled had acquired a "dignified" appearance.<sup>269</sup> But he remarked that all the other rooms, despite some provisional changes he had determined,<sup>270</sup> needed complete repair and that the museum did not have enough resources to do so. Another important issue in his report was related to the scarcity of staff in the museum and the low salaries paid. José de Figueiredo also pointed out the need for a conveniently organised library to be

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<sup>266</sup> Letters sent by the director (1926/07/12, 1926/10/18 and 1926/12/10).

<sup>267</sup> Letters sent to the governmental responsible (1930/01/23 and 1930/02/22).

<sup>268</sup> Report sent by the director (1930/03/31).

<sup>269</sup> The director refers especially some of the rooms on the first floor and the rooms of the French silverware.

<sup>270</sup> The main changes José de Figueiredo ordered were related with the display of art objects and not with the repairs of the rooms, as he did not have enough budget.

opened to the public<sup>271</sup>. Finally, he stated that the inventories had been updated and gave a brief information concerning the total number of visitors per year.<sup>272</sup>



Fig. 6. Interior of one of the rooms of goldsmithery and faience. Photograph of Alvão, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisboa.

During the early 1930s some minor repairs were undertaken in the museum.<sup>273</sup> However, the director repeatedly protested against the poor conditions of the building. During the winter the rain often produced severe damage inside the rooms.<sup>274</sup> Finally, in 1937, the government decided the repair of the roofs and also the construction of new facilities. This phase ended in 1939 when the new buildings were considered ready.

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<sup>271</sup> The library of the museum counted some 3.000 volumes, the majority being the result of donations.

<sup>272</sup> In the twenties the average number of visitors per year to the MNAA was less than 30.000. The exception was the year of 1924, when a temporary exhibition about national faience brought to the museum more then 36.000 visitors.

<sup>273</sup> Letter (1931/05/22).

<sup>274</sup> Letters (1932/11/06, 1933/12/05, 1937/01/17, 1937/10/04 and 1937/12/02).



Fig. 7. Interior of one of the rooms of paintings. Photograph of Alvão, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisboa.



Fig. 8. Interior of the main room of Portuguese painters. Photograph of Alvão, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisboa.



The following years brought in important changes in the main building of the museum, that made it necessary to partially close it to the public between 1940 and 1945 (only a temporary exhibition was available).<sup>275</sup> During this long period of decisive changes the director kept insisting that the 'new' museum that would emerge from the repairs and the construction of new buildings would need more staff.<sup>276</sup> The museum reopened in 1945, but the changes did not end: the director was committed to having the reserve collections available to art students and other specialists.<sup>277</sup>



Fig. 9. Interior of the reserves of the museum, after the changes. Photograph of Alvão, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisboa.

<sup>275</sup> Letters (1938/01, 1938/06/04, 1938/08/24, 1940/01/30, 1940/08, 1942/04/28, 1948/08/07, 1943/09/01).

<sup>276</sup> Letters (1942/08/07 and 1943/09/01). The director was asking for an important improvement in terms of staff.

<sup>277</sup> The director wrote a letter (1946/01/14) on this matter to the governmental responsible.

As a result of this period of changes, the exhibition area of the museum was enlarged and other very important services got proper space inside the building.<sup>278</sup> Nevertheless, five years after the repairs the director had, once again, to face the same old problem of rain infiltration in the museum.<sup>279</sup> In October 1950 it was raining so heavily inside the museum, that the director was forced to transfer the collections and to close some of the exhibition rooms.<sup>280</sup> It rained inside of the museum all through the winter and still in the spring of 1951;<sup>281</sup> two years later the same problem was still unsolved.<sup>282</sup> Yet, the rain was not the only difficulty the director had to face: during summer time the ventilation of the exhibition rooms was deficient and the temperature reached inadequate values;<sup>283</sup> during the winter the museum depended on the central heating, that also became a reason for worries. In 1954 the central heating ceased to work and despite all the efforts made by the director to solve the situation, the next winter arrived with no solution whatsoever.<sup>284</sup>

The issue of repairs is linked to another of the major topics of the museum's history: revenues and expenditure. The museum was in almost complete dependence<sup>285</sup> of the central budget. Sometimes the Association of Friends of the Museum contributed with some money to buy books for the library or other equipment,<sup>286</sup> but the usual expenditure of the museum could not rely on these donations. The system adopted by the public finances for museum expenditures was complex. The annual budget was divided into twelve parts and the museum received each part monthly. That amount of money was not to be used freely by the museum, as the budget was divided into several sections (e.g. stationary, cleaning products, electricity, wages) and the money could only be spent for a specific purpose

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<sup>278</sup> In 1938 the museum had only 23 exhibition rooms; in 1945 the number of rooms of the permanent exhibition was of 44 and 5 more rooms were dedicated to temporary exhibitions. The total area of the museum was 16.735m<sup>2</sup>, of which 10.981 m<sup>2</sup> were exhibition areas.

<sup>279</sup> Letters (1950/03/18, 1950/06/07 and 1950/09/29).

<sup>280</sup> The director decided to cover the roofs with large impermeable pieces of cloth. Letter (1950/10/06).

<sup>281</sup> Letter (1951/05/24).

<sup>282</sup> Letter (1952/11/24).

<sup>283</sup> Letter (1953/09/23).

<sup>284</sup> Letters (1954/02/26 and 1954/10/06).

<sup>285</sup> Two letters (1940/01/18) one sent to the DGESBA and the other to the producer of showcases, make it possible to understand that the director was trying very hard to obtain permission to acquire the glass cases, a purpose that proved very difficult to achieve.

within each section.<sup>287</sup> The administration of such a budget was obviously a hard task and the director protested more than once against this system.<sup>288</sup> One of the most significant examples of the difficulties the directors had to face is the 'case' of the typewriter. In October 1941 the director informed that a new typewriter was needed in the museum and that he had no money available to buy it. In November 1942 the director insisted that the typewriter was really necessary; in November 1947 the director was still asking for the typewriter with no success; in October 1948 he sent another letter, asking for a typewriter once again. In 1951, and for the first time since the beginning of the museum, the director had to inform that the administrative section of the museum would not be able to respect a legal deadline to handle some documents. The staff of the museum had too much work and the secretariat services lacked a typewriter to accomplish the task.<sup>289</sup>

The archive of the museum still keeps most of the expenditure documents, as the museum had to prove the acquisition of each item or service.<sup>290</sup> Each month, from 1930 onwards, the director had to produce a document justifying each expense and giving detailed information about the person who was responsible for it.<sup>291</sup> Annually, the director had to propose a budget clearly justifying all items included. Frequently the budget planned by the director was not accepted and the central administration would reduce the amounts requested drastically.<sup>292</sup> Another difficulty was that the museum, as all other public services, could not hire a service without having received quotes from several different suppliers. The normal decision was to accept the lowest price. The director disagreed with this standard procedure, at least with certain specific issues, such as hiring the services of a professional

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<sup>286</sup> In 1942 the director asked for the help of the Association because he desperately needed money (letter, 1942/02/24). He had asked for some equipment to the central administration but the answer was negative.

<sup>287</sup> Once, he even asked for permission to transfer the money from one section of the budget to another, but without success. Letter (1946/07/02).

<sup>288</sup> Letter (1926/10/28) where the director explains the difficulties of handling the administration of the museum with the restricted budget he had; he adds that he frequently had to use his own money to pay for museum expenses and then wait to receive it back. This situation occurred repeatedly and in 1940 the director protested again for the same reason (letter, 1940/12/17).

<sup>289</sup> Letters (1941/10, 1942/11/12, 1947/11/18, 1948/10/30 and 1951/02/26).

<sup>290</sup> As examples, see the lists sent to the central administration service (1927/08/31 and 1927/12/31).

<sup>291</sup> The central department in charge of controlling the expenses of the public services really checked those documents. Once the director had to face a criticism from that department and had to answer explaining the acquisition of a particular item. The case was about the acquisition of a large bottle of mineral water (5 litres). The central department considered the expense a luxury and the director explained that that water was not for the use of the staff of the museum but to fill the glasses of lecturers that had gone to the museum to present conferences. He added that he had decided to buy a large bottle because the price per glass of mineral water was lower that way (letter, 1953/05/11).

<sup>292</sup> See budgets sent to the Art and Archaeology Council (1927/04/27, 1930/03/05 and 1931/01/20).

photographer. Once the director argued that what really mattered was the quality of the service and not the price, but he had a very hard time convincing the central bureau in charge of the expenses to allow such exception.<sup>293</sup>

The low salaries paid to the workers of the museum were also a reason for difficulties. The director used all opportunities he had to protest against the amounts paid per month to the museum staff, from the cleaners to himself. In the extensive report he sent to the president of the Art and Archaeology Council in 1930<sup>294</sup> he stated that the salaries of the museum's personnel should be increased, as they were low compared to other professions. He added two other arguments: the MNAA was a very demanding institution in terms of schedules and responsibilities and similar jobs in other European museums were much better paid.<sup>295</sup>

As a consequence of his institutional responsibility, the director of the MNAA had to travel and visit other national and regional museums. These trips should be paid by the Portuguese state, but the procedures that had to be undertaken are worth explaining, as they show how the Portuguese state tried to avoid budgetary responsibilities by making the bureaucratic procedures almost impossible to follow. Each time the director wanted or needed to travel he had to send a letter to the central department in charge asking, in advance, for proper authorisation and then wait for the answer. Then he had to send another letter asking for a special document<sup>296</sup> that enabled him to acquire the train tickets for free. In the 1940s the director had his own car<sup>297</sup> and used it for the service of the museum, without receiving any payment or even co-participation in the expenses with petrol. During the war, and in the years that followed, the use of imported products was under severe restrictions and some were even strictly rationed. Such was the case of fuels, in general, and of any other products made of crude oil. In 1945 the director asked for permission to buy petrol to go to some museums away from Lisboa, but the central department in charge

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<sup>293</sup> Letter (1953).

<sup>294</sup> Quoted in previous note.

<sup>295</sup> He kept insisting on that point in other letters (1927/04/29, 1931/01/20 and 1933/07/08, this one sent directly to the Minister) with no practical results.

<sup>296</sup> The name of that document was "*guia de viagem*" (as example, 1932/10/25); the director was asking for the "*guia*" to visit museums in Coimbra, Aveiro, Porto, Braga and Guimarães.

(*Instituto dos Combustíveis*) refused.<sup>298</sup> The director insisted and it is possible to know that he finally got the authorisation.<sup>299</sup> Again in 1946 he had to ask for permission to buy tyres. This time he pointed out that he had always used his own car for the service of the museum without receiving any compensation.<sup>300</sup> All these difficulties the director had to deal with 'behind the scenes' were the hidden face of the museum, the one the public was not aware of, the one the propaganda of the regime carefully covered by stating "the MNAA is one of the good museums of Europe".<sup>301</sup> The museum was used as an object of propaganda but the excessive care of the regime with public expenditure turned out to be an obstacle for the real development of the institution.

After the war, and with the improvement of national economy, the Portuguese State showed some 'generosity' towards the cultural services. The museum's budgets were increased and in 1948 the director of the MNAA even wrote a letter of gratitude to the Ministry of Finance.<sup>302</sup> However, the difficulties did not end, and some years later the director had to protest against the budget that the government had allocated for the restoration of several paintings. The director vehemently pointed out that the amount granted would, in foreign countries, be enough but for the restoration of one painting, and therefore, totally inadequate for all the historic paintings that needed urgent care, in Portugal.<sup>303</sup>

The fact that the Portuguese state would never spend more money than the strictly necessary caused embarrassment. In the early 1950s, the director had been present in international meetings and conferences and, as a consequence, Portugal joined ICOM since its foundations. In 1955 the director received a letter from ICOM informing that if Portugal wished to remain as a member of the Council, fees would have to be paid, just like all other members. In fact, the Portuguese State was already owing about 65.000 French Francs. The

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<sup>297</sup> The director affirmed he bought the car in 1945 (letter, 1946/06/27).

<sup>298</sup> Letter (1945/09/13). The director reduced the request and was asking only for 100 litres of petrol.

<sup>299</sup> As some months later he sent back the remaining documents that he had not used . Letter (1945/11/02).

<sup>300</sup> Letter (1946/06/27).

<sup>301</sup> Decree 15.216.

<sup>302</sup> Letter (1948/01/23).

director suggested that either the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Ministry of Finance should pay.<sup>304</sup> The aim of João Couto was to keep in touch with what was being done in the rest of Europe, in terms of museums and museological policies. He thought that the reconstruction of the European museums, after the Second World War was a process worth of attention because the Portuguese museums could learn a lot from it.<sup>305</sup> He did his best to enable the Portuguese presence in international conferences and other scientific meetings, either by going himself or by encouraging some of his staff to go.<sup>306</sup> He succeeded in his efforts and due to his participation in the First Conference of ICOM, Portugal had the right to participate in the Second International Conference (dedicated to restoration of art objects) organised by ICOM, in Rome in 1949.<sup>307</sup> In 1950, Portugal was represented by a curator of the MNAA (Maria José Mendonça) in the Conference of ICOM, in London, and by João Couto in the Conference of Paris on restoration of art objects.<sup>308</sup> The presence of Portugal was registered by ICOM and João Couto was proud to inform, by the end of 1950, that this organisation was preparing a publication entirely dedicated to Portugal.<sup>309</sup> Another consequence was the organisation, in October 1952, of an international conference about the restoration of paintings, in the MNAA, under the supervision of ICOM.<sup>310</sup>

With all the restraints imposed by the budgetary limits to expenditure, the directors of the MNAA always faced serious difficulties in implementing a coherent acquisition policy. One of the sources of the objects and collections the museum had were the donations of

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<sup>303</sup> Letter (1950/03/01). As the director obtained no response he insisted in another letter (1950/03/16) but with no success.

<sup>304</sup> Letter sent to the *DGESBA* (1955).

<sup>305</sup> João Couto wrote a letter to the *DGESBA* affirming that it was a duty for the Portuguese museum professionals to take a close look at what the other countries of Europe were producing in terms of museums. He then asked for three scholarships so that the curators of the MNAA could visit the main European museums (letter, 1946/12/12). In 1948 João Couto organised a visit to the museums of Galiza for the curators of the MNAA (letter asking for permission and for the necessary passports, 1948/08/21).

<sup>306</sup> For example he asked for financial support so that a curator of the Museum could go to London and attend the sessions of the Museum's Congress that took place at the National Gallery; in June of that year he made all efforts to enable a Portuguese presence in the First Conference of the ICOM, in Paris (letter 1948/06/15).

<sup>307</sup> Letter (1949/11/18); João Couto intended to go to Rome to be at the Conference and to visit some museums. Then he intended to return via Paris where he would represent Portugal in another international meeting.

<sup>308</sup> João Couto informed of his intentions the governmental department in charge (letter, 1950/04/17).

<sup>309</sup> Letter (1950/12/14).

<sup>310</sup> João Couto informed the *DGESBA* of this event (letter 1952/09/20).

private collectors.<sup>311</sup> The director had to ask for hierarchical approval to accept such donations, but he was also to give his own approval.<sup>312</sup> Sometimes this procedure resulted in embarrassing situations such as the one that involved an Insurance Company (*Fidelidade*) that had offered a hunting knife<sup>313</sup> and then wanted the museum to have it always on display. The director tried to justify the removal of the knife from the permanent exhibition with the lack of space. He informed the insurance company that if the situation did not please them the solution would be either to have it returned by post, or for them to send someone to collect it at the museum. Some years later, in 1935,<sup>314</sup> the director had to face another embarrassing situation: the daughter of Delfim Deodato Guedes wrote a letter protesting against the removal from the display of a medallion *in memoriam* of her father. José de Figueiredo never had agreed with the display of the medallion. When he died in 1937, this question was not yet solved and João Couto had to face the anger of the "insulted" daughter who even wrote to the government to protest against such affront to her father's memory. As a consequence, the director had to explain his resolution and even suffered political pressure. Nevertheless, he never altered his resolution. This is an example of the difficult balance the director had to establish between museological criteria and political, ideological and propagandistic stress. Although the director of the MNAA was a notable person of the regime, due to the importance of the museum, he was not immune to political pressure and demands.

Despite all difficulties and budgetary constraints, during the 1930s, the museum enlarged its collections and was even able to acquire a significant number of art books for the library. This was because the Portuguese financial situation had improved and the directors were able to convince the political power to spend more money with the museum. The overall investment in the museum is impressive, as is evidenced by the graphs below.<sup>315</sup> If compared with the average number of acquisitions and with the amounts involved during

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<sup>311</sup> The director always thanked the donors by letter. See, for example, documents related with the donations of José de Lencastre e Távora (1927/03824), of the *Conde d'Elba* (1930/01/15), of Augusto Rosa (1933/01) and of the deceased director of the museum, José de Figueiredo (1938/04).

<sup>312</sup> In 1940 several collections were given to the museum.

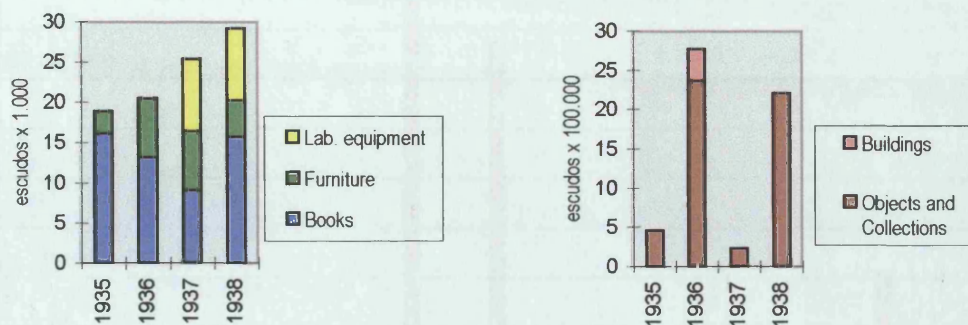
<sup>313</sup> The object had no possible coherent relation with the exhibits of the museum and the director decided to remove it from the display (letter, 1933/04/15).

<sup>314</sup> Mail of August 1935, in particular letter dated 1935/08/05.

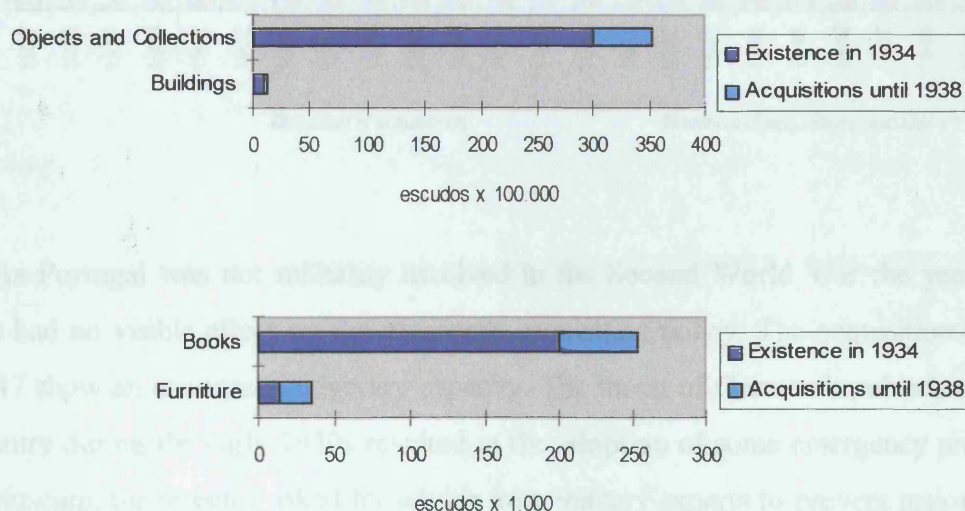
<sup>315</sup> José de Figueiredo died in 1937, after several months of illness. The fact may explain the cut in the acquisitions.

a longer period of time (between the late 1920s and the early 1950s)<sup>316</sup> the late 1930s (especially the years of 1936 and 1938) are exceptional.

**Fig. 10. Acquisitions between 1935 and 1938 (MNA)**



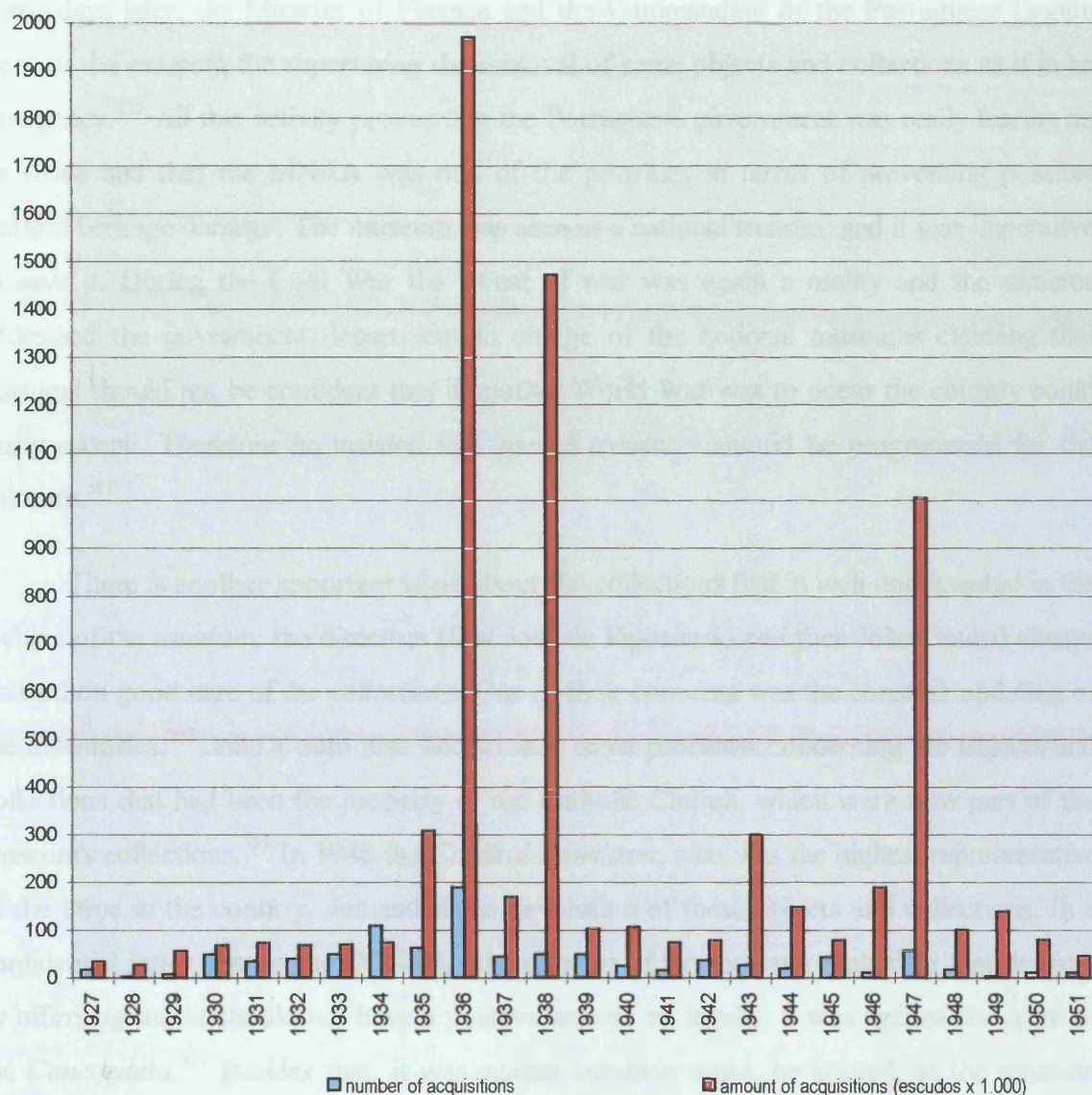
**Fig. 11. Comparison between the patrimony in 1934 and 1938 (MNA)**



<sup>316</sup> The average number of acquisitions per year, between 1927 and 1951, was of 38,7; during the same period the average amount spent per year in those acquisitions was of 273.056\$00.



Fig. 12. Expenditure and number of acquisitions per year 1927-51 (MNAA)



As Portugal was not militarily involved in the Second World War the years of the conflict had no visible effect on the museum's acquisition policy. The acquisitions of 1946 and 1947 show an increased budgetary capacity. The threat of German bombardments over the country during the early 1940s resulted in the adoption of some emergency procedures in the museum: the director asked for advice from military experts to prevent major damage in case of attack and informed the Minister of National Education of the measures he was undertaking.<sup>317</sup> In order to know the priorities in an emergency the director also ordered

<sup>317</sup> Letter (1942/04/08).

that all inventories should be checked.<sup>318</sup> In June 1942 another exercise was performed.<sup>319</sup> Some days later, the Minister of Finance and the Commandant of the Portuguese Legion went to the museum for supervising the removal of some objects and collections as if in an emergency.<sup>320</sup> All this activity proves that the Portuguese government was really fearing an air strike and that the MNAA was one of the priorities in terms of preventing possible cultural heritage damage. The museum was seen as a national treasure and it was imperative to save it. During the Cold War the threat of war was again a reality and the director addressed the government department in charge of the national museums claiming that Portugal should not be confident that if another World War was to occur the country could easily escape. Therefore he insisted that special measures should be programmed for the museum.<sup>321</sup>

There is another important issue about the collections that is well documented in the archive of the museum: the directors (first José de Figueiredo and then João Couto) always insisted on good care of the collections. One of their concerns was the constant updating of the inventories.<sup>322</sup> João Couto also had to face some problems concerning the objects and collections that had been the property of the Catholic Church, which were now part of the museum's collections.<sup>323</sup> In 1948 the *Cardeal Patriarca*, who was the highest representative of the Pope in the country, demanded the devolution of these objects and collections. In a confidential letter sent to the DGESBA the director of the museum replied to that demand by affirming that it should not have a positive answer as, legally, it was against the spirit of the *Concordata*.<sup>324</sup> Besides that, it was against common sense, he argued, as the museum had received objects that had been nationalised by the First Republic, but had also bought

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<sup>318</sup> Letter (1942/05/19).

<sup>319</sup> Letter (1946/06/20).

<sup>320</sup> Letter (1946/06/25).

<sup>321</sup> Letters (1953/03/16 and 1953/05/18).

<sup>322</sup> See *Boletim Dos Museus Nacionais de Arte Antiga*, vol. III, Lisboa, 1944, p.46-68; letter (1946/11/19); letter (1948/08/18).

<sup>323</sup> During the First Republic the Portuguese State took possession of a significant part of the Catholic Church property.

<sup>324</sup> The *Concordata* was an agreement between the Portuguese State and the Catholic Church, signed in 1940. The agreement was celebrated to put an end to the previous decades of misunderstandings and even of hostility, to agree on some basic points concerning mutual respect and to determine the basis of future normal diplomatic relations. See CRUZ, Manuel Braga da - *O Estado Novo e a Igreja Católica*, Lisboa, Ed. Bizâncio, 1998, especially p.17-88.

many others with its own budget. Therefore, it would not seem right to return all religious objects to the Church.

The director's policy on the good care of the collections was disturbed by some official demands of the governmental protocol. Different governmental departments and Ministries had the right to request objects from the museum to display in cabinets or to be used during official ceremonies. The directors always tried to avoid such practices, but were hardly ever successful.<sup>325</sup> In these cases the vanity of politicians and bureaucrats was strong enough to overwhelm museological concerns, proving that power over museums, during the *Estado Novo*, was frequently in the hands of politicians and not in the hands of museum curators.

Temporary exhibitions were a means of bringing public to the museum. The MNAA was very much a model for other national museums. One of the novelties the MNAA brought to the national concept of public museums was the foundation of a service dedicated to scholars. In 1937<sup>326</sup> the museum was established as an "extension of schools" and therefore an institution with an important educational role.<sup>327</sup> The MNAA had a significant number of objects and collections that were not on permanent display. Some of them were considered of exceptional historic and artistic value. João Couto, while director of the museum, promoted temporary exhibitions using the reserve collections. These exhibitions were meant to be interesting and meaningful for students. This procedure became frequent during 1940, as this was the year of the national celebration of the centenary of independence.<sup>328</sup> During the Second World War the number of such events was restrained by the fear of bombardments and economic difficulties, but after the War the number of temporary exhibitions increased again, as is shown in the graph below:

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<sup>325</sup> One of the most significant examples is the systematic use of a collection of French silverware during official banquets. The director formally protested against this practice (letter 1248/12/09). Another very important information concerning this question was given by Bairrão Oleiro in his interview (see appendix for synopsis). He affirmed that when he became responsible for the governmental department in charge of the national museums, in the middle 1960s, he had to face the difficult situation of having a significant number of museum objects away from the museums. More than four hundred objects belonging to the National Museum of Contemporaneous Art were being used in official departments. In an official visit to Madrid, Bairrão Oleiro accidentally found an object belonging to the MNAA used as an ashtray at the Portuguese embassy.

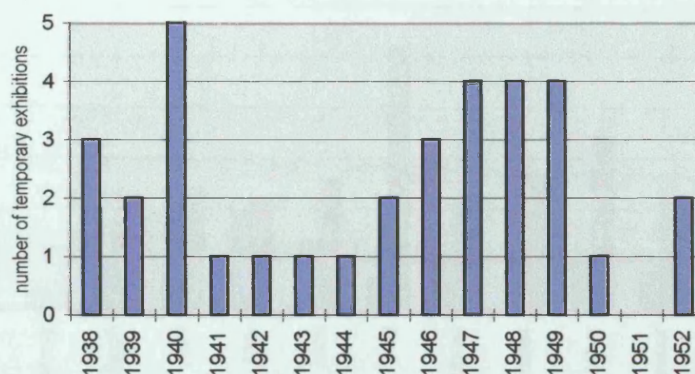
<sup>326</sup> Letter (1937/02/11), sent to 82 schools informing about the services provided by the museum in the field of education.

<sup>327</sup> From the beginning of the 1930s the museum received an impressive number of letters from schools asking to visit the museum.

<sup>328</sup> See chapter 7 on this matter.

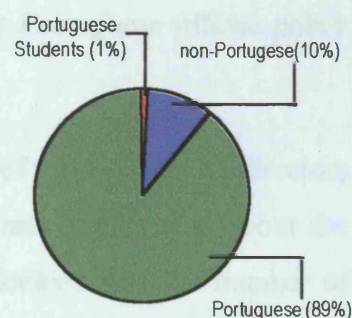


**Fig. 13.**  
**Temporary Exhibitions at the National Museum  
of Ancient Art**



The graph on the right shows the profile of non-paid visitors to the museum, during 1931. The data for this year is a good example of the scarcity of the visits of students to the museum. It also explains the measure mentioned above. After the death of José de Figueiredo the policy of providing students facilities was continued by João Couto. He had well defined ideas about the functions of a national museum one of which was the educational purpose.<sup>329</sup> The development of his ideas resulted in the establishment of an educational department in the museum, which was the very first in the country.<sup>330</sup>

**Fig. 14.**  
**Non paid visits to the MNAA in 1931**



At the same time the museum wanted to attract new visitors<sup>331</sup> and, despite the governmental decision to impose entrance fees for national museums,<sup>332</sup> the number of visitors increased. In 1947, it exceeded 1937 (2,58 times more visitors in 1947), as the graph below demonstrates.

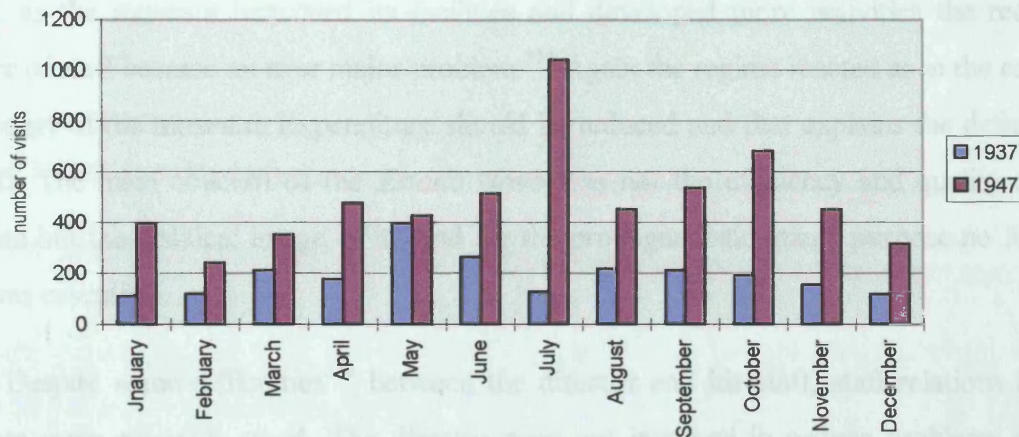
<sup>329</sup> See COUTO, João - "Extensão escolar dos museus", in *Museu*, revista do Círculo Dr. José Figueiredo, II, nº 2, Porto, 1961.

<sup>330</sup> In 1953 João Couto was already mentioning his project of an educational department (e.g.: he sent a letter to the SNI about a film on the museum directed by António Lopes Ribeiro - who could be considered as one of the official film directors of the regime). João Couto supported the idea that other films of the sort should be made to be used didactically in high schools and in the educational department..

<sup>331</sup> E.g.: the director sent a letter to the national mail (*Administrador Geral dos Correios e Telégrafos*) asking for collaboration in implementing an idea: as all stamps had to be validated by the Mail using some kind of sentence printed over, he thought that that sentence could be "Visit the Museum of the Green Windows". In 1953 the director tried to promote the museum once more: in February he addressed a letter to the SNI, protesting against the fact that in a leaflet with the title "Visit Lisboa" no mention to the Museum could be found.

<sup>332</sup> Decree 19.414 (1931/03/09). The museum changed the admission conditions according to this decree (letter, 1931/03/12).

**Fig. 15. Paid visits to the MNAA in 1937 and 1947**



All the efforts of the 1950s<sup>333</sup> to keep in touch with the process of development of the European museology made the decade an important period of international influence over the Portuguese museological concepts. The MNAA was the most active museum on what international relations were concerned. The MNAA was the "first national museum", the one that played a decisive role in the modernisation of the Portuguese official policy towards museums.<sup>334</sup>

Despite the importance given to the MNAA as an object of propaganda, its directors always faced difficulties in terms of staff. The directors frequently complained about the situation but with very few success.<sup>335</sup> One of the major difficulties was the number of curators working in the museum. Before 1911 there were two curators; later on another one was appointed to the museum, but after that and with no further explanation the central department in charge of the national museums suppressed two curators, thus leaving the museum with only one.<sup>336</sup> During the 1930s the museum had a director, one curator, one chief clerk, one clerk, one chief of guards, one porter, ten guards, two servants and a

<sup>333</sup> See above paragraphs about ICOM.

<sup>334</sup> It is only natural to link the decree of 1965, number 46.758, that changed the official definition of museum and that formally recognised museums as educational institutions, to this international connection João Couto, (and others, Bairrão Oleiro, for example) were performing.

<sup>335</sup> Letter (1926/08/17).

<sup>336</sup> In 1930/04/21 the director wrote a letter protesting against this situation, remembering that he had already complained in 1922/03/06, 1925/01/12, 1926/03/15, 1926/04/14 and 1927/01/27.



gardener.<sup>337</sup> The directors were particularly worried with the lack of curators in the museum and repeatedly remarked that the museum should have at least two curators.<sup>338</sup> In the mid-1950s, as the museum increased its facilities and developed more activities the reduced number of staff became an ever major problem.<sup>339</sup> Again the regime reacted as in the case of the budget of the museum. Expenditure should be reduced and that explains the deficiency of staff. The main concern of the *Estado Novo* was not the efficiency and quality of the museum but the political image of it. And for the propagandistic image purpose no further staff was essential.

Despite some difficulties<sup>340</sup> between the director and his staff, staff relations in the museum were generally good. The director even got involved in private problems of the employees willing to help them. Between 1946 and 1950 he helped a former porter of the museum, someone who had served for more than 35 years. The porter received a monthly salary of 550\$00 but after retirement the Portuguese state was to pay him only 192\$00 and asked him to pay 5.779\$00 of taxes. The director wrote several letters to the DGESBA<sup>341</sup> vehemently protesting against the situation. The director also had to intervene in procedures related to accidents occurred during working hours. The major problem would usually be the cold, slow, bureaucratically insensitive nature of the Portuguese state, always with the aim of spending less money.<sup>342</sup>

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<sup>337</sup> See copies of the statistical forms (1931/01/17 and 1937/01/07).

<sup>338</sup> Letters (1940/08/22, 1944/09/08 and 1949/11/28).

<sup>339</sup> Letter (1954/10/29).

<sup>340</sup> It is relatively easy to trace the moments of conflict between the director and the staff because whenever they occurred the director would edit an internal document determining procedures. These documents were called "*Ordem de Serviço*". The list below shows some of the most important ones: 1933/06/26: The director formally reprehends two of the guards because of misconduct and use of improper vocabulary during working hours; 1937/09/18: The director demands that all personnel takes good care of the uniforms. The personal care for the uniform became object of official evaluation; 1938/05/18: The director instructs the guards to remain in the respective rooms and not to abandon their places under any excuse; he interdicts any disputes in loud voice or other kinds of misconduct; 1939/02/06: The director forbids the guards to read newspapers, magazines or books during working hours and when visitors are in the rooms; he also forbids the guards to remain seated while visitors are in the rooms; 1940/06/12: The director formally thanks all staff and personnel of the museum because of the help he received with the organisation of the temporary exhibition of painting during the commemorations of the centenaries; 1940/07/08: The director explains the main rules to be followed to ask for temporary leaves; 1940/08/07: The director reprehends two guards in consequence of acts of misconduct and menaces with formal disciplinary sanctions if something of the kind happened again; 1942/10/19: The director informs all personnel that any further complaints should be submitted in writing and that only that formal procedure would be accepted.

<sup>341</sup> Letters (1946/12/07, 1950/05/15 and 195006/05).

<sup>342</sup> It is worth mentioning two accidents which demonstrate these difficulties: in October 1952 a guard got injured during working hours; he had to go to hospital and to buy penicillin with his own money; the director asked (1952/10/19) for the payment of all expenses by the Portuguese State, as the guard was on duty, but in December he was still asking for the same thing with no practical results (letter, 1952/12/30). In 1954 another guard of the museum had a bad accident on his way to work and had to remain inactive for more than two months; the accident was not regarded as a work accident and therefore the Portuguese State assumed no responsibilities.

Staff employment procedures in all departments under the Portuguese government were intricate. The admittance of a new worker depended on proof that the person would not disrespect the National Constitution, had no subversive ideas and was not a communist.<sup>343</sup> Whenever the museum wanted to admit someone a standard procedure to check the "qualities" of the candidate was used. One example of this is the case of Leopoldina Martins, in 1951. Someone wrote anonymous letters to the director accusing her of being involved in subversive activities. Leopoldina had to wait until in a formal process it was found out that the letters had been written by a guard of the museum who had some private dispute with her. The guard (Luis Pereira) was suspended from work for two years, while Leopoldina got the job.<sup>344</sup>

In brief, the MNAA was seen very differently by its directors and by the Portuguese State. For the directors the museum was a cultural and scientific institution, the major and principal museum of the country, the one that should represent Portugal in internal and foreign events regarding art and art objects.<sup>345</sup> For the Portuguese state the Museum was, like many other museums, a vehicle of propaganda; the museum should be evidence that Portugal was taking good care of its art and historic objects. Before the *Estado Novo* the Portuguese state had been very proud to declare that the museum had changed a lot in the early decades of the century.<sup>346</sup> In 1940, for the celebration of the centenaries, the *Estado Novo* presented the museum as an exemplary institution.

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<sup>343</sup> In 1935/05/13 the decree 25.317 ordered that every person working for the Sate that had shown some kind of opposition towards the Constitution should be compulsorily retired; in 1936/09/14, to become a civil servant, the decree 27.003 made compulsory a declaration of acceptance of the Constitution and of active renounce to all subversive ideologies, including communism.

<sup>344</sup> Letters (1951/09/20 and 1952/08/23). By another letter (1954/12/30), it is possible to know that the guard returned to the museum two years after (see also the official diary, second part, number 283, 1954/12/03)

<sup>345</sup> E.g.: in the early 1930s, referring to the presence of some Portuguese paintings in the Exhibition of Antwerp as a major example, the director of the museum affirmed that taking such works of art to such event was "one of the best acts of propaganda" (letter, 1933/04/21).

<sup>346</sup> Decree 15.216 (1928/03/22). The museum, that had been a "chaotic warehouse", had become "one of the major museums of Europe".

Even in its recognised role of first Portuguese museum, the MNAA had to face severe financial difficulties. José de Figueiredo never seemed to fear political pressure and some of his intervention were even 'politically incorrect'. João Couto also had a strong will and more than once challenged the administrative decisions he considered inappropriate.<sup>347</sup> In certain circumstances, the particular characteristics of the objects in the museum, prevented propagandistic use<sup>348</sup> as the directors argued that some objects could not leave the museum without severe risk of permanent damage. Nevertheless, the political power was stronger than the scientific or curatorial evidences and sometimes the directors had to concede.<sup>349</sup>

Despite all the difficulties, the directors of the MNAA were able to influence the political power on particular, yet very important, subjects. José de Figueiredo took the responsibility of modernising the museum and he managed to accomplish that task. He also had a decisive influence on the restoration and preventive care of art objects.<sup>350</sup> From the late 1930s and for more than two decades, João Couto was director of the museum. One of his major objectives was the development of the educational role of the museum, and his ideas had a decisive influence over the Portuguese legislation of the 1960s about museums.<sup>351</sup> The museum was no longer seen as a mere deposit of objects, and the collections became important not only by their artistic or aesthetic value but also by their educational potential. This legislation still had the paternalistic tone of the regime but some very important principles were evoked, such as the social importance of the museum, the imperative necessity of having a broader public and the need to communicate with that public in terms of a pedagogical relationship.<sup>352</sup>

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<sup>347</sup> One of the major quarrels João Couto had to face was the one about the exhibition of 1940, when the museum was asked to lend some objects that were not in acceptable conservation conditions to leave the museum. João Couto firmly opposed that request but he had to face powerful political decisions that overwhelmed his authority while director of the museum. See Chapter 7 on this subject.

<sup>348</sup> This is the case of temporary exhibitions both in Portugal and abroad. More than once the director tried to avoid the transport of certain objects that were too fragile.

<sup>349</sup> Letter (1940/04/20) João Couto wrote to the president of the Commission in charge of the National Exhibition demanding a formal order to let some objects leave the museum; he declined any further responsibility if his disapproval to the use of such objects was not taken into consideration.

<sup>350</sup> The institution linked to the MNAA in charge of those proceedings was named after him.

<sup>351</sup> Decree 46.758.

<sup>352</sup> The decree assumed that some of the visitors of art museums had the capability of enjoying the visit by themselves, because they were educated people; others, less educated (as manual workers or students), should be guided into the aesthetic, artistic and historic importance of the objects on display. This interpretation of the educational role of the museum was elitist



This new definition of 'museum', the last the *Estado Novo* was to produce, lasted for almost two decades and it is undeniable that the MNAA, under the direction of João Couto, exerted a decisive influence in the engendering of it. Obviously, other museums had new approaches and new attitudes towards their educational role and their public (the Museum of José Malhoa and the Museum of Conímbriga are good examples of that). But the MNAA, due to its cultural and national importance and due to the fact it was the national 'school-museum' for curators and museum directors, played an exceptional role in the process.

#### **4.2 The *Museu de Soares dos Reis* (Museum of Soares dos Reis)**

The MNSR was for a long time the only national museum in the city of Porto. This gave the museum's director reason to argue in favour of his institution and enabled some demands that otherwise would not have been well received in Lisboa. Even before becoming a national museum, the Soares dos Reis was valued as the only art museum in Porto.<sup>353</sup> The *Estado Novo* recognised that value and was therefore careful in the relations with the museum.

Before being called Soares dos Reis, the museum was known as the *Museu Portuense*, founded in 1833 by King D. Pedro IV. Some years later, the museum was ruled by the "Academy of Fine Arts of Porto" (*Academia Portuense de Belas Artes*) and remained so until the First Republic. In 1911 the museum came under the authority of the "Third Art and Archaeology Council" (*Conselho de Arte e Arqueologia da 3ª Circunscrição*);<sup>354</sup> the name of the institution was then changed and it became *Museu Soares dos Reis*. After the revolution of the 28<sup>th</sup> May 1926 the new regime decided that this museum should be considered as national.<sup>355</sup> This resolution was inspired by the new policy towards national heritage and museums. The introductory text of this decree is a self-eulogy of the

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<sup>353</sup> Decree 21:504 (25/07/1932); the MNSR was officially recognised as the only opened-to-the-public museum of the city. The local authorities' museum was closed due to the very small building where it was installed.

<sup>354</sup> See chapter 3.4.1 .

<sup>355</sup> Decree 21:504 (25/07/1932).

government policy towards culture, aesthetics and heritage.<sup>356</sup> The decree also affirms that the museum of Soares dos Reis was one of the poorest museums of the country and that this circumstance hindered the institution performing its "high cultural mission".<sup>357</sup> This situation deeply concerned the central government because the museum possessed collections of national value (such as the painting collections of Silva Porto, Sousa Pinto, Vieira Portuense, among others, and the collection of sculptures of Soares dos Reis) that should be displayed or stored in better conditions. The government stated clearly that the museum of Soares dos Reis did not have sufficient financial support and that this resulted in deficient facilities.

Another important issue concerning this museum was the collections that had belonged to the Catholic Church authorities of Porto and that the Republic had nationalised. These collections were temporarily under the custody of the city's museum,<sup>358</sup> but the government considered this fact as an anomaly: these collections were of great cultural and aesthetic value and the decision of nationalising them was taken with the purpose of enabling the public use of the collections.<sup>359</sup> In order to solve this situation the government decided to alter the status of the museum. This is reflected in a change in the name of the museum: it became *Museu Nacional de Soares dos Reis*. The decree also includes the decision to transfer other collections of the Church that had been nationalised during the Republic to the new museum. The local authorities could transfer the collections of their museum to the new one, and still keep formal possession of them. Finally, the decree determined that the new national museum should have a director with a salary paid by the government.<sup>360</sup> The director had authority to choose from the ceramic collections of the "Commercial and Industrial Museum of Porto" (*Museu Comercial e Industrial do Porto*) those which he thought should be in the new national museum. Obviously, changing the management and name of the museum would not solve all its problems. In fact, the museum remained in the same old building with the same old problems, even if some repairs (that

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<sup>356</sup> Original text: "*Tem o Governo demonstrado o interesse que o desenvolvimento da cultura estética lhe merece [...]*".

<sup>357</sup> Original text: "*desempenho da alta missão cultural que lhe incumbe*".

<sup>358</sup> The one that was closed due to the very small building.

<sup>359</sup> Decree 21:504.

<sup>360</sup> The director's salary was of 13.572\$00 annually.

implied the closure of the museum) were undertaken to mend the most urgent needs.<sup>361</sup> The main difference was that the director had an official route to protest against the situation.<sup>362</sup>

The museum reopened to the public in April 1933 and, to the sadness of the director, the government department responsible (the director of the DGEBSA) was not present at the ceremony.<sup>363</sup> During the following year the average number of visitors was approximately four hundred per month.<sup>364</sup> Despite these numbers, the only permanent personnel of the museum was the director. There was also a guard and a porter but they were temporary.<sup>365</sup>

During these first years of the existence of the new national museum the director (Dr. António Vasco Rebêlo Valente) cared for the collections and for the museum's internal organisation (he undertook the essential task of preparing the inventory: the method was the same used in the MNAA). He also cared for the correct official use of the museum's name. In 1933 he wrote a letter to the department responsible for public finances (*Chefe da Repartição da Direcção Geral da Contabilidade Pública*) clarifying that the name of the museum should include the word "National". The director feared the lack of such word could result in "future complications".<sup>366</sup> In 1934 the inventory of objects on display was completed. According to the director, the stores were too cold for anyone to work there and therefore no inventory of them could be made.<sup>367</sup> In 1934 the director informed his superior about the statistics (between 1925 and 1934) of the money received from the public resources by the museum.

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<sup>361</sup> Letter (1932/11/09).

<sup>362</sup> Letter (1935/04/29); the director affirmed that the provisional installation of the museum in a dark, narrow, cold and damp place lasted for a century.

<sup>363</sup> Letter (1933/04/12).

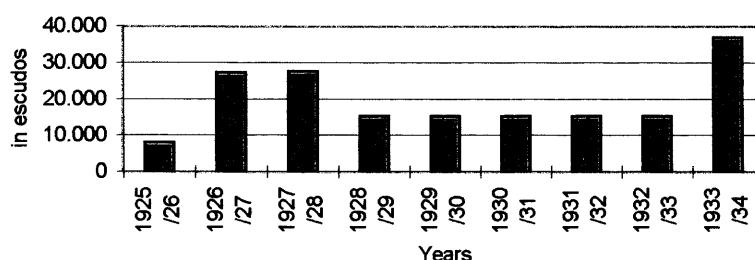
<sup>364</sup> Letter (1933/06/02).

<sup>365</sup> The complete list of personnel was sent to the governmental responsible (1932/12/31).

<sup>366</sup> Letter (1933/06/12).

<sup>367</sup> Letter (1934/03/07).

Fig. 16.  
Money received by the Museum of Soares dos Reis



The graph above makes it clear that after the revolution of the 28<sup>th</sup> May 1926 the museum had its budget increased almost three times; this was the result of the national policy regarding heritage and museums that the military dictatorship undertook. After the change in public finances imposed by Salazar in 1928, the budget was reduced and the same amount was awarded each year until 1933. In 1933/34, having improved the country's economic and financial situation,<sup>368</sup> the regime realised that the museum needed some extra support, and increased its budget. The director emphasised that finally the State had given some real attention and support to the only national museum of "the second capital of the Country".<sup>369</sup> Even so, he asked for additional money. In May 1934, he requested money to buy some more sculptures of Soares dos Reis.<sup>370</sup> After a bureaucratic struggle he finally received it. The acquisition policy was restrained by these budgetary problems, but the director had other options: during the second half of the 1930s he successfully asked for private collections to be handed to the museum as deposits.<sup>371</sup>

In terms of staff, the situation improved a little with this new budget. New personnel was admitted (in 1935 the director informed that three curators were working in the

<sup>368</sup> This idea spread in the country. For example, in July 1933 the director of the MNAA wrote a letter to the Ministry of Public Instruction (*Ministro da Instrução Pública*) about a question he had already mentioned in previous letters: his salary. The director received 1.450\$00 per month what he considered insufficient. The director also mentioned that for more than five years he was claiming against insufficient salary and he points out that, as a result of the work of Salazar, the national finances were finally capable of paying a fair salary to public servants.

<sup>369</sup> Original text: "[...] *único Museu Nacional da 2ª Capital do País*" in letter (1934/04/25).

<sup>370</sup> Letter to the DGESBA (1934/05/05) asking for 6.000\$00.

<sup>371</sup> As an example, in 1938 the director asked Mr. Sebastião Calheiros de Menezes to deposit a collection of objects that was suffering severe damage because of the conditions it was stored. The director reassured the owner that the formal possession of the collections was not at stake and that the objects would be better preserved in the museum. Letter (1938/08/06).

museum<sup>372</sup>). Nevertheless, he never ceased protesting against the facilities.<sup>373</sup> During 1936, he supported the guard and porter's complaints about the differences between their working conditions and those of other guards and porters in other national museums.

The government had plans for the museum. In 1934 a first and significant step was taken, when the future building of the museum (*Palácio das Carrancas*) became classified as a "building of public interest" (*imóvel de interesse público*).<sup>374</sup> This decision would become very significant some years later, when the government decided that that building should no longer be private property but should belong to the state and be adapted to receive the MNSR. 1934 was a great year for the museum in terms of visitors. The figures available for the previous years show that very few people entered the museum during paying days; but, after the repairs and with a new facade, the museum received an impressive number of visits during the end of 1933 and 1934.<sup>375</sup> This enthusiasm did not, however, last for long and the figures for the following months are again very low.<sup>376</sup> Again in 1937 some more visitors went to the museum, but the average of 1934 was not exceeded.<sup>377</sup>

The director of the museum experienced other difficulties, and always expressed his concern to the official responsible. An important example of these difficulties is the fact that the museum had no telephone service until 1936. In the beginning of 1936 the director wrote a letter asking for that service and two months later the museum was able to communicate via telephone.<sup>378</sup> Other apparently minor details made the work in the museum very difficult: for several years the director asked for a typewriter, as no such thing existed

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<sup>372</sup> Letter (1935/03).

<sup>373</sup> Letter (1935/04/29).

<sup>374</sup> Decree 24:003 (1934/06/12). The museum was installed in another public building, with poor conditions.

<sup>375</sup> All figures concerning the number of visitors in the museum are not sequentially coherent; nevertheless, it is of some interest to quote those available. The museum received an average of 400 visitors per month during the first months of 1933; during that whole year the number of paid visits did not exceed 187 (letter, 1934/04/25). From July 1933 until July 1934, the total number of visitors sums 13.739, what corresponds to an average of 1.145 visitors per month (letter 1936/07/15).

<sup>376</sup> From July 1934 until December 1935, only 434 paid visits are registered, what represents an average of only 24 visitors per month.

<sup>377</sup> In 1937 2.248 males and 540 females visited the museum. The monthly average is about 232. Another information on this matter can be found in the figures forwarded to the National Institute for Statistics (*INE Instituto Nacional de Estatística*) in the beginning of 1940: during the previous year 2.194 males and 415 females visited the museum, in a total of 2609, what represents an average of 217 visits per month.

in the museum. In 1936 the director wrote another polite yet emphatic letter to DGESBA,<sup>379</sup> he had to wait for another eleven months, but finally the museum was authorised to buy the typewriter in November 1937. These were simple facts of the internal life of the museum the public would not be aware of. They illustrate the fact that the official policy of great concern for national heritage was, at least partially, a façade and that the regime was either indifferent or incapable of solving real day-to-day problems.

The situation of the museum, which had never been acceptable to the director, became unbearable with an increase in collections acquired through private donations and the deposit of objects and collections coming from other museums.<sup>380</sup> In face of this situation the government finally decided that a new solution had to be found, and that was a new building. The timing could not be better; as the commemorations of 1940 were arriving and the regime wanted the country to exhibit a good national image. The problem of the building was to be resolved by a governmental decision that also solved another difficulty: the *Palácio dos Carrancas* had been classified as building of public interest in 1934, but the owner, a religious organisation called *Misericórdia*<sup>381</sup> was not being able to use the facilities as it should.<sup>382</sup> Therefore the State decided to buy the building and to adapt it in order to install the MNSR. This decision was taken in 1937<sup>383</sup> and the changes began in May 1939.<sup>384</sup> Another very important decision was that the collections of the local authorities' museum should be transferred into the MNSR; despite this, the ownership of the collections remained unchanged.

During the last months of 1939, and the beginning of the following year, the director closely watched the building works. At least twice he sent letters informing the

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<sup>378</sup> Letter (1936/02/29); in March that year the director informed that the telephone was installed.

<sup>379</sup> Letter (1936/12/30).

<sup>380</sup> In 1937 the director informed that the museum received 8 objects by donation, bought 17 and obtained 50 from other museums. In 1937 the museum received 4 objects and bought 81 (information transmitted to the National Institute for Statistics (*INE Instituto Nacional de Estatística*)).

<sup>381</sup> The direct translation of this word would be "Charity"; it belonged to the Catholic Church and was devoted to help those who needed (young orphans, poor people).

<sup>382</sup> The building had been given to the *Misericórdia* by king D. Manuel II with the intention of being used as a house for orphans.

<sup>383</sup> Decree 27.878 (1937/07/21). The Portuguese State "forced" the transaction, as this decree clearly states.

<sup>384</sup> Letter (1939/05/10). The general tone of the letter demonstrates the contentment of the director.

central government departments of the progress made so far and reported everything was going well. He was obviously glad with the idea of a new building for the museum.<sup>385</sup> He had, however, to take some stern measures to ensure that the local authorities surrendered the collections of the *Museu Municipal do Porto* to the MNSR.<sup>386</sup>

Problems also arose concerning the gardens of the museum. The grounds, adjacent to the museum, were used by a private club (the *Velo Club do Porto*). This club did not agree with the request to give up the use of those grounds so that the museum could install an open-air theatre and display some large archaeological objects. In a formal letter that was sent to the Ministry the club contested the proposal made by the museum's director and mentioned the collaboration with the "Portuguese Youth" (*Mocidade Portuguesa*) as a strong argument for retaining the garden.<sup>387</sup> The director was informed by the Ministry of this formal objection of the club and answered by contesting the arguments. The director based his case on the idea that the museum should perform other cultural tasks rather than only putting objects and collections on display. He argued that the gardens were essential to have an open-air exhibition and to build a theatre.<sup>388</sup> However, the political influence of the club and its connections with the "Portuguese Youth" were sufficient to defeat the director's beliefs and wishes. By the end of May 1940 the director knew that the grounds would remain for the club. Nevertheless, he protested violently and used very strong words in a letter sent to the governmental responsible for the public property.<sup>389</sup> The *Estado Novo* had complete control of the situation and this kind of decision could not be contested. The strong presence of the regime in the internal life of the museum is perceivable in other ways. For example, when the director wanted to admit new personnel, he had to send records containing information on the candidates to a special police force.<sup>390</sup> The director had to ask

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<sup>385</sup> Letter was sent to the DGESBA (1939/11/04); letter sent to the *Director Geral da Fazenda Pública* (1940/01/15).

<sup>386</sup> Letter (1940/03/07); see also decree 27:878.

<sup>387</sup> Letter (1940/04/20).

<sup>388</sup> Letter (1940/05/15).

<sup>389</sup> Letter (1940/05/23). Original text: "[...] o museu fica incompleto, defeituoso, devassado, quando poderia ser modelar"; in English this would be "the museum will be incomplete, deficient, encroached, when it could be perfect".

<sup>390</sup> This police had different names in different periods: first it was the PVDE (*Polícia de Vigilância e Defesa do Estado*) "Police of Vigilance and Defence of the State"; then PIDE (*Polícia Internacional de Defesa do Estado*) "International Police of the Defence of the State"; finally DGS (*Direcção Geral de Segurança*) "Bureau of Security".

for evidence of the political and moral trustfulness of the candidates.<sup>391</sup> Another similar situation recorded in the documentation of the museum is the case of a employee of the museum who was a member of the "Portuguese Legion" (*Legião Portuguesa*).<sup>392</sup> He had the right to be absent from work for training and public parades.<sup>393</sup> Even in smaller matters the importance of the state was present in the museum. The SPN could take photographs for internal and external propaganda; only requests were merely a formality as the SPN had the right to use museum material for its actions.<sup>394</sup>

But the director had other concerns during these final months of 1939, mainly the organisation of the "commemorations of the centenaries". He received instructions from the central department in charge of the commemorations (as other directors of museums did) to contact private owners of objects or collections of national interest in order to get proper authorisation to include those objects and collections in the national temporary exhibitions that were being organised.<sup>395</sup> One of the objects that was meant to be in Lisboa for the commemorations was the sword of D. Afonso Henriques, which was in possession of the MNSR. Naturally the director agreed with the intention of taking the symbolic weapon to Lisboa. The *Estado Novo* wanted the object they considered contributed to Portugal's independence to be associated with the nationalistic festivities. The symbolic importance given to that sword is representative of the spirit of the commemorations that were taking place. In 1944 this weapon was the centre of an argument about the right of its possession. The director of the MNSR received a formal report from the DGESBA informing that "a city" (not identified in the document) was reclaiming the right to keep the sword and to have it on display. The governmental decision reported to the museum was against such a request and stated that the sword was in its right place, well displayed, and that it could not be in better hands. Again in 1947, the sword went to Lisboa, this time to be exhibited at the

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<sup>391</sup> Letter (1940/09/03).

<sup>392</sup> This was a national and official paramilitary organisation that provided military training to its members and used to participate in official ceremonies of the regime.

<sup>393</sup> In 1954/05/24 the commandant of the north section of the Legion sent a letter to the director of the museum demanding the presence of Leonídio Coelho Dias in a parade that would take place in Lisboa. He was to be absent for three days and the director had to agree with the demand.

<sup>394</sup> Letter received by the museum (1944/02/19).

<sup>395</sup> As an example, letter (1940/02/27) sent by the director of the museum to the *Ordem Terceira de S. Francisco* (a catholic organisation) asking for permission to use some of their paintings in a temporary exhibition about early Portuguese painters to be held in Lisboa.



commemorations of the conquest of the city by D. Afonso Henriques. Apparently, this sword was, for the *Estado Novo*, one of the most important and symbolic material evidences of Portuguese nationality.

Finally, in September 1940, the building was considered ready and the director began to install the museum. In March of the following year he informed his superior of the problems he had found: the lift was not working, the roof leaked rain water into the museum, the air-conditioning was not functioning properly, the temperature in some galleries would not normally exceed 5° centigrade and the electrical system was faulty.<sup>396</sup> In preparation for the public opening the director asked the tramways to provide a stop in front of the museum. This wish was not granted, and in 1943 he was still asking for it. These difficulties faced by the director are evidence that the regime, either directly from government or indirectly from public services, was not very concerned with the ordinary running of the museum. During periods of intense propagandistic activity (such as the grounding of the regime during the late 1920s and early 1930s or the commemorations of 1940) the *Estado Novo* did pay a great deal of attention to national museums and monuments. But apart from that they were not considered first priority.

During 1941 the fear of German air strikes imposed some restrictions on life in Portugal and the museum had to prepare a means of defence.<sup>397</sup> Despite this threat, in January 1942 the director was able to inform that the museum was ready to open to the public.<sup>398</sup> A museum library was also opening by 1940-41. The director had asked for the help of private and public institutions to gather one together. During its first year the museum received a significant number of visitors.<sup>399</sup> The new building also demanded more

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<sup>396</sup> Letter (1941/03/01).

<sup>397</sup> Confidential letter (1941/08/26) informing that some defence exercises were being performed. See decree 170 (Official Diary, *II série*, 1953/07/17) and letters received in the museum (1954/01/20 and 1954/04/20) from the committee in charge of the protection of national heritage in case of war (*Comissão encarregada de estudar as providências a adoptar, em caso de Guerra, para a protecção dos bens culturais da Nação*).

<sup>398</sup> Letter (1942/01/17).

<sup>399</sup> The total was 13.859, what represents a monthly average of 1.155 visitors. This number decreased in the following years: in 1945 9.552 visitors went to the museum (6.355 males and 3.197 females) what represents a monthly average of 796; in 1948 9.145 (5.926 males and 3.219 females) visited the museum, what represents a monthly average of 762. In 1949 10.024 visitors went to the museum (5.953 males and 4.071 females) what represents an average of 835 per month. In 1950 the number of visitors was 12.146 (7.446 males and 4.700 females) what represents a monthly average of 1.012.

personnel and the number of people working in the museum increased: in 1950 the museum got four additional guards and two other employees.<sup>400</sup>

As the museum began to function, other difficulties concerning the facilities were found. In 1944 the director asked for the installation of two laboratories: one for photography and the other to perform preservation and restoration of objects. To solve these and other questions, in 1948 the government decided to buy two adjacent buildings,<sup>401</sup> but the director still asked for more museum space.<sup>402</sup> The main building needed remodelling, but the bureaucratic central administration decision for such intervention implied pressure put on by the director. Vasco Valente died without achieving this objective and the new director kept on insisting on the need for renovation. During the summer of 1951 at least two letters claimed for urgent help, as the museum would not be able to withstand winter conditions.<sup>403</sup> However, the decision to renovate the museum was only made in 1953.<sup>404</sup> It could be argued that economic difficulties caused by the Second World War were one of the reasons that led to this negligence. However, it is evident from the documentation that the directors of the museum always struggled against such neglect. The regime wanted to appear as 'the' protector of national heritage for reasons of political and ideological propaganda, but often neglected the good care of that heritage by providing economic and bureaucratic excuses.

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<sup>400</sup> In 1950 the museum had a director, two curators, a clerk, a porter, five guards and two servants. Letter (1950/01/23).

<sup>401</sup> Letter received (July 1948).

<sup>402</sup> Letter (1949/02/10).

<sup>403</sup> In July a letter (1951/07/18) informed that humidity had infiltrate the previous winter and that that would happen again if nothing was done; another letter (1951/09/25), insisted on the urgent need of repairs.

<sup>404</sup> The repairs began in April 1953. At the end of May the director sent a letter (1953/05/29) informing that the remodelling of the museum implied its closure to the public; he foresees the repairs could be conclude in four months, but some necessary interventions will not be performed because of the lack of money. The museum suffered new intervention in 1955. In 1963 new repairs took place during summer (letter, 1963/09/05).



Fig. 17. Aspect of one of the rooms of the Museum of Soares dos Reis, during the forties (photograph by Alvão, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisboa)

During the 1950s the museum not only became more important in the national domain, but was also recognised by the ICOM. In the beginning of 1955, ICOM approached the museum with a detailed survey.<sup>405</sup> During this period, members of museums staff in Portugal were very interested in the museum developments that were happening in other countries of Europe. In 1968 a curator of the MNSR asked permission to go abroad and visit several museums in order to learn what was happening there.<sup>406</sup>

During the late 1960s and the early 1970s the museum did not change significantly. Only some minor rearrangements occurred, but they were not really important<sup>407</sup> in terms of the overall organisation of the museum. This process is coherent with the Portuguese economic and political situation of the period: the war in the colonies had begun in the early 1960s and was demanding a lot from the national resources and the economic crisis of the 1970s only made things worse.

<sup>405</sup> The director answered the questionnaire in February 1955. Another detailed description of the museum, dating 1957, exists in the archive.

<sup>406</sup> By a letter sent to the DGESBA, the curator Maria Clementina de Carvalho Quaresma (Dr<sup>a</sup>) asked permission to be absent from the 24<sup>th</sup> July until the 12<sup>th</sup> August. She intended to visit several French museums.

<sup>407</sup> For the 1960s and the 1970s there are annual reports available, that mention activities and modifications that occurred in the museum.

The MNSR, which is one of the oldest of Portuguese museums, received some attention from the state during the first years of the dictatorship, but then had to struggle with many difficulties until the *Estado Novo* finally decided that a new building was urgently needed. This is coherent with the pattern of the period, as the regime had regained some financial capacity, and so the nationalistic ideology and propaganda had direct effects on the improvement of public buildings, museums as well. After that the museum continued to fight against all kinds of difficulties. Nevertheless, the central financial support enabled some important changes both in the building and in the displays, and the museum was modernised in the middle 1950s. As other museums and organisations in Portugal during the *Estado Novo*, the MNSR was also under the ideological pressure of the regime. This pressure was directed to the people that worked there and also to the objects and collections that were seen as means of propaganda.

#### 4.3 The *Museu de Arte Popular* (Museum of Popular Art)

The MAP received its building and displays from the Pavilion of "Popular Life" (*Vida Popular*), which had been built to the Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World, in 1940.<sup>408</sup> This exhibit was organised by administrative regions,<sup>409</sup> each region occupying an area of the Pavilion, or even an entire room. This layout remained unchanged until the late 1990s.<sup>410</sup> The museum is, therefore, the most long-lasting testimony of the 1940 Exhibition. The intention of the Pavilion was to present the diversity of the rural and traditional Portuguese way of life. According to the ideology of the *Estado Novo*, one of the characteristics and reasons of the Portuguese unity was the diversity of the traditional agriculture, products and survival strategies that

Fig. 18.  
Portuguese Administrative Regions  
of the *Estado Novo*



<sup>408</sup> Part of the collections had been gathered for the exhibition of Portuguese Popular Art, held in Geneva in 1935.

<sup>409</sup> Portugal was divided in eleven administrative regions, as shown in the map.

<sup>410</sup> The museum remained almost unchanged until 1998/9.

co-existed in such a small territory. Indeed it was seen as a patchwork of different traditions<sup>411</sup> which together formed the nation. This ideological image was the one presented by the exhibitions of 1940 and the one preserved in the MAP, created in 1944 and inaugurated in 1948.

This museum was directly dependent on the Bureau of Information, Popular Culture and Tourism (*Secretariado Nacional da Informação, Cultura Popular e Turismo* - SNI) and was therefore a direct vehicle of propaganda. It is therefore possible to observe the major guidelines of the policy of the *Estado Novo* concerning museums (from the mid-1940s to the mid 1960s) in this particular institution. The museum had a task to perform: showing the Portuguese nation in its best traditions through its material culture. This was evident in the displays. The museum was a 'path' through Portugal, showing the aspects the SNI wanted to promote. Within the museum space the visitor would walk from one region to another and could admire objects considered as most significant to local popular culture. The objects lacked interpretation because it was considered unnecessary: the object was seen as a value by itself, the 'real thing', an evidence of the Portuguese nation, which demanded no further explanation or interpretation.<sup>412</sup>

The control exerted over the museum by the authorities of the *Estado Novo* was intense. All the budget was strictly controlled<sup>413</sup> and a number of items had to be asked from a central department supplier and could not be directly bought by the museum.<sup>414</sup> Sometimes this process resulted in significant delay in the delivery of the items, forcing the curator to complain about the procedure.<sup>415</sup> This process did, however, enable a very strict control of the expenses of the museum.<sup>416</sup> This budgetary control was so strict that the

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<sup>411</sup> This is demonstrated in the poster of the Exhibition of Paris (chapter 3.3.) See also CHAVES, Luís - "O Museu de Arte Popular" in *Pnorama*, SNI, nº 35, vol. 6, 1948.

<sup>412</sup> The labels just identified the geographical provenience of the object, sometimes its age and its producer or donor.

<sup>413</sup> For example, in 1968 the museum had a budget of 200.000\$00, but this amount was to be used in monthly portions of 16.666\$70, and the director had no authority to spend more than this per month (folder "*Museus Existentes / Contas do Museu*").

<sup>414</sup> Almost all items of current use were submitted to this regime, as stationary, washing liquids, furniture, all kinds of items for the garden around the museum and even some non-material needs as transports of large objects or repairs the museum needed (folders "*Apetrechamento Mobiliário*", "*Requisições*" and "*Notas de Expediente*").

<sup>415</sup> E.g.: a letter sent by the curator to the director of the museum (folder "*Apetrechamento mobiliário*" - 1967).

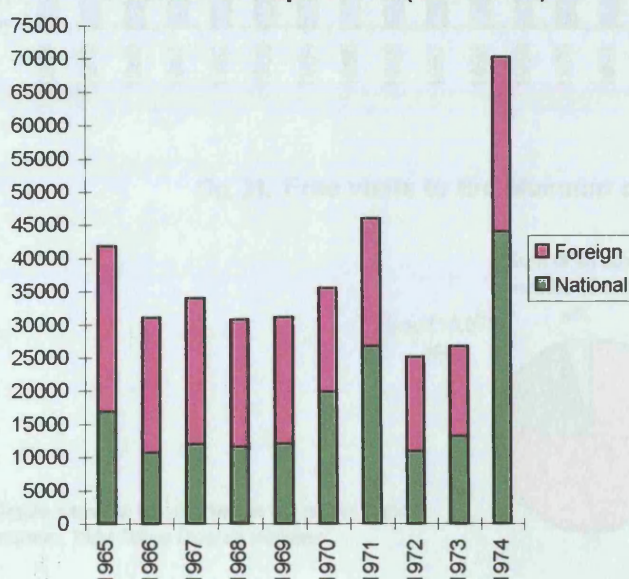
<sup>416</sup> In 1963/12/10 the responsible for checking the expenses of the museum (*Chefe da 1ª Secção da Repartição Central*) sent a letter to the director, marked as "Confidential". He remarked that the MAP had asked for an unjustifiable quantity of toilet paper, considering the number of people working in the museum; he also remarked that the museum always asked for foreign washing products when the



money available was often too short and, sometimes, lead the curator to use personal funds for museum purposes.<sup>417</sup>

The MAP was one of the most popular Portuguese museums. This was the result of several factors among which three stand out: it was visited by a significant number of tourists as the regular tourist tour of Lisboa included a stop at the museum;<sup>418</sup> it kept an aura of the magnificence of the Exhibition of 1940; it was located in one of the most emblematic parts of the city that attracted an important number of Portuguese visitors. These visits to the museum were, substantially, paid ones. This changed in 1974 when, after

**Fig. 19**  
**National and Foreign visits to the**  
**Museum of Popular Art (1965-1974)**



Graph of the visits to the Museum made from the data kept in the archive of the museum in the folder "Notas de Expediente"

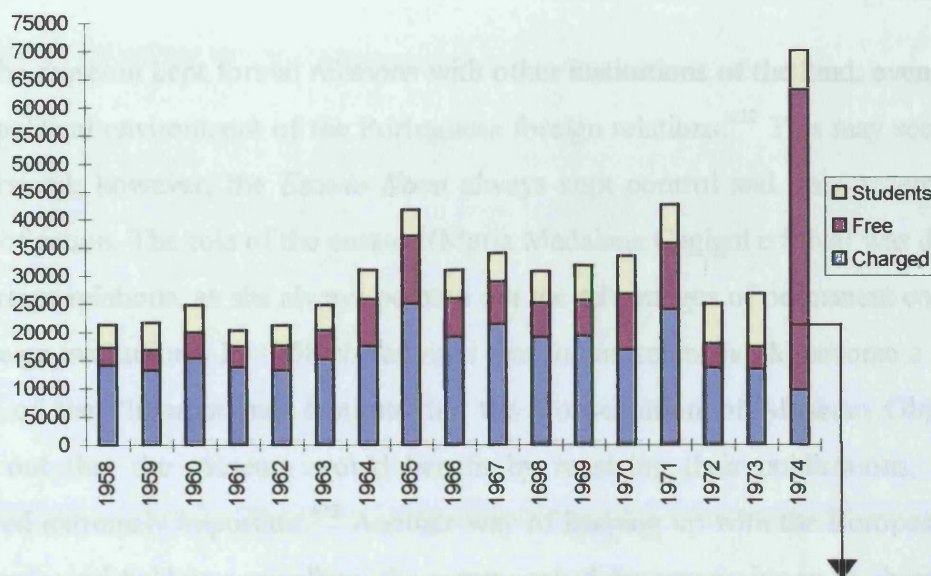
national ones were cheaper and as good; finally he also pointed out that the museum's personnel should take better care of the museum machines and tools, as a number of these items had to be repaired more than once during the year (folder "*Apetrechamento mobiliário*").

<sup>417</sup> One of these situations occurred in 1969/01/02 (folder "*Notas de Expediente 1969/70*").

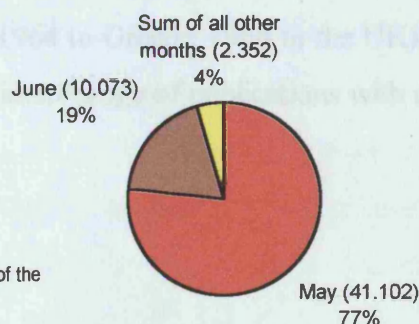
<sup>418</sup> António Jesus Lopes Crucho is a day guard of the museum and still remembers that sometimes three or four buses arrived at the same time with tourists to visit the museum. See appendix for synopsis of the interview with António Crucho.

the revolution of April, the number of free visits increased significantly.<sup>419</sup>

**Fig. 20.**  
**Charged, Free and Students visits to the Museum of Popular Art (1958 - 1974)**



**Fig. 21. Free visits to the Museum of Popular Art in 1974**



Graphs based on the data kept in the archive of the museum, folder "Mapa Geral de Visitantes"

The number of students (of all grades) that visited the museum is not very significant if compared with the number of other visitors. Nevertheless, in absolute figures, the museum received an important number of students.<sup>420</sup> The museum received numerous solicitations for visits from schools, boys scouts, private cultural associations and

<sup>419</sup> There is no official explanation to this increased number of free visits, but it is logical to accept that the revolutionary ambience during May 1974 contributed to it.

militaries.<sup>421</sup> From the graphs presented above it is evident that the number of Portuguese visitors to the museum increased in 1974 especially in May and June, the months immediately after the revolution (1974/04/25). This phenomenon is quite interesting, and was probably because the museum was seen as a landmark of the *Estado Novo*, an ideological construction made with the obvious intent of political and ideological propaganda.

The museum kept formal relations with other institutions of the kind, even out of the normal political environment of the Portuguese foreign relations.<sup>422</sup> This may seem difficult to understand; however, the *Estado Novo* always kept control and only accepted certain courses of action. The role of the curator (Maria Madalena Cagigal e Silva) was decisive for these foreign relations, as she always pointed out the advantages of permanent co-operation with foreign institutions. In 1958 she advised that the museum should become a permanent member of the "International Institute for the Conservation of Museum Objects". She pointed out that the museum would benefit by receiving their publications, which she considered extremely important.<sup>423</sup> Another way of keeping up with the European news on the museological field was travelling: the curator asked for permission to be absent from the museum several times and undertook different study trips (in 1959 to Belgium; 1960 to France; 1962 to Spain; 1963 to Belgium; 1964 to Greece; 1966 to the UK).<sup>424</sup> The library of the museum also kept an active policy of interchange of publications with other museums in Europe, Africa, Brazil and USA.<sup>425</sup>

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<sup>420</sup> The highest number was reached in 1973 (9.366 students visited the museum); the average between 1958 and 1974 was of 5.500 students per year.

<sup>421</sup> In folder "*Pedidos de Visitas*". In 1970 the museum received 175 applications for visits.

<sup>422</sup> In 1969 a delegation of Russian intellectuals visited the museum. The opportunity was used to exchange publications of both institutions. In 1971 the director asked for permission from the Secretary of State to present a temporary exhibition of Romanian popular art. The reply established the necessity of equal treatment by the Romanian museum, but allowed the event (letters, 1971/06/15 and 1971/07/23, folder "*Visitas e Viagens de Estudo; Congressos e Exposições; Postais e Fotografias*").

<sup>423</sup> The letter of the curator is dated 1958/03/13; the formal authorisation is dated 1958/03/31 ( folder "*Biblioteca*").

<sup>424</sup> Folder "*Visitas e Viagens de Estudo; Congressos e Exposições; Postais e Fotografias*".

<sup>425</sup> Folder "*Biblioteca*".



Staff is one of the issues best documented in the archive of the museum.<sup>426</sup> The museum director was frequently absent<sup>427</sup> and almost all the responsibility was passed to the curator. During the period under analysis two different curators worked in the museum: Maria Madalena Cagigal e Silva occupied the place since 1958 and Maria Helena Meira Dias Coimbra replaced her in 1968. Maria Madalena Silva applied for the job after a long experience in museum work as a curator and the director approved her application because he had always considered the former curator, Henrique Vaz Viana, incompetent.<sup>428</sup> Ten years later she left the museum to become director of another national museum (the *Museu Nacional dos Coches*). Then Maria Helena Meira Dias Coimbra took her position. While Maria Madalena was the curator the labour disputes in the museum were constant and when she left some very difficult questions were still unresolved. Maria Helena tried to implement a peaceful working environment, but she had to face similar difficulties as her predecessor.

Problems arose with the guards about holiday entitlement. The guards had no right to paid holidays, they could only ask for unpaid leave for twelve days in each year. The result was that during the absence of one guard the others had to do his job. It was impossible for the curator to impose co-operation among the personnel of the museum, and for more than once some of the guards refused to work overtime.<sup>429</sup> The curator even appealed to the director's authority as she recognised that her orders were no longer respected inside the museum.<sup>430</sup> This problem was partially solved in 1968 when the museum admitted another night guard.<sup>431</sup> The problems between Maria Madalena and the personnel of the museum were continual. During the period she was responsible for the museum the number of disputes is significant. In 1960 the curator used for the first time a printed 'Warning' to the guards, because she found the staff toilets and some of the objects in the displays dirty with a substance she avoids to identify. In 1962 she tried to put an end to the lack of discipline

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<sup>426</sup> The examples that will be used in the following paragraphs are documented in folders "*Movimentação de Pessoal*", "*Pessoal Menor*" and "*Questões de Pessoal*".

<sup>427</sup> The director also worked in the SNI, that was in another part of the city.

<sup>428</sup> Letter (1958/01/15).

<sup>429</sup> In 1958/02/04, a director's internal decision allowed changes of duty among the staff if properly documented and communicated, in written, in advance. During the 1960s there was hardly ever a month without some justified absences to work (medical reasons, and other accepted justifications).

<sup>430</sup> Letter (1968/11/19).

with another 'Warning' to the guards, which the chief guard was compelled to sign. From then onwards, it was absolutely forbidden to smoke inside the museum both for guards and visitors.<sup>432</sup> Just before the curator left the museum she had to face another two quarrels: the first one occurred in May 1968 when one of the cleaning ladies wrote a dismissal letter in which she accused the curator of making her work too much, while she allowed that others worked very little; the second one occurred in December of the same year involving a guard who was systematically disobeying her orders and being insolent.<sup>433</sup>

This was the state of labour relations in the museum when Maria Helena became curator. She tried to solve things, and the number of quarrels decreased significantly.<sup>434</sup> Nevertheless, the problems among the guards remained unsolved and the disrespect for the working hours was constant. In 1971 this question resulted in an intervention of the governmental representative responsible for the museum who reprehended the director and demanded discipline. The director sent a letter informing the curator<sup>435</sup> and imposing a 'martial law' in the museum: no more privileges, no more confidence, no more prerogatives. Any minor disrespect to rules was to be immediately and severely punished. A month later the governmental representative responsible for the museum sent a hand-written note<sup>436</sup> to the director asking whether the museum timetables were being respected. The workers of the museum were not concerned with the pseudo-authority of the curator or with the intervention of the director, but they feared the intervention of governmental administrative disciplinary decisions because a simple act of work disobedience could be interpreted as an act of subversion (as they were considered civil servants) and, therefore, have dramatic political consequences: to be against the state and the *Estado Novo* was a crime.

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<sup>431</sup> On this matter it is interesting to hear what the guards, still working in the museum, have to say. See appendix for synopsis of interviews with António Jesus Lopes Crucho and Sebastião Gouveia Santos.

<sup>432</sup> The curator remarked that she had found some of the objects in the displays used as ashtrays.

<sup>433</sup> Some months before, the curator had forced the guard to sign a document where she had written down all the duties he had to know and to perform.

<sup>434</sup> In 1970/02/03 Maria Helena had to face a legal question with a guard (Manuel de Jesus Maria) who had been absent from work since December 1969.

<sup>435</sup> Letter (1971/03/17).

<sup>436</sup> Folder "Pessoa!", note (1971/04/24).

Despite all these difficulties the curators were perfectly conscious that the guards were not very well paid<sup>437</sup> and that their work was dangerous and hard.<sup>438</sup> When Maria Helena became curator she tried to help the gardener, Feliciano Coelho, who had been working in the museum since 1948 with no right to retirement. In 1970, he was seriously ill, he sent a letter to the director imploring some help.<sup>439</sup> The curator took the defence of the gardener and sent a letter<sup>440</sup> to the director. The official answer arrived two months later<sup>441</sup> denying all the requests.<sup>442</sup> This official answer demonstrates the total indifference of the *Estado Novo* bureaucratic system towards its workers. Apparently, the main goal of the regime was to save money.

The lack of harmony inside the museum and the poor respect towards the regime generated a significant number of absences that the guards had to justify. The most common justification for these absences was health problems. They had to present a formal document from a doctor but it was common knowledge that some of those were false. Another excuse to be absent, for those who belonged to the "National Legion" (*Legião Nacional*),<sup>443</sup> was the participation in official ceremonies. Still another reason evoked by one of the guards (Germano Folgado) was the fact he was studying.<sup>444</sup> The effort of Germano Folgado was an exception. Most of the guards of the museum had only completed compulsory education. The guards had to deal with international visitors and had to explain the contents of each room. This was seen as an act of propaganda because the museum intended to represent Portugal in its most vernacular and truthful traditions. Because of that, in 1959, the director

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<sup>437</sup> In 1965 the guard António Monteiro received 1.300\$00 per month.

<sup>438</sup> As an example of this, there is the case of an aggression perpetrated against a guard during the night of 1963/10/08. In the interviews with the guards the issue of self defence was raised and Mr Sebastião Santos informed that he has a pistol which is his own gun, but he is not allowed to use it inside the facilities. Nevertheless, he had to use it once while going back home during the night, after having finished his shift.

<sup>439</sup> The general tone of the letter is remarkable: the gardener uses a very humble and submissive text, begging for help and affirming he knows he has no legal rights whatsoever.

<sup>440</sup> Folder "*Pessoa*", letter (1972/03/07).

<sup>441</sup> Letter (1972/04/26).

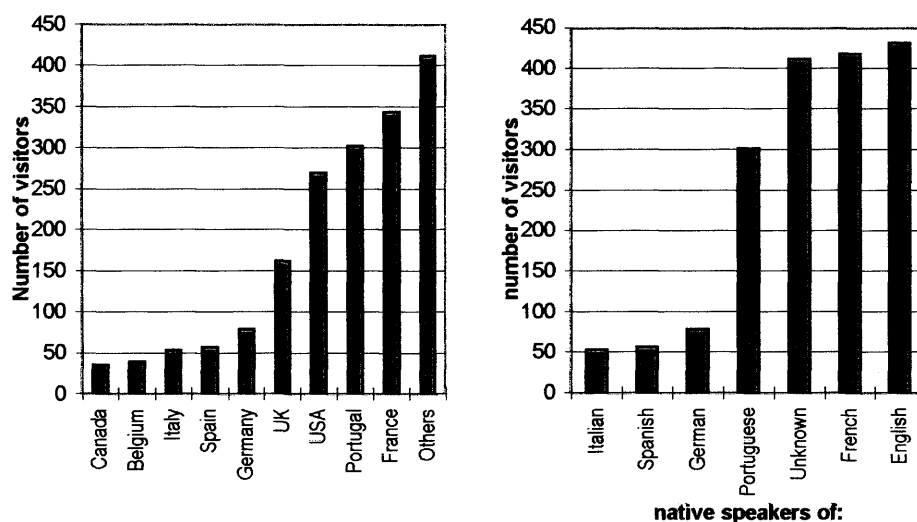
<sup>442</sup> In 1973, the curator tried to help the gardener again, using the same arguments and receiving the same answers; letter (1973/07/13).

<sup>443</sup> The guard Fernando Pinhão Alegria was a member of the *Legião* and between 1954 and 1957 there are several letters from that organisation asking for his presence in official events.

<sup>444</sup> In 1958/01/30 Germano Augusto Folgado sent a letter to the director of the museum explaining that he was trying to finish the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. The director asked for the curator's opinion who agreed; Germano Folgado was authorised to be absent from work all Sundays during the morning (letters in folder "*Movimentação de Pessoa*" dating 1958/02/01 and 1958/02/06).

of the SNI decided that all the guards of the MAP should take French classes.<sup>445</sup> French was the second language traditionally learned in Portuguese schools and an important percentage of the tourists visiting Portugal were French speakers. That decision was therefore understandable. Some years later the number of English speakers visiting the Museum increased considerably (see graphs below).

**Fig. 22. Visitors to the Museum of Popular Art in August 1972**



The lack of formal education and the poor social conditions for the guards working in the museum shaped the relationships among them and between them and the curators and directors. Despite all the conflicts there are several examples of an almost complete dependence of the guards on their hierarchical superiors, even for asking for their legal rights. As demonstrative examples, there are two letters sent to the director and written in such terms that 'feudal' could almost be a good adjective to classify the relationship of which they are evidence. The first one is from Cristovão Saboia Farinha, who wrote a letter to the director of the museum applying for a job.<sup>446</sup> The second one is a letter of one of the guards

<sup>445</sup> Letter (1959/10).

<sup>446</sup> In his letter he reminded the director that he was the person who had been in charge of the paperwork related to the director's dog and humbly asked for forgiveness for writing the letter. It is remarkable that the word "dog" (*cão*) is written with a capital letter as a sign of respect. Letter (1967/02/17).

of the museum who was going through health problems.<sup>447</sup> He asked to be transferred to a different workplace, but emphasised that he was aware that he was asking for a favour.<sup>448</sup> This kind of paternalistic relationship between different social classes is one of the characteristics of the regime. Inside museums and other public services it was considered as a privilege to be respected by hierarchical superiors. Most of the labour difficulties inside de MAP were the result of a sentiment of rebellion that could not be freely expressed but that was present, poisoning day-to-day life.

With slight changes<sup>449</sup> the Museum remained the same during the whole period under analysis. The organisation of the rooms and of the collections were kept almost unchanged, as they were considered perfect from the ideological perspective. It was of almost no relevance if the museological criteria were different. The only news of important repairs in the museum dates from the late 1960s. During a brief period in 1969 the museum had no curator and a clerk, named Ângelo Ricardo Antunes Reis,<sup>450</sup> had to assume the responsibility for the institution. He was worried that any problem could arise under his responsibility and wrote an internal note to the director stating that rain was infiltrating into the room dedicated to *Algarve*; two weeks later, he reinforced the information by affirming that it was "really raining" in *Algarve* and in *Trás-os-Montes*.<sup>451</sup> Yet those were not the only difficulties Ângelo Reis had to face. Only a few days later (on the 27<sup>th</sup> February) an earthquake caused major damages in the museum. Cracks opened on the walls, especially in the room of *Minho* that was in danger of collapsing.<sup>452</sup> In the beginning of March, Ângelo Reis informed the director that the roofs had finally been inspected and that he had carefully restored the objects broken during the earthquake with a special glue he had expressly

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<sup>447</sup> He was a night guard and the cold and moister of the river associated to a rheumatic disease and to very long years of work in such conditions was making it impossible for him to work.

<sup>448</sup> The terms of the final sentence of the letter are almost humiliating: the guard declares himself as an "humble" servant who finds himself in the need of imploring the help of the director; he adds that the director could do with him whatever he wanted in his high judgement. Letter (1968/12/29).

<sup>449</sup> For example, the installation of night emergency lights or other devices meant to improve the security of the building and of the night guards. See appendix for synopsis of interviews with the guards.

<sup>450</sup> Ângelo Reis had had a problem with the director some ten years before: he used to drink heavily and behave in improper ways; the director informed the responsible of the SNI of this problem. Nevertheless Ângelo Reis remained in his job. Letter in folder "*Movimentação do Pessoal*" (1958/02/04).

<sup>451</sup> Internal notes in folder "*Notas de Expediente*" (1969/01/14 and 1969/02/04).

<sup>452</sup> Internal note in folder "*Notas de Expediente*" (1969/02/28).

bought for that task.<sup>453</sup> As a consequence of the inspection of roofs some emergency repairs were made<sup>454</sup> but the building needed a much deeper intervention. So, a complete inspection to the building occurred a few days later.<sup>455</sup> There is no record in the archive of the museum that any repairs were done to the building.<sup>456</sup>

The MAP can be considered as a 'model' of the *Estado Novo*: almost all of the most important ideological marks of the regime could be found inside the museum. The displays provided an image of Portugal that the *Estado Novo* wanted to transmit both to international visitors and to the Portuguese. Besides, the personal and labour relationships inside, the museum had the 'trademark' of the *Estado Novo*. The paternalistic domination was to produce a humble submission, but sometimes a paradoxical effect emerged and it is possible to observe a subversive resistance. The Museum, unlike other national museums, was under the direct supervision of the SNI and this institution had decisive propagandistic and ideological interests in the museum, as it was 'the' museum of the SNI and one of the most visited Portuguese museums. Therefore, the MAP was a very special case as it was the centre of political, propagandistic and ideological concerns. Perhaps more than any other Portuguese museum of the epoch, the MAP reflected the *Estado Novo's* policy for museums, while objects of propaganda and ideological activity.

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<sup>453</sup> Internal notes in folder "*Notas de Expediente*" (1969/03/04 and 05).

<sup>454</sup> Internal note in folder "*Notas de Expediente*" (1969/03/07).

<sup>455</sup> Internal note in folder "*Notas de Expediente*" (1969/03/11).

<sup>456</sup> It is a fact that the museum was in very poor condition during the 1970s and the 1980s. The interior of the rooms was too humid and the ceilings and walls had evident marks of moisture. This situation remained unchanged until the late 1990s.

## Chapter 5 - Portuguese Museums under the *Estado Novo* - Regional Museums

### 5.1 The *Museu do Abade de Baçal* (Museum of the Abade of Baçal)

Bragança is the most north-eastern city of Portugal and the capital of *Trás-os-Montes*,<sup>457</sup> a region that has a long-lasting tradition of cultural autonomy.<sup>458</sup> The regional identity of this part of the country is very strong and it manifests itself in cooking, traditional festivities, and other expressions of difference<sup>459</sup> towards the rest of the country. Ever since the beginning of the 20th century Bragança had its own museum. The institution began as a local museum (*Museu Municipal de Bragança*), and during the First Republic it was given regional status (*Museu Regional de Obras de Arte, Peças Arqueológicas e Numismática de Bragança*).<sup>460</sup> The Republican regime nationalised the ancient residence of the Bishop of Bragança: a building of the 17th century that had been remodelled during the 18th century. In 1915 this building received the Civil Archive (*Arquivo do Registo Civil*), the Republican Guard (*Guarda Nacional Republicana*) and the Erudite Library of Bragança (*Biblioteca Erudita de Bragança*) was installed in the first floor. This means that the public visiting the library would have to accept the presence of the Guard's horses on the ground floor (and the consequent presence of flies and smells), which would have threatened the care of the collections. This situation continued unchanged until 1935. Several testimonies, dating back to the 1920s, confirm the poor conditions of the building. In 1922 Álvaro Carneiro (director of the museum) wrote a letter to the department of National Monuments referring to the danger the conditions of the roof represented both for the books and the collections. Later, in 1928, the priest Francisco Manuel Alves (known as the *Abade de*

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<sup>457</sup> In a free translation this would be *Behind the Mountains*.

<sup>458</sup> There is a popular saying about this: *Para cá do Marão mandam os que cá estão*. This sentence means that the people living in Trás-os-Montes hardly accept the ruling of "outsiders". *Marão* is a high mountain that separates the littoral from the inner land.

<sup>459</sup> There is even a local language, spoken by very few people but with good perspectives of improving, as it became a nationally recognised language some years ago. It is learned as a second language in local primary schools and the number of speakers is increasing.

<sup>460</sup> The decree 2:119 (1915/12/04) created the museum with this name. This decree determined that the museum should receive the collections of the former local museum and other objects (silver objects, furniture, paintings, religious clothes, wooden sculptures and other ancient objects) from the bishop's former residence. The museum's personnel were a director with responsibility of curator and a guard. The annual revenue of the director was 160\$00; the guard received the salary of 150\$00.

*Baçal*), by then the director of the museum, continued with these objections. In a telegram sent to the National Monuments<sup>461</sup> he wrote that rain was getting inside the building and that this was jeopardising books and museum objects. Despite the very poor condition of the building, only some emergency works were made.<sup>462</sup>

The Republican Guard left the building in 1935 and the department of the National Monuments<sup>463</sup> decided that a change was needed. Between 1937 and 1940 the building received important renovations, but during this process some unplanned interruptions occurred due to budgetary difficulties. Finally, in 1940, the building was considered ready to receive the museum. The layout, exhibitions and facilities established in 1940 were kept almost unchanged until 1993/4. It is therefore possible to identify three main periods in the existence of this museum: the first, when the museum shared the building with other institutions, in very poor conditions; then with the renovation of the building and the other services removed, the museum was mounted in conditions coherent with the nationalist ideology; finally, the period when the building received an important architectural intervention that implied significant changes.<sup>464</sup>

The process of establishing the museum was marked by the intervention of central political power through the governmental department responsible for museums. In 1914/15, when the Church tried to sell the remains of the bishop's residence, the director of the MNAA (José de Figueiredo), who recognised the value of these collections, went to Bragança to exercise one of the State prerogatives, the so called "right of preference" (*direito de preferência*).<sup>465</sup> This legislation existed because of the Republican policy towards national cultural heritage, and the action of the director of the MNAA is coherent

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<sup>461</sup> It is possible to have access to these documents in the General Archive of the DGEMN, *Museu do Abade de Baçal, Processos de Obras*. These documents are quoted in CARVALHO, Anabela *et al.* – "De Paço Episcopal a Museu" in *Museu do Abade de Baçal*, Lisboa, IPM, 1994, p.47-49.

<sup>462</sup> The decree that gave legal existence to the museum determined that the amount of money available to the establishment of the museum was 90\$00.

<sup>463</sup> In 1937/03/18 the museum received a letter from the central government (*Direcção Geral da Fazenda Pública*) quoting the article number 1 of the decree 16:971 (1929/04/03), where it was determined that all interventions in national buildings and monuments should be performed under the National Monuments Department

<sup>464</sup> As it occurred only during the 1990s, this last intervention will not be under analysis.

<sup>465</sup> The *direito de preferência* was a legal right the Portuguese State established with the intention of protecting heritage of national importance from being purchased by private collectors and then exported. The Portuguese State had the right to buy objects and collections in public auctions not competing with private collectors (see chapter 3.4.1 on this question). José de Figueiredo bought objects and collections, not only for the local museum but also for the national museums (MNAA and MNSR)



with that national policy. The director of the MNAA had a particular legal status, which gave him important power in this domain. This was the official attitude, and the question of the collections of the bishop's residence is only one among several similar episodes that happened by that time. As a result, the Museu do Abade de Baçal (MAB) achieved its goal and received part of the collections acquired by the Portuguese State. In the early 1920s and continuing this effort to enlarge the museum collections, the director acquired objects and collections namely by exerting his influence over potential donors.<sup>466</sup> Nevertheless the museum did not have a complete inventory<sup>467</sup> and the local newspapers sometimes suggested that some objects of the museum were missing.<sup>468</sup>

In 1925 the priest Francisco Manuel Alves became director of the museum. He remained in that position until his death in 1935. During this period, he managed to buy some objects and collections to the museum with the financial help of Coronel Salvador Nunes Teixeira, who was Civil Governor (*Governador Civil*) at that time. Francisco Manuel Alves, known as the *Abade de Baçal*, actively tried to improve the museum's collections. In 1934 he was involved in a legal dispute against a judge from Barcelos because of an illegal decision of that court. The director of the museum claimed that the Portuguese State, through its representatives, could buy any cultural object in public auctions (thus, exerting the "right of preference") or simply prevent their exportation, even without buying them.<sup>469</sup> The director of the museum applied to the Ministry of Justice and to the Superior Judiciary Council (*Conselho Superior Judiciário*) and the decision of the court of Barcelos was dismissed. This legal battle proves the extreme concern of the director of a local museum for national heritage. This was the ideology of the regime and even as far as Bragança, the guidelines of Lisboa were proving to be effective. Another of his concerns was the condition of the displays in the museum. The exhibits were not very attractive<sup>470</sup> and it was necessary to acquire some new showcases. The director was concerned with legal limits to

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<sup>466</sup> Letters received from central governmental departments.

<sup>467</sup> There is an inventory of archaeological material made before 1915, while still a local museum; when it became regional, another inventory was made, but this is a very incomplete one, including only archaeological and ethnographic material.

<sup>468</sup> The interview with the present director of the museum was very interesting on this matter, as Dr. João Manuel Jacob is undertaking research in this area.

<sup>469</sup> Law 1700 (1924/12/18) and decrees 20.586 (1931/11/27, article 1) and 20.295 (1932/03/07, article 7).

<sup>470</sup> To illustrate this, a number of photographs, taken by the photographer Alvão, before the changes of 1937/40, are available in the Archive of Photography of Porto.

the expenditure (over 100\$00) on furniture and sent a letter to the governmental department in charge, the *Direcção Geral do Ensino Superior e das Belas Artes* (DGESBA) asking for some clarification of procedures. The answer arrived in a letter<sup>471</sup> saying that those limits only applied to unnecessary expenses with dispensable ornaments, so it was possible to buy all necessary furniture to the guard, preservation and exhibit of the objects of museums. This interpretation of the law makes it clear that the policy of the *Estado Novo* concerning the reduction of public expenses was not a blind policy. On the contrary the care for national heritage was claimed to be one of the priorities of the regime.

This political interest in promoting the preservation of the material remains of the past had already been expressed some months earlier, when the DGESBA sent a letter<sup>472</sup> to the museum asking the director for a list of public buildings (schools, museums, libraries) in the region that needed repair. The intention was to include the expenses in the financial year of 1934. The *Estado Novo* was putting into practice its policy of caring for the national buildings and monuments as a manifestation of nationalism. After a part of the National Palace of Queluz had been destroyed by a fire, some instructions (given in a document of national significance) were sent to all people in charge of national buildings, explaining the need to avoid such accidents and providing all state services with a checklist to be strictly observed.<sup>473</sup> The orders from the Ministry included the decision of disciplinary procedures against all who would not comply with those determinations. The hierarchy in each service was used to make sure all would obey.

In 1935, after the death of Francisco Manuel Alves, the museum received the name of *Abade de Baçal* by decision of the Ministry of the Public Instruction (*Ministério da Instrução Pública*) as a way of public celebration of the deceased director. In May of that same year Raúl Manuel Teixeira, a civil servant who depended on the Civil Governor, was appointed director to the museum.<sup>474</sup>

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<sup>471</sup> Letter (1934/12/20).

<sup>472</sup> Letter (1934/07/27).

<sup>473</sup> Letter from the DGESBA, transcribing a document from the Ministry of Finance, department of heritage (1935/02/04).

<sup>474</sup> He then decided to keep his former position as civil servant; as consequence, he is always mentioned in that category in the museum's financial documents of salaries.

The new director had some difficulties in corresponding to the demands of the central department responsible for the museums. In August 1935 the museum received a letter from the Ministry of Finance asking for a new inventory of the collections that should have already arrived to that ministry; a week later, another letter insisted on the urgent need for such document.<sup>475</sup> Some months later (February 1936) the museum received a letter from the government asking for co-operation for the organisation of the national exhibition that was being prepared to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the revolution of 1926. The director did not correspond to this demand. In May 1936, another letter asked for the same co-operation again, but in stronger terms.<sup>476</sup> Central government was committed to the task of effectively controlling the country and this pressure on museums was a part of that policy.

Despite these initial difficulties, Raúl Manuel Teixeira remained as a director until 1955. In 1951 he retired but worked in the museum until his death in 1955, with no payment for his services. One of his main contributions to the museum was raising money through the association of the friends of the museum which he used to purchase collections of archaeology, numismatics, sacred art and ethnography. He also had great influence over local artists and an important part of the art collection of the museum was gathered during the 1940s; amongst those were paintings of consecrated national artists as Silva Porto, José Malhoa and Marques de Oliveira.<sup>477</sup> During this period, the organisation of the museum only changed in minor aspects. In general it was considered as an important institution, from a cultural perspective. Even some prosaic matters were addressed to the museum. A picturesque example, are the two letters from the DGESBA asking the museum to educate the population against the habit of spitting on the ground.<sup>478</sup>

In 1936 the museum received an order to choose the size, format and location of a sign saying "State Property" (*Património do Estado*) which was to be placed on the exterior

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<sup>475</sup> Letters (1935/08/10 and 1935/08/15).

<sup>476</sup> Letters (1936/02/10 and 1936/05/04). There is no further reference to this question in the archive of the museum and there is no document that explains this lack of co-operation. It is however possible to admit that the new director had some initial difficulties in his early months in the job.

<sup>477</sup> SANTOS, Maria Alcina Afonso – "Introdução" in *Museu do Abade de Baçal*, Lisboa, IPM, 1994, p.14.

<sup>478</sup> Letters (1936/07/01 and 1936/08/12).

wall of the museum. This was a national decision that included all national buildings and monuments. The sign should be "made of an adequate material although within economic criteria" and it should be "affixed in visible but discrete place". The concern with the external appearance of the national buildings and monuments is mentioned, once again, in another letter from the same department, prohibiting any posters or other advertisements to be glued to the walls of the museum.<sup>479</sup> These decisions were related with the national policy of the *Estado Novo*, which intended to improve the appearance of the national buildings and monuments. This policy, far from being exclusive of Lisboa, reached the far northeast of the country and the whole national territory as well. The *Estado Novo* wanted to show, either in Bragança or in any other city, that Portugal had respect for the ancestors and for their "works of genius". The care for public buildings and monuments was a sign of that respect and evidence of the dignity of the state and the nation.

This kind of central intervention was common during the 1930s, when the regime was establishing national policies, according to its program of propaganda. Another of these interventions occurred in 1939 when the Ministry of National Education (*Ministro da Educação Nacional*) decided that no public ceremonies celebrating a public figure (alive or dead) could be performed in institutions dependent on that ministry without proper authorisation. This decision had an immediate effect and no formal ceremonies,<sup>480</sup> even if already scheduled, could be performed. Once again, the *Estado Novo* was reaching all parts of the country with its central decisions. In Bragança, if the director of the museum wanted to name a room of the museum after a former director or a local personality, he would have to ask for permission. Such attitude enabled the government to avoid known political dissidents from having their names displayed in public places what might encourage others against the regime.

An important part of the museum's collections entered the institution as donations. Coronel Albino Pereira Lopo (a local archaeologist of the 19th century) gave some of the original archaeological collections. *Abade de Baçal* was responsible for the acquisition of the main collection of epigraphy and he also gathered most of the collections of Neolithic,

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<sup>479</sup> Letter (1938/03/03).

Bronze, and Iron Age archaeological objects. In 1934/35 a legacy from Abel Salazar gave the museum an important collection of paintings. In the late 1930s the museum received another legacy (called Sá Vargas) that included goldsmithery and furniture. In 1952 the museum received the legacy of Guerra Junqueiro - a famous writer - (furniture, manuscripts and paintings); eight years later the legacy of Trindade Coelho - another famous writer - was given to the museum and included furniture and the donor's library; in 1973 Coronel Ramires gave the museum an important collection of numismatics (approximately two thousand coins, from king D. Sancho I until king D. Manuel II) together with a rigorous catalogue made by himself.<sup>481</sup> The number and importance of these legacies is evidence of the prestige of the museum and of the cultural role donors recognised in it.

In 1955 a new director was appointed to the museum: António Augusto Pires. He only occupied the job for some months (from April 1955 until July 1956<sup>482</sup>) and, in August 1956, Maria de Lurdes Coelho Bártolo became director.<sup>483</sup> One of the most important decisions of António Pires was to make a new inventory. This document is incomplete (all the numismatic collections are missing) and gives only a very brief description of the objects. Nevertheless, this is the last inventory that has been made in the museum until the 1980s.<sup>484</sup>

This museum is a very good example of the evolution of regional museums during the century, especially of those located away from the seaside, in the inner land. The starting point was a local museum with very poor (or no) support from central authorities. The Republican policy for developing museums all over the country brought the first impulse to the institution. Then, the nationalistic policy of the National Dictatorship and of the *Estado Novo* made a difference: the museum was established in a national monument and that fact made possible a significant architectural development, changing the building and providing it with what was seen as dignified look. The *Estado Novo* invested in the former bishop's

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<sup>480</sup> The ceremonies included: solemn acts, inauguration of public portraits or statues, the nomination of a room from a celebrity's name, special issues of scientific journals, daily newspapers or other magazines, and even all kinds of *in memoriam* ceremonies. Letter from the DGESBA (1939/06/23).

<sup>481</sup> See SANTOS - *op.cit.*, p.13-15.

<sup>482</sup> Financial documents (*Folhas de Salários*).

<sup>483</sup> She was appointed by governmental decision. See Official Journal (*Diário do Governo*, 137, 1956/06/09, 2ª série).

palace in order to install the museum properly, so as to show to the nation that no national monument was too far from Lisboa to be forgotten. It must be kept in mind that this intervention was closely connected with the commemorations of 1940, a period when the *Estado Novo* wanted the country to be portrayed favourably. After that short era of nationalistic propaganda, the *Estado Novo* had to face the threat of war, and later other domestic problems of political nature. So, the MAB remained almost unchanged since 1940, and the main efforts of improvement were made by its directors. Acquisitions and legacies enlarged its collections and furthered its importance as cultural institution in the region; but its importance as a means of ideological propaganda decreased.

## **5.2 The Museu de Alberto Sampaio (Museum of Alberto Sampaio)**

The Museu de Alberto Sampaio (MAS) is the result of a number of historic circumstances, which reveal a lot about Portuguese political evolution of the first half of the 20th century. During the period of the First Republic the institutional relationship between the state and the Catholic Church went through severe difficulties. The Republic was a laic regime<sup>485</sup> and some important legislation was produced restraining the freedom of the Church and nationalising its possessions. In Guimarães, the *Colegiada* was one of the most important religious institutions. It was founded in the first decades of the 12th century and had inherited the tradition and some of the possessions of an ancient monastery.<sup>486</sup> It was a very powerful and rich medieval institution. This power and richness lasted until the 19th century when the Liberal regime (that was the result of the revolution of 1820) first attacked the Catholic Church; the Republic finally decided to terminate the institution<sup>487</sup> and to take possession of all its properties. The richness of the *Colegiada* was considerable. It

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<sup>484</sup> In the 1980s a new inventory was made, concerning numismatics.

<sup>485</sup> In Portugal the State and the Church were never understood as the same organisation. Even during medieval times the king had just very few prerogatives over the hierarchy of the Church. After the liberal revolution, in 1820, the separation of these two organisations became a legal evidence. The First Republic emphasised this separation.

<sup>486</sup> The monastery was founded in the first half of the 10th century. See RAMOS, Cláudia – *O Mosteiro e a Colegiada de Guimarães (ca. 950 – 1250)*, MPhil dissertation in Medieval History, Faculty of Arts, University of Porto, 1991, not published, p.48-51 and 84-86.

<sup>487</sup> This action was not an isolated decision: the Republic put an end to all religious institutions. On this questions see *DICIONÁRIO de História de Portugal* (dir. Joel Serrão), 6 vol., Porto, Livraria Figueirinhas, p.77-80; MARQUES, A. H. de Oliveira - *History of Portugal. Volume II: From Empire to Corporate State*, New York and London, Columbia University Press, 1972; MATTOSO,

held objects of great historical value and collections of sacred art and goldsmithery. The Portuguese state decided that all those objects should be protected as cultural heritage.<sup>488</sup> Nevertheless, more than ten years passed without any further decision related with those collections. Only in 1928, under the National Military Dictatorship, did the government decide to create a museum to preserve and exhibit those objects.<sup>489</sup> This legal instrument clearly stated that the historic importance of those objects and collections was one of the main reasons to create the museum. In accordance with the nationalistic ideology the state was creating a museum in which it should be possible to admire some of the most important national cultural creations. Another reason leading to the opening of the museum was that other regional organisations, which could eventually take care of the collections, were already overwhelmed with other tasks. The name of Alberto Sampaio was chosen to honour the memory of an important historian from Guimarães, once again paying tribute to the glories of the Portuguese ancestors.

The new museum was established as a regional museum<sup>490</sup> and included collections of sculpture, paintings, goldsmithery, cloths, furniture, ceramics and carvings, all of artistic and historical value and collected among some of the extinguished religious institutions of Guimarães.<sup>491</sup> The government also decided that a commission should be created in order to begin the fitting out of the new museum; funds would be provided from a central governmental department and a special regulation would be the object of further legislation. The MAS had official existence. The years that followed this governmental decision were troubled ones for the new museum. During 1928 the enthusiasm gathered by the creation of the museum was significant. An association called the "Friends of the MAS" (*Amigos do Museu*) was organised in May and in November a party took place with the intention of raising funds for the museum. In December 1928, a local newspaper published a list of people who had contributed with different amounts of money to the museum,<sup>492</sup> totalling

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José (dir.) - *História de Portugal*, Lisboa, Ed. Estampa, s.d., vols. 5-6; SERRÃO, Joel and MARQUES, A. H. de Oliveira (dir.) - *Nova História de Portugal*, Lisboa, Ed. Presença, vols. IX -X.

<sup>488</sup> Decree 1:012 (1917/07/06). A popular magazine (*Ilustração Portuguesa*, II Série, nº 595, 1917/07/16) refers to this decision

<sup>489</sup> Decree 15:209 (1928/03/20).

<sup>490</sup> Decree 15:209 (1928/03/20).

<sup>491</sup> The *Colegiada* and the monasteries of *Santa Clara* and *Capuchinhos*.

<sup>492</sup> See *Comércio de Guimarães*, issues of 1928/05/01, 1928/11/13 and 1928/12/11.

14.400\$00.<sup>493</sup> However, difficulties began in 1929 as there was not enough money to mount exhibitions in the museum. The works had begun in May, but the budget was too short and the reconstruction of the cloister could not be finished. During the summer a popular movement tried to raise the extra funds needed. In July the people of Guimarães walked through the city claiming that the cloister of the *Colegiada* should be saved. In order to do so the *Junta Geral do Distrito* (a local administrative department) gave 10.000\$00. To add to these, a local civil association, the *Academia Vimarãense*, organised a public appeal for funds and collected 2.500\$00. In the beginning of 1930 the repairs were almost ready and the people of Guimarães were happy to know that the cloister had been preserved and that the museum was about to open.<sup>494</sup>

The problems, however, continued. Alfredo Guimarães (the director of the museum) needed more space to install the museum, but the priest of the *Colegiada* did not agree with his intentions. In April 1930, the quarrel between Alfredo Guimarães and the priest increased and culminated in a conspicuous episode: the priest tried to avoid the presence of the director of the museum in a part of the premises he claimed was possession of the church and stated that, either with or without the museum, he was the only one who ruled inside the gates. Alfredo Guimarães did not comply with that and forced his way in. The priest called the police and Alfredo Guimarães was arrested. As a consequence, the people of Guimarães came in defence of the director and the problem was only solved with the intervention of a major authority.<sup>495</sup> The priest did not rest his case and some days later wrote a very violent article in the local newspaper, the *Comércio de Guimarães*. But the priest was already defeated by the public opinion. His quarrel with Alberto Sampaio continued for another decade.<sup>496</sup>

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<sup>493</sup> This was a considerable amount. In 1932 the annual maximum of expenses with personnel of the museum was of 12.000\$00, for the director and a guard. In 1931 the entry ticket in any Portuguese museum was of 2\$50.

<sup>494</sup> *Comércio de Guimarães*, issues of 1929/07/14, 1929/07/21, 1929/07/25 and 1930/02/15

<sup>495</sup> The *Governador Civil*, that is the supreme civil authority in each district, solved the case. *Comércio de Guimarães* issues of 1930/04/18 and 1930/04/22.

<sup>496</sup> Circa 1940/42 the quarrels between the director and the priest though pointless were still violent Mr Jerónimo (see Appendix for synopsis of interview) still remembers the day when the director and the priest shouted obscene insults at each other..



In July 1931 a rumour that the museum of Alberto Sampaio would be directed by the *Sociedade Martins Sarmiento*, spread in Guimarães.<sup>497</sup> Once again the *Comércio de Guimarães* published an article<sup>498</sup> in defence of Alfredo Guimarães and of the autonomy of the Museum. Finally, in August 1931, the museum opened to the public with Alfredo Guimarães as its director. In fact the museum never became a part of the *Sociedade Martins Sarmiento*. All concerns about that ended in 1932 when a governmental decree<sup>499</sup> established the internal regulation of the institution, respecting the decree that had founded the museum. This decree reinforced what had been established in the former one, but added some important issues. One of the most relevant of these was about the rules the museum should observe towards gathering objects and collections: all works of art and historical or archaeological objects found in the area of the county of Guimarães (that for legal reasons were possessions of the Portuguese State) should belong to the museum. This was a very significant point and one that would cause some future protests from Alfredo Guimarães, demanding its respect.<sup>500</sup> Another important issue legally solved with this decree was the division of the building: it was the government's determination that the museum would occupy the cloister and the rooms adjacent to it. The cloister was one of the main spaces of the museum.



Fig. 23. View of the south wing of the cloister. Photograph taken in 1940 by Alvão, published in GUIMARÃES, Alfredo - *Guimarães, Guia de Turismo*, second edition, Guimarães, CMG, 1953.

<sup>497</sup>

A Society that still exists and that is named after a famous historian and ethnographer of the beginning of the century. The clash between the Museum and the Society is a never ending story in the city of Guimarães.

<sup>498</sup>

Issue of 1931/07/31

<sup>499</sup>

Decree 21:514 (1932/07/26).

<sup>500</sup>

Letter (1933/03/15).

The museum should have the following sections: archaeology, ceramics, goldsmithery, sculpture, cloths, carvings, paintings and a library. The museum staff would include a director, who had the responsibility of curator, and a guard. Finally, the decree clarified some financial questions: the state would pay the salaries of the director-curator and the guard and the Local Authorities would have to pay for all other expenses (conservation of the building and of the objects, among other). This solved all legal constraints that could jeopardise the existence of the museum. During the 1930s Alfredo Guimarães developed an intense activity of collecting for the museum. In 1934 a general inventory was produced. For Alfredo Guimarães the organisation of the museum was a priority.<sup>501</sup> Another source of acquisitions were collections of objects that had been taken from religious institutions years before and that, finally, found their way into a museum.<sup>502</sup> Alfredo Guimarães received donations but also developed an active policy of collecting, by using all spare money to buy objects and collections. Nevertheless, his possibilities in this field were very limited because of the very strict budget he had.<sup>503</sup> In the beginning of each year the director had to send to a central government department a proposition of budget for the next year. Alfredo Guimarães always used this as an opportunity to reinforce his belief that the museum desperately needed more money for acquisitions, and justified all calculations he presented.<sup>504</sup> Despite the constant lack of resources Alfredo Guimarães kept the finances of the museum well organised.<sup>505</sup> Another concern of Alfredo Guimarães during those early years of the existence of the museum was to impose the respect for the museum's rights to certain collections.<sup>506</sup> More than once, he complained against other institutions or persons who tried to collect objects of artistic, historic and archaeological

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<sup>501</sup> Other information on acquisitions can be found in letters the director received and sent. For the years of 1932 to 1938 it is possible to follow the acquisition policy of Alfredo Guimarães.

<sup>502</sup> This is, for example the case, of a set of objects taken from extinguished religious institutions of Guimarães and that were on temporary deposit in the *Sociedade Martins Sarmiento*. In 1935 Alfredo Guimarães received that set and there is a document proving that transaction, (1935/12/28).

<sup>503</sup> Alfredo Guimarães claimed for more money several times. Letter (1933/03/21) protesting against the budget of the museum; he said that he had only 300\$00 per month: 200\$00 for paying the guard, 30\$00 for cleaning the museum, 30\$00 for paying the electricity; this left him with 1\$00 per day for all other expenses.

<sup>504</sup> See, for example, the budgets for 1933/34 and 1934/35.

<sup>505</sup> He had the habit of taking note of all significant revenues and expenses in booklets. This practice was maintained during the following decades, until the 1960s. For greater expenses, after 1945, there were other books, called "General Expenses".

<sup>506</sup> These rights were established in the decree 21:514.

value inside the area reserved for the museum.<sup>507</sup> He also claimed against what he considered an injustice: priests and other members of the clergy were collecting art objects (and even objects that were mentioned in the national inventory of cultural heritage, therefore under legal protection) freely, with no legal or pragmatic constraints. In addition, museums directors, like himself, had to respect their areas of collecting, determined by law.<sup>508</sup>



Fig. 24. Room of goldsmithery and furniture. Photograph taken in 1940 by Alvão, published in GUIMARÃES, Alfredo - *Guimarães, Guia de Turismo*, second edition, Guimarães, CMG, 1953.

In the early years of the museum Alfredo Guimarães was also concerned with improving and enlarging the facilities. He wanted the church to free the first floor of the building in order to use it for the museum. He proposed this in a letter<sup>509</sup> written to the DGESBA. In this letter the director asked for the use of the upper floor, which the priest had let to a religious association (*Amigos do Sagrado Coração de Jesus*) that held evening meetings above the room where the gold collections were stored. The director emphasised that the ceiling of that particular room was about to collapse and that this was a risk to the collections. About one month latter Alfredo Guimarães wrote another letter again

<sup>507</sup> Letter (1933/03/15) against the *Sociedade Martins Sarmiento* that was collecting funeral stones near the chapel of *S. Miguel*.

<sup>508</sup> In a letter sent to DGESBA (1933/09/20) Alfredo Guimarães mentioned this question, referring the example of a priest of Braga that was collecting in different areas of the north of the country with the intentions of acquiring for a private museum, the Museum of Sacred Art of Braga.

emphasising the dangerous condition of that ceiling,<sup>510</sup> but the problem remained. Other parts of the building also demanded urgent intervention; during the year of 1935 the director wrote a number of letters about this question and even sent a telegram in an emergency.<sup>511</sup>

The problems with the condition of the building did not end, and in the beginning of 1936 an inspection ordered and performed by the National Monuments concluded that the building urgently needed repairs. Immediately Alfredo Guimarães used this information to put pressure on the ministry and insisted on the absolute necessity of removing some of the objects that were in danger. Finally, during the summer of 1936, the repairs began. Despite this, at the beginning of October, Alfredo Guimarães saw rain water infiltrating the museum once again.<sup>512</sup> In the beginning of the 1940s the first floor remained under the administration of the Church and only became part of the museum two decades later, during the 1960s.

Alfredo Guimarães was worried, not only about 'his' museum, but also about all other monuments in the city. He therefore tried to exert pressure upon the director of the National Monuments by sending him several letters, in 1935. Again, in 1936, he demonstrated deep concern with the monuments of Guimarães and especially with the palace of the *Duques de Bragança*<sup>513</sup> that, as he refers, was being the object of vandalism.<sup>514</sup> Alfredo Guimarães concerns are consistent with his expressed political beliefs. He officially supported the *Estado Novo* and believed that Salazar was the right leader for Portugal. This is evident in a telegram he sent to Salazar affirming his political loyalty and his confidence in the regime and its leader.<sup>515</sup>

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<sup>509</sup> Letter (1934/05/11).

<sup>510</sup> Letter (1934/06/16).

<sup>511</sup> Letter (1935/11/09) to the Director of the National Monuments affirming that there it was raining inside the museum; a telegram on this matter was sent to the ministry of Public Works.

<sup>512</sup> Two letters (1936/10/09) sent to the DGESBA and to the National Monuments, explaining that for the lack of care the works in the first floor were letting the rain into the museum. He even insinuated that this was on purpose, an evil act of the priest.

<sup>513</sup> This palace is a gothic building erected in the park near the castle. It is one of the very few gothic civil buildings in Portugal and was the official residence of the king during the monarchy.

<sup>514</sup> Letter (1936/05/23). Alfredo Guimarães affirms that for some months the communist vandalism is running free through the streets of the city and that the monuments are one of its targets. He demands an exemplary punishment.

<sup>515</sup> In August 1935 the city of Guimarães commemorated the Portuguese victory over the Castilian army in *Aljubarrota*, in 1385. That was the battle that put an end to the war and determined the maintenance of the independence of Portugal. Alfredo Guimarães sent a telegram to Salazar affirming the absolute confidence in the *Estado Novo* and in his leader.

The cultural activities initiated by Alfredo Guimarães, as director of the museum, were also significant. One important example is the "Aesthetic Missions of Holidays" (*Missões Estéticas de Férias*) at which some of the national most prominent artists gathered in Guimarães during summertime for lectures and artistic production. The second of these "Missions", which took place in 1938, was considered to be of national importance, and the local newspaper refers to it in enthusiastic nationalistic terms.<sup>516</sup> The director of this event was Aarão de Lacerda and he delivered the main speech of the session. He praised the Mayor of Guimarães for hosting such an event in his city and added that he hoped that all other Portuguese local authorities followed that example because, as he affirmed, "that is the way to serve de *Estado Novo*! That is the way to prestige the political power!".<sup>517</sup>

The *Estado Novo* supported such activity. The regime invested in the field of museums and cultural heritage to the end of the 1920s and in the beginning of the 1930s. One of the most delicate issues in Guimarães was the rehabilitation of the palace of the *Duques de Bragança*. In 1933 Salazar had made a promise to the director of the MAS on that matter and the city was hoping for a budgetary decision. In 1944 the *Comércio de Guimarães* had announced, with evident joy, that the amount to be invested in the palace was the impressive sum of 800.000\$00.<sup>518</sup> The newspaper expressed the city's gratitude towards the central government and the regime represented by Salazar.<sup>519</sup>

The city of Guimarães was the symbolic birthplace of Portugal. On the medieval city walls a plaque read, in huge letters, "Portugal was born here" (*Aqui nasceu Portugal*).<sup>520</sup> All significant anniversaries, related with the affirmation of independence and with the nationalistic ideology of the *Estado Novo*, were to have a ceremony in Guimarães. This was the case of the commemoration of 1940, when Salazar delivered a speech on the highest

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<sup>516</sup> See *Comércio de Guimarães*, issue of 1938/08/12.

<sup>517</sup> Original text: "[...] *É assim que se serve o Estado Novo! É assim que se prestigia o Poder!*" issue of the *Comércio de Guimarães* of 1938/08/12.

<sup>518</sup> Issue of 1944/02/16.

<sup>519</sup> Original text: "*este edificio obteve, para o presente ano, o notável subsidio de 800.000\$00. [...] A nossa gratidão ao Governo Nacional.*"

<sup>520</sup> There is a number of reasons that explain such symbolism: the monastery of Mumadona Dias was the first permanent institution in the region and Mumadona was a very important member of the noble families closely connected with the autonomic trends of this part of the Peninsula; the castle was her initiative too and the city of Guimarães developed under those two influences; in the 12th century D. Afonso Henriques, who would become the first king of Portugal, had Guimarães as one of his most important militaries centres and some

wall of the castle. Salazar visited Guimarães and the MAS again in 1953. On this occasion the newspaper, *Comércio de Guimarães*, recorded<sup>521</sup> that a crowd joined in front of the museum applauding the "Rescuer of Portugal" (*Salvador de Portugal*). This connection between Salazar, Guimarães and the MAS is a significant fact and was probably the result of a thoughtful decision of the dictator. The symbolic power of the city was associated with him each time he visited it or legislated for the protection of its monuments. A propaganda postcard was designed with the monuments of Guimarães as background to the image of the famous statue of Afonso Henriques (the first king of Portugal) that stands near the *Palácio dos Duques de Bragança*. But the statue had the face of Salazar, instead of the face of the king. Salazar was presented as the last Portuguese hero, and, like all Portuguese heroes, was associated with Guimarães.

Alfredo Guimarães remained director of the museum while his health permitted. Maria Emília Amaral Teixeira succeeded him in the job and remained director from 1955 until 1969. From then on the museum had a provisional director until 1975. It is possible to divide this period of twenty years, between 1955 and 1975, into three major parts: before the great changes the museum went through in the mid 1960s, the period of transformation between 1963/4 and 1967, and the years that followed.

Maria Emília was determined to transform the museum into a modern institution, both in terms of organisation and facilities. She undertook the important task of remodelling the inventory and other aspects of documentation; she went about enlarging and enriching the collections of the museum<sup>522</sup> and she planned the redesign of the building as if it were for a 'new' museum.<sup>523</sup> In order to accomplish that objective it was important to gain the first floor for the museum. This time, the church was not able to oppose the plan. The Director also had to convince the people at the National Monuments that the rest of the building that was occupied by a bank, should be part of the museum facilities too. She

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of the events usually linked to the formation of the nation happened in Guimarães; King John the First, in the 14th century, after defeating the Castilian army in Aljubarrota came to Guimarães to thank the Virgin for the victory and consequent independence of Portugal.

<sup>521</sup> Issue of 1944/10/02.

<sup>522</sup> The *Comércio de Guimarães* refers this activity of the new director, in 1955; as it is said, Maria Emília was able to gather precious objects and assembled them in the "reliquary" the museum was.

<sup>523</sup> This period of changes partially coincides with the years Mr. Jerónimo worked in the museum (from 1960 until 1964). An important part of the information gathered to understand the changes operated in the museum in this period came from the interviews with Mr. Jerónimo. See Appendix for synopsis of interviews.



managed to get the support of the governmental departments for both plans. Despite this success, Maria Emília had to face another battle: her ideas about the way in which the building should be transformed were not in accordance with the official plans, so she had to go to Lisboa and argue in favour of her project. Once again she managed to convince the political power. The changes in the museum, in accordance to her plans, have remained to the present.

It is interesting to observe closely what these changes were. Mr. Jerónimo, who worked in the museum during 1964-8, provides an important oral record of the changes in the museum during those years. Prior to Maria Emília intervention, the museum's entrance was a door that connected the cloister directly with the street; part of the exhibition was installed in the cloister. From there, visitors had access to three different rooms where other parts of the museum's collections were on display. No security system was available. After the works, the museum opened its new areas of exhibition in the first floor to the public in 1967, but only in 1968 all the renovation was accomplished. At this time the number of visitors was insignificant. Yet, there were some official exceptional visits, from members of parliament and other politicians: it was important to have the museum in its best condition for those visitors.

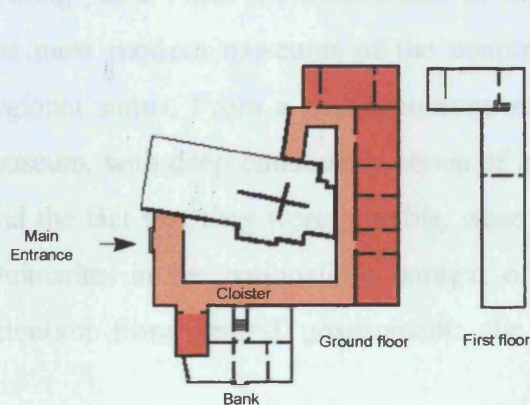


Fig. 25. Plan of the museum of Alberto Sampaio before the changes of the sixties (drawn over the contemporary plan of the museum)

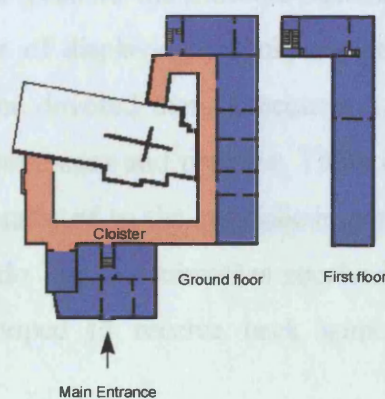


Fig. 26. Plan of the museum of Alberto Sampaio after 1967/8

The director used to be at the museum only twice a week. Despite being very strict on what concerned schedules, working relations between the director and other personnel were excellent during those four years. Mr. Jerónimo always refers to the director as "a friend".<sup>524</sup>

Another important informant is Mr. Adão.<sup>525</sup> He began working for the MAS in 1968, but resigned some months after getting the job. Later on he returned to the museum with a better salary.<sup>526</sup> Ever since, Mr. Adão has worked in the museum with no further interruptions. In his words, working in the museum was a "routine". Nothing happened for days and days, week after week. "During winter not even visitors use to break the monotony". During the summer, and especially on weekends, the number of visitors increased. Sometimes a VIP came to the museum. It was the time for extra cleaning and for extra care with everything: the director was particularly demanding in those days.

The MAS was closely connected with the regime of the *Estado Novo*. The museum kept objects considered important from a nationalistic point of view. This is the case of the donations made by King John the First when he came to Guimarães in 1385 and the very famous garment he used during the battle of Aljubarrota. Alfredo Guimarães was a man who officially believed in the *Estado Novo* ideology and political practice. Salazar went to Guimarães several times, for different reasons, and the museum was almost always in his visiting plans. After the intervention of Maria Emília Teixeira the museum became one of the most modern museums of the country in terms of displaying techniques, despite its regional status. From a small museum, made by one devoted man, it became a national museum, with deep concerns in terms of museological theory and practice. These changes, and the fact that they were possible, were closely connected to the symbolic importance of Guimarães in the nationalistic context of the *Estado Novo*. Guimarães received special attention from central government: the regime hoped to receive back some of the

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<sup>524</sup> He makes his point by remembering an habit of the day-to-day life in the museum: whenever the director was there, at five o'clock in the afternoon, all personnel assembled in the director's office for a cup of coffee together.

<sup>525</sup> He is still working in the museum and it was there that the interviews took place, inside one of the museum rooms, the working scenery of Mr. Adão for the last thirty years. See Appendix for synopses of interviews.

<sup>526</sup> Mr Adão always complains about shortage of money. He refers to very ingenious ways of improving his revenues. For example, when foreign visitors went to the museum he received the entry ticket money in foreign currency and paid the value in Portuguese currency from his own pocket. After a few of these transactions he used to go to a bank to change pounds, marcs, dollars or francs, with a small personal profit.



emblematic ambience the city and its monuments had. The regime welcomed symbolic connections with Guimarães, the birth of the nationality, the main residence of D. Afonso Henriques, the chosen destiny of the nationalistic pilgrimage of D. João I who saved the country from the Castilian domination. This importance of Guimarães spread over the MAS and this partially explains the changes of the 1960s. Other significant factors must be considered: the national policy towards museums was changing<sup>527</sup> and the director of the museum was a very dynamic person. Nevertheless, Guimarães and its regional museum benefited from an indulgent policy.

### **5.3 The *Museu de José Malhoa* (Museum of José Malhoa)<sup>528</sup>**

The Museu de José Malhoa (MJM) is an exceptional case in the Portuguese museography of the 20th century because its building was the first in Portugal specifically designed and built to install a museum. The museum is the result of one man's vision, António Montês, who struggled in favour of his city (*Caldas da Rainha*) and region. He first expressed the idea of creating an art museum when he was in his early thirties; since then, and until his death in 1967, Montês devoted an important part of his life to the museum.

During the second half of the 1920s the project of an art museum called *José Malhoa*, gathered important support and António Montês organised an association of friends of the museum, even before the museum was established. The bureaucratic process of approving the creation of a new museum lasted for some time, but finally, in 1933, all the necessary steps had been taken. In May<sup>529</sup> the Superior Council of Fine Arts (*Conselho*

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<sup>527</sup> During the end of the 1940s and the 1950s some important people from museums had the opportunity of travelling abroad and observed what was being done in some European countries. The result of such process is evident in some of the Portuguese museums of that period (see the MMC and the MNAA, that stand as examples); another important reason for changes was the decree 46:758 (1965/12/18) that changed the organisation of the national museums.

<sup>528</sup> José Malhoa is a well known Portuguese artist. There is a comprehensive documentary research on the history, evolution and importance of this museum published in *ANTÓNIO Montês, Museu de José Malhoa*, Ministério da Cultura, I.P.M., Museu de José Malhoa, Caldas da Rainha, 1996. This book includes several articles about António Montês and the Museum and publishes some very important letters (sent and received) by António Montês concerning the Museum. An important part of the information used in this chapter concerning this museum was gathered in this book. Another significant help, on what documents and information are concerned, came from Dr<sup>a</sup> Matilde Tomás Couto, curator of the museum.

<sup>529</sup> Document dated 1933/05/09.

*Superior das Belas Artes*)<sup>530</sup> approved the creation of the new museum; in June,<sup>531</sup> the Ministry of Public Instruction (*Ministro da Instrução Pública*) approved the decision of the Superior Council of Fine Arts and finally, in November,<sup>532</sup> the museum's official existence was recognised. The text of the decree is very clear about the importance given to this project. The Superior Council of Fine Arts believed that the creation of a regional museum had many advantages. The most evident were the creation of an artistic collection with regional value, the possibility of establishing a section dedicated to the traditional art of the region (the ceramics), and the potential for attracting tourists.<sup>533</sup> The Council also agreed with the provisional installation of the museum, but approval of a definitive building awaited further consideration. The eventual decision by the government was positive, on the condition that the museum had to be established "with no expenses to the Portuguese state".<sup>534</sup> The museum existed but António Montês should not expect for any material support from central departments. He knew that if he wanted the museum to be a reality he would have to gather money and contributions somewhere else.

The main difficulty had already been overcome: the museum was first installed in a provisional building, the "Boats House" (*Casa dos Barcos*), a building near the lake in the Park *Carlos I* (the central park of Caldas da Rainha). Yet, this building was only available during part of the year;<sup>535</sup> the museum was, therefore, to be open to the public between April and October each year. This solution was obviously not an ideal one, so António Montês never ceased to fight for a more suitable building. The opportunity finally came, during the late 1930s, with the preparations for the commemorations held in 1940.<sup>536</sup> António Montês was very active in the proceedings that led to the "commemorations of the centenaries". That participation allowed him some influence near the decisional power of

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<sup>530</sup> See Chapter 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 on what concerns the legal attributions of this Council.

<sup>531</sup> Date is 1933/06/17.

<sup>532</sup> Document dated 1933/11/07 (was published 1933/11/09 in the Official Diary, 262, *II série*).

<sup>533</sup> Original text: "*como elemento de atracção do forasteiro e de ensinamento aos que continuam a trabalhar nesse ramo da nossa indústria artística*".

<sup>534</sup> Original text: "*Concordo, sem encargos para o Estado*".

<sup>535</sup> During winter time the House was used to keep the boats off the lake.

<sup>536</sup> See chapter 7 and 7.1.

Lisboa. He thus managed to convince the government that a new building for the museum was a real need and in 1939 the construction began.

The new MJM was officially opened in August 1940, as part of the national program of commemorations. The new building was unique in Portugal: for the first time in the century, a Portuguese museum was opened in a new building expressly built for that purpose. The original plan was created by the architect Paulino Montez in 1934 and the building that was opened in 1940 respected that original plan.

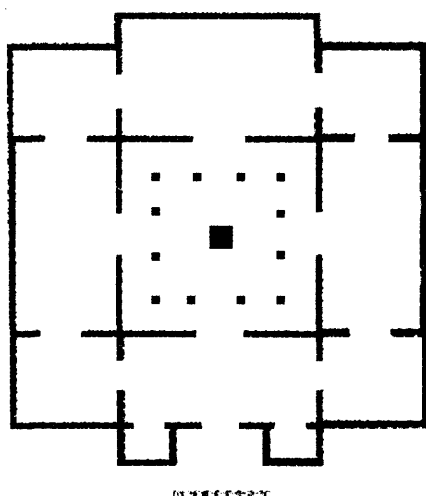


Fig. 27. Plan of the original building of the museum of José Malhoa

The museum had a main entrance and rooms for exhibitions; no stores or other facilities were available. The building had a severe aspect if viewed from the outside, with columns and façades of a geometrical design. There were no windows and the light came in through the glass roof. The ceilings of the rooms were also of glass, enabling the use of daylight. This allowed a diffuse natural and indirect illumination, which was very important as the museum exhibited paintings and other art objects in most of the rooms.<sup>537</sup> This intervention of the state in the evolution of the MJM had political significance and integrated the museum in a nation-wide project of propaganda. The choice of the political occasion had been crucial; António Montês was able to recognise the opportunity of 1940 for taking advantage of a national scheme of ideological propaganda. The Portuguese state had first allowed the creation of the museum under the condition it was not a drain on

public expenses. The preparation of the 1940 commemorations forced the Portuguese state into the decision of providing a new building, actually a very good one for the standard of the time.

António Montês was the director of the museum since its beginning. However he was not satisfied with his museum training. So, between 1944 and 1946 he became a student in the MNAA, the national 'school-museum' of the time. This decision proved to be of major importance to the future of the MJM, as António Montês became an officially recognised museum curator and therefore studied museum theory and practice. The first chapter of his final thesis submitted for the degree of museum curator was called "How a museum is built". He described the museum of José Malhoa in full detail, and discussed all major options, from the architectonic and display techniques perspectives.<sup>538</sup> As the museum enlarged its collections, the building soon became too small to exhibit all the works of art in possession of the institution. In 1942 a project to enlarge the museum was first made, but it was only in 1950 that six new rooms were added to the building. The museum reopened in May 1951 with a new internal organisation. Still during this decade, in 1956 and in 1957, the museum was again extended, first with two more rooms and then with two lateral galleries.



Fig. 28. Interior of one of the new rooms of the museum.  
Photograph of Alvão, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisboa.

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<sup>537</sup> This solution remained when the building of the museum received new rooms. One of the sources of information on this question was the interview with the director of the Museum. See Appendix for synopsis of interview.

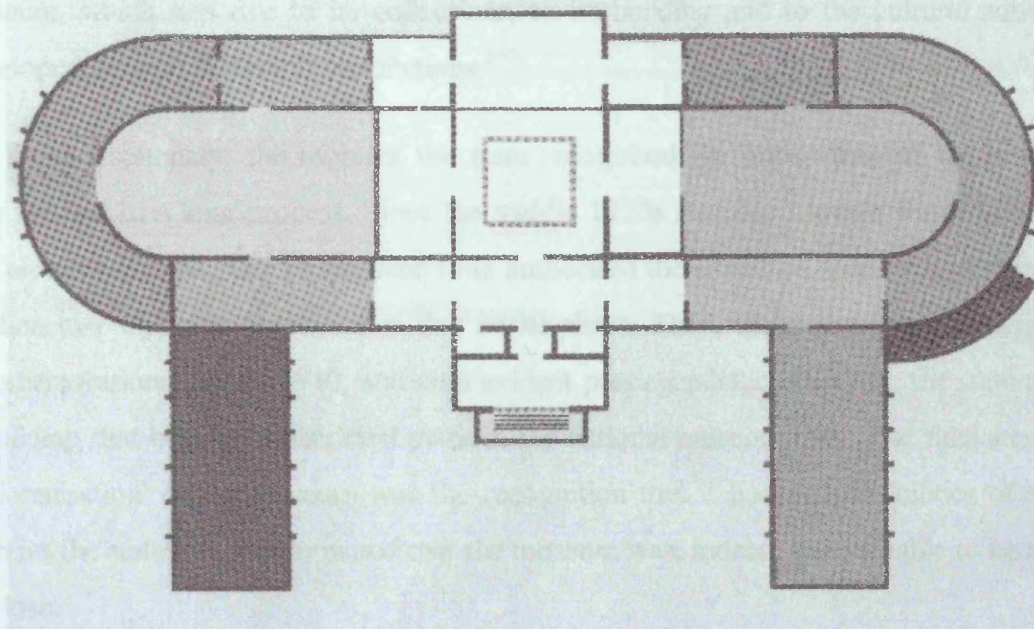


Fig. 29. Plan of the present building of the museum of José Malhoa (in white, the area of the first building of the museum)

The original building was the centre of the new museum (see figures 27 and 29). The central cloister remained the core of the museum and the exhibition area available increased significantly. With only some minor adjustments, the building of the beginning of the 1960s is the building that can be visited today. This period was also a period of deep formal changes for the department responsible for the museum. In 1959<sup>539</sup> the government decided that from 1 January 1960 onwards the museum should become the responsibility of a regional department (*Junta Distrital de Leiria*). Yet, this department had no financial budget for maintaining the museum. In 1960<sup>540</sup> the government decided that the museum would be considered a national museum, under the rule of the Ministry of National Education (*Ministério da Educação Nacional*) and directly dependent on the DGESBA.<sup>541</sup>

<sup>538</sup> The thesis is available from the archive of the museum.

<sup>539</sup> Decree 42:536 (1959/09/28).

<sup>540</sup> Decree 42:938 (1960/04/22).

<sup>541</sup> From this decree it is possible to know that all personnel of the museum remained in service. The museum had a Director with the function of curator, a clerk, a guard and two servants. The salaries were, per month, respectively: 3.600\$00; 1.500\$00; 1.300\$00; 1.150\$00 (decree 42:938). Since the 1930s António Montês declined any payment for his job; he gave the museum the amounts that would be his salaries to be used in acquisitions; see *ANTÓNIO Montês, Museu de José Malhoa*, Ministério da Cultura, I.P.M., Museu de José Malhoa, Caldas da Rainha, 1996, p.142-143 and note 52.



These decisions were justified by the extreme importance the government attributed to this museum, which was due to its collections, to its building and to the cultural activities it developed, such as temporary exhibitions.<sup>542</sup>

As a summary: the moment the state recognised the importance of the museum is also the end of a long process. Since the middle 1920s António Montês wanted a museum in Caldas da Rainha. The Portuguese state authorised the existence of the museum but gave no financial support whatsoever in that initial phase. Then, under the program of national commemorations held in 1940, and with evident propagandistic purposes, the state paid for a building that became a historical mark in the national museography. The final step of the 'nationalisation' of the museum was the recognition that it had no possibilities of survival without the state's intervention and that the museum was, indeed, too valuable to be allowed to close.

Another field of innovation in which the MJM pioneered was the educational development. The first decision about the need for an educational department was taken in 1962, and within a year the museum had a fully operational educational department, which was highly influenced by João Couto, the director of the MNAA. António Montês always<sup>543</sup> had the support of Couto, who had formal and pragmatic influence on the national decisions concerning museums. One of João Couto's main ideas about the role of museums concerned their public service, the opening of the museums to scholars and the creation of educational departments.<sup>544</sup> So, as a result, Montês decided to provide such department in his museum. He first invited Madalena Cabral, who was responsible for the educational department in the MNAA, to come to the museum and to address them with her ideas and programs already developed in Lisboa. Then, he invited Maria Helena Coimbra to organise the educational department in the MJM. A new dynamism was thus achieved in the museum,<sup>545</sup> with an

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<sup>542</sup> This was the only art museum in Caldas da Rainha.

<sup>543</sup> In the first phase of the creation of the museum one of the supports came from José de Figueiredo, who was then director of the MNAA. See Chapter 4.1.

<sup>544</sup> See COUTO, João - "Extensão escolar dos museus", in *Museu*, revista do Círculo Dr. José Figueiredo, II, nº 2, Porto, 1961. João Couto sent a copy to António Montês with the note "This is to be repeated in Caldas"; In 1962 João Couto went to the MJM and gave a conference on this theme. See ANTÓNIO Montês, *Museu de José Malhoa*, Ministério da Cultura, I.P.M., Museu de José Malhoa, Caldas da Rainha, 1996, p.121-123.

<sup>545</sup> The museum already had a significant number of visitors. For example, in 1935 more than 3.000 visitors entered the museum during the six months it was opened. See ANTÓNIO Montês, *Museu de José Malhoa*, Ministério da Cultura, I.P.M., Museu de José Malhoa, Caldas da Rainha, 1996, p.138 and note 30.

important number of school classes visiting and using the museum and its services.<sup>546</sup> As an art museum one of the major topics of the educational department was art. Maria Helena Coimbra invited Alice Aurélio, a painter, to help her with the "Art Service" (*Serviço de Iniciação Plástica*) in the museum.<sup>547</sup> Just like many museums that were the result of individual will and perseverance, the MJM had very scarce financial resources. Therefore its collections and acquisitions depended greatly on the generosity of collectors and friends of the museum who contributed with art objects, collections and money. Some national and local artists gave their works to the museum, thus enlarging its collection. António Montês donated his own collections and left his personal library to the museum in his will.<sup>548</sup> The museum's library also depended on the generosity of its friends. During the period when the museum was independent (until 1960) António Montês, as director, was free to define the acquisition policy. After 1960 and the intervention of the State in order to rescue the museum, the final decision concerning acquisitions was passed on to the DGEBSA.

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<sup>546</sup> The presence of young children in the museum was not a novelty: periodically, school classes used to visit it and use its services; see *ANTÓNIO Montês, Museu de José Malhoa*, Ministério da Cultura, I.P.M., Museu de José Malhoa, Caldas da Rainha, 1996, p.152 notes 32 and 34.

<sup>547</sup> The middle 1970s, especially after 1975, marked some important changes in the department, mostly because of new ideas about education and pedagogy.

<sup>548</sup> See *ANTÓNIO Montês, Museu de José Malhoa*, Ministério da Cultura, I.P.M., Museu de José Malhoa, Caldas da Rainha, 1996, p.143.

## Chapter 6 - Portuguese Museums under the *Estado Novo* - Specialised Museums

### 6.1 The *Museu Monográfico de Conímbriga* (Monographic Museum of Conímbriga)

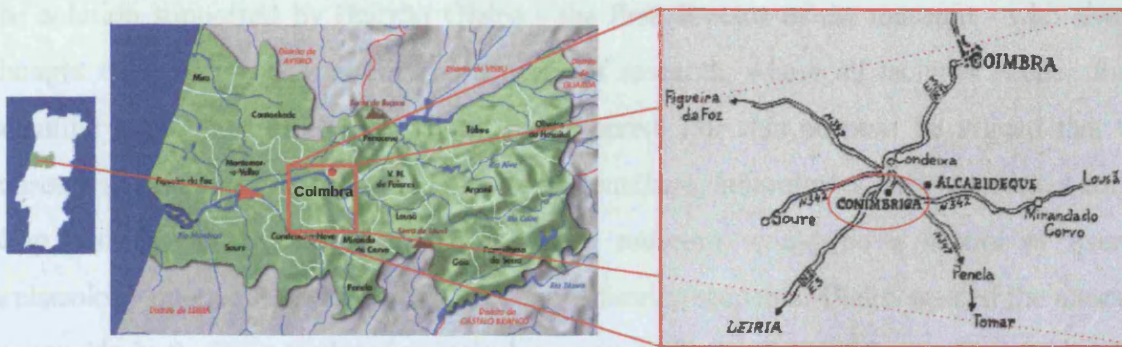


Fig. 30. Location of Conímbriga

Long before a museum existed in Conímbriga,<sup>549</sup> the place was already very well known as an important Roman archaeological site. There are references to the importance of the site dating from the beginning of this century,<sup>550</sup> but the scientific research and systematic excavations only began on the 1930s with Virgílio Correia.<sup>551</sup> Correia initiated an era of intense research and archaeological excavations in the site and published several papers and articles about his work.<sup>552</sup> These actions had official support of the University of Coimbra that received money from the *Junta de Educação Nacional*, which was a central department.<sup>553</sup> One of the most important consequences of this activity was the public and official acknowledgement of the importance of the site. In 1937 the government decided

<sup>549</sup> Conímbriga is located near Condeixa, a small city in the area of Coimbra.

<sup>550</sup> For example AZEVEDO, Pedro – "Miscellanea", in *AP*, XIII, 1908, p.10-37. Newspapers also had some eventual information on Conímbriga; as an example see the *Diário de Notícias*, issue of 1907/02/23.

<sup>551</sup> Before systematic excavation some exploratory research was undertaken. CORREIA, Virgílio - "Conímbriga. A camada pré-romana da cidade (Notas de uma exploração de dez dias em Condeixa-a-Velha)", in *O Archeologo Português*, XX, Lisboa, 1916, p.252-264;

<sup>552</sup> See CORREIA, Virgílio – *Notícia do "oppidum" e das escavações nele realizadas*, Coimbra, Imprensa de Coimbra Lda, 1936. Virgílio Correia also published articles in a local newspaper called *Diário de Coimbra* (see issues of 1939/01/06, 1939/08/21 and 1940/01/29). Also of interest CORREIA, Virgílio - "Conímbriga Visigótica", in *O Instituto*, 90, number 5, 1936, p.410-415 and CORREIA, Virgílio - "Las mas recientes escavaciones romanas de interes en Portugal. La ciudad de Conímbriga", in *Archivo Español de Arqueologia*, Madrid, 1940-41, p.257-267. A complete collection of Correia's papers on Conímbriga (1909 to 1944) was published under the *II Congresso Nacional de Arqueologia* (28 Setembro a 4 de Outubro), Coimbra, Biblioteca Geral da Universidade, 1970.



that Conímbriga was to have a proper access and ordered that a new road should be built, linking to the main national road passing by.<sup>554</sup> The recognition of Conímbriga as a national monument had its public demonstration in 1948, when an issue of the *Boletim* published by DGEMN was dedicated to Conímbriga.<sup>555</sup>

The first ideas about a museum to Conímbriga came from Virgílio Correia, who thought that the museum should imitate a house or a section of the ruins.<sup>556</sup> This was not the solution supported by Bairrão Oleiro - the first director of the museum - who always thought that the museum should be a place of research, where all facilities needed for a scientific excavation of the site could be gathered. For this purpose he argued that the museum should include accommodation for researchers, laboratories, vast reserves, a coffee shop and, obviously, exhibition rooms. The museum would be a school of Roman archaeology opened both to Portuguese and to foreign students. Oleiro wanted the museum to provide both theoretical and practical experience in the field of Roman archaeology; in other words, the museum would produce scientific work, from the excavation to the publication of papers and other scientific results. This plan for the museum was based on the experience he had at the site during the late 1940s and was also due to the work he had done abroad, especially in Spain where he studied Roman archaeology.<sup>557</sup>

The decision to build the museum was taken due to the importance of the findings of the campaigns Vergílio Correia and others undertook in the mid-1950s, and to a circumstantial episode, involving Bairrão Oleiro. At that time, the Minister of Public Works (*Obras Públicas*) was Arantes de Oliveira, who had been born in Condeixa. He knew Conímbriga very well and exerted some influence on the central government in order to

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<sup>553</sup> *Ruínas Romanas de Conímbriga. Museu Monográfico*, Lisboa, DGEMN, Ministério das Obras Públicas, 1962, p.4-5.

<sup>554</sup> Decree 27:967 (1937/08/18).

<sup>555</sup> *Ruínas de Conímbriga*, Lisboa, Boletim da DGEMN, number 52-53, June-September 1948. In the 1960s another issue about Conímbriga was published: *Boletim da DGEMN*, number 116, June 1964.

<sup>556</sup> This information was given by J. M. Bairrão Oleiro, who was the first director of the museum of Conímbriga and was familiar with the site since the 1940s. See Appendix for synopsis of interview.

<sup>557</sup> Bairrão Oleiro travelled through Europe and gathered information on Greek and Roman site's museums. The museums he used as examples were the ones of Pompeii, Ostia and especially the one of Ampurias, as this one was a school museum. He went to Spain in 1949 with a scholarship from the Institute of High Culture (*Instituto de Alta Cultura*) to study roman archaeology, as Portugal had, at that time, no specialists in that field. In 1950 he wrote an extended report to the IAC where he presented his ideas for a museum in Conímbriga. In 1952 Bairrão Oleiro published a paper on Conímbriga (OLEIRO, Bairrão - "Conímbriga e alguns dos seus problemas", in *Humanitas*, IV, Coimbra, 1952, p.32-42).

increase the financial support to the excavations.<sup>558</sup> Knowing about one of his visits to Condeixa and Conímbriga, Bairrão Oleiro asked the Minister to visit the site with him, so that he could explain the difficulties and the problems of Conímbriga. The Minister accepted and Bairrão Oleiro was therefore able to present him the major questions that he thought should be urgently solved. After the activity of Virgílio Correia the site had been under the responsibility of the DGEMN a situation that, in Oleiro's opinion, had brought many difficulties: nobody was really responsible for anything and holes (made by people looking for coins and other treasures) were being dug in private fields. He believed that these fields should be integrated to the site and kept under protection. Furthermore, the objects from the site were dispersed by different museums. The Minister asked for a complete report and Bairrão Oleiro committed himself to that task. His final text included the ideas and suggestions he had for the museum of Conímbriga.

But the decision to build the museum was postponed until the end of the 1950s,<sup>559</sup> and only in the early 1960s did the museum become a reality. The government decided that a museum was to be built but the process of defining the project was complex. Different ministries had different opinions on the subject and the project became an issue of political dispute. The Ministry of Tourism had decisive influence and, under his pressure, the project suffered several changes; the small coffee shop, for instance, was transformed into a restaurant.<sup>560</sup> Nevertheless, and according to the original plan, the museum had exhibition areas, laboratories and vast reserves.<sup>561</sup> The decree<sup>562</sup> that gave legal and formal existence to the museum determined that it would be called *Museu Monográfico de Conímbriga* and that the personnel would be a director-curator, two assistant-curators (*Preparador* or *Colector*<sup>563</sup>), two guards and three general assistants.<sup>564</sup> This staff had to care not only for

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<sup>558</sup> *Ruínas Romanas de Conímbriga. Museu Monográfico*, Lisboa, DGEMN, Ministério das Obras Públicas, 1962, p.4-5.

<sup>559</sup> In 1960 a newspaper (*Século*, issue of 1960/03/18) published an article about the future museum, predicting that it would be ready in that year, and that an hotel was to be built near the site. The total budget announced was of 800.000\$00.

<sup>560</sup> João Couto remarked that someone had ruined the ideas of Bairrão Oleiro: instead of a museum with a small coffee shop the building was a large restaurant with a tiny museum adjacent... See Appendix for synopsis of interview with Bairrão Oleiro.

<sup>561</sup> The idea of having rooms for external researchers was not accepted in this initial phase, because of a strict budget (information given by Adília Alarcão; see appendix for synopsis of interview).

<sup>562</sup> Decree 44:349 (1962/05/14). Also decree 44:346 (same date) which determined the necessary authorisation from the Ministry of Finances to establish an annual budget for the new museum.

<sup>563</sup> The word used in the decree was *Preparador*; Adília Alarcão prefers the word *Colector*. See appendix for synopsis of interview.

the museum but also for the archaeological site. This museum was a peculiar one, as its acquisition policy was confined to the adjacent archaeological site. Until then, no other Portuguese museum had had such character.



Fig. 31. Aerial photograph of Conímbriga, taken from Northeast.

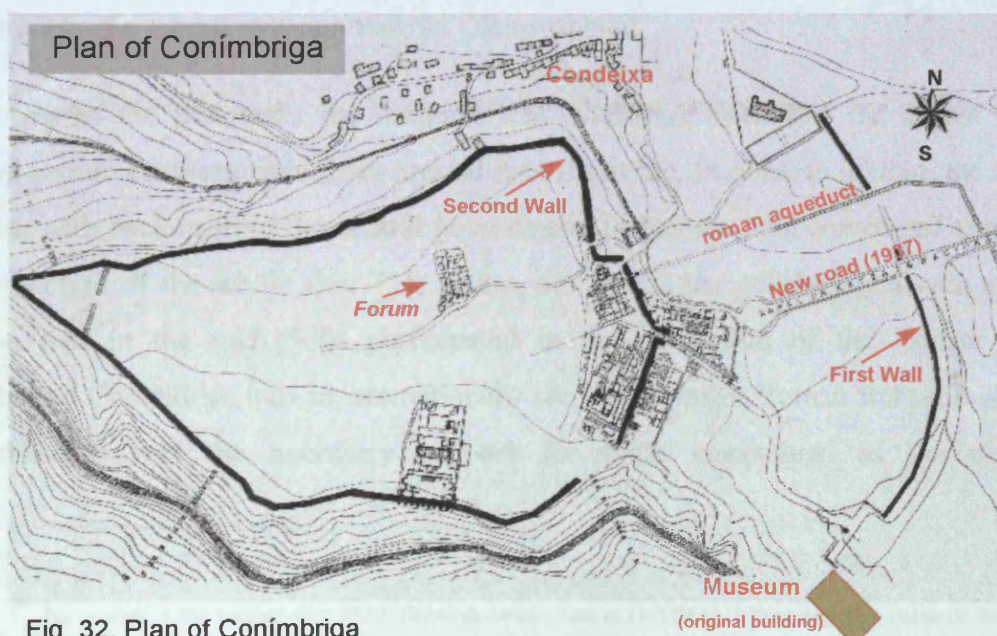


Fig. 32. Plan of Conímbriga

<sup>564</sup> The salaries were, respectively: 3.600\$00, 2.00\$00, 1.400\$00, 1.150\$00, per month.

The establishment of the new museum was reported in national newspapers.<sup>565</sup> They celebrated the modernity of the museum<sup>566</sup> and the quality of the facilities. The museum is described as a multi-use building including three exhibition rooms, reserves, a vast working room, laboratory, dark room, residence of the guard and coffee shop. This complex was built in an area that had previously been checked for archaeological remains.<sup>567</sup> The museum was not exactly what his director (Bairrão Oleiro) had in mind and really wanted, but the need for a museum in Conímbriga was officially recognised and this certainty was the first and essential fact for further possible improvements. The Portuguese state was finally committed to the project. The idea of having an archaeological site of national, and international, importance, pleased the Portuguese political power.

Bairrão Oleiro's close collaborators were Adília Alarcão and Jorge Alarcão, who had been attending his classes at the University of Coimbra. Bairrão Oleiro wanted the museum to work in a professional basis, so he invited his two young collaborators to study abroad in order to learn conservation methods and techniques.<sup>568</sup> As a result the MMC rapidly became an advisor to the museums in Portugal, in the fields of conservation and restoration of ceramics, and metallic and wooden objects. The museum was also able to gather local support and some local people became skilled archaeological artists and active collaborators with the museum. These successes contributed to the progressive transformation of the museum into the school-museum Bairrão Oleiro wanted.

One of the first tasks the museum was confronted with was the urgent need to prevent private excavations in fields around the official site. In order to do that, the museum decided, with backup from the central government, to buy the area considered essential to the protection of the whole site. This action, along with the collaboration with a French mission that in the mid-1960s participated in the excavation of the Roman *Forum*, transformed Conímbriga into an internationally recognised major Roman archaeological site. The museum was the necessary support for those campaigns, as the excavated

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<sup>565</sup> For example *A Voz*, issue of 1962/08/03; *Diário de Lisboa*, issue of 1962/08/16, with photographs; *Diário de Notícias*, issue of 1962/08/12.

<sup>566</sup> *Diário de Lisboa*, quoted above.

<sup>567</sup> See appendix, synopsis of interview with Bairrão Oleiro

archaeological material included thousands of ceramic fragments and other objects.<sup>569</sup> The collaboration with the French also resulted in a sentiment of "brotherhood" between those who worked in Conímbriga, based on the long hours of intense field work. As a result, an Association of the Friends of the Museum was then created. It still exists today. In 1963 a booklet was published about the museum and the archaeological site. This booklet was republished several times in many different languages.<sup>570</sup>

In these first years of existence the museum was rarely criticised. One of the few examples is reported in a newspaper of Coimbra,<sup>571</sup> which remarked that tourists visiting the site observed herbs growing on the alleys in front of the main entrance of the museum. The newspaper gives a piece of advice to the museum's responsible, suggesting that the alleys and pathways should be cleaned. In 1964 another newspaper<sup>572</sup> stated that the museum was still under a process of organisation. Conímbriga was *the* national Roman site and, the archaeological 'jewel of the crown' of the regime and the public interest was therefore very evident.

Bairrão Oleiro remained as director of the museum until 1967, when he accepted administrative responsibilities at the DGESBA, in Lisboa. Adília Alarcão became the new director. She decided that it was time for the museum to change: she had the opportunity to accomplish some of the original plans for the museum that had never been accomplished due to political interference - such as, the construction of accommodation for external researchers.<sup>573</sup> In Oleiro's own words, Adília Alarcão was better prepared than himself for the task of directing the museum. In fact the changes she accomplished improved the operation of the museum. From the late 1960s to the middle 1970s, the original building experienced several changes. New exhibition rooms, new reserves and other areas became

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<sup>568</sup> The Gulbenkian Foundation helped the museum with two scholarships so Adília e Jorge Alarcão could go to the UK and study there. This Foundation also gave a substantial amount to the installation of the laboratory.

<sup>569</sup> This information is confirmed by both interviews, with Bairrão Oleiro and Adília Alarcão. See also OLEIRO, J. M. Bairrão and ÉTIENNE, Robert - "Les résultats de la première campagne de fouilles franco-portugaises a Conímbriga", in *Comptes-rendus des séances de l'année 1965*, Paris, Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 1966, p.442-451.

<sup>570</sup> *Conímbriga. Roteiro do Museu e das Ruínas*, Coimbra, 1963.

<sup>571</sup> *Diário de Coimbra*, issue of 1963/10/12.

<sup>572</sup> *Jornal de Turismo*, issue of May 1964.

<sup>573</sup> Bairrão Oleiro reconfirms that sometimes he used to stay overnight in the museum, working and writing. See Appendix for synopsis of interview.

available, independent access was provided to the museum and coffee shop and an auditorium was built.<sup>574</sup> At this time the environmental control of the stores was an issue. The stores were too humid and the isolation of the walls and a system of air conditioned solved this problem. Another important change occurred in the design of the museum's displays. Adília Alarcão organised two different visit paths, one about the site of Conímbriga and the other about the roman professions. The first one had four main subjects: the *Forum*, houses, gardens and religion; the second one, using the small objects excavated, showed the main Roman professions that had once existed in Conímbriga. These two exhibitions were intended to be developed in order to be useful to the thousands of school children that visited the museum annually.<sup>575</sup>

The site of Conímbriga became internationally known, especially because of the mosaic floors.<sup>576</sup> At a national level it was one of the 'jewels of the crown' of the *Estado Novo*. In fact the extension of the site, the well preserved architectonic structures, the quantity and quality of very well preserved mosaics and the variety of archaeological material, made Conímbriga the most important national Roman site for many years. The existence of a museum (and the quality of the laboratory work done there) helped to ennoble Conímbriga and transformed it in a symbol of what the *Estado Novo* had done for the national archaeology.

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<sup>574</sup> The museum had to be closed to public visits during several years (from 1976 to 1985).

<sup>575</sup> A newspaper (*A Capital*, issue of 1970/04/20) published an article affirming that in 1970 more than four thousand students visited the museum. Nevertheless, the same article referred that it was intolerable that the teachers let the children walk on the ruins and the mosaic floors. Bairão Oleiro also comments on this matter, criticising teachers that do not prepare the visit with proper care and prefer to chat to each other instead of guiding the groups of students (see appendix for synopsis of interview).

<sup>576</sup> As examples, see the following articles: PINHEIRO, Fernando M. - "Una Città Romana in Portogallo. Conimbriga", in *Le vie del Mondo*, Milan, XXIX, 2, 1967, pages 145 to 156; LEONARD, Henry K. - "The Rebirth of an Ancient Roman City in Portugal", in *The New York Times*, issue of Sunday, March the 23<sup>th</sup>, 1969: "Wonder and frustration... superb, almost perfect, mosaic floors. But it will take many more years to complete the work. And that is where the frustration comes in. It is difficult not to kneel and sweep away the covering sand and dirt so as to be the first person in 1.500 years to see the whole floor."



## 6.2 The *Museu Nacional de Etnologia* (National Museum of Ethnology)

The development of the MNE began in the late 1950s when Jorge Dias<sup>577</sup> gathered a small team of researchers (Viegas Guerreiro and Margot Dias) and formed the "Mission of Ethnic Minorities of the Portuguese Overseas Territories" (*Missão das Minorias Étnicas do Ultramar Português*). One of the results of their work was a temporary exhibition about the *Macondes* (from Mozambique) where the objects they had gathered were presented to the public. The success of this exhibition is a symbolic mark of the beginning of the process that would result in the establishment of the MNE. In this exhibition the scientific principles that would rule the activity of the future museum of ethnology were already present. From Jorge Dias' point of view, the aesthetic value of the objects was not the main interest of the exhibition. On the contrary, the object was considered important not for itself but for the human activity behind it; the exhibition was not about objects, it was about people.

The first institution that can be considered as a runner of the MNE was the Museum of Ethnology (*Museu de Etnologia*). It was established as a school museum and was part of the Superior Institute of Overseas Studies (*Instituto Superior de Estudos Ultramarinos*) that was directly dependent on the Department of Overseas Research (*Junta de Inverstigação do Ultramar*). As a consequence, this museum had no institutional link with the government department in charge of other national museums, and this circumstance would produce some political and institutional difficulties. In fact, the government department responsible for the national museums did not approve this new museum that was out of its institutional reach and could therefore escape its control.<sup>578</sup> Nevertheless, with the support of the Minister Silva Cunha, the museum survived.<sup>579</sup>

Another very important step for the organisation of the museum was taken in 1962, when the *Junta de Investigação do Ultramar* decided to form a team of researchers who would have the task of selecting material for the museum. Jorge Dias was in charge of that

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<sup>577</sup> Jorge Dias was an anthropologist who studied for his PhD in Germany (the thematic of which was *Volkskunde*); after his return to Portugal he developed the Centre of Studies of Ethnology (*Centro de Estudos de Etnologia*) at the University of Porto, in 1947. See OLIVEIRA, Ernesto Veiga de - "O Museu de Etnologia", in *II Encontro de Museu de Países e Comunidades de Língua Portuguesa*, ICOM, Palácio Nacional de Mafra, 1989, p.55-68.

<sup>578</sup> See appendix for synopsis of the interview with Benjamim Pereira. In his opinion João de Almeida, who was in charge of the national museums, made consistent efforts to invalidate the project of the museum.

<sup>579</sup> Interview with Benjamim Pereira. He points out that the arguments of Jorge Dias about his ideas for the museum had a partial support of the Minister.

team and invited his three colleagues and friends Ernesto Veiga de Oliveira, Fernando Galhano and Benjamim Pereira to work with him. This group of four ethnologists would be the core staff of the museum. The project of Jorge Dias gathered the agreement of his three collaborators and the plan of the museum could finally be realised. Jorge Dias wanted a museum about mankind and not a museum about the Portuguese overseas territories, which was the desire of the regime. His concept of a museum rejected all colonialist approaches<sup>580</sup> and consequently was not what the regime wanted. Dias's first step was to convince the political power that it was absurd to build a museum about the overseas domains which neglected the European territory. The second step, and the hardest one, was for his team to enlarge the field of research of the museum so as to include all aspects of human activity, paying no attention to the geographical limits of the Portuguese colonies. The acquisition of the collection known as the "Victor Bandeira collection" was the final step.<sup>581</sup> Despite some bitter and politically influenced criticisms on this acquisition, the museum possessed a collection that was the material proof of its universality.<sup>582</sup>

The name of the museum and its status were changed in 1965, when a decree renamed it Museum of Overseas Ethnology (*Museu de Etnologia do Ultramar*). Nevertheless, as Jorge Dias was the director, he was able to maintain the original international orientation of the institution represented by a decade (1965-1975) of intense research work and important acquisitions. As Benjamim Pereira points out, the acquisition policy of the museum was based on the fundamental principles that objects should be representative of a typology and not gathered only because of their aesthetic value.<sup>583</sup> In the Museum of Ethnology the task of gathering material evidence of human activity was no longer the random activity of the previous ethnographic Portuguese collectors.<sup>584</sup> One of the

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<sup>580</sup> Tony Bennett uses the concepts of "sites of discovery" (the colonies) and "sites of gathering" (the main land). These concepts would fit the will of the *Estado Novo* but not the project of Jorge Dias - see BENNETT, Tony - *op.cit.*, p.210-211.

<sup>581</sup> Interview with Benjamim Pereira.

<sup>582</sup> Benjamim Pereira describes this period in the early sixties as a very violent time, in terms of political manoeuvres. As he remarks, the regime was not very pleased with the new museum and some political influences were used with the clear intention of changing the project of Jorge Dias. He gives a significant example: when he wanted to dedicate a text "to the memory of Jorge Dias, who made the Museum of Ethnology possible" (*à memória de Jorge Dias a quem se fica a dever o Museu de Etnologia*) the official censorship reduced it to "to the memory of Jorge Dias".

<sup>583</sup> Interview with Benjamim Pereira.

<sup>584</sup> Benjamim Pereira gives two examples: on one hand the collections gathered by Leite de Vasconcelos, that can hardly be considered as scientifically representative; on the other hand the work of Fernando Galhano who used to identify the main types and the regional variants of a specific object before collecting specimens to the museum.



intentions of the museum was to gather enough material to form a picture of the Portuguese traditional material evidence of the middle of the century. Some of the options concerning acquisitions did not gather official support, and the team of the museum had to find other sources of financial help.<sup>585</sup>

All this effort and research work resulted in a major temporary exhibition called "Peoples and Cultures" (*Povos e Culturas*) that opened to the public in 1972. The spirit of the museum was finally transformed in a public event that presented, to a large audience, the intentions of the institution. The vision of the world the exhibition presented was not a colonialist one, according to the project Jorge Dias had always proposed. The exhibition presented objects as results of human will, art or necessity. The exhibition displayed material culture in such a way it was possible to infer that no human society was considered "superior" or "inferior", thus the official colonialist view over the overseas territories was expressly denied. In the early 1970s the political ambience in Portugal was favourable to such presentation of anti-colonialism: the war in Africa lasted for a decade (and was seen by an important part of the population as a pointless effort) and the death of Salazar in 1968 had made the country hope for some changes. This exhibition showed that another view over mankind was possible and endorsed by reputed scientists. Jorge Dias died in 1973, the year that followed the exhibition. A new director was appointed to the museum, Ernesto Veiga de Oliveira, who maintained his predecessor's orientation, keeping the museum outside the political domination of the regime.

Another important activity of the museum was the organisation of a library of related books and scientific journals.<sup>586</sup> The number of book acquisitions during 1959 is huge (five hundred and forty nine). This was the year of the great temporary exhibition about the *Macondes*. The financial capacity for such huge acquisition demonstrates that the team of Jorge Dias was committed to the task of building a new museum, representative of a new perspective in the Portuguese ethnology. In 1965, the year of the official and legal

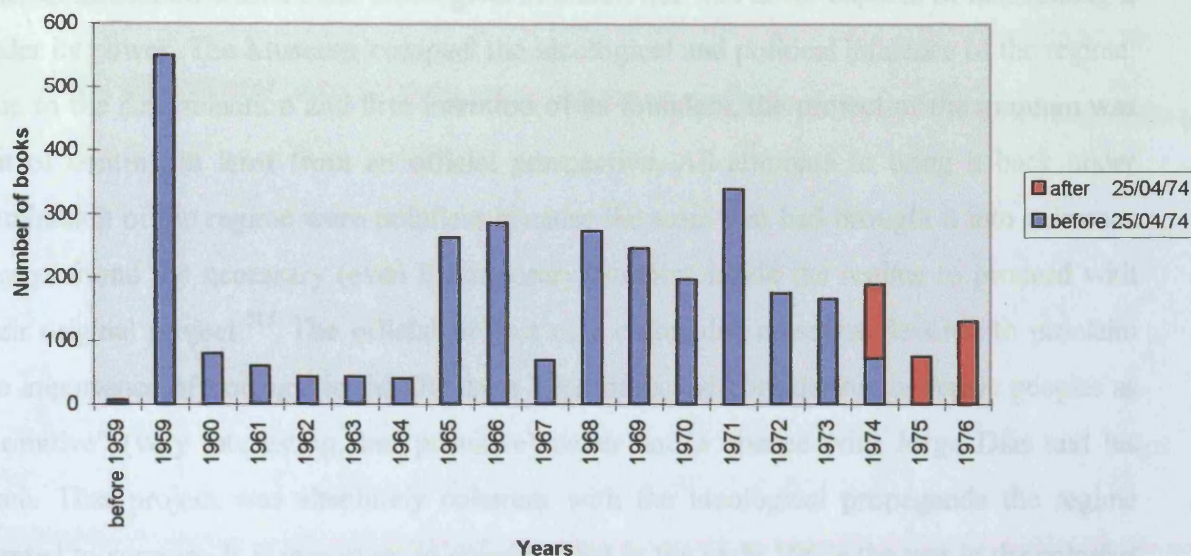
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<sup>585</sup> Benjamim Pereira refers that this task was a very hard one. They had to face not only the lack of money but also the political disapproval of his projects.

<sup>586</sup> In 1967 it was decided that all books belonging to the library, that depended on the "Centre of Cultural Anthropology Studies" (*Centro de Estudos de Antropologia Cultural*), should be registered in a special record book. The oldest record dates from 1941, but until 1959 the number of books acquired is insignificant (six).

institutionalisation of the museum, the number of acquisition increased again. The graph below shows the evolution of the acquisitions:

**Fig. 33.**  
**Acquisition of books**  
**MNE 1959-1976**



The revolution of 25 April 1974 slowed down the process of installing the museum in a new building. During the previous ten years the museum survived in several different locations, with all kinds of problems in terms of facilities. The new building, that was ready in April 1974, only lacked the inside equipment to receive the collections. The revolution hindered the administrative action of approving that final step, and that delayed the transfer to the new building. There was also a financial problem: the budget was not enough even to maintain the objects in good environmental conditions. The only solution to keep the museum open was to prepare a temporary exhibition on "Modernism and African Art" (*O modernismo e a arte africana*). For the year that followed the museum was partially open due to this exhibition, but it was obvious that the situation could not be maintained. Finally, the museum was closed to the public in 1975 and was only reopened in 1985. All these problems were difficult to accept to the members of the team that had started the museum in the early 1960s.<sup>587</sup> Benjamim Pereira comments that it is hard to admit the fact that the museum, which had made a stand against the regime of the *Estado Novo*, almost ended after

the revolution, due to lack of support. After the end of the *Estado Novo*, the museum, instead of affirming its importance and being able to develop its project, remained abandoned for a decade.

The case of the Museum of Ethnology is important, because the *Estado Novo* created it as an institution with a clear ideological intention but was never capable of maintaining it under its power. The Museum 'escaped' the ideological and political influence of the regime. Due to the determination and firm intention of its founders, the project of the museum was out of control, at least from an official perspective. All attempts to bring it back under domination of the regime were pointless because the team that had brought it into existence always found the necessary (even if temporary) support inside the regime to proceed with their original project.<sup>588</sup> The official project of a colonialist museum, devoted to proclaim the importance of Portugal in the Overseas Territories and considering the native peoples as "primitive" (very interesting, but primitive) never had a chance with Jorge Dias and his team. That project was absolutely coherent with the ideological propaganda the regime wanted to support. It is important to consider that in the early 1960s the war in the colonies (especially in Guiné, Angola and Mozambique) was about to begin. The *Estado Novo* made all efforts to diminish the importance of that conflict and to emphasise the civilising role of Portugal in all the overseas territories. This museum would have been an important piece in that policy, had the official project been accomplished. The presence of the word "Overseas" (*Ultramarino* or *Ultramar*) in the designation of the museum and in the name of the department it depended on is of some importance. That word was officially removed from the name of the museum at the suggestion of its director, Veiga de Oliveira, after the revolution of 1974.

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<sup>587</sup> Benjamim Pereira refers to these years as a "grey period". He regrets that Veiga de Oliveira could not see the museum reopened to the public before his death.

<sup>588</sup> The first time the museum was referred as one of the *Estado Novo*'s museums, Benjamim Pereira strongly rejected that assertion. The museum, he said, began its existence under the *Estado Novo*, but was never a museum of the regime.

## Chapter 7 - Temporary Exhibitions as media of political and ideological propaganda.

In the previous chapters the subject of analysis was the use of museums and museum objects by the *Estado Novo* in order to promote its nationalistic ideology. Not only did museums and museum objects serve this purpose but also the temporary exhibitions held in the Portuguese European territory as well as in the African colonies. The list of temporary exhibitions organised and sponsored by the State is impressive.<sup>589</sup> These temporary exhibitions were designed to be visited by large numbers of Portuguese and the propagandistic impact was expected to be effective. The process of assembling these exhibitions and of using museum objects for the purpose, involved, more than once, disagreement with the Directors of museums.<sup>590</sup> This process seems to be incoherent with all the legislation produced by the *Estado Novo* with the apparently obvious intention of preserving cultural property, especially on what concerns museum objects and national monuments. Nevertheless, it is evident that propagandistic interests and objectives, at least sometimes, overwhelmed the conservation concerns. Museum objects and national monuments were seen as pieces of a machine of propaganda that absolutely needed their concourse to achieve its political and ideological objectives. This is one of the possible explanations for the very intense investment the *Estado Novo* made in the cultural heritage domain in an epoch when the regime was still struggling against economic and financial difficulties. It was an "investment", not an "expenditure". The regime needed the historical background to sustain its nationalistic ideology and this was only possible through monuments and museum objects that were well preserved and capable of demonstrating the past greatness of Portugal. Even the idea that Portugal was still a great country (great in territory, great in population, great in its geo-strategic importance, great in its concern of continuing the greatness of the past) demanded a great deal of care. Caring about the country's history and image would help constructing a 'respectable', nationalistic image of the 'self' for the nationals: a country that does not care about its history is not a respectable

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<sup>589</sup> See Appendix 1.

<sup>590</sup> See Chapter 4.

one. Monuments and museum objects were seen as the ultimate proof of Portugal's important and decisive role in the universal history, and a live evidence of the respect Portugal and its regime had for the past.

Some of the temporary exhibitions held by the *Estado Novo* had a very strong colonial emphasis. One of the major political issues of the regime was the earnest defence of the unity of the nation including all colonial territories, as mentioned in chapter 3. Therefore temporary exhibitions focusing on the colonial domain had the intention of reinforcing the belief that Portugal, from the European territory to the far East in Timor, was all one country. For this purpose the history of the maritime discoveries was presented as one of the greatest deeds of mankind, using the so called 'historical rights of occupation' as arguments of colonial domination. Temporary exhibitions on colonial themes always had at least one section focusing on the history of the discoveries and emphasis was put on the fact that the Portuguese were the first Europeans to step onto those lands. In order to improve the sentiment of unity and the notion of cohesion, these temporary exhibitions attempted to recreate the colonial ambience in the grounds of the exhibition. For instance, African and Asian villages were built in traditional ways and natives transported from their homes to be 'on display' during the exhibition.<sup>591</sup>



Fig. 34. Natives from Mozambique in the Colonial Exhibition of 1934 (Porto)  
Photograph from Alvão in *Álbum fotográfico da 1ª Exposição Colonial Portuguesa - 101 clichés fotográficos de Alvão, fotógrafo oficial da Exposição Colonial, Porto, Litografia Nacional, s.d.*

<sup>591</sup> This question will be the object of further analysis when describing the Colonial Exhibition of 1934 in chapter 7.2.



In 1940 even the Portuguese from the European territory were submitted to this kind of treatment: from north to south, people came to the exhibition and lived for several months in artificial villages that were intended to represent the traditional architecture of the country. These 'actors' <sup>592</sup> were expected to perform traditional day-to-day activities, to the delight and enlightenment of the visitors. Two of the main objectives of these exhibitions are evident: the need that the *Estado Novo* had to convince all Portuguese that Portugal was a colonial State by historical rights, and the nationalistic affirmation of the greatness of Portugal *vis a vis* with all the other countries of the world. These exhibitions exposed, possibly better than the museums, some of the political and ideological uses of cultural heritage of the *Estado Novo*. For this reason this chapter will analyse in detail some of the major temporary exhibitions organised by the regime.



Fig. 35. Interior of the Pavilion of the Colonies, "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World".  
Photograph from Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

<sup>592</sup> The *Estado Novo* made what could be called a 'Goffmanian' joke *avant la lettre*: people were expected to 'perform normal life', acting as "social actors" not on the stage of society but on the stage of propaganda. On the concept of "social actor" see GOFFMAN, E. - *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1969.

## 7.1 - "O Mundo Português": a museographic presentation of the Portuguese nation through a temporary exhibition.

The main event of the *Estado Novo*, after the celebration of the first decade of the regime, was the great exhibition of the Portuguese Nation, held in Lisboa in 1940. The exhibition was an important part of a vast program of commemorations dedicated to the centenaries of the Portuguese independence. Portugal was celebrating eight centuries of independence and three centuries of the restoration of that independence.<sup>593</sup> The intention of the regime was that all Portuguese participated in the celebrations. This intention succeeded in very different forms and, in fact, the country recognised 1940 as the year of nationalistic festivities.<sup>594</sup>

The name chosen for this exhibition is a celebration of Portugal: the "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World" (*Grande Exposição do Mundo Português*). The exhibition aimed at presenting Portugal in all its continental and colonial splendour, as one of the greatest nations of the world. Portugal was a country of many territories spread around the world. "From Minho to Timor" (*de Minho a Timor*)<sup>595</sup> was a common saying symbolising the worldwide tradition of 'Portugality'. The greatness of the nation was represented by the variety of territories, the number of citizens (continental and overseas) and the number of native speakers.<sup>596</sup> Portugal was to be presented as an important and active nation in fields such as international diplomacy, economy and military geo-strategy. The Portuguese people all around the world, whether living under the Portuguese flag or not, were to be presented as a culturally valid nation, united by common links of ancestral cultural background. The main idea was that since the existence of the *Lusitanos*<sup>597</sup> the "soul" of Portugal had struggled to be free and to affirm its independence and importance as a Nation. This "magnificent" exhibition, at least as it was imagined by the *Estado Novo*,

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<sup>593</sup> In 1580 Portugal had its crown united with the Spanish dynasty. In 1640 the independence of the Portuguese crown was restored.

<sup>594</sup> As an example it is possible to refer local efforts to celebrate the centenaries. In *Trás-os-Montes* Firmino Martins was working, since 1938, in a history of the county that was meant to be ready by 1940. He asked *Abade de Baçal* for help and his letters clearly stated that the year of 1940 was in fact the moment to have the work ready. JACOB, João Manuel - "Correspondência de Firmino Martins para o Abade de Baçal", in *Vinhais Património*, nº 1, Vinhais, Câmara Municipal de Vinhais, 1998, p.70. Another very well known example is the history of Portugal by João Ameal, especially written to be ready in 1940 (AMEAL, João - *op.cit*).

<sup>595</sup> *Minho* is situated in the north end of the Portuguese European territory; Timor was a Portuguese colony in the far East.

<sup>596</sup> Portuguese was, and still is, one of the languages spoken by a very large number of people in the world.

<sup>597</sup> The *Lusitanos* were a people of *celtiberos* (the result of a mixture of Celts and Iberians) who lived in the Iberian Peninsula before the Roman Invasion and who opposed to that invasion.

served the purpose of telling that story.<sup>598</sup> The Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World was a moment of climax, a paroxysm of nationalistic excitement, the strong and (wished) definitive affirmation of Portugal as a powerful, pluri-continental and colonial nation.



Fig. 36. External views, "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World" (over the historical pavilions). Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.



Fig. 37. External views, "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World" (over the Pavilion of the Portuguese Diaspora). Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

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<sup>598</sup> This way of presenting national history is close to the concept of ethno-history developed by SMITH, A.D. - *National Identity*, London, Penguin, 1991, specially chapter 7.



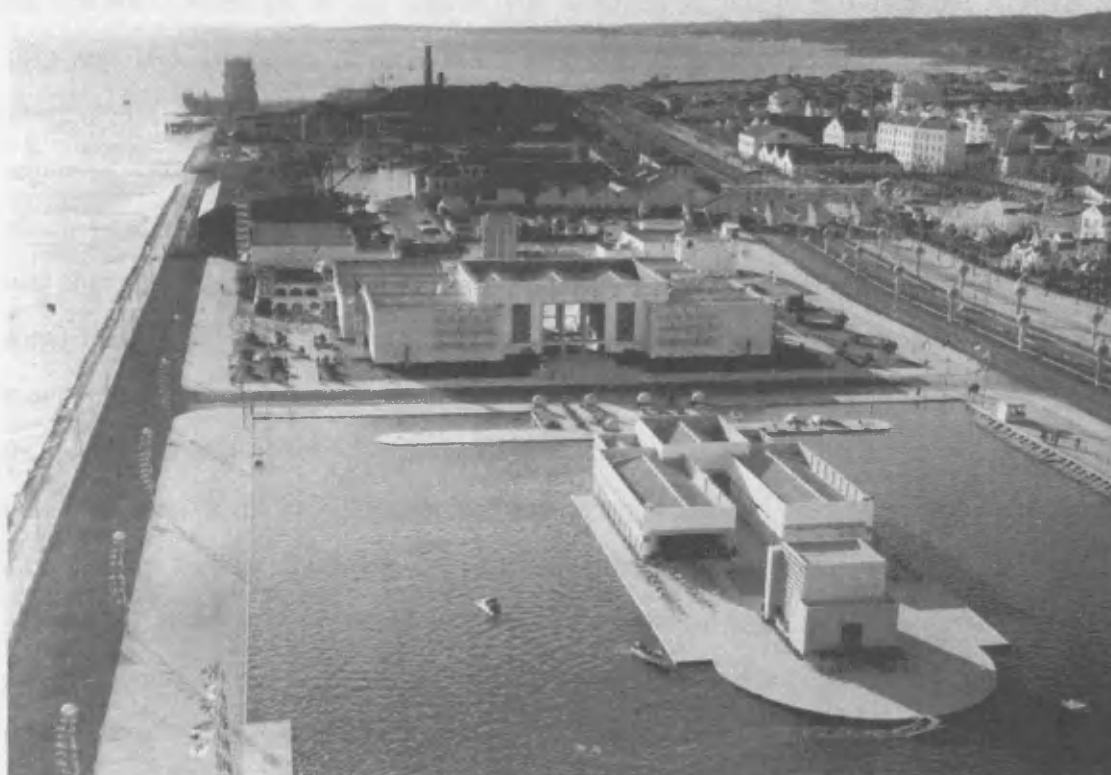


Fig. 38. External views, "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World" (over the section of popular life). Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

Different strategies were used to produce this effect. The exhibition had a theatrical set up and each pavilion performed a special role in the complete scene.<sup>599</sup> The exhibition was meant to receive several thousands of visitors and to overwhelm them, culturally and politically. The exhibition was a 'stage' for a 'performance', the actors being Portuguese nationalism, Portuguese traditions, Portuguese history, the Portuguese themselves and Portuguese reasons to exist. The exhibition was meant to impress.

The location chosen by the government<sup>600</sup> was along the river *Tejo*, in front of the magnificent *Jerónimos*.<sup>601</sup> Not very far away, also by the river, another monument marked

<sup>599</sup> The best way of understanding the theatrical set up of the exhibition is by observing some of the photographs taken during this event. There are two major collections of official photographs: the one from Mário Novais (kept in the photography archive of the *Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian*, Lisboa) and the one from Alvão (kept in the *Centro Português de Fotografia*, Porto). Another collection is available from the archives of the SNI that gathers photographs from different photographers. There are two main official publications that include vast collections of photographs of the exhibition: *Mundo Português: imagens de uma exposição histórica*, Lisboa, edições do SNI, 1957; *Portugal 1940*, Lisboa, SPN, 1940; *Mário Novais - Exposição do Mundo Português - 1940*, Lisboa, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian e Caminho do Oriente, 1998.

<sup>600</sup> Salazar, in 1938, already had some ideas about the location to be chosen. In a note published in the newspapers on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 1938, Salazar refers as a good idea to use unoccupied fields, from "*Junqueira to Belém*". SALAZAR, A.O. - *Discursos e Notas Políticas*, Coimbra Editora, 2<sup>a</sup> ed., vol III Coimbra, 1959, p.41 and following. Augusto Castro, the main responsible for the exhibition agreed that the great area in front of the *Jerónimos* was the perfect "hall" to receive whoever came to visit the exhibition". CASTRO, Augusto - *A Exposição do Mundo Português e a sua Finalidade Nacional*, Lisboa, Empresa Nacional de Publicidade, 1940, p.17.

the symbolic departure of the sailors who weighed anchor to discover the Atlantic in the 15th and 16th centuries. This monument is the "Tower of Belém" (*Torre de Belém*).<sup>602</sup> There could not be a better location for an exhibition organised by a state that used, as argument for colonial possession of overseas territories, the historic rights of occupation which went back to the maritime discoveries. Another argument in favour of this location was that this part of Lisboa needed investment and public rehabilitation. Thus, the *Estado Novo* had found where to build the exhibition. The process of setting it up took several months and the very difficult weather conditions of that winter (1939/1940), along with the troubled international situation created by the War, contributed for a few weeks delay in the public opening of the exhibition. It had been programmed to be in May, and occurred on the 23<sup>th</sup> of June 1940.<sup>603</sup> Building the exhibition demanded a great number of workers. The seventeen months process involved 5,000 manual labourers, 15 engineers, 17 architects, 43 painters with 129 auxiliaries and 1,000 stuccoers working under the orientation of 7 supervisors.<sup>604</sup> Except for the *Jerónimos* and the tower of *Belém* the grounds of the exhibition were almost<sup>605</sup> unoccupied, and that simplified the process.



Fig. 39. Model of the main area of the "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World".  
Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

<sup>601</sup> *Jerónimos* is a great monastery built in the *Manuelino* style (16th century). This style, the end of the Portuguese gothic, represents an epoch of enrichment and glory in the Portuguese art history.

<sup>602</sup> This is also a monument built in the 16th century and in the same style of *Jerónimos*.

<sup>603</sup> CASTRO - *op.cit.*, p.16.

<sup>604</sup> *MUNDO Português - Roteiro dos Pavilhões (Descrição Pormenorizada do seu Conteúdo)*, Lisboa, Comemorações Centenárias, 1940.

<sup>605</sup> Some buildings surrounded the tower of *Belém*. But these were constructions referred as ugly and even embarrassing, both because they were a national shame and because foreigners would think that Portugal paid less attention to its monuments. SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.41 and following.



Fig. 40. Location of the "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World".

It is of some interest to take a look over the spatial and architectonic organisation of the exhibition.<sup>606</sup> The grounds that had been settled to receive the pavilions occupied a vast area (circa 560.000 m<sup>2</sup>) between the *Jerónimos* and the river *Tejo*. It was possible to access the exhibition either from east and from west; a third access, from south, was by boat across the river.

The centre of the settlement was a vast open area with a monumental fountain in the middle, called "Plaza of the Empire" (*Praça do Império*) in an obvious allusion to the meaning of the exhibition. The whole area of the exhibition was surrounded by flags symbolising the Portuguese nation. Another monument gathered all historic flags that had been used since the medieval times to symbolise the longevity of the Portuguese nation. The regime needed so much to link the 'present' to the "glorious past" that the absence of any information about the flag used by our first king was not an inconvenience. Instead, a flag, a 'likely' flag, was invented and presented as the one used by D. Afonso Henriques before

<sup>606</sup>

See figure 42.



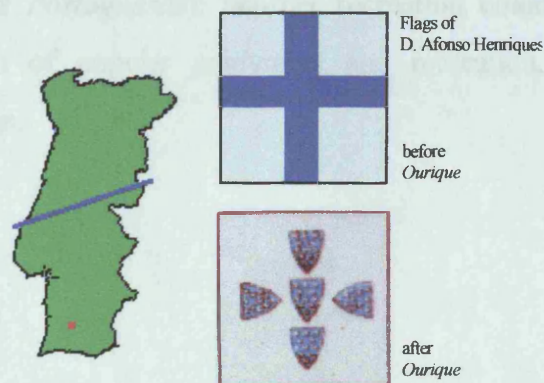
the battle of Ourique.<sup>607</sup> As for the other flags it was possible to find information, documents with descriptions or maps with representations. In the very same year, when Salazar went to Guimarães for the commemorations of the independence, the invented flag was flying on the highest tower of the Castle. Ever since then Portugal has adopted that invention as a national symbol.<sup>608</sup> And even nowadays, when the battle of D. Afonso Henriques against his mother<sup>609</sup> is celebrated in the city of Guimarães, the flag is unfurled at the top of that same tower.

The pavilions that received the different displays that composed the exhibition were built around the central plaza. The main pavilions were dedicated to: the foundation of the nationality (*Pavilhão da Fundação de Portugal*), the independence of the country (*Pavilhão da Independência*), the maritime discoveries (*Pavilhão dos Descobrimentos*), the Portuguese *Diaspora* (*Pavilhão dos Portugueses no Mundo*) and the ethnographic collections from the European territory .

<sup>607</sup> Nationalistic historiography always referred to the battle of *Ourique* as the moment chosen by D. Afonso Henriques to adopt the title of King of Portugal. The battle was described as a miraculous event: D. Afonso was very far away from his territories, down to the south, and with a tiny army of just some hundred knights. The Muslims were a hundred time more numerous than the Christians and led by five kings. In the dawn before the battle Christ himself appeared to D. Afonso reassuring him and inciting to the battle. According to that historiography, D. Afonso defeated the Muslim army and killed the five kings. After that, he was claimed as King of the Portuguese (*Portugalensium Rex*) and changed his flag, using in the new one the symbols of the Muslim kings he had defeated, Christ's sores and the money Judas received for selling Christ.

This is what an apocryphal document relates, what *Camões* tells in the *Lusiadas*, and what was adopted as an accepted miracle by the nationalistic historiography: Portugal was officially the result of the direct will of God himself. Nevertheless, no draw or document is available referring to the flag D. Afonso used before *Ourique*. The *Estado Novo*, invented one: a white flag with a blue cross over it. It became the official first flag of Portugal, and was reproduced in all children's history books.

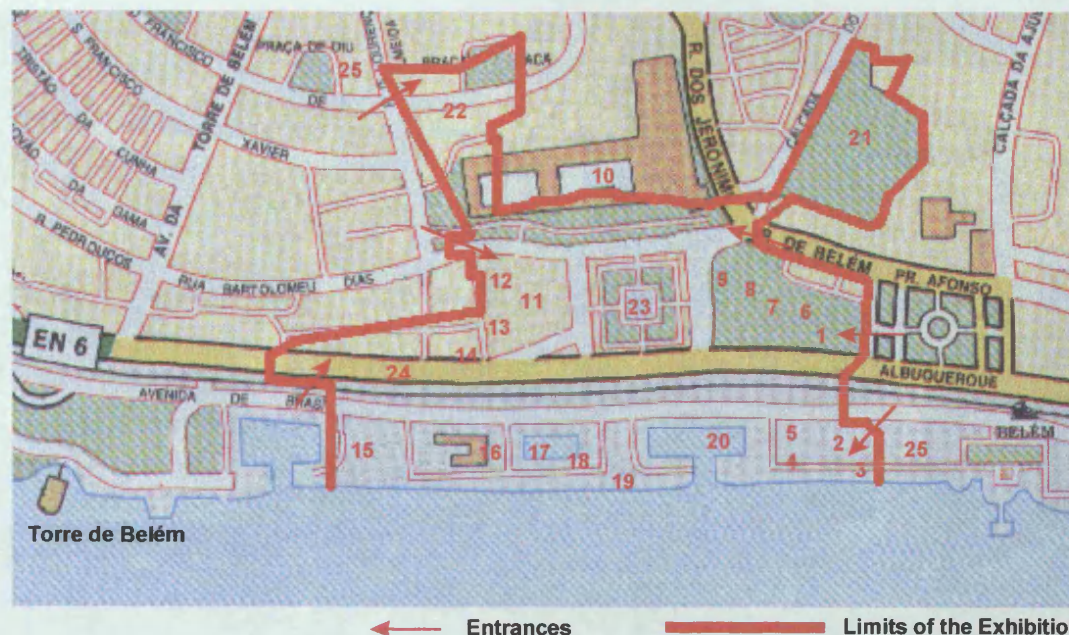
The map shows the probable location of *Ourique* (red spot) and the approximate border (*limes*) conquered by Afonso Henriques (blue line). The green territory corresponds to the present Portuguese continental territory and the lands of D. Afonso were, *grosso modo*, the ones to the north of the border. *Ourique* was some 200 Km to the south, away from the Christian border, and it is known that D. Afonso did not had with him reinforcements or reserve troops. These are some of the reasons normally refereed in defence of the miraculous explanation of that victory.



<sup>608</sup> Serious history books clarified this question. For example the *Dicionário de História de Portugal* in an article called "National Flag" (*Bandeira Nacional*) states that the flag used in 1940 and said to be D. Afonso Henriques', was a forgery, based on very doubtful information. SERRÃO, Joel (ed.) - *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, 6 vol., Porto, Livraria Figueirinhas, p.290.

<sup>609</sup> On the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 1128 D. Afonso Henriques sent his army against his mother who was supported by some noblemen from Galiza. Afonso Henriques wanted to rule the territory given to his father some thirty one years before. The success of the battle determined that the power came into his hands. He would be recognised as King by his cousin, King of Leon, in 1143 and by the Pope Alexander the III in 1179 by the bull *Manifestis Probatum est*.



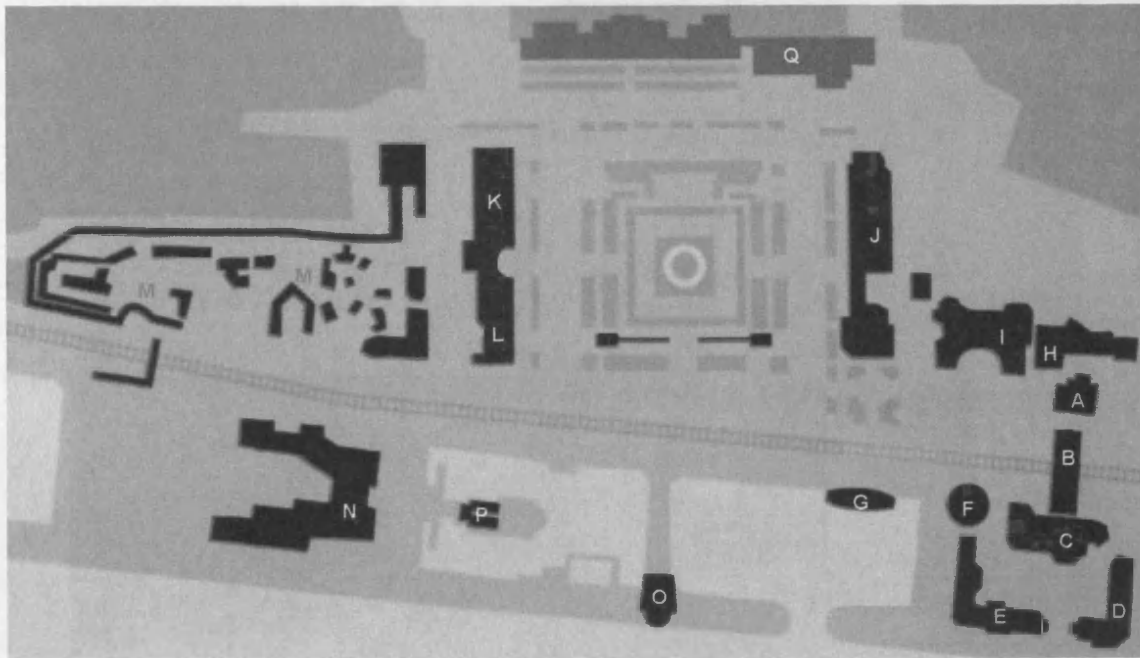


1 - Pavilion of the Foundation of Portugal; 2 - Pavilion of the Formation and Conquest of the Territory; 3 - Pavilion of the Independence; 4 - Pavilion of the maritime Discoveries; 5 - Globe of the maritime Discoveries; 6 - Pavilion of Brazil; 7 - Pavilion of the Colonisation; 8 - House of Saint Anthony; 9 - Pavilion of Honour and Lisboa; 10 - Monastery of *Jerónimos*; 11 - Pavilion of the Portuguese in the World; 12 - Fireman, Police, Medical assistance, Complaints; 13 - Pavilion of Harbours and Railways; 14 - Post, Information on hotels, coaches; 15 - Poet's Gardens, Children's Playground; 16 - Pavilions of Popular Life; 17 - Restaurant over water; 18 - Swimming pool; 19 - Maritime Discoveries Monument; 20 - Vessel "Portugal"; 21 - Colonial Section; 22 - Playground; 23 - Plaza of the Empire; 24 - Portuguese Villages; 25 - Parking places.

Fig. 42. Plan of the "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World".

Other less important pavilions and displays were there too: one about Lisboa, other from Brasil,<sup>610</sup> another dedicated to traditional goldsmithery, a garden, and a replica of a boat (representing those from the 15th and 16th centuries) which was floating on the Tejo since the opening of the exhibition. The exhibition was completed with some adjacent areas: one where the reconstitution of the traditional continental Portuguese architecture received the name of "Portuguese Villages" (*Aldeias Portuguesas*); another recreating colonial ambience (*Secção Colonial*); finally an area of popular enjoyment and recreation, a playground with several different fair attractions.

<sup>610</sup> Salazar made very clear that this exhibition was not an international one. Nevertheless, he stated, Brasil had a part in this exhibition as a country linked to Portugal by very tight connections. SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.41.



A - Pavilion of the Foundation of Portugal; B - Pavilion of the Foundation and bridge over railway; C - Pavilion of the Formation and Conquest of the Territory; D - Pavilion of the Independence; E - Pavilion of the maritime Discoveries; F - Globe of the maritime Discoveries; G - Vessel "Portugal"; H - Pavilion of Brazil; I - Pavilion of the Colonisation; J - Pavilion of Honour and Lisboa; K - Pavilion of the Portuguese in the World; L - Pavilion Portugal - 1940; M - Portuguese Villages; N - Pavilions of Popular Life; O - Maritime Discoveries Monument; P - Restaurant over water; Q - Monastery of Jerónimos.

Fig. 43. Plan of the "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World" - area of the pavilions.

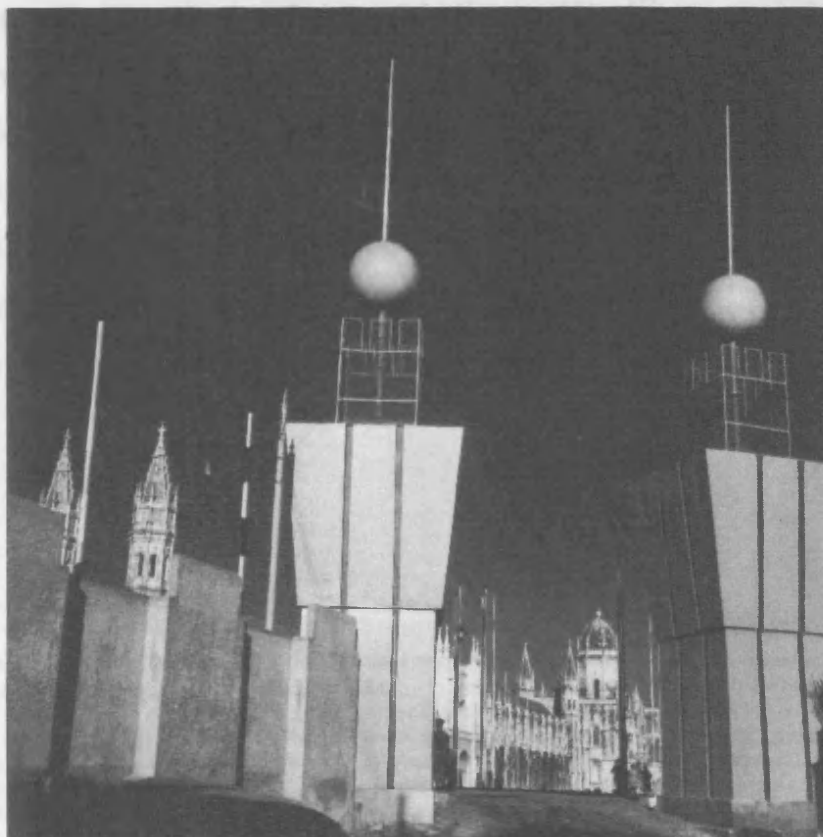


Fig. 44. South-west gate of the "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World".  
Photograph from Amadeu Ferrari, National Archive of Photography, Lisbon.

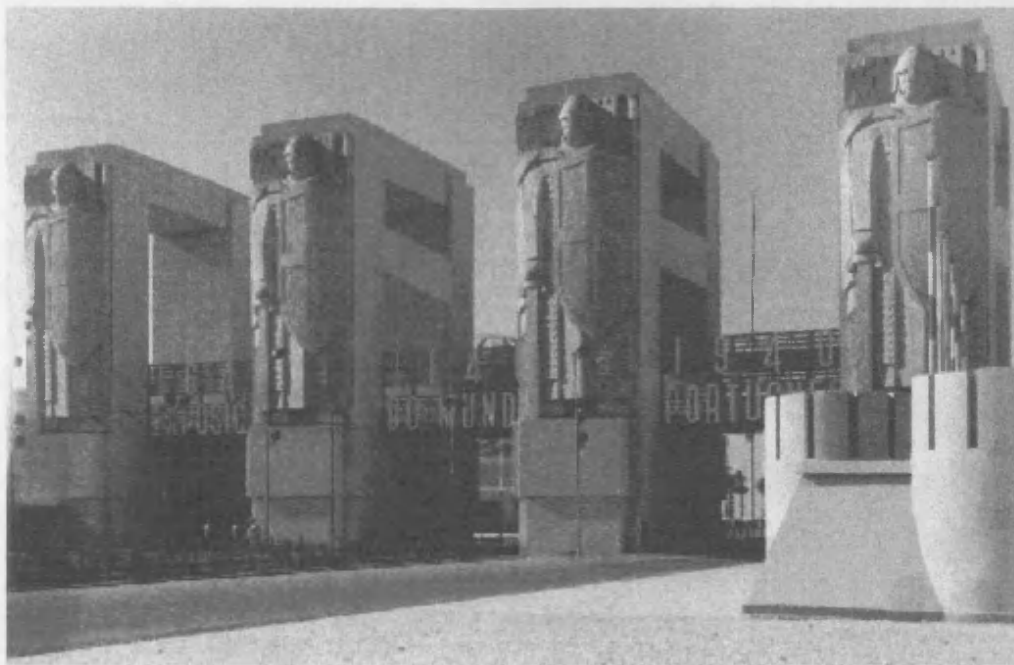


Fig. 45. Main entrance to the Historical Section (East) of the "Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World".

Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

This exhibition layout corresponds, in general, to the ideas expressed by Salazar when he presented the project of the exhibition in 1938.<sup>611</sup> Augusto de Castro, who assumed the responsibility of supervising the exhibition, described it in a very similar way.<sup>612</sup> The two sections of ethnography (continental and colonial) should be, in his opinion, lively sections. Natives from the colonies were to be placed in the recreated villages, working, dancing, eating, in a word, living, as if they were at home. In the "Portuguese Villages" the same idea was to be performed: locals were to be transported to Lisboa and to live there during the exhibition. Human beings were meant to be part of the exhibition as display material.<sup>613</sup>

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<sup>611</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.41 and following. Salazar expressed then the ideas that the commemorations would not have one exhibition but several. Some of his ideas for those possible exhibitions turned out to be "condensed" in the Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World. For example, he imagined as one of the exhibitions a historical exhibition about Portuguese history and importance in the world; this turned out to be the core of the exhibition; he also imagined an ethnographic exhibition, where the traditional architecture of the Portuguese territories (including overseas) would be the scenario for the presentation of the Portuguese variety, where real people from all over the country would be represented in their traditional clothes; this turned out to be organised in two different areas of the exhibition: the one designated as Colonial Section and the other called Portuguese Villages.

<sup>612</sup> CASTRO - *op.cit.*, p.20-28.

<sup>613</sup> Further on this chapter the Colonial Exhibition that took place in Porto in 1934 will be analysed. There too natives were used as objects of display. Examples of other temporary exhibitions using human beings as objects of display can be found in BOLAÑOS, Maria - *op.cit.*, p.268-272. See also TESLOW, Tracy Lang - "Reifying race. Science and art in *Races of Mankind* at the Field Museum of Natural History" in MACDONALD, Sharon - *op.cit.*, p.53 on the exhibition held in Chicago in 1933.





**Fig. 46. Fishermen working (section of popular life).**  
 Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.



**Fig. 47. Recreated street of Macau (colonial section).**  
 Photograph from Amadeu Ferrari, National Archive of Photography, Lisbon.





Fig. 48. Recreated village of Mozambique (colonial section).  
Photograph from Amadeu Ferrari, National Archive of Photography, Lisbon.



Fig. 49. Recreated village of *Trás-os-Montes* (section of Portuguese villages).  
Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.



Fig. 50. Recreated interior of a village house (section of popular life)  
Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

The preparation of this exhibition was a demanding process. A team was established to take care of the different tasks, from designing the pavilions to preparing the labels and choosing objects to put on display. This preparation of the Great Exhibition gathered significant names of the cultural scene in Portugal. For example the 'official' director of films in Portugal,<sup>614</sup> António Lopes Ribeiro, participated in the event with films of propaganda about the Portuguese mission of civilising African territories. Others, who later on opposed to the regime, also contributed for the event. Perhaps the most significant example is Henrique Galvão. He was involved with the revolution of 28<sup>th</sup> of May 1926. He assumed responsibilities in the colonial administrative scheme, organised the Colonial Exhibition of

<sup>614</sup> The film industry in Portugal was growing in this period and António Lopes Ribeiro signed some of the most popular movies them made. These films showed Portuguese society, economy, politics, etc. in such a way that it is possible to say that they contributed to the "invented" Portugal of the *Estado Novo*.

Porto in 1934 and was the responsible for some of the events during the exhibition of 1940, including the organisation of the colonial section.<sup>615</sup>

The exhibition of 1940 was a moment of national union around a common motive for celebration. It is important to remember that Portugal had recovered from a very difficult economic, financial, political and social situation and that significant parts of the Portuguese society supported Salazar and considered him as the redeemer of the country. Portugal had avoided participation in the Civil War in Spain, it was successful in remaining neutral in the Second World War and the Portuguese population thanked Salazar for that. National pride, one of the objectives of the *Estado Novo*, existed again and the commemoration of the centenaries was an extraordinary moment to acerbate it. The exhibition played a decisive part in this intention.

Probably no one understood the possibilities of reinforcing the nationalistic policy of the *Estado Novo* by using such events as the Exhibition of 1940 better than Salazar himself. In a very early stage of the preparation of the commemorations he stated clearly some of the goals he conceived for the celebrations. In 1938<sup>616</sup> he addressed the nation through the newspapers and explained what his intentions were. First, he made clear that Portugal should proudly proclaim its long lasting existence as an independent country: the oldest politically independent nation of Europe, the one with the oldest stable borders. He argued that even outside of Europe Portugal was an example of a very old political identity. He based his criteria on having the same people, the same Nation and the same State throughout a long time.<sup>617</sup> Another objective of the commemorations of 1940 was to demonstrate that Portugal was not "finished". Portugal had accomplished great deeds in the past but was still an influential country, mainly in Africa and in the other Portuguese overseas territories.<sup>618</sup> The Portuguese regime did not mean the exhibition to be a show off for foreigners; rather it was designed as internal propaganda. As Salazar explained in 1940 the exhibition in Lisboa would be a national, rather than an international one. Beyond

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<sup>615</sup> But a few years later he became a critic of the regime, was arrested in 1952 and eradicated from the army six years later; he was sentenced to eighteen years in prison but broke free in 1959; two years later he was one of the protagonists of one of the most spectacular strikes against Salazar's regime: he leaded the hijacking of a passengers ship, the *Santa Maria*, willing to draw international attention over the Portuguese political situation.

<sup>616</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.41.

<sup>617</sup> *Idem, ibidem.*

aiming at being the celebration of important dates, it should be the reason to initiate or to complete projects that were fundamental to the cultural benefit of the country. Salazar gave examples of these: to finish the new buildings in the MNAA, to dignify the Tower of Belém that was surrounded by degraded constructions, to repair one of the most important palaces of the monarchy (the palace of *Vila Viçosa*) and make it a museum, to remodel the castle of Lisboa and transform it in a dignified monument. Other important enterprises were also part of a large list of works to accomplish before 1940, all aiming at the improvement of cultural needs of the country and especially of Lisboa.<sup>619</sup>

In the inaugural address delivered at June 1940, Augusto Castro pointed out the three main objectives he thought the exhibition should achieve: first, a representation of the glorious past of the Portuguese nation, including all Imperial glories; second, the strong affirmation of the moral, political and creative forces of the present; third, the belief in the future. As he said, these three objectives could be condensed in the testimony and apotheosis of national consciousness.<sup>620</sup> For Castro the main theme of the exhibition was "To know how to be Portuguese" (*Saber ser Português*).<sup>621</sup>

The opening of the exhibition was a very formal moment: the President of the Republic was there, and all important politicians that had contributed to the event had the opportunity to make a statement. From the 23<sup>th</sup> of June onwards the exhibition was officially open to the public and during that summer an impressive number of people visited it. The official events continued until October and different pavilions and sections had their formal opening ceremonies over the summer months.<sup>622</sup> These were only ceremonial events, because the pavilions had already been opened to the public. These were opportunities to keep the public aware of the meaning and purpose of the exhibition, while maintaining the political and ideological presence of the *Estado Novo*.

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<sup>618</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.259. In a speech during the celebrations (4<sup>th</sup> of June 1940), from the Castle of Guimarães, again Salazar evoked this question.

<sup>619</sup> SALAZAR - *op.cit.*, p.41 and following.

<sup>620</sup> CASTRO - *op.cit.*, p.65.

<sup>621</sup> CASTRO - *op.cit.*, p.217-218.

<sup>622</sup> See CASTRO - *op.cit.*; the book includes the main speeches of these events.





Fig. 51. Aspects of the cover of the Official Guide ("Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World").

To guide the visitors through the exhibition, an Official Guide was published.<sup>623</sup> This was a leaflet with several photographs of the main pavilions, informative texts about the exhibition and all services and facilities available in the premises; it was printed on A3 sized paper which was folded. One side was occupied by a detailed plan of the exhibition; on the other side, the text began with the sentence "The proper way to visit the exhibition" (*Como se deve ver a Exposição*) and was written with the purpose of guiding the visitor through the exhibition: the "Portuguese Villages" should be visited before the Pavilions of Popular Life; the "Colonial Section" could be visited before the *Jerónimos* or in an other opportunity, as the leaflet says. The leaflet also includes useful information about transport, about tickets prices, about special events during the exhibition and other relevant information about Lisboa, such as restaurants and accommodation. The visitor was also informed that the exhibition opened daily at 9 a.m. and closed at 12 p.m.; the playground remained opened until 2.30 a.m..

Another guide was available, organised like a little pocket booklet.<sup>624</sup> It was meant to guide the visitor inside each pavilion. It described 14 pavilions, one by one, presenting

<sup>623</sup> *Exposição do Mundo Português - Guia Oficial*, Lisboa, 1940.

<sup>624</sup> *Mundo Português - Roteiro dos Pavilhões (Descrição Pormenorizada do seu Conteúdo)*, Lisboa, Comemorações Centenárias, 1940. The size of this booklet was about A<sub>6</sub>.

information on name, location, main objective, what it looked like seen from the outside and a description of each room inside. The objectives of each pavilion, referred in this guide, represented the official goals of the exhibition: Pavilion of the Foundation of Portugal, to remember the birth and growth of the nationality; Pavilion of the Independence, to remember three historical epochs (King John the First, King John the Second, Peninsular War<sup>625</sup>); Pavilion of the Colonisation, to represent the Faith and the Empire;<sup>626</sup> Pavilion of Honour, to carry out official receptions, parties and artistic performances; Pavilion of *Lisboa*, to represent the traditions of the city; Pavilions of Popular Life and the "Portuguese Villages", to give a general view over the Portuguese traditions and architecture in an ethnographic way; Pavilion of the maritime Discoveries, to demonstrate the Portuguese nautical science; Pavilion of the Formation and Conquest of the Territory, to remember (in art objects, documents and historical objects) the life of the first Portuguese; House of Saint Anthony, to reconstruct, in a 13th century style, the house where the Saint was born; Pavilion of the Portuguese in the World, to evoke the life of important Portuguese in the four continents; Colonial Section, to represent the Empire and the evangelistic effort of the Portuguese Nation by giving an ethnographic vision of the Portuguese colonies.

The main facades of these pavilions were theatrical scenarios, planned to impress. Each one was decorated to represent the main theme of the pavilion. In the guides published for the event, it was possible to identify the pavilions by the facades, as some photographs were printed with that intention. The four following photographs show some of these facades, perhaps the most significant ones. The first one is of the entrance to the pavilion of the Foundation of Portugal, with a Romanesque-like door and the national symbols adopted by D. João I. The second one shows the entrance to the pavilion of the Popular Art which was decorated with popular-like motives and statues. To gain access to the pavilion of Lisboa the visitor had to cross some gothic-like arches, shown in the third photograph. The fourth photograph displays the main entrance of the pavilion of the Portuguese *diaspora* which was impressive with a huge statue in front of a planisphere and a label affirming "And

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<sup>625</sup> The importance of these moments in the Portuguese History deserves an explanation. **King John the First** became king of Portugal after a period of war with Castilla; **King John the Second** was the king of the maritime discoveries; he was responsible for the negotiation of the treaty of *Tordesilhas*; **The Peninsular War** happened after the restoration of the Portuguese independence in 1640.

<sup>626</sup> "Faith and Empire" are two words that have a very special meaning when put together as they were used by Camões in the beginning of the *Lusíadas* poem. The verses are: "[...] *as memórias gloriosas daqueles Reis que foram dilatando a Fé, o Império* [...]". A possible translation would be: [...] the glorious memories of those kings who widened the Faith and the Empire [...].

if there it was any where else to go, we would have gone there".<sup>627</sup> The interior of these pavilions was also meant to make an impression upon the visitor. Huge statues, magnificent scenarios, light and colour, adequate labels, were all used with the intention of impressing the visitor. Examples of these pavilions are shown in some photographs, below.



Fig. 52 and 53. Main entrances to the Pavilions of the Foundation of Portugal and of Popular Art. Photographs from Amadeu Ferrari, National Archive of Photography, Lisbon and from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.



Fig. 54 and 55. Main entrances to the Pavilions of Lisboa and of the Portuguese *Diaspora*. Photographs from Mário Novais (National Archive of Photography and Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon).

<sup>627</sup> The sentence in Portuguese is "*E se mais mundo houvera lá chegara*", which is very difficult to translate. The sentence is from the *Lusiadas*, and was used to signify that the Portuguese spread to all over the world.



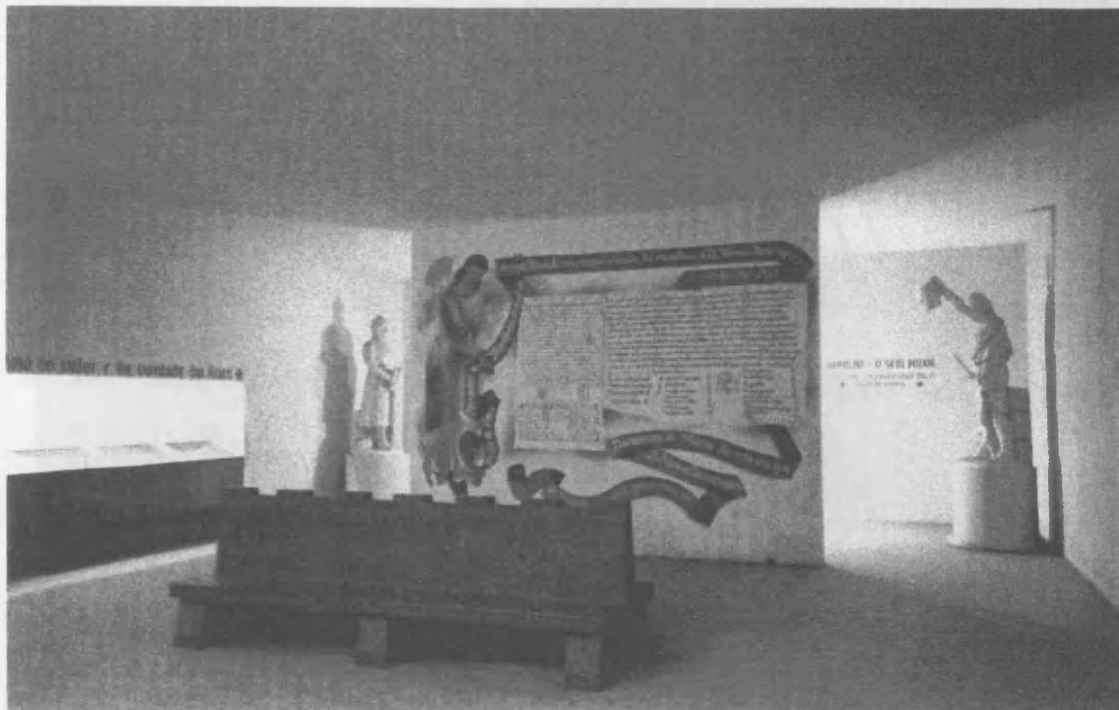


Fig. 56. Interior of the Pavilion of the Foundation of Portugal .  
 Photograph from Mário Novais (Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon).

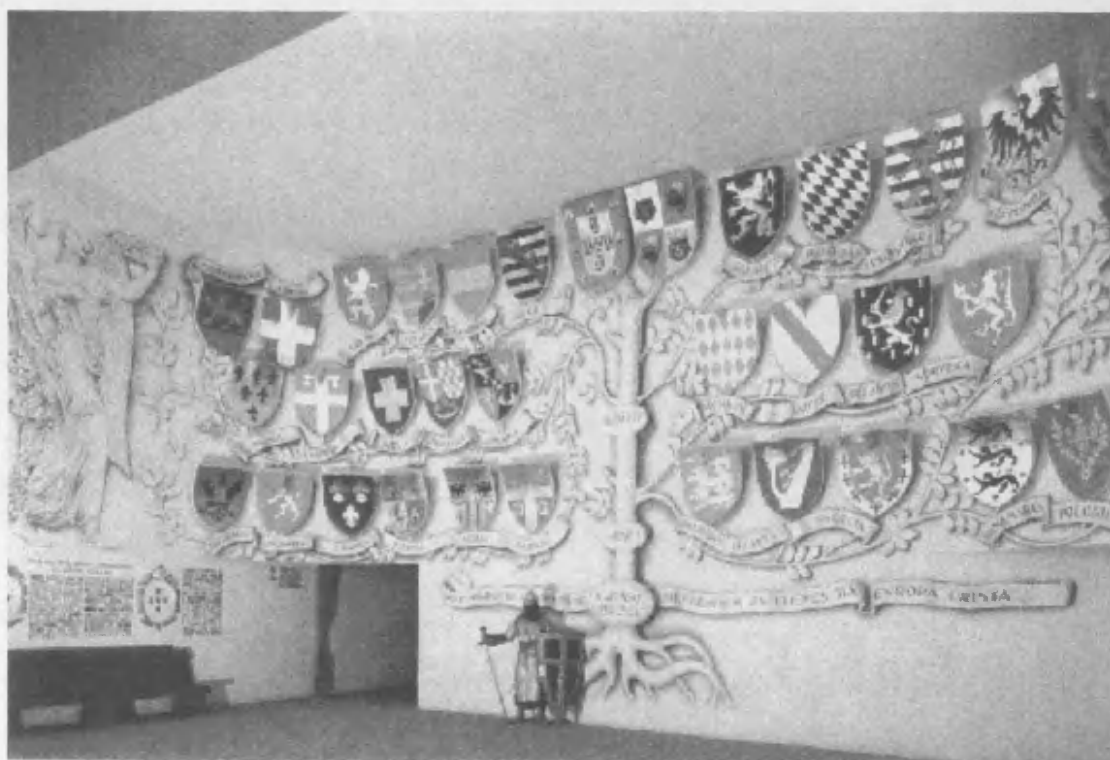


Fig. 57. Interior of the Pavilions of the Portuguese *Diaspora* .  
 Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.



Fig. 58. Interior of the Pavilion of the Maritime Discoveries.  
Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

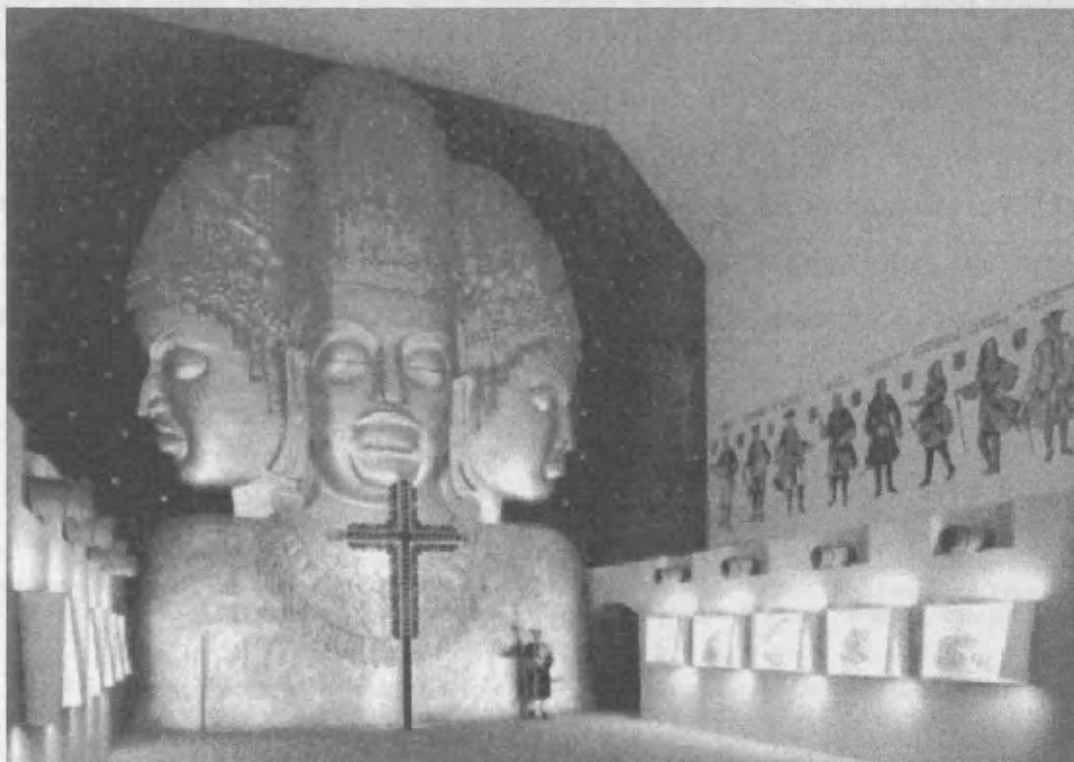


Fig. 59. Interior of the Pavilion of India.  
Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

The exhibition remained open until the winter of 1940. The good weather conditions of that autumn and early winter meant the exhibition remained open longer than it was initially programmed, thus providing more time for the *Estado Novo* to spread its message. According to official statistics over three million people visited the exhibition. The real number of visitors is, however, lower, as it is known that several visitors went there more than once.<sup>628</sup>

The impact that this exhibition had from a political and ideological point of view is, obviously, very difficult to measure. Nevertheless, some testimonies remain from those who visited the exhibition that enable some analyses.<sup>629</sup> One of those testimonies is an article published in a local newspaper<sup>630</sup> called "Echoes from *Belém*" (*Ecos de Belém*). The author identifies his text as the faithful and minute description of the historical pavilions of the exhibition. He quotes, literally, the labels and other written information placed inside each pavilion. If we disregard all the enthusiastic and eulogistic adjectives,<sup>631</sup> it is possible to have a good idea of what the pavilions looked like seen from the inside. The two pavilions that had the most intense political and ideological messages were the one about the Portuguese *Diaspora* and another assigned to the achievements of the *Estado Novo*, called "Portugal - 1940".

In the first pavilion, in a room called "Culture", lists of the Portuguese who were well known in the world for their contribution to scientific knowledge were on display.<sup>632</sup> These lists included names from the 13th century to 1940 and a label in huge letters said that "The culture of these and others made the name of Portugal even greater" (*A cultura destes e doutros tornou maior [...] o nome de Portugal*).

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<sup>628</sup> The total figure of repeated visits is not known. Tickets for more than one visit had lower prices per visit than single tickets. The normal entry costed 2\$50. Free access during the all period of the exhibition would cost 200\$00. Large groups, over 200 people, had reduced prices (1\$50 per visitor); school groups and children paid half price. See *Exposição do Mundo Português - Guia Oficial*, Lisboa, 1940.

<sup>629</sup> It must be kept in mind that the censorship was active in Portugal during the *Estado Novo* and therefore voices against the regime and against its events would not be allowed to be published.

<sup>630</sup> NUNES, João Bastos - "Oito séculos de História (impressões de um visitante) - Descrição Minuciosa dos Pavilhões Históricos da Exposição do Mundo Português", in *Ecos de Belém*, s.d..

<sup>631</sup> For example, the article begins: "At *Belém*, embracing the sumptuous temple of *Jerónimos*, in the exact location of the ancient beach of *Restêlo*, was built in 1940, high and magnificent, the Exhibition of the Portuguese World, an event of a significant nationalistic character that was conceived in the patriotic spirit of a Great Portuguese: SALAZAR!". NUNES - *op.cit.*, p.1.

<sup>632</sup> The lists included: Humanities, Mathematics, History, Medicine, Anatomy, Teaching, Poetry, Music, Painting, Sculpture, Physics, Philosophy, Diplomacy, Botany, Laws and Theology.



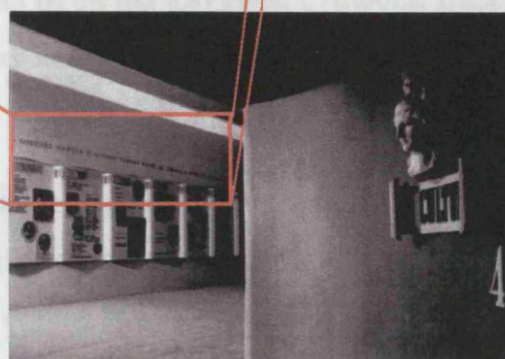


Fig. 60. Interior of the Pavilion of the Portuguese Diaspora and detail of the label.

Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

The next room was called "Faith and Sacrifice" and was about all Portuguese that had given their lives for their country. A very special mention was made of King *Sebastião*, and a monument was erected in memory of his very short life. The label identified D. Sebastião with fearlessness and honour, the two characteristics of Portuguese gentlemen. The same label had a moral conclusion saying<sup>633</sup> that "Even today when we want to show someone the right way of honour we say *Be a man like D. Sebastião*".<sup>634</sup>

The room dedicated to the works of the *Estado Novo* (Portugal - 1940) had its own entry, in the South wing of the "Pavilion of the Portuguese in the World". This was a room organised by the governmental department of propaganda with the clear intention of publicising the achievements of the regime. The author of the article quoted above recognises this and states that all visitors would recognise the great deeds of the *Estado*

<sup>633</sup> Original text: "*El-Rei D. Sebastião, símbolo da temeridade e do cavalheirismo português. Ainda hoje, quando queremos chamar alguém ao bom caminho da honra dizemos: «Sê homem como D. Sebastião.»*".

<sup>634</sup> It is necessary to explain this evocation of D. Sebastião in the context of the Portuguese History: D. Sebastião was the grandson of D. João III. His father died before he was born. So the young Sebastião was the last and only hope for the Portuguese royal family. He had a peculiar education and convinced himself that the future of the country was in the North of Africa and in the conquest of that region. He became King at the age of 14. Years later, against all advice, he prepared an army, invaded the North of Africa and suffered a tremendous defeat in *Alcácer Quibir* in 1578. The body of the young king was never recovered. So a legend began according to which D. Sebastião was not dead and claiming that he would come back to Portugal to save the country from all its problems, the major one being the annexation to the royal family of Spain once D. Sebastião had no descendants. One of the most peculiar descriptions of his character was written by Oliveira Martins (in *História de Portugal*, Lisboa, Guimaraes e Cª Editores, 1977, 17ª ed.). The legend of the young king led to a "glorious" and pointless death by a sentiment of honour and tardy chivalry remained in the Portuguese tradition. Some of the most important Portuguese writers (Priest António Vieira or Fernando Pessoa) worked on this Portuguese characteristic of hoping for a hero that would come and change everything for the best. This sentiment is called *sebastianismo*.

*Novo* after visiting this room.<sup>635</sup> Entering the room the visitor had to face two statues: one of the President of the Republic and one of the Prime Minister. The labels on these statues were respectively: "I have always been a soldier, slave of duty and honour" (*Soldado fui sempre escravo do dever e da honra*); "To study with doubts and to carry out with Faith" (*Estudar com dúvida e realizar com Fé*). These were to symbolise the spirit of those two men: the President of the Republic as a guardian of all old and good traditions, the Prime Minister as the one who recognised the real problems of the country and dealt with them successfully.

In the next section of the room these characteristics of Salazar were again evident. A succession of drawings and photographs made the comparison between before and after the *Estado Novo*<sup>636</sup> and it was made clear that the regime had changed a lot of what had been wrong in Portugal. Two quotations of Salazar marked this assertion: "It is characteristic of the Government not to promise - to do, not to begin - to accomplish." (*É timbre do Governo não prometer - realizar, não começar - fazer*); "Until now we have accomplished everything we had planned." (*Até agora temos realizado tudo o que nos havemos proposto*).

The ideas about social relations and social structure of Portuguese society were presented in seven text panels with allusive drawings that explained the main ideas of the regime. One of the panels was about the family, which was considered to be the 'root and flower' of the *Estado Novo* and one of the basic structures of the regime.<sup>637</sup> No parallel or competing social organisation was considered as important. For the State it was inconceivable that the union of a couple would occur without formal marriage, and the state would also not recognise divorce. In the family the man was the "head of the couple" (*cabeça de casal*) (which was a legal status) responsible for the welfare of the family.<sup>638</sup>

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<sup>635</sup> NUNES - *op.cit.*, p.3.

<sup>636</sup> The themes of these draws and photographs were: care for the young children; harbours and naval capacity; national monuments; fisheries; roads and other means of transport; primary and secondary schools; agriculture; theatre and culture; houses and popular low rate facilities to buy a house; mail and telecommunications.

<sup>637</sup> "God, Motherland and Family" (*Deus, Pátria e Família*) were three fundamental structures of the *Estado Novo*.

<sup>638</sup> This kind of mentality was deeply embedded in people's minds. E.g.: a sentence of a newspaper (*O Primeiro de Janeiro*, Porto, 1927/02/05) article published during a rebellion in Porto in 1927. The number of dead (civilians and militaries) was significant and a part of the city was almost destroyed. The journalist expresses his indignation because, during the battle, women who were at the windows observing what was going on, were injured or even killed. He wrote: "Why do men, who because of being men have superiority in command, not send them away from those places of death and force them to look for refuge at home?" (*Porque é que os homens, que por serem homens têm superioridade de mando, não as expulsam desses lugares de morte e as obrigam a refugiar nos lares?*).



Fig. 61. Interior of the Pavilion "Portugal - 1940".

The label above says "Social and Political Organisation of the Estado Novo"; the tree represents the pyramid of power and the images refer to working relations, family and social and political organisation.

Photograph from Novais (Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon).

Another panel was about the relationship between 'labour' and 'capital'. It stated that labour and capital are two sources of welfare that are equal and that must work together (*O Trabalho e o Capital, fontes de riqueza, são duas forças iguais e combinadas*). This was one of the basis of the corporative regime. There was no possibility of having an union of workers striking against an organisation of employers, because workers (labour) and employers (capital) of a particular sector had a common organisation where all questions should be discussed and solved. These organisations, called "Corporative Unions" (*Sindicatos Corporativos*) were supervised by the state in order to maintain the social peace, essential to the development of the country. This official discourse was represented in the exhibition on a wall where all corporative unions and other similar organisations were represented by their respective flags, forming an impressive sight.

A very significant panel was about the role of the leader of the country. The title read "The Leader is the living image of the Nation" (*O Chefe é a imagem viva da Nação*). Salazar was the leader, obviously, and the message behind this sentence was evident: all Portuguese ought to follow the example of the leader, to imitate his nationalism, to work as hard as he worked, to celebrate the name of Portugal as strongly as he did, and to be

extremely careful about expenses as he was. In other words, to devote their lives to their country as he did.

Finally, the last room was about finance, the golden image of the *Estado Novo*. It was introduced in the statement: "Portugal is a country of good accounts" (*Portugal é um país de boas contas*), meaning that since 1928 (the year Salazar embraced the ministry of finance) Portugal was producing at least as much as it was consuming. Below this sentence there was a list of figures, year by year, which proved the statement. On the walls, tables of figures informed the visitor about all sectors of the national economy, explaining the (right) decisions of the *Estado Novo*. Another message was very important: Portugal was independent, not only politically, but also economically. And economic independence was, in fact, as important as political independence. Portugal, because of Salazar, was no longer under the constraint of international finance. This situation was the best guarantee of a moral and political independence.<sup>639</sup>

Propaganda was overt in this room. The regime used the exhibition as a media of propaganda with no intention of hiding that fact. It was fundamental to the ideology of the regime to inspire nationalistic feelings in the citizens. One of the goals of this exhibition was to produce, or to consolidate, those feelings, not only among cultural elite, but amongst all Portuguese. Every Portuguese should be proud of being part of such a great Nation, capable of so important deeds in the past and predestined to so many glories in the future. This was the main message of the exhibition and of all commemorations of the centenaries.

The exhibition was indeed one of the main events of the *Estado Novo*, and one of the most important propagandistic event. Not only did the *Estado Novo* use it during the months of the exhibition but also afterwards. An important example of this propagandistic use of the exhibition is a book that was published in 1957 about the event. This book was published by the SNI, a governmental department of propaganda. The book begins with the transcription of two main speeches delivered in the official opening ceremony (on 23/06/1940): the one from Duarte Pacheco who was the Minister of Public Works, and the

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<sup>639</sup> Two labels marked these points: " *O saneamento da dívida pública deu-nos o desafogo da tesouraria...* "; " *O equilíbrio financeiro está na base do resurgimento português* ".



other from Augusto de Castro. The rest of the book are photographs of the exhibition. An introductory text affirms that the exhibition would remain in the Portuguese memory.<sup>640</sup>

The period that ended in 1940 with the Great Exhibition was the golden age of the *Estado Novo*: Salazar achieved important success in the financial and economic fields: the country changed for the best and large investments were made into public works; the colonies were an important source of raw material and a good market for the young Portuguese industry, the international situation was favourable. The *Estado Novo* had to face little internal political opposition as a large majority of the population was with the regime or, at least, not actively against it. Everything changed with the Second World War and the *Estado Novo* never had another moment of 'pure glory' as seen at the 1940 Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World. The regime had succeeded in other propagandistic events before, and achieved other interesting moments after this exhibition, but the 1940 exhibition remained as 'the' event.

## 7.2 - Other main temporary exhibitions.

During the *Estado Novo*, temporary exhibitions were used as a means of political and ideological propaganda, as the exhibition of 1940 clearly demonstrates. It is also important to bear in mind that temporary exhibitions were not an invention of the *Estado Novo*. In the nineteenth century, following the European and American trend, Portugal participated in international exhibitions hosted in European and American cities. Some important events of this kind also took place in Portugal.<sup>641</sup> The participation of Portugal in international exhibitions created a tradition of such events in the country. Internally, participation was seen (at least by the intellectual elite) as a matter of national pride.<sup>642</sup> The colonial theme of some of these events was particularly interesting to Portugal. Being recognised as an imperial country with undeniable rights to the overseas territories was one of the national

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<sup>640</sup> *Mundo Português: imagens de uma exposição histórica*, Lisboa, edições do SNI, 1957.

<sup>641</sup> It is, for example, the case of the "International Exhibition of Industry of Porto" (*Exposição Internacional de Indústria do Porto*) that opened to the public in September 1865. See SANTOS, José Coelho dos - *O Palácio de Cristal e a Arquitectura do Ferro no Porto em meados do século XIX*, Porto, Fundação Eng. António de Almeida, 1989.

<sup>642</sup> About the Portuguese presence in international exhibitions during the second half of the 19th century see GREENHALGH, Paul - *Ephemeral Vistas. The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and world's Fairs, 1851 - 1939*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1988, specially p.12-70.

objectives. The international situation and the foreign pressures over Portuguese colonies reinforced the necessity of presenting the country as a powerful, vast and historically solid Empire. This way of presenting Portugal lasted until the *Estado Novo*, when it was reinforced by the nationalistic policy of the regime. As a consequence, Portugal continued to participate in the main international exhibitions during the first half of the 20th century, presenting itself (by rights of historic discovery and occupation) as a colonial Empire.<sup>643</sup> Internally, some major exhibitions were organised during the *Estado Novo* as means of political and ideological propaganda<sup>644</sup> and the number of such events was impressive.<sup>645</sup>

It is possible to gather these events in three main thematic groups as the *Estado Novo* emphasised three major domains of its propaganda in temporary exhibitions: the maritime discoveries and the Portuguese presence in the overseas provinces, the Portuguese rural and traditional popular life and the development of the country under the *Estado Novo* (industry, agriculture, roads and railways, culture and education and political peace and stability). Each temporary exhibition was meant to work as a propagandistic event in one or more of these themes, thus helping the *Estado Novo* to consolidate its power (*grosso modo* until the end of the Second World War) and to maintain that power (from the middle 1940s to the middle 1970s).

In the early 1930s two exhibitions, both about the colonies, took place in Lisboa: the 1931 exhibition was about Timor and the 1932 exhibition was about Guiné. The organisation of the catalogues for these two exhibitions was similar.<sup>646</sup> First, there was an introduction to the colony, referring to the main aspects of its geography and economic potentialities; then, a list of its main manufactured produce (especially agricultural); and finally, a vast list of reference material about the colony, including maps. The two

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<sup>643</sup> In the 1930s the Director of the MNAA was very active on what concerned both the participation of Portugal in the International Exhibition of Anvers and the Portuguese presence in the Exhibition of Paris.

<sup>644</sup> In this chapter, some of the main temporary exhibitions with clear political, ideological or propagandistic intentions will be analysed. A vast number of other took place during the *Estado Novo*, organised by official entities. In some of these events it is possible to detect a political or ideological meaning, but it was not the main and declared intention of the exhibition. The number of such temporary exhibitions is so large that a complete research could be planned to fully understand their meaning, importance and significance. Clearly, that is not the plan of this research. For these reasons those exhibitions will not be systematically analysed in this thesis. Some references to international events and to minor temporary exhibitions will be made whenever necessary.

<sup>645</sup> It is of some interest to see a catalogue of the publications of the official department of propaganda (SNI), between 1933 and 1948. Between 1944 and 1955 the number of temporary exhibitions held in Portugal and organised by governmental departments is of more than one hundred. The complete collection of the catalogues of temporary exhibition published by the SNI is available at the Library of the Museum of Chiado (Lisboa). In this chapter exhibitions will be presented in a chronological sequence, in order to enable a comprehensive vision of the all period.

exhibitions were mounted in the beginning of a period in which the overseas territories were seen as major topics for Portuguese temporary exhibitions. As far as it is possible to understand from the scarce documentation still existing, the impact upon the public was not very significant. This is perhaps the result of the little propagandistic effort that had been made until then.

Another major topic considered by the *Estado Novo* as a subject of temporary exhibitions was the Portuguese ability to finally overcome the long lasting economic and financial deficit and therefore to achieve progress. According to this idea, in 1932 a temporary exhibition about Portuguese Industry was mounted in Lisboa in a vast public park (*Parque Eduardo VII*).<sup>647</sup> This exhibition lasted for several months and had a clear intention of publicising the improvements of national industry. Another objective of the exhibition was to encourage the consumption of Portuguese products instead of imported ones. The catalogue of the exhibition stated: "To consume Portuguese products will have as a consequence the development of our industries; that progress will correspond to the enrichment of the country and its citizens".<sup>648</sup> The Portuguese Government was aware that this sort of propaganda would be more useful if some pragmatic examples were given. Thus, the catalogue had a note about its process of production: all its materials were Portuguese and all work had been done by Portuguese workers.<sup>649</sup> Finally, the *Estado Novo* used this exhibition to reinforce the message that would become one of the major principles of Salazar's economic policy: the richest nation is not defined by having the largest amount of money or gold in its reserves;<sup>650</sup> rather, the economic power of a nation is the result of its capacity to be economically independent, that is, to produce what it needs inside its borders, importing as little as possible from other nations.<sup>651</sup>

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<sup>646</sup> *Exposição de Timor - Catálogo*, Lisboa, Museu Colonial, Sociedade e Geografia de Lisboa, 1931 and *Exposição da Colónia da Guiné - Catálogo*, Lisboa, Museu Colonial, Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa, 1932.

<sup>647</sup> *Exposição Industrial Portuguesa - Catálogo Oficial* - Lisboa, Imprensa do anuário Comercial, 1932.

<sup>648</sup> Original text: "Consumir os produtos portugueses terá por consequência o desenvolvimento das nossas indústrias; e esse progresso equivalerá ao aumento da riqueza do país e dos seus cidadãos." *Exposição Industrial ...*, page II.

<sup>649</sup> *Exposição Industrial ...*, page CLXIV.

<sup>650</sup> Yet one of the economic actions performed by Salazar was the enlargement of the reserves of gold, as soon as the national economic conditions allowed it.

<sup>651</sup> *Exposição Industrial ...*, page I.

During 1933 and 1934 the theme of the colonial empire regained major importance and two significant events took place: the Colonial Imperial Conference (*Conferência Colonial Imperial*) and the First Congress of Commercial Relations with the Colonies (*Congresso de Intercâmbio Comercial com as Colónias*). Although these were not exhibitions, they also contributed to the general trend of giving utmost importance to the colonies. They were also directly related to the First Portuguese Colonial Exhibition (*Exposição Colonial Portuguesa*), which opened to the public on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 1934 in Porto.<sup>652</sup> This exhibition proved to be a major event. Its preparation had begun in 1931 and the original intention was to locate it in Lisboa. Yet, during 1932, the government decided that Porto should be the definitive location.

The premises of the Crystal Palace were the place chosen for the exhibition.<sup>653</sup> It was said to be the perfect location<sup>654</sup> as the gardens included vast spaces that could be arranged so as to look like the colonial territories. Lots of trees and abundance of shadows, long and wide alleys and a magnificent landscape,<sup>655</sup> were the ideal conditions to mount the exhibition. The actual planning of the exhibition started on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 1933. The preliminary operations for adapting the gardens and the main building of the Crystal Palace began in January 1934. On the 16<sup>th</sup> June 1934 the exhibition was ready to open to the public.

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<sup>652</sup> See GALVÃO, Henrique - *Álbum Comemorativo da Primeira Exposição Colonial Portuguesa*, Porto, Litografia Nacional, 1934, the end of this Album includes several drawings of "natives" identified by name and region of origin. See also the official guide for visitors *Exposição Colonial Portuguesa - Guia Oficial dos Visitantes*, Porto, Mário Antunes Leitão e Vitorino Coimbra editores, 2<sup>a</sup> ed., 1934.) See also a collection of photographs *Álbum fotográfico da 1<sup>a</sup> Exposição Colonial Portuguesa - 101 clichés fotográficos de Alvão - Porto, fotógrafo oficial da Exposição Colonial*, Porto, Litografia Nacional, s.d.). Finally, the complete collection of photographs taken by the official photographer (Alvão) is available at the *Centro de Fotografia do Porto*.

<sup>653</sup> The Crystal Palace of Porto was built in the 19th century and was ready for the International Exhibition of Industry that opened in 1865. But the maintenance of such a building was a precarious balance and by the end of the 19th century and the first years of the 20th the Palace went through significant degradation. Finally in the beginning of 1934 the local authorities of Porto bought the building and its gardens. The intention was to save the Palace and the Colonial Exhibition contributed for that purpose. In fact, one of the most traditional newspapers of Porto (*O Tripeiro*, nº 9, Janeiro de 1952, V Série, ano VII, p.200) refers to the exhibition as one of the most important events that had taken place in the Crystal Palace. See SANTOS - *op.cit.*, specially p.345-346 and 359-363.

<sup>654</sup> GALVÃO, Henrique - *p.cit.*, p.9.

<sup>655</sup> About the importance of the Crystal Palace in the temporary exhibition that took place in Porto, see BARROS, Alexandre Ferreira - "O Palácio de Cristal nas Exposições do Porto", in *O Tripeiro*, Setembro de 1956, p.153-155. The Crystal Palace was demolished in 1951 for the construction of a new building that opened to the public in 1952 with an Exhibition of Agriculture.

Future Location of the  
Crystal Palace

City Centre



Fig. 62. Partial aspect of Porto in 1791 (taken from Gaia) with future location of the Crystal Palace

Future Location of the  
Crystal Palace

City Centre

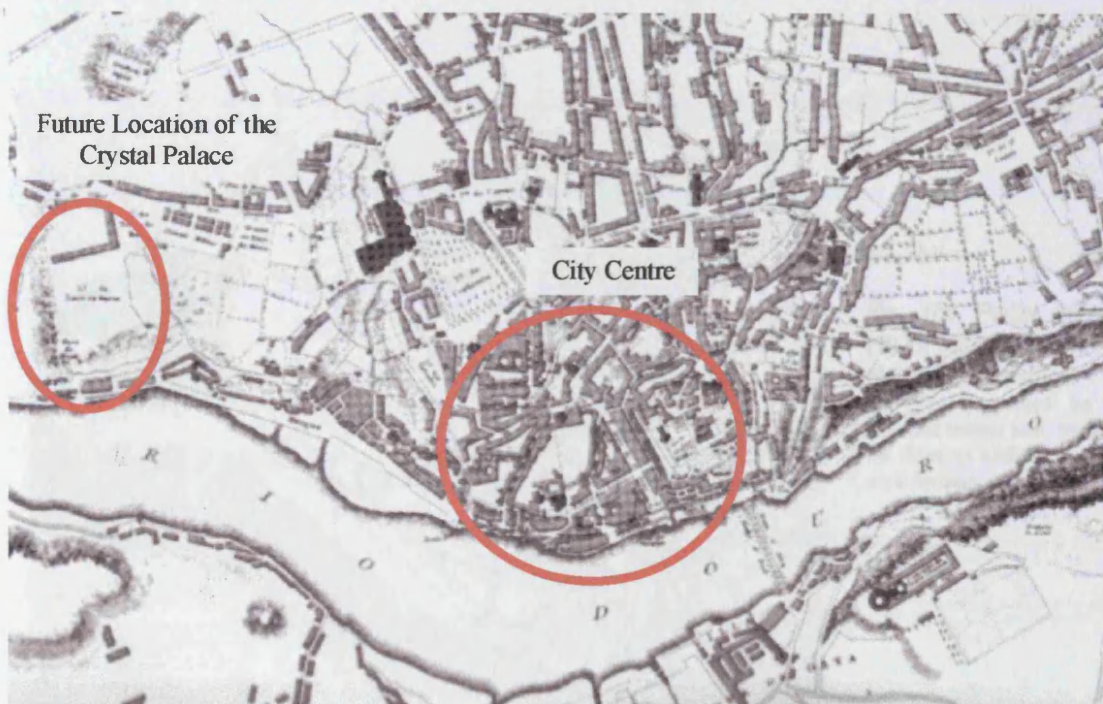
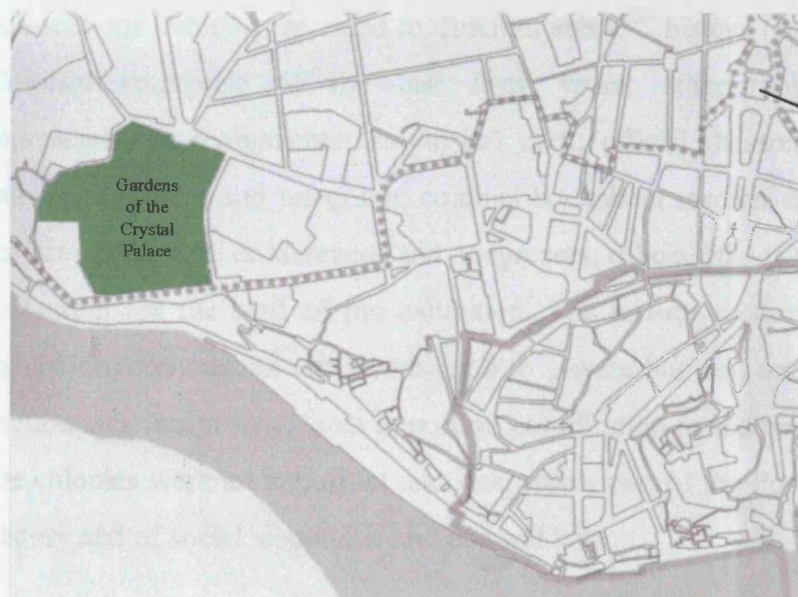


Fig. 63. Plan of Porto in 1833 (partial) with future location of the Crystal Palace





Fig. 64. Aerial photograph of Porto (1990) with location of the Crystal Palace



City Hall

Fig. 65. Partial Plan of Porto (1993) with location of the Gardens of the Crystal Palace.

The grey spots mark the limits of the protected historic area; the grey line marks the limits of UNESCO's classification as world heritage.



Fig. 66. Main entrance of the Crystal Palace (original building).

The exhibition was divided into two main sections: the official section and the private section. The first one was undoubtedly the core of the exhibition. It included fifteen major sub-sections that corresponded to different areas:<sup>656</sup> history (dating from 1415); Portuguese Colonial enterprise of the last forty years; ethnographic representation;<sup>657</sup> army representation; monuments; zoological park; official theatre; official cinema; bureau of information; mail and telegraph; colonial bookshop; medical assistance to the natives; hall for art exhibitions, conferences and congresses; official stands for tasting colonial products; restaurant for the staff of the exhibition. The private section only included an industrial exhibition, commercial areas consigned to private business and some fair attractions. Each section was meant to give an important contribution to the core message of the exhibition: the colonies were an important and inseparable part of the Portuguese nation by reasons of history and of social, economic and cultural links.

The grounds of the Crystal Palace were transformed into a miniaturised Portuguese Colonial Empire: the tropical forest, the desert, a road in Angola, typical villages from all the colonies, and many other reconstructions gave the visitor a *grand tour* of the Portuguese colonial possessions. A colonial house from Angola was rebuilt and several

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<sup>656</sup> GALVÃO - *op.cit.*

<sup>657</sup> Henrique Galvão affirms that each colony sent some of its natives that lived in traditional villages, keeping their habits and traditional ways of living during the exhibition. GALVÃO - *op.cit.*, p.19.



pavilions were dedicated to each colony. A lake was created there and was used for the presentation of some of the places where water was a fundamental piece of the natural environment, such as the archipelago of the *Bijagóz* in Guiné.<sup>658</sup>



Fig. 67. Recreated archipelago of the *Bijagóz* (Guine) (Porto, 1934)

Photograph from Alvão (*Álbum fotográfico da 1ª Exposição Colonial Portuguesa* - 101 clichés fotográficos de Alvão - Porto, fotógrafo oficial da Exposição Colonial, Porto, Litigrafia Nacional)

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<sup>658</sup>

The following photographs were taken by Alvão, the official photographer of the exhibition and are kept in the *Centro de Fotografia do Porto*. They were also published in *Álbum fotográfico*....



Fig. 68. Native village of Mozambique (Porto, 1934)

Photograph from Alvão (*Álbum fotográfico da 1ª Exposição Colonial Portuguesa - 101 clichés fotográficos de Alvão - Porto, fotógrafo oficial da Exposição Colonial, Porto, Litografia Nacional*)

The main building of the Crystal Palace was transformed into the "Palace of the Colonies" (*Palácio das Colónias*): the central hall received the official exhibition (on the subjects of harbours, railways, religious missions, health and hygiene) representing all the achievements in the colonies of which Portugal was proud. In this central area it was also possible to find displays about native art and ethnographic objects.



Fig. 69 and 70. Main hall of the Crystal Palace during the exhibition (Porto, 1934)  
 Photograph from Alvão (*Álbum fotográfico da 1ª Exposição Colonial Portuguesa - 101 clichés fotográficos de Alvão - Porto, fotógrafo oficial da Exposição Colonial, Porto, Litografia Nacional*)

Along the right wing it was possible to visit stands representative of private enterprises from the colonies whereas along the left wing stands representative of private enterprises from the European territory. The main building was also used for providing other facilities such as a bar, an indoor theatre, a hall for receptions, public telephones, public toilets and administrative spaces. The visitor would get some help in finding his way

around the exhibition by using the "Official Visitor Guide".<sup>659</sup> This guide described the exhibition in detail, display by display, mentioning both what was in the building and what was outside. It included photographs of the main exhibits and suggested a path through the exhibition. It also included a complete list of the private enterprises represented in the exhibition and some pages with advertisements. It also provided a map of the gardens with the exact location of the main attractions and a detailed plan of the main building.

The last day of the exhibition ended with a spectacular parade, the "Colonial Parade" (*Cortejo Colonial*), which marched past the streets of the city. This parade included not only people from all the colonies but also from the continental provinces. It was organised as an ethnographic train with the intention of showing the whole of Portugal. Men and women, animals and allegoric vehicles, representing the different provinces of the European territory and the overseas colonies, passed through crowded streets and marked the closure of the exhibition.

The underlying ideological and political intentions can be perceived by an analysis of the layout of the exhibition, the kind of displays and the themes of the ensemble. In addition to this, the publications quoted above give more precise information on the matter. In the introductory text to the *Album* of photographs by Alvão, Henrique Galvão affirms that the number of visitors of the exhibition had been nearly one and a half million people. He then concludes that the exhibition was a success because, as he puts it, all the visitors returned home with the certainty that they "were not the citizens of a small country".<sup>660</sup> In his publication dedicated to the exhibition, Galvão further explained the idea. In order to do so, a map of Europe with, overlaying the European territory, the areas of the Portuguese colonies, was on show in the exhibition and was reproduced in the publication. The title of the map - "Portugal is not a small country" (*Portugal não é um País pequeno*) - expressed the main idea of the exhibition. The areas of the colonies, altogether, occupied an area

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<sup>659</sup> *Exposição Colonial Portuguesa - Guia Oficial dos Visitantes*, Porto, Mário Antunes Leitão e Vitorino Coimbra editores, 2ª ed., 1934.

<sup>660</sup> *Álbum fotográfico ...*, p.4: "não eram habitantes de um país pequeno".

almost equal to Europe.<sup>661</sup> Some quantitative data stressed this comparison, by giving totals of the sum of some of the areas of the biggest European countries side-by-side with the areas of Angola and Mozambique, for example.

From an ideological point of view, Galvão makes it perfectly clear that the exhibition in Porto was a consequence of a structured policy and of imperial political planning. The foundations of both, he refers, could be perceived in the Portuguese representation in the exhibition *Paris Coloniale Internationale*.<sup>662</sup> Galvão strengthens the importance of the Portuguese representation in that international exhibition as the first result of such imperial political thought.<sup>663</sup> Further in his text he clearly explains that the exhibition of Porto was the direct result of the policy the Portuguese government had been laboriously developing since 1926. Its strength depended on three fundamental achievements: political and social order, economic and financial order, and colonial order.<sup>664</sup>

In such discourse Galvão's words were the image of the regime. In the 1930s, as well as in the beginning of the century, Portugal had to face international menace over its African colonies.<sup>665</sup> The Portuguese policy during this decade and in face of the menace of another world war, included an important activity of propaganda. It aimed at establishing at both national and international level, the certainty that Portugal was a vast and stable country, with both European and overseas territories. This was meant to be an indisputable assertion, and one which no one had the right to challenge or change. The First Colonial

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<sup>661</sup> The areas of the Portuguese territories were (in Km<sup>2</sup>):

Territories	Areas
European Continental Territory	92.076
Angola (Africa)	1.246.700
Mozambique (Africa)	783.030
Guiné (Africa)	36.125
Timor (Asia)	14.926
Cabo Verde (Africa)	4.032
Estado da Índia (Asia) (Goa, Damão and Diu)	4.194
Açores (Europe)	2.314
S. Tomé e Príncipe (Africa)	963
Madeira (Europe)	797
Macau (Asia)	16
<b>Total area</b>	<b>2.185.173</b>

in SILVA, J. R. - *Mapa de Portugal Insular e Ultramarino*, Lisboa, Editorial Organizações Lda, 1971.

<sup>662</sup> GREENHALGH - *op.cit.*, p.68-71.

<sup>663</sup> See GALVÃO - *op.cit.*, p.7.

<sup>664</sup> See GALVÃO - *op.cit.*, p.13.

<sup>665</sup> See Chapter 3. It is important to reaffirm that the Portuguese policy towards the colonies had been stable, at least ever since the Republican Revolution.

Exhibition was the result of such propaganda, which was meant to have both internal and external impact.

Several different aspects of the Portuguese presence in the overseas territories were the object of other smaller temporary exhibitions. For example, in 1936 an exhibition on native art took place from 19 to 29 April, a week dedicated to the colonies (*Semana das Colónias*) organised by the Lisbon Society of Geography (*Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*). The objects on display were works of art collected in Africa. The catalogue listed the specimens giving only the original name and the Portuguese translation. This was solely an exhibition based on aesthetics with no anthropological interpretation of the objects. The introductory text of the catalogue is quite clear on this matter: it affirms that the Portuguese had never destroyed native art and that, on the contrary, they had always had the capacity for appreciating and understanding it.<sup>666</sup> This was presented as something the Portuguese should be proud of. The deep interest in African art and other subjects related with the overseas territories, led to several small temporary exhibitions of this kind. The Portuguese cultural elite was convinced of the fundamental importance of Portugal in Africa. This idea integrally matched with the political and ideological propaganda elaborated by the *Estado Novo* and helped in achieving its goals.<sup>667</sup>

In 1936, ten years after the revolution of the 28<sup>th</sup> May 1926, Salazar and the staff of the *Estado Novo* decided that it was the right time to commemorate its foundation. One of the initiatives for celebrating this anniversary was the organisation of an exhibition in which the achievements of the dictatorship and of the *Estado Novo* would be on display.<sup>668</sup> These 'achievements' would be the proof that the revolution had been successful and that therefore there was a reason to continue. In order to organise the exhibition the "National Union" (*União Nacional*)<sup>669</sup> asked for material, on behalf of the *Estado Novo*, from all kinds of institutions, including museums. The Museum of *Abade de Baçal* in Bragança, for instance, received a letter sent on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1936 from the government department in charge of

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<sup>666</sup> *Exposição de Arte Gentílica - África Portuguesa*, Lisboa, Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa, 1936..

<sup>667</sup> Another important example of the time is the "First Economic Conference of the Colonial Empire" (*I Conferência Económica do Império Colonial*), also organised in 1936.

<sup>668</sup> It is not worth mentioning all the initiatives related with the anniversary, because they had limited political or ideological intentions. The "National Exhibition of Typical Cloths" (*Exposição Nacional de Trajos Regionais*), which was held in Lisboa from May 16<sup>th</sup> to June 14<sup>th</sup> 1936, is an example of those.

<sup>669</sup> This was the name of the only legal political party that existed during the *Estado Novo*.

museums requesting a detailed list of all the changes that had been made in the museum since May 1926. Figures and statistical data which would enable a qualitative and quantitative evaluation of such changes were also requested as well as photographs of the museum and the name of someone who would be willing to act as a link between the museum and the organisers of the exhibition. The letter specified that no graphics, charts or diagrams were needed because the elaboration of those was a task for the commission in charge of the exhibition. All the interpretation and the public presentation of the material was centralised and controlled in a very strict manner. The letter explained that the main objective of the exhibition was the presentation of the services and of the achievements of the National Revolution of 1926.<sup>670</sup> The Museum seems to have failed to meet some of the demands, because some months later another letter was sent from the same government department. It insisted on the urgent need for photographs (at least one) showing buildings recently constructed or objects recently bought that would clearly demonstrate the progress of the museum since 1926.<sup>671</sup> This example clearly demonstrates the way the *Estado Novo* wanted the exhibition to be a statement of the great benefits of the Revolution for Portugal. This political event was an important step for the consolidation of the regime.

As the above examples illustrate, during this decade there were two main guidelines for the temporary exhibitions held by the Portuguese government: on the one hand, the firm proclamation of the Empire as one of the irreducible aspects of the Portuguese state; and on the other, the ideological and propagandistic use of the exhibitions as a means of consolidation of the *Estado Novo*. These two perspectives became evident in the early 1930s and remained perceptible until the end of the regime. In some particular moments, the two tendencies gathered for some especial events. Such was the case of some major exhibitions, held both within the national territory and abroad. This was the case for the participation of Portugal in the International Exhibition held in Paris in 1937. Portugal was presented there as a country that had overcome a very difficult financial and economic situation due to the intervention of a national 'hero' - Salazar. Other topics represented were the importance of the colonies and of popular traditions. One example of the latter was the presence of traditional popular boats: the Portuguese pavilions were set by the river which enabled the presence of some typical boats of the river Douro (the so called *rabelos*)

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<sup>670</sup> The letter finally remarked that all the elements were very urgent and that the deadline was February the 15<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>671</sup> Letter (1936/05/04).



traditionally used for the transportation of port from the production areas down the river, to the cellars in Vila Nova de Gaia. These boats were (and still are) a 'trade mark' of the Douro river, closely connected to popular traditions and to popular economic activities, as the work in the river<sup>672</sup> was a very important source of revenue.

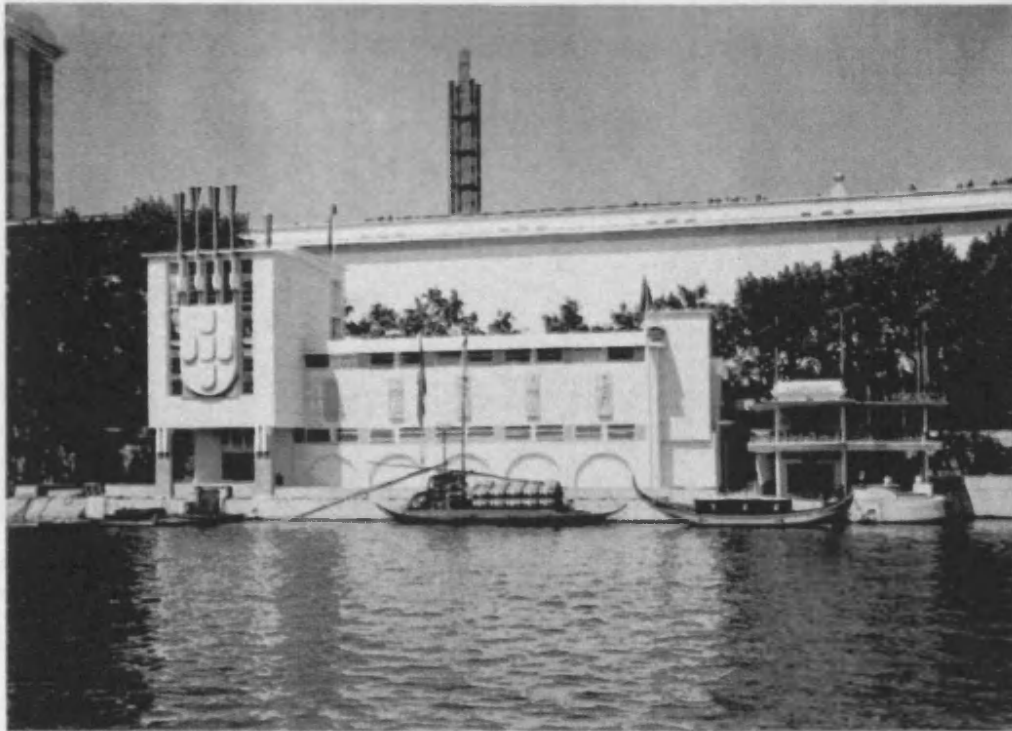


Fig. 71. Exterior of the Portuguese Pavilion with *barcos rabelos* (Paris, 1937)  
Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

In the Paris exhibition of 1937 the Portuguese Pavilion concentrated on the political organisation of the country as an opportunity for propaganda. The hierarchy of the State and the reorganised model of political structure settled by the Constitution of 1933 were presented as very important improvements. The role of Salazar, as prime minister, was a major one. He represented the Portuguese political organisation and was an incontestable leader ("*Le Chefe*").



Fig. 72. Scheme explaining the Portuguese political corporative structure (Paris, 1937). The image of a pyramid suggests hierarchy and order. *Le Chefe* is marked in red.

<sup>672</sup> For example the transport of wine, stones, sand and stone-coal; another important source of revenue was the fishing activity.

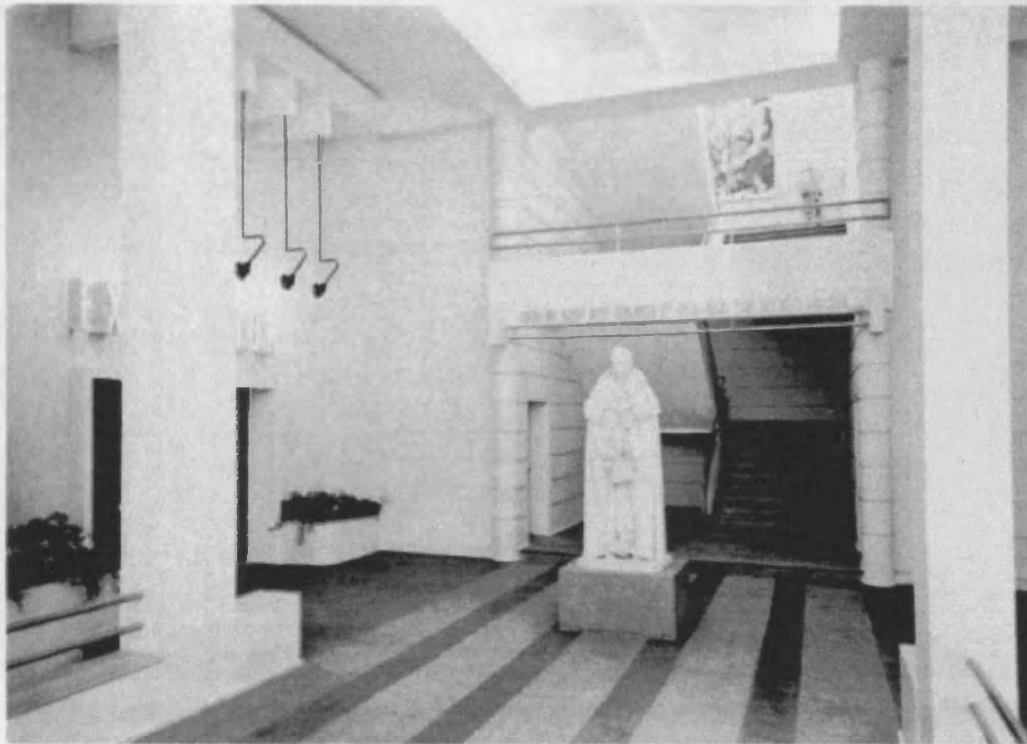


Fig. 73. Hall of the Portuguese Pavilion (Paris, 1937)  
 Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

At the main entrance hall there was a huge statue of Salazar in academic robes, which was an obvious reference to the respectable intellectual status of the Prime Minister (*Presidente do Conselho*). The title above the statue affirmed that it was possible for anyone to pass and see, even without admiring the leader (*Celui qui passe peut regarder et voir sans être obligé d'admirer.*) Different displays were mounted, which included aspects of Portuguese art, history, political organisation and economic and financial situation. These themes had a propagandistic purpose. For example, on the subject of finances, the display showed several graphs on the evolution of the economy and the main statement read "Portugal - a balanced country. Healthy Finances and their Consequences" (*Portugal Pays Équilibré. Finances Saines et leurs conséquences*).



Fig. 74. Interior of the finances room in the Portuguese Pavilion (Paris, 1937)  
 Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

In the ethnographic displays traditional objects and artefacts were on view and typical scenes were recreated, such as a popular fair of the North of the country and a tavern where it was possible to listen to *fados*.<sup>673</sup> The colonial perspective was there too: the main characteristics of each colony were represented by using photographs, charts and maps. Once again, the areas of the colonies were compared to the areas of the biggest countries of Europe by using a similar map to the one used in the colonial exhibition of Porto in 1934, previously mentioned.

The exhibition was originally planned in 1934 for the period before the First World War and one of its major objectives was to show the Portuguese effort to maintain the "imperial empire" in the face of the "new world" in the 19th century.

The exhibition was originally planned in 1934 for the period before the First World War and one of its major objectives was to show the Portuguese effort to maintain the "imperial empire" in the face of the "new world" in the 19th century.

<sup>673</sup> *Fado* is a traditional song, especially appreciated in the region of Lisboa but frequently considered as the "national song". There are two main different types of *fado*: Lisboa's and Coimbra's. In Lisboa the *fado* is traditionally sang in taverns in the old and historic areas of the city. The lyrics of the songs are usually about destiny, love and tragedy.

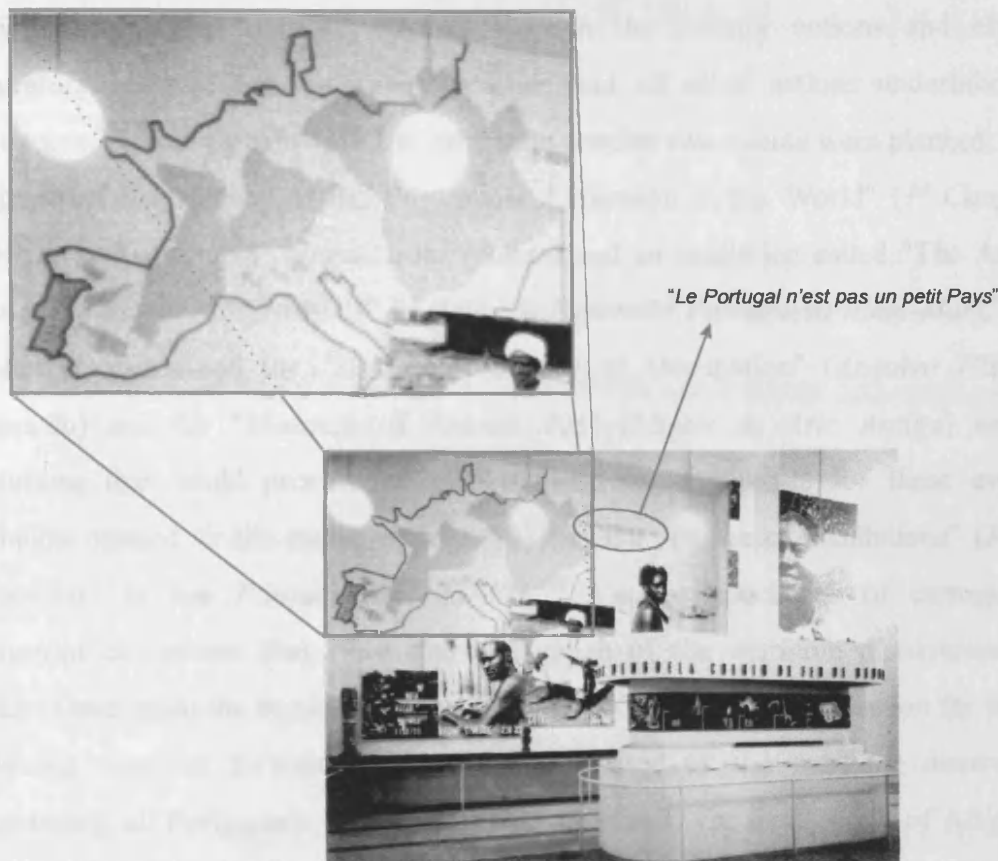


Fig. 75. Interior of the Colonies room in the Portuguese Pavilion, with detail of map (Paris, 1937)  
 Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

In 1937 another temporary exhibition, which was about the colonies and the Empire, took place in Lisboa. It was the "Historical Exhibition of the Occupation" (*Exposição Histórica da Ocupação*). The preparation of this event began in 1936<sup>674</sup> and it was the government's decision that all institutions (archives, libraries, museums, governmental departments) should help in the task of assembling the material needed for this exhibition. The government saw the event as fundamental because they considered that all Portuguese action and effort to colonise and occupy the overseas territories was a "glorious" history that was worth celebrating.

The exhibition was originally planned to focus on the period before the First World War and one of its major objectives was to show the Portuguese effort to assimilate the indigenous people.<sup>675</sup> In December 1936, a decree specified that this exhibition of the

<sup>674</sup> Decree 27.269 (1936/11/24).

<sup>675</sup> Original text: "[...] *mostrar os trabalhos e acção dos portugueses para assimilação dos indígenas*".

Portuguese presence overseas should mention the military actions and efforts, the exploratory activity, the missionary practice and all other actions undertaken by the Portuguese.<sup>676</sup> Side-by-side with the exhibition another two events were planned: the "First Congress of the History of the Portuguese Expansion in the World" (*1º Congresso da História da Expansão Portuguesa no Mundo*) and an exhibition called "The Art and the Portuguese Expansion Overseas" (*A Arte e a Expansão Portuguesa Além-Mar*).<sup>677</sup> Finally, the decree mentioned the "Historical Archive of Occupation" (*Arquivo Histórico da Ocupação*) and the "Museum of Ancient Art" (*Museu de Arte Antiga*) as the two institutions that could provide colonial objects and documents for these events. The exhibition opened to the public in June 1937 in the "Palace of Exhibitions" (*Palácio de Exposições*) of the *Parque Eduardo VII*.<sup>678</sup> Various specimens of cartography and manuscript documents that illustrated the epoch of the maritime discoveries were on display. Once again the argument of the historical occupation as justification for the right of colonising was put forward. Ancient books related to the maritime discoveries and documenting all Portuguese activity overseas (especially the exploration of Africa and the activity of missionaries on the spread of Catholicism) were also displayed. The military actions in the overseas territories were documented by displaying miniatures of soldiers wearing different uniforms of different epochs and exhibiting their weapons and by showing real size mannequins wearing complete uniforms.<sup>679</sup> As a whole, the exhibition was an encomium to the Portuguese presence in the colonies, establishing the rights of occupation with historical reasons (the maritime discoveries) alongside the benefits brought to the overseas territories by Portuguese activity and presence. Furthermore, the exhibition presented the Portuguese occupation as an act of civilisation, even if the armed force had sometimes been necessary. Portugal was established as an Empire: both by historical right and by association with the respectable task of spreading civilisation. These were the arguments underpinning the exhibition and this was the message to be understood and engraved in peoples' minds, thus shaping public opinion. Once again, ideology and propaganda were the main intentions of the exhibition.

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<sup>676</sup> Decree 27.346 (1936/12/18).

<sup>677</sup> This exhibition was to be prepared under the supervision of the director of the MNAA.

<sup>678</sup> A large public park in Lisboa.

<sup>679</sup> A collection of photographs about this exhibition was made by Mario Novaes and is available at the Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisboa.

In 1939, a temporary exhibition about the maritime activities of the north of the country was installed in the Crystal Palace of Porto. It was the "Maritime Exhibition of the North of Portugal" (*Exposição Marítima do Norte de Portugal*) and was organised by the Social Services of the Portuguese Legion.<sup>680</sup> As Silva Leal, one of the heads of the organisation remarked, the exhibition was a manifestation of nationalism.<sup>681</sup> The main objectives were to illustrate how much Portugal cared for those who worked on the ocean and to celebrate all the work the *Estado Novo* had developed in the social field on behalf of fishing communities.<sup>682</sup> The exhibition occupied the main building of the Crystal Palace and was divided into several sections. The most important sections were: "Religion - Faith and Art" (*Religião - Fé e Arte*); "Nautical Sports and Fishing" (*Desportos Náuticos e Pesca Desportiva*); "Social Services of the Portuguese Legion" (*Acção Social da Legião Portuguesa*); "Corporative organisation of the fisheries" (*Acção Corporativa e Organização Corporativa das Pescas*); "People of Fisheries" (*Gente da Pescaria*); "The Ocean and the Coast" (*O Mar e a Costa*); "Commerce and Industry" (*Comércio e Indústria*).<sup>683</sup>

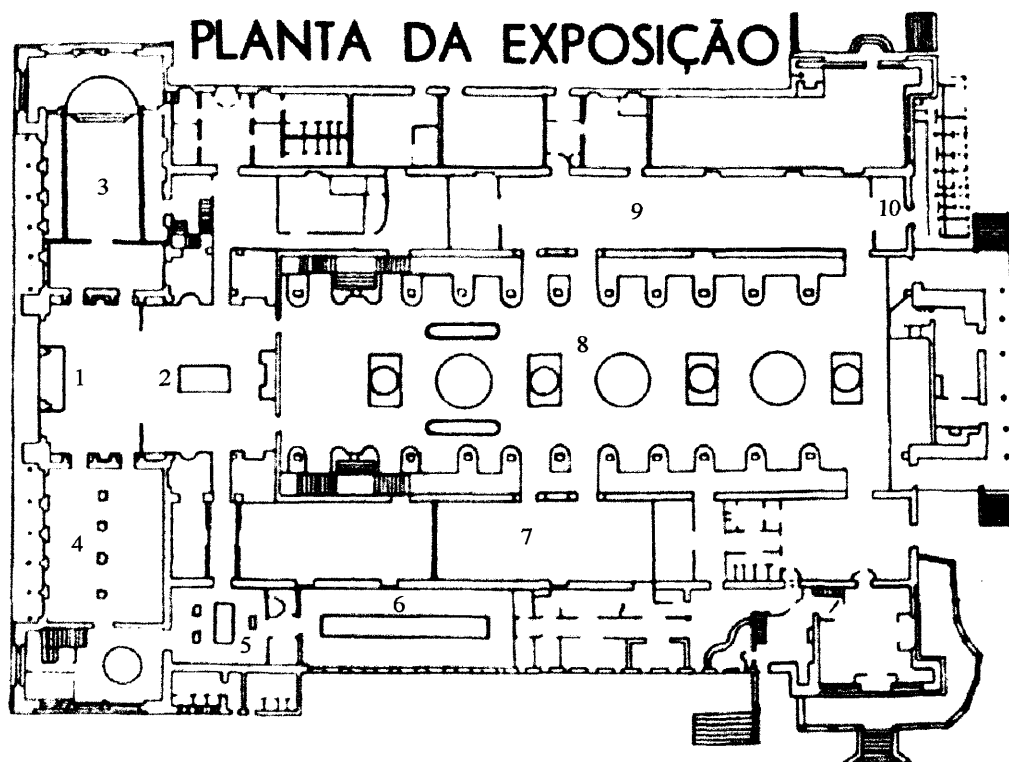
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<sup>680</sup> These services were called *Serviços de Acção Social*. The Portuguese Legion was an organisation with a military profile devoted to the defence of the country and of the State.

<sup>681</sup> See LEAL, M. da Silva - "Razões" in *Exposição Marítima do Norte de Portugal - Catálogo Oficial*, Porto, Hernâni da Costa e C<sup>a</sup> ed., 1939: "*A Exposição Marítima é uma manifestação nacionalista*".

<sup>682</sup> See LEAL - *op.cit.*: "*Fez-se a Exposição Marítima do Norte (...) para mostrar quanto o Estado Novo tem feito no campo Social*".

<sup>683</sup> The main sections were referred in the plan of the exhibition published in *Exposição Marítima do Norte de Portugal - Catálogo Oficial*, Porto, Hernâni da Costa e C<sup>a</sup> ed., 1939.



1 - Main entry; 2 - Religion - Faith and Art; 3 - Sports; 4 - Religious Art; 5 - Social Services of the Portuguese Legion; 6 - Coporative Organisations; 7 - People of Fisheries; 8 - The Ocean and the Coast; 9 - Commerce and Industry; 10 - Fishing as a sport. (Plan from the official Catalogue)

Fig. 76. Plan of the "Maritime Exhibition of the North of Portugal" (Crystal Palace, 1939).

The content and the organisation of these sections is significant. Immediately after the main entrance the visitor would enter a room with a huge statue of Saint Peter in the middle. St Peter was a fisherman and the statue represented the throwing of nets, thus symbolising the 'fishing' of souls.<sup>684</sup> All around the room there were several displays related with popular faith, including crosses, *alminhas*,<sup>685</sup> altars and *andores*.<sup>686</sup> The next room, to the right, was dedicated to religion and art. It was the most opulent room of the whole exhibition. The gold and silver on exhibition would have given the visitor the impression of being inside a treasury.<sup>687</sup>

<sup>684</sup> This is the explanation that can be read in the official catalogue of the exhibition.

<sup>685</sup> *Alminhas* are niches usually in walls, on the border of footpaths or roads indicating dangerous places or the location where someone died. People light candles, bring flowers and stop to pray near these altars.

<sup>686</sup> An *andor* is a wooden framework to carry statues in a procession. It is carried by four, six or even eight men. The tradition in fishing villages is that the statue goes on a journey on a fishing boat so that the Ocean 'behaves' during the next year.

<sup>687</sup> The official catalogue refers to this room in such an enthusiastic paragraph that the reader almost has the sensation of actually being inside a treasury.



The following room was dedicated to art and photography related to the fishing activities. From this room it was possible to enter the next section dedicated to the Social Services of the Portuguese Legion. This part of the exhibition had an obvious political intention, by displaying the evidences of the benefits of the *Estado Novo* to the fishing communities. Roads, affordable and comfortable houses, public water distribution and other improvements were presented as the deeds of the *Estado Novo*. The ideological tone of this section continued in the adjacent room which was about the corporative organisation of the country and particularly of the fishing activities.<sup>688</sup>

The main hall housed "The Ocean and the Coast" section where all activities related with the Atlantic Sea were represented. Maps of the harbours and of the shoreline, photographs taken both from the land and from the air, stuffed fishes representing the most common and the most rare species fished. Boats, miniatures and models<sup>689</sup> were also on display. As a whole, the intention was to represent the success of the Portuguese Northern shore fishing and other related economic activities. Another room contained exhibitions on the people of the region; traditional clothes, everyday objects, plans of typical houses, some more models and miniatures of working scenes, all were intended to give the visitor a general idea about the way of life in fishing communities.

The left wing of the building had a section on Commerce and Industry, which were associated with the fishing activity because it had led to the growth of the cannery industry. Such industries were concentrated in a few places and became of major importance to the local economy. A significant part of the catch went directly to the canning industry and a network of commercial distribution became necessary. Thus one of the policies of the *Estado Novo* was the promotion of this national production and of the consumption of canned sardines and tuna fish.<sup>690</sup> This section of the exhibition tuned in with this purpose. It is also important to mention another two rooms dedicated to sports. One was about fishing as a sport. It was not a very important section of the exhibition but some attention was

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<sup>688</sup> Among other objectives, the corporative organisation of productive activities intended to put an end to all disputes between Capital and Labour. The *Estado Novo* wanted to convince the people that this was the most interesting option for everybody, and therefore for the country as a whole.

<sup>689</sup> One of the models on display was about the way codfish was salted and dried. Codfish used to be one of the most popular and affordable food in Portugal, it was even called the "faithful friend" (*o fiel amigo*) because if there was not enough money to buy meat, it might be possible to buy codfish.

<sup>690</sup> During the World Wars canned food (sardines, tuna and anchovies) had an important role, both on what concerned feeding the troops in the First World War and having private reserves at home when Portugal was under the threat of bombings.

drawn upon this leisure activity. Another, having access from the entrance room, was about several other water sports.

Portuguese state propaganda was not confined to the national territory. The *Estado Novo* also felt the need to convince others of the benefits of its policies. In 1939 Portugal was present at the International Exhibition in San Francisco (California) and this opportunity was used to present to the world what the country had turned into, in terms of institutional organisation, financial recovery and economic balance. The ideas used in this exhibition were not of great originality and some of the labels, translated into English, were the same that had been used two years before in Paris. The internal organisation of the state, alongside the theme of financial recovery, were, once again, two of the major topics of the *Estado Novo* external propaganda. One of the first panels of the exhibition was titled "Portugal Land of Well Balanced Affairs".

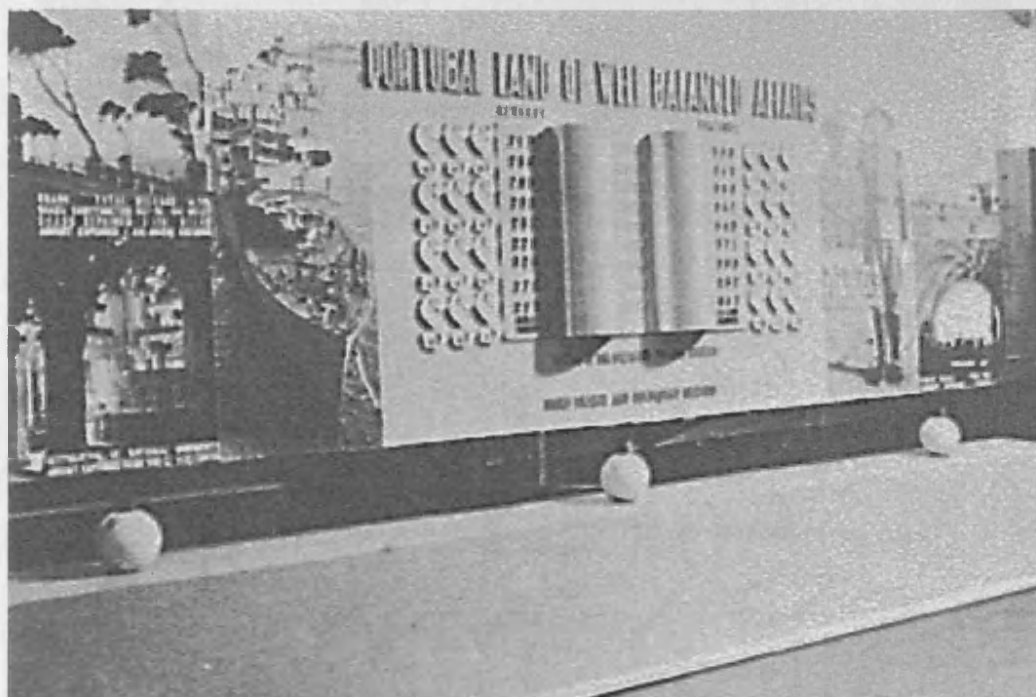


Fig. 77. Main entrance to the Portuguese Pavilion (S. Francisco, 1939)  
Photograph from Mário Novais, National Archive of Photography, Lisbon.

The display inside the pavilion told the visitor that Salazar's policies had changed the country for the better and that Portugal was no longer the diplomatically weak, disorganised, internationally and internally owing economy of a decade before.

The idea of a pyramid, like the one used in the Paris exhibition, to evidence the new political organisation of the country was not abandoned. A large scheme of the main

Portuguese institutions with the title: "Scheme of the organization of the Portuguese NEW STATE" was on display at the entrance of the exhibition. It is interesting to observe the existence of a "Head" of the regime. The "Head" connected with the Government, the Assembly and the Tribunals, and clearly controlled the all system. This "Head" was, obviously, Salazar.

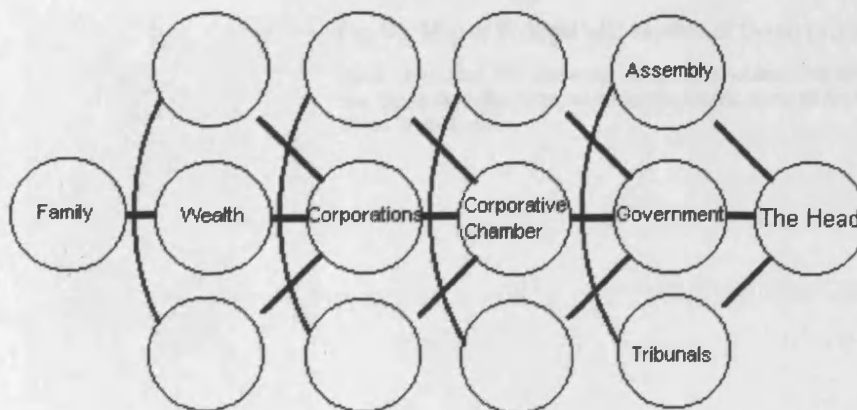
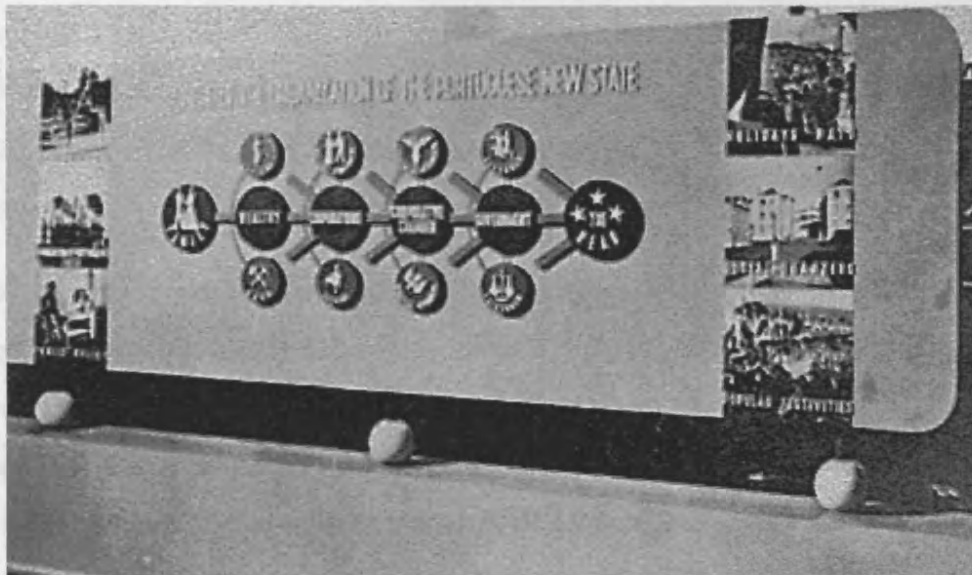


Fig. 78 and 79. "Scheme of the organization of the Portuguese New State" (S. Fancisco, 1939)  
 Photograph from Mário Novais, National Archive of Photography, Lisbon.

The quality of the photograph does not allow the reading of all the scheme. The diagram represents what can be read from the original photograph.

In September 1940 the Crystal Palace received another exhibition. It was the "Ethnographic Exhibition of *Douro Litoral*"<sup>691</sup> together with the "Second Harvest Fair" (*Exposição Etnográfica do Douro Litoral e II Feira das Colheitas*). Once again the building was chosen for its display potential, and because it was one of the very few buildings in Porto that could receive such an event. The ethnographic characteristic of the exhibition was in absolute harmony with the policy and desires of the *Estado Novo*: Portugal was a reunion of differences, a mosaic of characteristics. National unity found part of its strength in diversity.<sup>692</sup> Such an argument could be, and actually was, extended to the overseas territories.<sup>693</sup> This kind of exhibition was a powerful instrument to strengthen these arguments and that must have been a strong reason for the *Estado Novo* to be associated with them.

During the most difficult years of the Second World War few exhibitions were organised. Only in the second half of the 1940s did the *Estado Novo* return to the policy of organising national exhibitions with evident ideological and political objectives.<sup>694</sup> This new era of national exhibitions began in 1947 with two major events: the festivities organised to celebrate the eight centuries of the conquest of Lisboa<sup>695</sup> and the exhibition "14 years of

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Fig. 80. Map of Portugal with location of *Douro Litoral*

*Douro Litoral* (dark blue in the map) is the region crossed and influenced by the river Douro (light blue in the map) near the Atlantic, some 60 Km East/West and 50 Km North/South.

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There was a children's puzzle produced by *edições Majora* consisting of a map of the European Portuguese territory that could be separated into different pieces according to the administrative and ethnographic 'frontiers'. Each piece had representations of traditional clothes, natural products, typical food and popular houses. The 'lesson' was that Portugal was a reunion of differences and that that reunion was a successful one.

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See Chapter 7.1 about the Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World.

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As an exception Portugal participated in the Exhibition of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in 1942. The Portuguese representation was minor if compared with other International Exhibitions. Another minor exhibition was organised in Lisboa by the end of the 1930s called "Ancient Lisboa" (*Lisboa Antiga*). There is a set of photographs in the National Archive of Photography in Lisboa.

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Lisboa was conquered by D. Afonso Henriques in 1147/10/25 after more than four months of siege. Lisboa was an important military and commercial city. Negotiations led by the bishop of Porto (D. Pedro Pitões) with some crusades who were passing by (going to the middle east via Atlantic) brought important help to the Portuguese King.



spirit policy" (*14 anos de política do espírito*)<sup>696</sup> which took place at the *Palácio Foz*, in Lisboa.

The conquest of Lisboa was a very important historical date for the *Estado Novo*. It marked the symbolic moment when D. Afonso Henriques finally gained complete control over the northern part of the territory. In fact the river Tejo and its defensive fortresses were the last natural frontier between Christians and Muslims. When the Tejo was finally taken, all the southern territory was open to the Christian forces.<sup>697</sup> This military victory made it possible for the king and his forces to conquer more land. This was not only greed for more land, it was also imperative for D. Afonso to succeed in the war against the Muslims to be recognised as king by the Pope.<sup>698</sup> Therefore, the conquest of Lisboa was a major objective in his policy.

The city of Lisboa did not become the capital of the kingdom until the middle of the fourteenth century, and since then no other city has had that status. The belief that Lisboa was one of the main symbols of Portuguese independence was evident, during the war with Castilla between 1383-85. The Castillian army always had Lisboa as the final objective of its campaigns. Historically and culturally Lisboa was 'the' city.<sup>699</sup> Therefore, in the 20th century, the commemoration of the conquest of the city was a national event with a political and ideological significance. The commemorations were about the conquest of the city and, at the same time, were about the existence and independence of Portugal as the oldest independent country of all Europe. Another



Fig. 81. Commemorative Poster of the exhibition of the Conquest of Lisboa (1947).

<sup>696</sup> The name of this exhibition is a difficult one to translate. In essence it means the commemoration of the 14 years (1933-1947) of the *Estado Novo* new policy concerning nationalism and national values.

<sup>697</sup> D. Afonso Henriques conquered a vast area to the South before his death. His son, D. Sancho I, found great difficulties in keeping this territory and his successors felt the same problems. Only in 1249, did D. Afonso III conquer the kingdom of Algarve definitely.

<sup>698</sup> That recognition only occurred in 1179 by the bull *Manifestis Probatum est*.

<sup>699</sup> One of the Portuguese authors that better evidenced this aspect is Eça de Queirós in his romance *Os Maias* (QUEIRÓS, Eça de - *Os Maias*, Lisboa, Livros do Brasil, s.d., p.169 and following. There is an English translation from Patricia McGowan Pinheiro and Ann Stevens, London, Bodley Head, 1965. Discussing about the importance of Lisboa one of the characters affirms that "Lisboa is Portugal" (*Lisboa é Portugal!*) meaning that all that really matters happens there.

significant aspect of these commemorations was the importance given to D. Afonso Henriques as the hero who made Portugal an independent country. The cult of historic heroes was one of the characteristics of the *Estado Novo*<sup>700</sup> and this was an ideal opportunity to praise the conduct of D. Afonso Henriques.

The exhibition *14 anos de política do espírito*, mounted in the *Palácio Foz* in 1947, also had clear ideological and propagandistic objectives. Its title reveals precisely what it was about: it commemorated the fourteen years of cultural improvement with the impulse created by the *Estado Novo*. The SNI organised the exhibition and a significant part of it was propaganda to the SNI itself. For the sake of illustration, it is interesting to quote two of the texts of the exhibitions. A title, exhibited above a showcase, where it was possible to see several books and other printed material, said that "the literary prizes of the SNI have already gathered an impressive anthology of modern Portuguese literature" (*Os prémios literários de SNI constituíram já uma antologia riquíssima da literatura portuguesa actual*). Another title, above a display showing photographs and other related material, stated "With cultural missions and travelling libraries the SNI brings its cultural program to the whole country" (*Com as missões culturais e as bibliotecas ambulantes o SNI leva o seu programa de divulgação cultural a todo o país*).<sup>701</sup> This activity of the SNI, developed by the *Estado Novo*, was part of the general plan to reduce illiteracy. The regime continued the policy of the First Republic and tried to provide basic education for all citizens by building schools in almost every village and by establishing a compulsory system of basic education for all children under fourteen years of age.

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<sup>700</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>701</sup> Photographs about this exhibition are in the archive of photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, in Lisboa, belonging to the collection of Mário Novais.



Fig. 82. One of the the SNI displays (exhibition "*14 anos da política do espírito*" - 1947)

Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

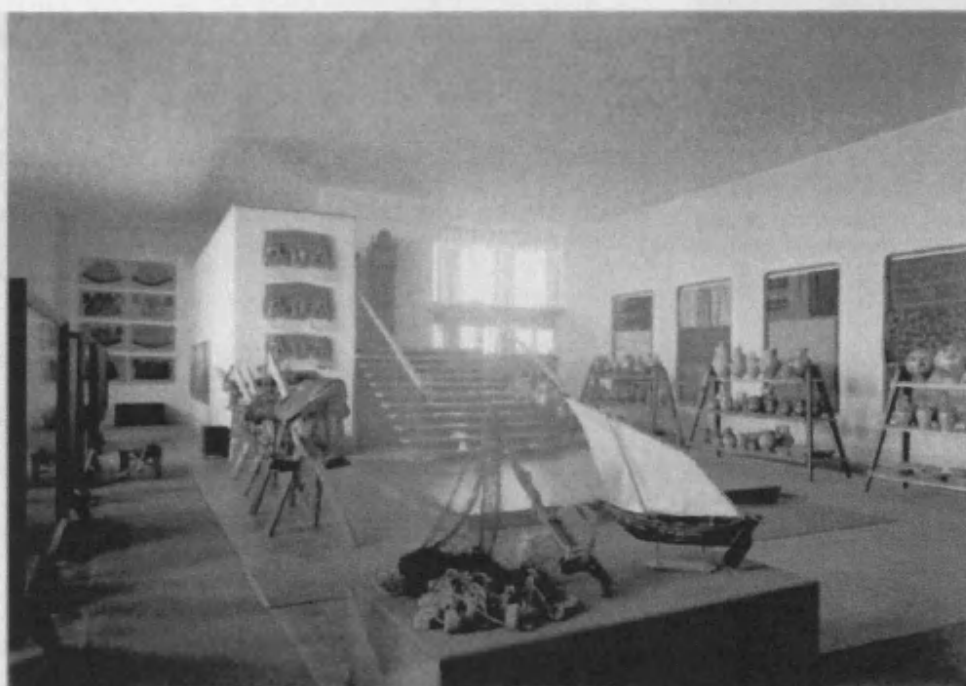


Fig. 82. Interior of the ethnography room (exhibition "*14 anos da política do espírito*" - 1947)

Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.



The exhibition included a vast number of displays. Ethnography was one of the main subjects, but leisure activities organised by the SNI, theatre, cinema and tourism were also mentioned. The Portuguese Youth (*Mocidade Portuguesa*) were also represented because its activities were seen as an important contribution to the cultural and physical development of the Portuguese children. An architectural competition, organised with the objective of developing and encouraging the traditional, popular and rural Portuguese architecture, was also included in the exhibition. The message of this exhibition was (as in previous exhibitions) that Portugal had gained significant benefits with the *Estado Novo* cultural policy.

The same way of presenting the regime is manifest in another temporary exhibition held in Lisboa in 1948. It was the "Exhibition of Public Works - commemorations of the 15 years (1932-1947)" (*Exposição de Obras Públicas - comemorações de 15 anos [1932-1947]*). Once again the regime was presented as the redeemer of the country. The exhibition aimed to prove that the *Estado Novo* had already accomplished important material results. The main areas in which the *Estado Novo* invested were transport development (roads, railways, bridges and maritime harbours both for commerce and for fishing boats) and public buildings (monuments and historic buildings and new constructions for the state services).



Fig. 84. Commemorative Poster of the exhibition of Public Works (1948)

During the late 1940s and the early 1950s the colonial theme was not forgotten. Temporary exhibitions hosted in Lisboa brought objects and other testimonies from Africa and, with them, the permanent presence of the overseas territories. In 1949 an art exhibition about Guiné was organised by the SNI.<sup>702</sup> The intention was to maintain the proximity between the "main land" and the colonies, at least amongst small but very important sectors of the population. In 1949 another art exhibition was organised. It was about "Black Art" (*Exposição de Arte Negra*)<sup>703</sup> and one of the governmental departments for the colonies

<sup>702</sup> *Exposição sobre motivos da Guiné de Martins da Costa*, Lisboa, SNI, 1949. There are no figures available about the visitors to this exhibition, but its duration (less than a month) may indicate a low number of visits.

<sup>703</sup> *Exposição de Arte Negra*, Lisboa, SNI, 1949.

(*Agência Geral das Colônias*) was the responsible for the exhibition. Clearly, the *Estado Novo* had a very strong interest in keeping the connection and the cultural interchange between the European territory and overseas. The political theory applied to the country<sup>704</sup> was such that it made it fundamental for any Portuguese to feel the intimate relation between all the territories. And that 'intimacy' demanded cultural bounds that linked the provinces.

Another important area for the *Estado Novo* was the missionary activity in Africa and the Far East. During the maritime discoveries and the military campaigns in North Africa, Portugal had assumed the role of spreading "Faith" and "Civilisation". The *Estado Novo* did not reject that role; on the contrary, it was seen as one of the main tasks of the Portuguese people. In order to do so, Catholic missionary work in the overseas territories was seen as one of the most important deeds of Portugal and the State always supported such Church initiatives. In 1951 an exhibition on "Missionary Sacred Art" (*Exposição de Arte Sacra Missionária*) arrived in Lisboa after having been held in the Vatican and in Madrid.<sup>705</sup> The exhibition included several sections about different regions (China, India, Vietnam, Japan, Central and South America) and had contributions both from Portuguese and Spanish missionary activity. It proved the strong presence of both countries in the overseas territories and approved the missionary action developed there.

From December 1951 to January 1952, the SNI organised another temporary exhibition about the colonies. The source of the material used was an excursion of the Portuguese Youth<sup>706</sup> that had visited the Atlantic Islands and Angola. The impressions and recollections of that voyage gathered by José Amaro Júnior were the main 'collections' on display. The official view about Angola was represented in this exhibition. This official perspective could be adapted to all the other colonies, as Angola was the 'jewel of the crown' of the Portuguese colonies. What is interesting about this particular exhibition is that the propagandistic machine in Portugal did not waste the opportunity to present the official

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<sup>704</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>705</sup> *Exposição de Arte Sacra Missionária - Catálogo*, Lisboa, 1951. The catalogue includes photographs of some objects on display.

<sup>706</sup> This organisation had a department called "Imperial Formation" (*Formação Imperial*) that was responsible for the journey. *Exposição "Apontamentos de Viagem" de José Amaro Júnior*, Lisboa, SNI, Agência do Ultramar, 1952.

view. In fact, it is even possible that the journey was organised with the firm intention of mounting the exhibition.

In 1953 it was time again to celebrate: the occasion were the 25 years of Salazar's government. The exhibition was called "25 years of government of the Nation" (*25 Anos de Governo da Nação*). Salazar was one of the main subjects of the exhibition. The visitor was confronted with a huge photograph of the leader with the title "This man did not want to be Governor" (*Este homem não queria ser Governo*). The sentence is part of propaganda too: Salazar always proclaimed he had no interest in political power; he was prime minister only because of his sentiment of duty, not because of personal ambition. The conclusion was to be obvious: Salazar was prime minister because the country needed and wanted him; he was serving the country against his personal interest. After this 'clarification' the exhibition reflected the work of Salazar, while governor, represented in photographs, models and large panels with graphics. The themes were the development of industry, the stabilisation of finance, the development of education, the construction of harbours and airports, the effort to extend electricity to the whole country, and the colonial policy. The intention was for the visitor to leave the exhibition with the solid conviction that nobody could have done better for "the Nation".

These themes were also apparent in another exhibition held two years later in London. The effort Portugal had undertaken to improve its image of a culturally rich, economically important and diplomatically influential country side-by-side with other European countries, especially through the participation in international temporary exhibitions, was the theme of the exhibition "Portuguese Art 800 - 1800" that took place in the Royal Academy of London between October 1955 and February 1956. The exhibition included displays of all major kinds of art and fine art produced either in Portugal or by Portuguese artists. It included paintings, sculpture, sacred art, goldsmithery and furniture as main themes. Other objects, such as china, silver and cloth were present there too. The exhibition was organised in several reconstructions of antique interiors, each one representing an epoch or a historical period.<sup>707</sup> The whole exhibition was intended to create the overall impression that Portugal was a rich and important country. The propagandistic intention was very clear. The message was that Portugal was taking good care of its history.

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<sup>707</sup> Photographs from Mário Novais are in the Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisboa.

History was seen as one of the basis of nationalism and historical remains of the past were seen as a sacred legacy. A nationalistic state should, therefore, be committed to the preservation of that legacy.

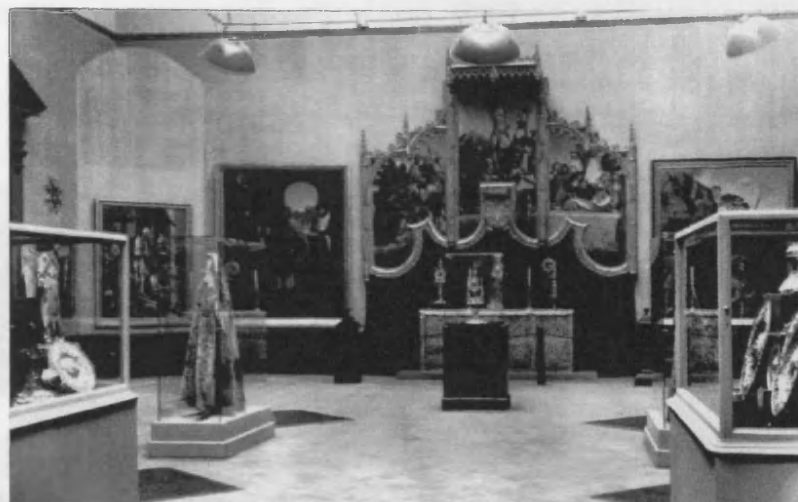


Fig. 85. One of the rooms of the exhibition "Portuguese Art 800-1800 (London, 1956). Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

The Crystal Palace of Porto was demolished in 1951. After the enormous success of the colonial exhibition in 1934, the building suffered some severe damages during the winter of 1941. Extraordinarily strong winds and heavy rain destroyed part of the construction and made its recovery an impossible task for the owners. Ten years elapsed without a solution and finally, in December 1951, the decision to demolish the building was taken and it began. Five years later, in October 1956, a new building was opened to the public with an "Exhibition of Agriculture" (*Exposição Agrícola*). This new building inherited the name of the former one, despite the fact that its architectural conception was completely different: the new "Crystal Palace" was a concrete building, a spherical dome of a conspicuous design, imposed on the classical gardens that were yet kept almost untouched.<sup>708</sup> The exhibition called the public's attention to the importance of the agricultural activity of the country. In the 1950s a very important percentage of the Portuguese population was still working in agriculture and the high dependence of the population on agriculture was presented as

<sup>708</sup> The building still exists with minor changes. The name of the building remained even in formal use. A newspaper article of the epoch, on the Exhibition of Agriculture, called the new building "Crystal Palace"; see "A propósito da próxima Exposição Agrícola no novo Palácio de Cristal..." in *O Tripeiro*, September 1956, p.134-140. It is also of interest to see BARROS, Alexandre Ferreira - "O Palácio de Cristal nas Exposições do Porto", in *O Tripeiro*, September 1956, p.153-155.



positive. Portuguese culture was, arguably, rooted in rural life.<sup>709</sup> This characteristic established a strong cultural link with the past. In terms of nationalism, that link was seen as essential because the traditional way of life was considered as one of the attributes of Portuguese identity.



Fig. 86. Aerial view of the new "Crystal Palace".  
(Photograph from postcard of the 1960s)

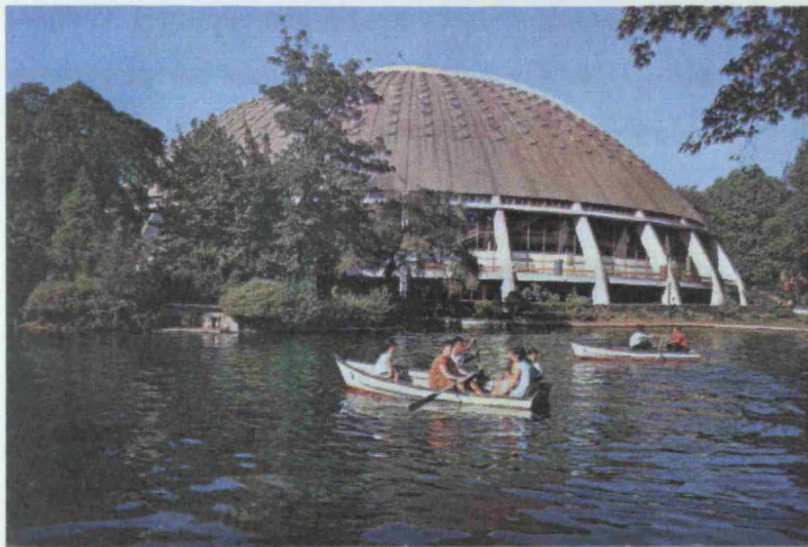


Fig. 87. Perspective of the new "Crystal Palace" taken from the lake.  
(Photograph from postcard of the 1960s)

Despite the symbolic importance given to the agricultural character of the country, the *Estado Novo* intended to develop a policy of industrialisation. This was coherent with the main rule of Salazar's economic policy:<sup>710</sup> to be independent and to import as little as possible. Industrialisation was the object of an exhibition that was held in Lisboa

<sup>709</sup> Salazar himself was born in a rural environment and kept for all his life that 'mark'. See NOGUEIRA, Franco, *op.cit.*, volume I.

<sup>710</sup> See Chapter 3.

under the name of "Know your homeland as an industrial country" (*Conheça a sua terra como país industrial*). This exhibition displayed numerous photographs of industrial enterprises, from North to South. It also displayed quotations from Salazar's speeches on industry and its importance for the national economy. Another object of interest were the tables, figures and graphs showing the development of the national industrialisation during 1955 and 1956.

In 1960 the subject of the maritime discoveries regained a relevant role as a subject for temporary exhibitions, represented by the organisation of the *Exposição Henriquina*<sup>711</sup> in Lisboa. 1960 was chosen to celebrate the five centuries of the death of the *Infant*.<sup>712</sup> Beyond the celebration of that event, the exhibition was about an epoch. The displays gave the visitors a view over the entire period of the maritime discoveries, that is from the end of the 14th century (with D. João I) to the beginning of the 16th century (with D. Manuel I). The exhibition was divided in three major areas:<sup>713</sup> the first one was dedicated to the period of D. João I and to the effort to consolidate independence; the second part was about the Infant D. Henrique and his contribution to maritime discoveries; the third and last part was assigned to the kingdoms of D. João II and D. Manuel I, the epoch when the maritime connection with the Orient was achieved and about when Brazil was first reached by the Portuguese.

This exhibition was mounted near the river Tejo, connecting with the space of the MAP. The exhibition entrance was through the cloister of the Museum and the event was assisted by Museum personnel; for instance, the museum guards helped with security.<sup>714</sup> The location chosen to mount the event was very appropriate, with a vast open space and a magnificent vista over the river. The area had been used in 1940 for the Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World and still had a particular style because of that. Furthermore, the "Monument to the Discoveries", the *Jerónimos* and the "Tower of Belém" were nearby, and added a symbolic value to the exhibition.

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<sup>711</sup> It is almost impossible to translate the name of this exhibition. It was about Infant D. Henrique, one of the sons of D. João I, said to be the one responsible for the beginning of the maritime discoveries. Modern historiography tends to demystify the role of D. Henrique.

<sup>712</sup> *Exposição Henriquina*, Lisboa, Comissão executiva das comemorações do quinto centenário da Morte do Infante D. Henrique, 1960.

<sup>713</sup> *Exposição Henriquina*..., p.11.

<sup>714</sup> See archive of the MAP, documents about Personnel, decade of 1960.



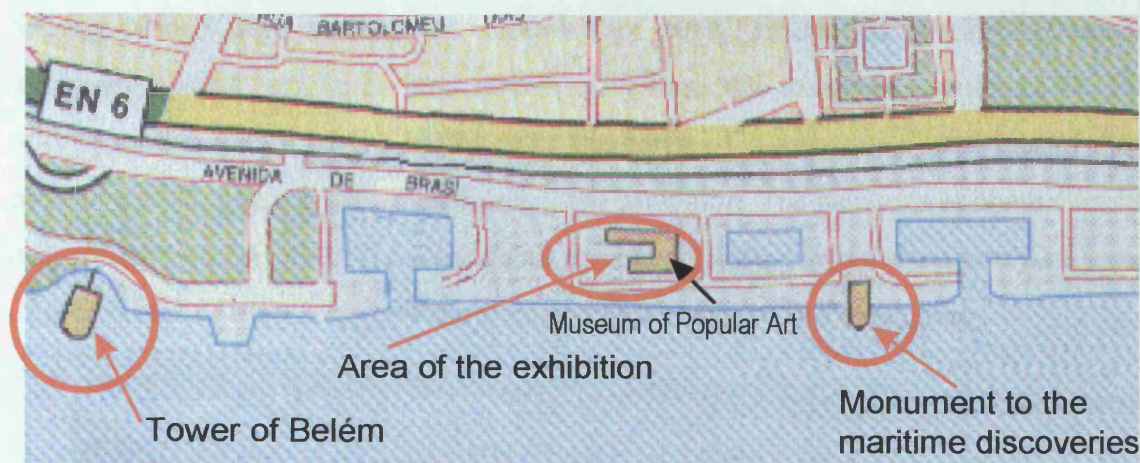
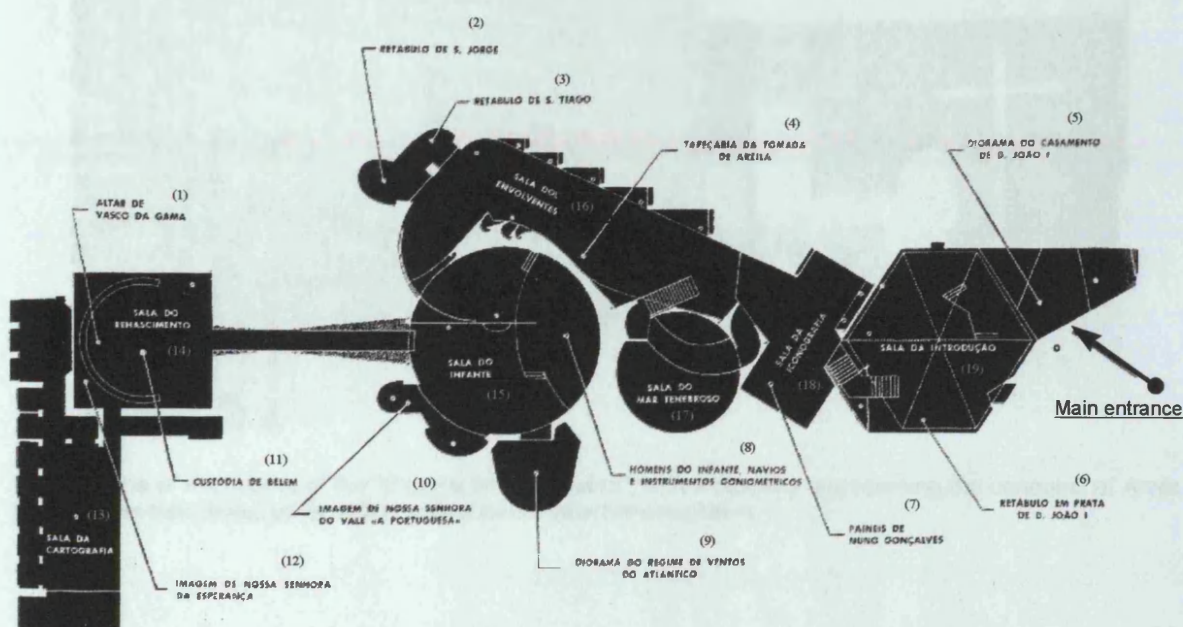


Fig. 88. Location of the "Exposição Henriquina" (1960)



1 - altar of Vasco da Gama; 2 - retable of Saint Jorge; 3 - retable of Saint Tiago; 4 - tapestry of the conquest of Arzila; 5 - diorama of the marriage of D. João I; 6 - silver retable of D. João I; 7 - paintings from Nuno Gonçalves; 8 - man of the Infant, ships and goniometrical instruments; 9 - diorama of the Atlantic winds; 10 - image of Saint Mary of the Valley «the Portuguese»; 11 - custodial of Belém; 12 - Image of Saint Mary of Good Hope; 13 - room of Cartography; 14 - room of the Renascence; 15 - room of the Infant; 16 - room of the Involvement; 17 - room of the Threatening Ocean; 18 - room of Iconography; 19 - room of the Introduction.

Fig. 89. Plan of the *Exposição Henriquina* (1960).

The plan of the exhibition reflected the organisation in the three major parts mentioned above. The inner spaces were vast, with empty spaces and careful design of



lighting, which gave visitors the sensation of being in 'another world'.<sup>715</sup> Some very important objects were presented in this exhibition. For example a sculpture D. João I offered to the church of Guimarães after the battle of Aljubarrota<sup>716</sup> was one of the first pieces the visitor would see when entering the exhibition. The paintings of Nuno Gonçalves, one of the masterpieces of the Portuguese ancient art history, were also there. The presence of these kinds of objects reveals the symbolic importance of this exhibition.

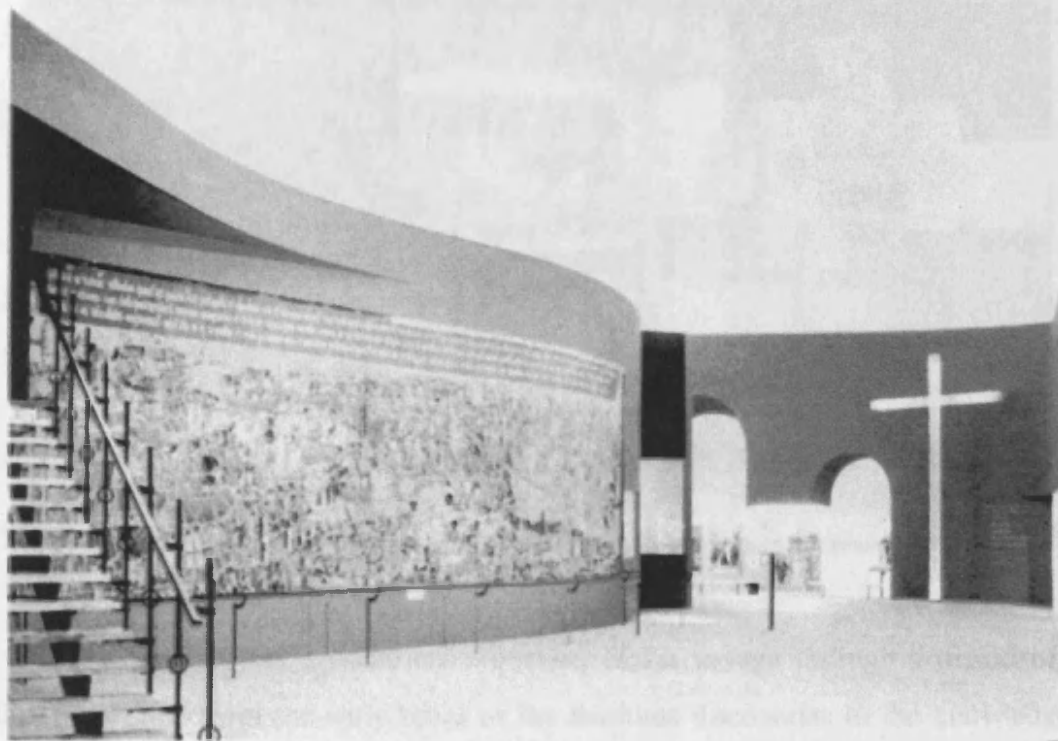


Fig. 90. One of the rooms of the "*Exposição Henriquina*", with a tapestry representing the conquest of Arzila. Photograph from Mário Novais, Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon.

The three parts of the exhibition were presented in a chronological sequence. The objects put on display included manuscripts, maps, specimens of medieval cartography and objects of sacred art. Contrasting with the age of these objects the ambience was modern, with architectural features that were not very common in the Portuguese temporary exhibitions of the epoch. For example, it was difficult to find a room with square angles: both the walls and the floor plans were based on triangles and circles; some windows were

<sup>715</sup> Two different collections of photographs on this exhibition are available in public archives: Archive of the Gulbenkian Foundation (Lisboa) and National Archive of Photography (Lisboa).

<sup>716</sup> Aljubarrota was the decisive battle against Castilla during the crisis of 1383/85. This battle marked the end of the danger over the Portuguese independence and therefore is always remembered in the Portuguese historiography as a remarkable event. After the battle D. João went as a pilgrim to Guimarães and made important offers to the church of Saint Mary.

hidden behind false walls enabling indirect lighting and different levels separated the rooms, making the visitor 'travel' between different environments.



Fig. 91. One of the rooms of the "Exposição Henriquina", with models of *caravelas*. Photograph from Mário Novais (Archive of Photography of the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon)

The exhibition had a theatrical sequence, like a voyage through a period of time, leading the visitor from the early times of the maritime discoveries to the knowledge of a vast world - that is to say, from the tiny world of medieval Europe to the immense world of the 16th century. D. João I knew his own country and could imagine a world as vast as Europe; D. Manuel was king of a huge Empire,<sup>717</sup> received richness from all over the world and had maps where only the Pacific Ocean was still *incognito* space. The presentation implied that in a little more than one hundred years the world got some thousand times larger. The exhibition ended in a cartography room, giving the visitor a perspective of that expansion. Under the nationalistic ideology, Portugal and the Portuguese were presented as the main makers of such progress. The concluding message of the exhibition was that his World is how we know it today, because *we* 'made' it like this.<sup>718</sup>

<sup>717</sup> The title of D. Manuel is a very long one indeed: *Dom Manuel per graça de Deus Rey de Portugal e dos Algraves daquem e dalém mar em África Senhor da Guiné e da Conquista e Navegação e Comércio da Etiópia, Arábia, Pérsia e Índia*. In English it would be: "Dom Manuel, by God's will King of Portugal and of the Algarve, of the near and the far African ocean, Lord of Guinea, and of the conquest, navigation and commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India". Not too bad for the grand-grandson of D. João I.

<sup>718</sup> This sentence was not written anywhere in the exhibition but summarises the main message of it.

In the beginning of the 1960s Portugal was represented in some international events. In 1960 an exhibition dedicated to port wine was organised in Paris. In 1961, in the Elisabethville exhibition<sup>719</sup> Portugal had two pavilions, one about the whole country and another dedicated to Angola and the railway of Benguela.<sup>720</sup> In the same year Portugal was present in the XXV Fair of Bologna (Italy); however, the Portuguese stand was not very impressive and the products on display were mainly coffee and canned fish. There was also another Portuguese stand, organised by the exporters of coffee and sponsored by the Portuguese State, where it was possible to sample and buy different kinds of Portuguese coffee.<sup>721</sup>

In 1963 and 1964 three important exhibitions in terms of colonial policy took place, two in Luanda and one in Lisboa. The first one was an exhibition based on miniatures handmade by Ana de Sousa Santos, who worked in the department of Ethnology and Ethnography of the Institute of Scientific Research of Angola.<sup>722</sup> These miniatures were about different ethnic groups in Angola and their clothes and personal objects. The exhibition characterised a particular European view of the "natives" which reflected an European ethnocentric perspective. Another exhibition was organised the following year, again in Luanda, in the Museum of Angola and under the impulse of the same Institute. This one was about musical instruments and masks of the people of Angola (*Exposição Etnográfica de Instrumentos Musicais e Máscaras dos Povos de Angola*)<sup>723</sup> and presented several objects collected across the vast colony. Once again, the exhibition had an European perspective. The exhibition held in Lisboa in 1964 had a peculiar name: "How the journalist Emile Marini has seen the Portuguese Overseas Provinces through his photographic lense".<sup>724</sup> This exhibition was based on photographs taken in the colonies and was organised

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<sup>719</sup> The name of this town is now Lubumbashi, in the South of the Democratic Republic of Congo (ex Zaire)

<sup>720</sup> This railway was of major importance for the territory as it crossed the provinces of Benguela, Huambo, Bié and Moxico (from West to East) allowing an efficient connection with the interior of the colony and with other territories in Central Africa.

<sup>721</sup> During the 1960s and the 1970s Portugal was present in other international events, with minor relevance from a political and propagandistic point of view. This is the case of the International Fairs of München (in 1960) and Osaka (in 1970). The International Fairs of Madrid, Geneva, Valencia, among others also had a Portuguese presence.

<sup>722</sup> SANTOS, Ana de Sousa - *Exposição de miniaturas Angolanas - Catálogo*, Luanda, Instituto de Investigação Científica de Angola, divisão de Etnologia e Etnografia, 1963.

<sup>723</sup> *Exposição Etnográfica de Instrumentos Musicais e Máscaras dos Povos de Angola*, Luanda, Museu de Angola, Instituto de Investigação Científica de Angola, 1964.

<sup>724</sup> *Catálogo da Exposição "Como viu através da sua objectiva, as Províncias Ultramarinas Portuguesas o jornalista Emile Marini*, Lisboa, Agência Geral do Ultramar e SNI, 1964.

by the governmental departments of the overseas territories and propaganda. War was escalating at this time in Angola and in other African territories; in terms of propaganda it was important (even vital) for the regime to show no anxiety concerning the colonies. The *Estado Novo* aimed to demonstrate a total confidence in its political and ideological discourse and, consequently, in the future of the empire. This kind of exhibition became more frequent during the end of the decade and the beginning of the 1970s. The opportunity to hold exhibitions about the colonies which ignored or minimised the war and insisted on the Portuguese indisputable right of sovereignty, was systematically taken.<sup>725</sup>

The commemoration of the fortieth anniversary (1966) of the "National Revolution" included a temporary exhibition organised under the name of "The Arts serving the Nation" (*As Artes ao serviço da Nação*).<sup>726</sup> This exhibition intended to show how the *Estado Novo* had improved the arts and how the arts, from a cultural point of view, had helped to the national reconstruction. The exhibition covered mainly the areas of sculpture, paintings and photography. Other items were on display, such as a model of the monument to the discoveries.<sup>727</sup> The model was important as it reinforced the idea that the maritime discoveries were one of the major topics of the *Estado Novo*. That period, regarded and presented as the climax of the Portuguese glory, was always represented in temporary exhibitions when the nationalistic sentiment was to be evoked. During the celebrations of this date, another exhibition on arts was organised. It was about the art awards given by the SNI. The propaganda of the regime, as mentor of arts, was obvious and deliberate.

The end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s was the period when a small but very determined group of scholars developed ethnographic research in Portugal.<sup>728</sup> From their efforts arose the National Museum of Ethnology<sup>729</sup> and a very important

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<sup>725</sup> As some examples it is worth to refer: *Ultramar Português de Hoje e de Sempre*, an exhibition organised by the SNI in Lisboa (July 1968); in 1973 another exhibition was called "Exhibition of the Cultural activities of the Overseas Ministry" (*Exposição Actividades Culturais do Ministério do Ultramar*, Lisboa, Agência Geral do Ultramar, September 1973); in 1974 another exhibition of this kind was organised (*Exposição "Uma Acção de estímulo aos artistas portugueses de temática ultramarina"*, Lisboa, Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1974). The regime was obviously making a strong effort to continue its colonial policy.

<sup>726</sup> *As Artes ao Serviço da Nação*, Lisboa, SNI, Comissão executiva das comemorações do 40º aniversário da Revolução Nacional, 1966.

<sup>727</sup> This monument was erected near the Tower of Belém by the river Tejo, in front of the monastery of *Jerónimos*, and was one of the symbols of the Portuguese "golden age".

<sup>728</sup> The core of this group was constituted by Ernesto Veiga de Oliveira, Fernando Galhano, Jorge Dias and Benjamin Pereira. See Appendix for synopsis of interview with Pereira.

<sup>729</sup> See Chapter 6.

temporary exhibition held in Lisboa (in the palace *Burnay*) in July 1968. The exhibition was called "Exhibition of Portuguese Agricultural Implements" (*Exposição de Alfaia Agrícola Portuguesa*) and gathered a very important collection of objects. This exhibition was the starting point for the extraordinary collection of agricultural implements the National Museum of Ethnology still possesses. As Veiga de Oliveira confirmed, this exhibition was the first one about this issue ever organised in Portugal in a scientific systematic way.<sup>730</sup> This movement, centred on ethnology, was not seen as very interesting by the authorities. The official trend was that ethnography should study overseas territories cultures and populations, not the European ones. Nevertheless some important fieldwork<sup>731</sup> was done during this last phase of the *Estado Novo*. Some of this work had a political motivation and the researchers were sometimes carefully watched (and even persecuted) by the political police.

In 1968 another exhibition about the maritime discoveries took place in Lisboa, at the National Gallery of Art of Belém: "Pedro Álvares Cabral and his epoch" (*Pedro Álvares Cabral e a sua época*). The exhibition was based on cartographic originals of the epoch, manuscripts, navigation instruments, paintings and miniatures of boats. The voyage of Pedro Álvares Cabral and the discovery of Brazil (in 1500) were the pretext on which to develop an exhibition about the epoch. The importance of Portugal in the world during that period was emphasised, in the nationalistic way already mentioned for other exhibitions of this nature.

Finally, some temporary exhibitions that were not individually very significant but that as a whole were quite important are worth a reference. In the beginning of the 1970s, following a trend that had begun in the previous decades, the SNI and other departments of propaganda organised several temporary exhibitions to promote individual artists. They were mainly painters and ceramists. During January and February 1974 five of these exhibitions took place.<sup>732</sup> Even in its final days, the regime did not give up the propaganda and used the arts and temporary exhibitions to forward its ideology. This is important

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<sup>730</sup> See OLIVEIRA, Ernesto Veiga de - "Exposição da Alfaia Agrícola Portuguesa do Museu de Etnologia do Ultramar". *In Revista de Etnografia*, nº 26, Porto, Junta Distrital do Porto, Museu de Etnografia e História, 1968, page1.

<sup>731</sup> It is of relevance the work of Jacometi and Lopes Graça on what concerns folk songs.

<sup>732</sup> Fernando Fernandes (painter); Jony Joanes (painter); Artur José (ceramist); Mário Oliveira (painter); Maria Adelaide Cruz (painter). The catalogues of these exhibitions were published by the SNI and are available in the archive of the Museu do Chiado, Lisboa. Photographs of the exhibitions are available at the National Archive of Photography.

mainly because the leaders of the *Estado Novo* were aware of the politically difficult situation of the regime. Even facing major problems to maintain the control of the country<sup>733</sup>, the *Estado Novo* was not giving up propaganda as an important means of spreading its ideology.

This chapter has discussed the evidence of the propagandistic and ideological objectives of the *Estado Novo* when organising temporary exhibitions. Propaganda was not seen as an 'evil' thing; on the contrary, the objectives of the governmental departments of propaganda, as they were established by law, were quite simple: to promote the national policy based upon a nationalistic ideology and to control the media (radio, press, and all others capable of forming public opinion).<sup>734</sup> If controlled and properly used, museums and especially temporary exhibitions were excellent means for spreading propaganda. Temporary exhibitions, exactly for the fact of being temporary, enabled intense 'experiences' of state propaganda. Some of the results, judged as positive, were used again and again. The *Estado Novo* never underestimated the power of such media and 'invested' in its accuracy and efficiency. The main themes of such exhibitions were the colonial empire and the maritime discoveries, as well as the support to the arts and culture and the economic and financial achievements of the regime. The exhibitions on these themes were to demonstrate that the *Estado Novo* had proved to be the best possible regime for Portugal. Furthermore, the exhibitions aimed to establish that the country needed to maintain the regime as the only solution to face future problems and difficulties.

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<sup>733</sup> One of the symptoms were the problems inside the army. In March 1974 a rebellion did not succeed but made evident that the *status quo* was about to be changed.

<sup>734</sup> See, for example, decree 23054 (1933/09/25) that established the existence of the SPN directly linked to the Prime Minister.



## Chapter 8 - Conclusions

This research has aimed at establishing how museums and temporary exhibitions were used as a means of propaganda during the *Estado Novo*. Since the regime was deeply imbued of a nationalist ideology, there were good reasons for looking for that agenda in the museums and exhibitions of the period. Very often in Portugal museums are associated with the presentation of history. Nationalism itself commonly bases some of its postulates on arguments drawn from history. Hence questions on the making of history in museums were also to be put. How museums and exhibitions, by making history, dealt with the themes of the propaganda of the regime was a key question for the research.

Against a political and cultural framework as background, the previous chapters have presented several cases of museums and of exhibitions of the *Estado Novo* period. It is fairly easy to find evidence that there was State propaganda, in temporary exhibitions – actually for some of them there was hardly anything else. Yet, it is not so immediately evident that the management of museums also conformed to the same propagandistic ends. With the exception of museums that have been partially closed, the collections of the present are not the same as in the past and are not displayed in the same way. The alternatives are the archives of the museums and, or, other sources of the epoch that may have described, or photographed, the buildings, the collections or even events in the museums. As a complement, interviews with the people who worked there may help to remember that past. However, there is no possibility of an integral reconstitution of that past. This is no new fact for historians as it keeps happening both for remote and for recent epochs and either because of the scarcity of sources or because of the difficulty arising from the need to choose some and eventually discard others. Hence, the making of the history of museums that made history themselves carries a double subjectivity – it is a construction about a construction.

Looking for evidence of propaganda in the archives of the museums some choices were to be made. These have to do with the concept of propaganda, itself. How does a State make propaganda? Propaganda brings to public knowledge the political options of the regime, while making the encomium of those choices. It was previously stated that history and heritage were major arguments in the construction of propaganda. Therefore, museums

had the raw materials for successful propaganda. Hence, the archives of the museums were researched for evidence of objects and of collections that had not only an artistic or historical value but also a symbolic value in the discourse of nationalism. Some did indeed come up. A further item of research was the public: propaganda is pointless without a public. Yet, statistics on public affluxes to museums for that epoch seldom exist. And yet there is some evidence that, with few exceptions, Portuguese museums were not regularly visited by a large number of people. Not even the fact that the educative role of museums was acknowledged and favoured by the regime resulted in a long lasting positive impact in the habits of cultural consumption of the population. Few people went to the museums. Who was then the State targeting, by protecting and enhancing its museums? A failure might be admissible but the dictator was not a man to live along with failures – and even less to spend the State's money with them. Hence, the question about the role played by museums in community life remains. A deeper look into the archives of the museums brought with it another picture of the reality of the museums of the epoch. Apparently meaningless documents, on quarrels between directors and workers, about repairs that had to be done in the museum, or about the scarcity of money, if used for illustrating the day to day life of the museum reveal the image of a social (hence political) cell of the *Estado Novo* building – the museums as cultural institutions. Dictators are not expected to be naïve and they will know that they must dominate the people either by force or by persuasion. As a sort of political architect, Salazar designed the Portuguese polity as a building, joining parts coherently, namely State and Society. A totalitarian State may go as far as to engulf Society in the State. But Salazar's corporatism aimed at persuading the community of the advantages of living under the ordered rules and values of the *Estado Novo*. As a microcosm, museums were able to do so. They were supposed to live as ordered cells submitted to the ordered values, and to the budget and to the decrees of the central State. And this was also propaganda, as working for the State meant being integrated (ie. formally accepted) in a particular vision of the world that altogether was to make the identity of the “ordered” Portuguese citizen.

In the chapters above, the case studies were deliberately approached from a historical perspective, which already involves some interpretation. Yet, the aim of the present chapter, which finalises this dissertation, is to synthesise the context and evidence of the previous chapters and draw conclusions on the use of museums and temporary exhibitions as media

for propaganda by the *Estado Novo*. A brief revision of the political and cultural framework in which the museums were integrated, along with the main concepts used for the interpretation of that framework will be presented. Then the propagandistic use of museums and exhibitions will be interpreted, both in general terms and for the specific item of the making of history in museums. Finally it will be essayed to define the theoretical and methodological standpoints of the museum practice of the *Estado Novo*.

### **8.1 – The political and cultural framework and the use of history**

The Republican Revolution of 1910 put an end to the monarchy that had lasted for almost eight centuries. Portugal hoped the Republic to solve some of the major national problems. However, the new regime proved unable to do so, and difficulties grew during the sixteen years of the First Republic. In May 1926 military action put an end to the First Republic and imposed a Military Dictatorship that led to the regime known as the *Estado Novo*. In 1928 a young and remarkable professor of economics of the University of Coimbra, António de Oliveira Salazar, became the strongest minister of the government as minister of finance. Four years later, in 1932, he assumed the role of prime-minister, a place that he kept until 1968. The mid and late 1930s were a period of consolidation for the new regime. Salazar was presented by the propaganda of the *Estado Novo* as the new Portuguese hero, the one who had been able to solve the economic and financial crisis, thus restoring national pride and the international autonomy of the country. During this period, Salazar not only presented what were to be the main ideological features of the long lasting *Estado Novo* but also put them into practice. Salazar was clearly the mastermind behind the regime, and the propagandistic apparatus that was set up was designed to inculcate his own options in the hearts and minds of the Portuguese people and thus make of those truly national options.

The Second World War upset Salazar's strategic and economic plans; nevertheless, he was able to keep Portugal out of the war, preserving the integrity of the European territory and the possession of the overseas colonies. This achievement was also seen as one of the major deeds of the incontestable leader of the *Estado Novo*. The opposition to the authoritarian regime of Salazar grew stronger during the late 1940s and the 1950s. The

regime faced severe internal political difficulties. In the beginning of the 1960s the pro-independence movements in the African colonies initiated a war that would last until 1974 and that was to become one of the main reasons for the collapse of the *Estado Novo*. In 1968 Salazar became seriously ill and Marcello Caetano was appointed as the new prime-minister. He tried to reform the regime from the inside, but the colonial war proved to be an insoluble problem without further structural change. In 1974 the militaries decided that it was time to end up with this war and the revolution of April put an end to the *Estado Novo*.

The ideological basis of the *Estado Novo* can be summarised in four words: God, Homeland, Family and Work. These were unquestionable pillars of the regime. Despite being a secular regime, the *Estado Novo* recognised the large majority of Catholics in Portugal and considered religion as one of the main characteristics of the Portuguese people. On top of that, the beginning of the Portuguese independence (back in the 12th century) was presented as a will of God. To the end of the monarchy and during the First Republic Portugal had gone through several decades of endless internal political disputes and the popular disbelief in national institutions was obvious. The *Estado Novo* wanted to restore national pride and so the word "homeland" became increasingly used in the political discourse. According to the ideology of the new regime, the smallest social cell was the family. This cell was considered as the social nucleus that should preserve morality and care for the transmission of the basic values of social life. Finally, work was both a pragmatic and a moral need: the husband had to work to provide for his family but also to be regarded as a respectable member of society, someone who contributed to the common well-being. Idleness was seen as a major "offence" against society. Altogether, these values led to another, which could conglomerate them all, thus conveying a particular aim and a meaning to the fact of living in society: the nation. The nation was one of the major concepts of the *Estado Novo*. The needs of the nation explained the existence of the regime, and the regime was presented as the only possible means for protecting and enhancing the nation.

For the promotion of the nation the *Estado Novo* based its ideological construction on three main themes: the very existence of a nation, the right to a territory and the venerable age of history and traditions. These symbolic values were proclaimed by the *Estado Novo* as the official and unquestionable truth. The *Estado Novo* selected some characteristics of the nation, some aspects of the territory and some themes of the national history and traditions to be used as ideological issues of propaganda. For the regime, the

nation was ancient, proud of itself, highly relevant for the progress of civilisation and therefore world-wide recognised. The territory was multi-continental, as a consequence of the maritime discoveries that had given historical rights of occupation to the Portuguese; the territory was therefore united and indivisible. Portuguese history and traditions were venerable and respectable, and consequently a motive for national as well as individual pride.

In order to explain these assertions, the regime emphasised some aspects of the Portuguese history that could endorse such characteristics. The nation was described as the oldest nation of Europe. Another important issue of the propaganda of the regime was the fact that the national territory had the oldest firmly established frontiers in Europe. The maritime discoveries had allowed the addition of large possessions that were Portuguese by rights of discovery and occupation. As a consequence, it was claimed, Portugal had become a country composed of a single nation and ruled by one state, though territorially scattered all over the world. The diversity of the territory was presented as a reason for unity, as each part was complementary to the others.

To strengthen this ideology the *Estado Novo* used history as final proof, even stretching some arguments in questionable ways. The historiography of the *Estado Novo* elected some national heroes, men that had performed “remarkable” deeds and that should therefore be seen as examples to follow. Salazar was presented as the last of those heroes whose financial “miracle” had saved the country from inevitable bankruptcy and consequent external dependence. This narrative of history, centred on individual “heroic” agents, was the result of a positivist conception of historiography. Therefore, history was presented as a positive sequence of indisputable facts, thus legitimising the ideology.

The *Estado Novo* would never accept the assertion that history is a construction, in the sense that the narrative of history is the result of the historian’s research and not directly the past “as it was”. The ontological gap between past and present was not acceptable for the essentialist conception of history that the regime upheld. On the contrary, the official history was ideologically oriented, for nationalist purposes. There was a normative aim, which was that of strengthening motherland moral values. The State itself was a concept entangled in the rhetoric of nationalism. The State matched the Nation perfectly; it was the nucleus of the Nation’s political power and therefore its political expression. It was also

claimed that it had been so for the previous eight centuries, so Portugal was presented as an independent and stable, ancient nation-state aged eight hundred years. For the *Estado Novo* it was its mission to keep that historical past alive and the nationalist messages issued were one way of accomplishing that task. Besides, nationalism was presented by the *Estado Novo* as the only political solution in accordance with the history of the country. Furthermore, it was presented as the only pragmatic solution for the country's financial and economic crisis as well as for keeping the national pride, which was fundamental for internal cohesion and for re-orienting external relations. In theoretical terms, it can be asserted that the historiography of the *Estado Novo* (and the *Estado Novo* itself, for political purposes) subscribed the theses of the historical approach to nationalism, rather than the modernist approach. History was a means of legitimising the very existence of the independent Portuguese nation, so the eyes of the Portuguese people were deliberately redirected into the past (ever since primary school) so that they learnt the premisses of the syllogism that was to demonstrate that Portugal was "for ever" and that people should be proud of that.

The importance of ideology for the regime is well documented by the legislation it produced. On what concerns museums and cultural heritage, the *Estado Novo* followed at first the policies of the previous regime, preventing the exportation of artistic, archaeological and historical objects and acquiring for both the national and the regional museums. However, legislation on museums and national monuments was changed at an early stage of the regime. Propagandistic and ideological roles were attributed to museums and to cultural heritage, as the *Estado Novo* conceived the care for artistic, archaeological and historical objects as a nationalistic obligation. The most obvious example is the legislation that enabled the commissions in charge of national temporary exhibitions to request objects from museums to be used in the exhibitions. The separation of the museums into the national and the regional types was clear. The first were supposed to collect, preserve and exhibit collections that, for their meaning, were of nation wide importance, whereas the latter were to collect preserve and exhibit objects the importance of which would be mainly local or regional. Exceptionally, some regional museums kept objects or even collections of a larger, even national significance, a fact that might improve at least the symbolic importance of the museum in the national panorama. After the initial impulse for the renovation of the museums, the distinction between museums of the regional and of the national types enabled the *Estado Novo* to decentralise budgetary responsibilities. In



practical terms it means that local associations, along with local authorities, were asked to grant financial support for the museums. Another of the legislative outcomes was the increased importance attached to the training of professionals for working in the museums. Thus, the regime was aware of the necessity of making both the management of museums and the care for the collections tasks of a professional status, for the sake of efficiency. Specific legislation on temporary exhibitions was also produced, which reveals that the main concerns of the regime were those of propaganda, not strictly the care for the objects and collections. And yet the object was central in the logics of display during the *Estado Novo*, as will be mentioned further in this chapter.

To sum up, this was the panorama: a central, authoritarian State that sought the support of the Nation by gathering it under a nationalist ideology, which needed a propagandistic machine for being spread. Museums, as cultural institutions, were soon programmed by legislative measures to be part of that apparatus.

## **8.2 - The use of museums and temporary exhibitions**

Hence, during the *Estado Novo* museums and temporary exhibitions were the mirror of the official understanding of the world. The positivist conception of history, above mentioned, conceived of time as a linear sequence, like a path, with a beginning and a predictable end. As history was seen as a group of indisputable facts, it should be possible to reconstitute the past from a core of tangible documents. Those facts, represented by those documents, were to be chronologically aligned, each one in its own place. In museums this was also the understanding of history. An immediate result of such conceptions was that many exhibitions were organised chronologically, with the objects aligned as the facts of positivist history (for example the MAB organised its archaeological collections this way). These exhibitions were considered as the exhibit of truth, because they resulted from the historical truth provided by documents – in this sense, the objects where documents, the material evidence of facts. But, beyond the strict rules of positivism, the main goal of history - for the *Estado Novo* - was to provide lessons from the past. As a result, museums and exhibitions were expected to make known those lessons. People who would go to museums or temporary exhibitions were the target of those messages and were expected to learn that particular version of the past. Heroes from the past were presented as examples to

follow, and their deeds were considered models of good behaviour. Besides, as history had a moral and political purpose, the act of making history should serve that purpose. The consequence is that producing history - for the *Estado Novo* - was a process imbued by ideology and museums reflected that. Museums and temporary exhibitions as places where history was made and presented were too to serve that ideological aim, that is, to serve the nation as the highest value. The interpretation of history was the process of achieving that goal. The state set the rules for interpreting history in a propagandistic way, combining documents and facts with ideology and propaganda. Museums in general and temporary exhibitions followed those rules in their making of history and were then used to pass the message. This was evident in the 1940 exhibition, especially in the exhibits on the achievements of the *Estado Novo*, but was also present in museums as the MAS.

Despite the fact that the legislation of the period defined several categories of museums, for the purposes of the present research the division between national and regional museums was a focus of attention. A third division that does not have a legislative basis, but which is helpful in analytical terms, was introduced under the designation of specialised museums. The distinctive characters of each will be synthesised below.

National museums, despite some effort exerted by the State to ensure minimum conditions for them to function, faced several financial difficulties that are evident at all levels of their day-to-day life. For internal and external purposes, the State wanted the museums, especially the national museums, to be the mirror of the nationalist dominant ideology, by disseminating the message that the regime was faithful to the historical past of the nation and that it took good care of its heritage. Yet, very often the national museums went through severe difficulties, such as those described in apparently minor episodes as that of the leaking roofs, or of the lack of funding for buying a typewriter, but also scarcity of means for paying the personnel museums absolutely needed and, most of all, for supporting a coherent and effective acquisition policy.

These were mainly the worries of the directors of the museums. They had to face permanently a central administration that was deaf to the claim of their difficulties. It seems that, for the directors, the cultural function of museums was primordial, even above their political function of spreading propaganda. It does not necessarily mean that they were immune to that use of the museums; only for them those were second order questions that

were preceded by the more immediate need for preservation of the objects. As for the government, their political reading of the situation was entirely opposite. That was fairly evident at the time of the organisation of several national as well as external exhibitions. The State would either stretch the budget attributed to a museum or cut it down, according to the propagandistic potentialities of the labour of the museum.

These museums were organised internally as a succession of valuable objects. The sequences of objects were either based on chronological or typological criteria. The displays presented the objects as treasures, both for their intrinsic value and for the importance of the collection as a whole, often in terms of the nationalistic ideology. Labels were preferentially made for each of the objects and with factual information, such as date, authorship, raw material used and number in the inventory. There was no interpretation in those. Seldom would the museums exhibit a common label for a set of objects, interpreting the meanings resulting from the combination of those objects. Ancient art collections, historical or archaeological objects were the most common among the collections of national museums. Exceptionally the MAP and the MNE gathered objects of ethnographic significance. Hence, national museums were very much like mausoleums of a venerable past, reliquaries for treasures that were the legacy of revered common ancestors. This was indeed the trend of the epoch, in museum techniques. But what is being highlighted here is the fact that the positivist discourse of history and of museums matched the essentialist conception of history and heritage that backed State propaganda.

As was previously stated the internal life of these museums can be read as a microcosm of the larger social organisation of the *Estado Novo*. Personal relations among the personnel of the museum were framed in the boundaries that the system set for them. The very first condition to be admitted as a worker for the State was the certification by the political police that the candidate's political record was clean, that is to say, that he had not been involved in political activities of a subversive nature, according to criteria set by the State. Then, day-to-day life, inside of the museum, established clearly hierarchical relations among the people. These hierarchies were both of a professional and of a more general social nature, reproducing differences that came from the outside world. Frequently, it is hard to tell whether the ascendancy - dependency relations set inside of a museum, among workers and directors, for example, draw from professional or personal relations. According to the legislation, the directors were indeed supposed to be commanding in the

museums – in practical terms some were more than others according to their personality and circumstances. Yet, the rigid hierarchy of the corporatist State established the ascendancy of those directors, according to the strict scheme of the *Estado Novo* that draw a pyramid of hierarchical dependencies. As the dictator upon the Nation, the directors of the museums ruled their institutions in a paternalistic manner, sometimes even getting involved in the workers private life, either for helping (what would usually result in pathetic expressions of thankfulness by the subordinates) or for imposing the moral patterns of behaviour set by the regime. In turn, the directors were supposed to show the same loyalty towards central government authorities. There is some evidence of expressed disagreement by the directors but it does not mean that, by the end, they disobeyed central orders. It is useful here to remember that whereas common workers at the museums were “common” people who had had few or no formal education, directors were chosen among the cultural elites of the country. In the museums, as well as in nearly all other institutions of the time, the tentacles of the social and political organisation set by the State were therefore present and active. In this sense, culture was dominated by politics.

As was hypothesised at the beginning of the research there is some specificity reflected in the life of regional museums. The first and perhaps major is the fact that these institutions went through even harsher budgetary difficulties. This was due both to the fact that they had less capacity of exerting influence upon the central State and to the fact that their propagandistic impact upon the people, especially that of peripheral museums, was estimated as substantially minor than that of the national museums. It is possible to know this through the points of view presented by the directors, whenever they were able to reach the central State, expressing arguments in favour of their museums. Such was the case for the period of preparation for the exhibition of 1940. Some museums that had for long been willing to acquire objects or collections or even to undertake works in the buildings, but had postponed those decisions due to the lack of money, were then able to fulfil those objectives. Unlike the usual contention of expenditure, the regime mobilised substantial material resources for the nation wide preparation of the commemorations, the climax of which was to be attained with the Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World. There, in Lisboa, was the centre of the celebrations but all through the country the material evidences of Portuguese culture, heritage and history were also looked after with particular care. As a

consequence, regional museums received temporarily financial support, which was far more substantial than usual.

Another major difficulty of these regional museums was the management of the heterogeneous collections that they usually kept. The reasons for that heterogeneity were mainly three. First, the acquisition policies of those museums were mainly determined by their regional and local roots that made them responsible for collecting all sorts of objects of historical, artistic, archaeological or ethnographic value. Besides, the directors were usually recruited locally, people with a fierce sense of the specificities of the local and of the regional levels of Portuguese culture and heritage, a factor that reinforced the tendency for acquiring a diversity of objects. Finally, these museums received several donations of private owners who wanted to perpetuate the memory of someone and, or, give public utility to a diversity of objects or collections that were considered by themselves as museum objects. Yet, that way, some of the museums managed to gather remarkable collections or exceptional objects, for their historical and symbolic value, that even a national museum would not despise to have in its collections. This was also used before the central authorities as an argument to ask for further material resources for providing adequate care for the collections. The rhetoric of nationalism was then used to evoke the symbolic value for the nation of this or that particular object.

The directors' personal qualities were fundamental in the management of these local museums. Their initiatives, strong will, capacity of persuading the others and of exerting influence were key factors for the success of the museums. Sometimes it was the local museum that led innovative experiments, in terms of museum practices. Some examples are the organisation of conferences and other cultural events that assembled the cultural elites of the time, or activities in the educational area, or the establishment of close relations with local communities, or the involvement of new publics, or simply the organisation of temporary exhibitions. It was not until the mid nineteen sixties that these programmes became part of national initiatives and of the national policies for the museums. Until then, they were exceptional and depended entirely on the performance of these individual directors who were able to mobilise local resources and good will for their initiatives. Some local associations, known as "the friends of the museum", were born that way. The *Estado*

*Novo* supported those initiatives, from a legal perspective, as they lessened the budgetary responsibilities of the central State. Some still remain.

The museums that we have designated as specialised emerged in a later phase of the *Estado Novo*, that is to say the 1950's and the 1960's. For the regime they were isolated investments in areas where there was a necessity of public intervention either by the specificity of the situation or for reasons of political opportunity. Two of these examples were previously analysed, each representing each of the situations mentioned. In Conímbriga it was the specificity of the place that made intervention urgent; as for the MNE it was what was thought to be a political opportunity that favoured the creation of a museum. Nevertheless, in both cases, the State aimed at creating exemplary museums that would be the proof that the regime took very good care of the national heritage and that might, that way, work as a support for renovated nationalistic theses.

The pillars of the nationalist ideology had emphasised the past of the nation, even a past as distant as the pre-roman age in the Peninsula, where from some theorists had been able to grasp the roots of independence. Hence the importance attributed to archaeological remains. Conímbriga, for the richness of the remains of the roman period that were found there and that arose the interest of the international archaeological community, had to be cared in a special manner, so as to prove that the State was indeed effective in its concern for the nation's historical past. Thus, the support to the excavations and the creation of a museum were seen as a political opportunity. Both inside and outside the country, there was a public of potential admirers of the State's cultural policy, if a proper and modern solution was found for Conímbriga. In Lisboa, the MNE was the result of a particular situation. By then, the *Estado Novo* was facing growing difficulties in keeping the overseas empire, at first in the ideological and then even in the military field. After World War II, the international community had started the condemnation of colonialism and therefore secessionist movements in colonies became ever more active. For the State, the creation of a museum that would propagate the thesis that there were permanent historical reasons for the link between Portugal and the overseas territories was vital. The museum was then planned as a cultural validation of the State's colonial policy. However, the museum was to become more a focus of criticism to the establishment than an ally. Still, for both cases, it

was the idea of taking political advantage of cultural dynamism that led the State to finance these initiatives.

As in the two types previously mentioned, the directors of these two museums and their teams played an important role in the definition of what the museums were to become. In Conímbriga, Bairrão Oleiro was essential to the creation of the museum and the definition of the initial project. Even after he had left, the new director, who had worked in close cooperation with him, followed the same guidelines. In the MNE, and contradicting the official plans for the museum, it was Jorge Dias, the director, and his team that together drew the guidelines for contesting rather than supporting colonialism and imperialism, hence facing the dominant ideology. It was high time for alternative ways of conceiving the world after several decades under the monochrome *Estado Novo*.

In fact, these two museums, born after 1945, were born in a new era, both for Europe and for Portugal. For the Portuguese State, the creation of “specialised” museums made it necessary to work in close relation with specialists, that is to say, cultural elites coming from the academic world. The social history on this particular period of the regime has shown that there was a growing internal opposition to the regime and a search for external alternative models. Cultural, urban elites led the process and the universities, for their inner attribute of reflexivity, were potential foyers for the mobilisation against the regime.

Temporary exhibitions were crucial for the propaganda of the regime. Their propagandistic language is self-evident, but they also carried other, less evident but still political messages. There were four main themes in these exhibitions: the colonial empire, Portuguese art, Portuguese history and ethnography, the achievements of the *Estado Novo*. Quite often the exhibitions matched all four items in a deliberate propagandistic combination. All of them were used in the rhetoric of nationalism: the empire as an indestructible part of the Portuguese soul and hence of the Portuguese territory; art as one of the greatest manifestations of the cultural grandiosity of the nation; history and ethnography as the proof of the historical essence of Portuguese cultural individuality and political autonomy; finally, the achievements of the *Estado Novo* (from infrastructures to cultural policies) were presented as evidence of the efficacy of the regime and therefore of



the necessity to maintain it, in order to proceed the construction of the new Portugal. The dark alternative presented was always Portugal as it had been before the 28 May 1926.

The themes mentioned all served the same objectives. In general, there were five main objectives: internal and external propaganda; ideological consolidation; the definition of the nationalist values; indoctrination of the population; stabilisation of the regime. Propaganda was clearly supported by the State as a legitimate activity and even an essential one, an assertion that led to the creation of the SPN and then of the SNI. The regime was aware of the necessity of divulging its vision of the world and of making it convincing. Salazar was ready to impose his reasons, but did a great deal for making them known and accepted rather than imposed. The exhibitions were part of this strategy. Besides they were also directed to external public opinion and to external political leaders, for Salazar wished the foreign countries to recognise the rightfulness of Portuguese positions. He claimed that Portugal needed to have its own coherent external policy rather than some external relations, and conceived of it in a setting of international recognition and respect. Besides, the regime claimed to be the result of a definite ideology and therefore there was a necessity of convincing the people of the rightfulness and advantages of that State ideology. Nationalism was a pillar for the State so it became central in the language of the exhibitions. Complementary themes, such as the hierarchies of the Portuguese society, the corporatist organisation, the thorough management of public economy and finance, were also patent. The country was repeatedly presented as taking good account of its material resources, and the regime as one that honoured its promises, unlike the precedent ones. So, political stability, that is to say the need for the continuity of the regime, was the logic conclusion to draw from the discourse of the exhibitions. Hence ideological inculcation was vital for the regime: exhibitions, where museum objects and other deliberate symbols were put together, according to a grammar imposed to the objects that transformed all of them into proofs of the nationalist discourse, were privileged places for indoctrination. Following B. Anderson's analysis of nationalism,<sup>735</sup> this was a huge investment in the imagination of the Portuguese people.

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<sup>735</sup> See note 101, ANDERSON, Benedict - "Old Empires, new nations" in *Imagined Communities, reflections on the origins and spread of nationalism*, London, Verso, 1993, p.50-65.

The amount of material resources involved in these initiatives was indeed huge to meet the grandiosity planned for the exhibitions. In most cases, the sceneries and the artificial ambiences created were impressive and for that reason memorable. For national as well as for international fairs and exhibitions, the State made its best for producing remarkable images of itself. For the purpose, the sceneries were grandiose, the objects were carefully chosen according to their symbolic value, the texts inscribed in the labels well conceived, the contents of the speeches delivered thoroughly planned, the memory of the exhibitions edited in catalogues that collected significant texts and photographs. The objects and their sceneries attracted the public. But equivalent or even stronger impact was exerted by the texts in the labels, for their intense propagandistic message. A graph showing the State accounts was associated to a label where it could be read that the *Estado Novo* had rescued the country from bankruptcy; or a fishing boat had a label that appraised positively the State's fishing policies; or the drawings of the plan of a new bridge were illustration for a label on the efficacy of the regime's infrastructures policy. There were also some texts on the virtues of the national heroes of the past and of the present: the kings, the warriors, the governors and, among them, of Salazar himself. At inaugural ceremonies speeches delivered would always repeat the affirmation of the structural values of the regime and the principles of the prevailing nationalist ideology that supported the State. Perhaps the public was not abundant at these sessions. In 1940, however, the programme of events was planned with successive inaugurations all through the period of the exhibition, for the public to be there. The published materials resulting from those events were attempts to register and perpetuate the main aspects of the exhibitions. Their circulation would result in an increased impact of the exhibitions.

### **8.3 - Theoretical and methodological standpoints of the museum practice of the *Estado Novo***

The definition of the museum, for the *Estado Novo*, is patent in the legislation. However, it is the theoretical concept of the museum behind that model that is targeted here. For the definitions of the corporatist State, museums were institutions of culture. They are still considered to be so. For the present, it is quite uncontroversial that the function of museums, as cultural institutions, has a political nature, in the sense that culture is not

neutral when it comes to ascribing power to someone or legitimating authority. Hence propaganda is a way of ordering society, that is, of imposing, through persuasive language and arguments, models of societal organisation and of ideal polities. Made under the strict control of the State, propaganda will tend to introduce patterns of uniformity. Some authors will tend to read these facts in terms of cultural dominance.

The use of museums and temporary exhibitions by the *Estado Novo* can also be interpreted in terms of dominant culture. For the *Estado Novo*, academic culture was hierarchically superior to working-class culture. Museums and exhibitions were seen as opportunities of education for the low classes. That education would include the aesthetic contemplation of the work of art, the understanding of historical lessons as well as basic values of social relations. For the purpose, museums and exhibitions, as expressions of the dominant culture were used to pass its ideology and its values. Political propaganda was part of this strategy of domination.

Museums, as cells of the *Estado Novo*, reflected social cleavages: working-class, middle-class and elites were clearly separated both in social and cultural terms. Museums, as places of enjoyment, were for the elites, perhaps even for the middle-class; the workingman was supposed to learn from the museum, not to enjoy himself. The hierarchical organisation of the Portuguese society was evident in terms of museum practices, as the museum faced its visitors as members of specific social groups. From this point of view, museums were indeed loci of political pragmatics, as they reproduced a rigid social scheme.

Both national and regional museums were under national guidelines for almost all aspects of their internal life. These centralised policies were implemented due to two fundamental factors: first, the central government dominated almost all aspects of the Portuguese life, in a paternalistic way, deciding what was best and what was forbidden; second, museums' fundamental budgetary resources came from central administration. This second factor was decisive in terms of museums' policies, as each museum had a very narrow margin for self-decision. Main decisions and main policies came from above, and so did the propagandistic and ideological message the museums had to pass.

As for the methodological standpoints of museums, during the period, there are three main aspects to mention: a positivist logic of history and, by extension, of the work to be

done with museum objects, which, for the sake of authenticity of the history narrated, should be “the real thing”; the exhibition of people as objects, mainly during some temporary exhibitions; finally the use of deliberate symbols of the national pride among real objects of the museums.

### 8.3.1 - Objects as 'the real thing'

The *Estado Novo* presented itself as a regime that was the guardian of the material remains of the past. As the respect for the national history was one of the main themes of the Portuguese nationalism, the *Estado Novo* recognised the need to care for historical objects, monuments and documents. The preservation of the material evidences of a "glorious past" was a necessary action of propaganda for the regime. It was imperative to match pragmatic action with ideological discourse in order to make it credible. The goals of the nationalistic propaganda were both internal and external, as the regime wanted to be persuasive both inside and outside its borders. The constructed image of a nation that was taking good care of its past was a main objective of the *Estado Novo*.

In order to enhance that image the regime focused on three main groups of objects: artistic objects, historical objects with exceptional symbolic value and ethnographic objects of the popular art, culture and traditions. The common characteristic of those remained in the importance attached to the object as 'the real thing'. That is to say that the authenticity and uniqueness of the objects put on display in museums or temporary exhibitions was one of their most important and emphasised characteristics. Objects with artistic or aesthetic significance were kept in museums like the MNAA, which was considered a very good example of the cultural policy of the regime. Displays of historical and archaeological objects were most common both in national and in local museums. Some very special objects, such as the sword of Afonso Henriques or the garment King John the First wore during the battle of Aljubarrota, were almost venerated for their quality of national symbols. These objects were used to evoke the national pride and to tell a story, interpreting history in a nationalistic way. Museums were conceived as 'reliquaries', where objects were to be kept and admired. The organisation of the displays matched the positivist conception of history. Each object was the tangible proof of a certain historical fact, and valuable because

of that very status. No structural interpretation was available and, as a consequence, each object was conceptually isolated from the others. Museums exhibitions were sequences of isolated objects.

With a slightly different use, ethnographic objects were also of great importance for the regime. It was the *Estado Novo* aim to affirm the originality of the Portuguese material culture as one of the characteristics of the national independence. Ethnographic material was also used to stress the belief that national unity was generated by regional diversity. Originally, this was used to explain the diversity inside the European part of the country. However, at a later stage, it was also used to justify one of the most important political and ideological statements of the regime – that of the indivisibility of the national territory, which included both the continental and the overseas provinces. In temporary exhibitions held in the late 1930s, and in the 1940 exhibition, the regime emphasised the indivisibility of the territory in an effort to indoctrinate all Portuguese people in the official truth.

The propaganda of the *Estado Novo* proclaimed that its policy concerning museums was based on a deep concern with artistic, historical and archaeological objects and with their conservation and cultural use. However, the regime allowed and encouraged other uses of such objects, even at the risk of jeopardising their integrity and against the advice of curators and museum directors. During official commemorations and temporary exhibitions with high political and ideological purposes, museum objects were used with propagandistic intentions, with very few or no concern at all for possible damages. The regime wanted to be identified with the care and devotion for art and history but did not hesitate to use museum objects to pursue propagandistic interests. Unaware of the technical aspects of the exhibition, the public would stare and admire the ‘things’ the nation possessed.

Despite the proclaimed concern with museums and heritage, the lack of financial resources museums had to deal with during the *Estado Novo* was directly reflected in the poor conditions of the buildings and in all sorts of material difficulties faced by museum directors. No coherent acquisition policy could be followed and even the smallest problems of the day-to-day life of museums became major issues. Central administration was extremely careful on what concerned expenditure and museum directors did not have financial autonomy at all. Yet, contradicting this trend, temporary exhibitions were organised with important financial resources. The *Estado Novo* was aware of the fact that

museums - with some exceptions - had few visitors and that their propagandistic impact was low. On the contrary, temporary exhibitions would attract a significant number of people, thus representing a much better propagandistic investment. It is also interesting to look at the fact that temporary exhibitions with propagandistic purposes were rarely organised by museum professionals. It was for the central departments of propaganda to organise them. Thus, the nationalistic message resulting is more obvious and much closer to the standard produced by the central state than it is in museums.

Nevertheless and in spite of the differences, both the museums and the temporary exhibitions were centred in the objects exhibited, both for the makers of the displays and for the public. The former planned the exhibition around the objects that were to be exhibited; the latter were attracted by the rarity of the objects displayed. And yet the choice of the objects obeyed to the symbolic needs of the nationalist and propagandistic discourse. The objects as “real things” were there but their meanings were not open to the interpretation of the public. On the contrary, the public was carefully guided into the particular meanings that it was important to highlight, for political reasons. A crucial example of this is the case of the sword of King D. Afonso Henriques. The “real thing” ought to be there, not a photograph or a replica. But it was not “the sword” equal to so many others that was important. It was the fact that the king had fought the war for the national independence with that sword (and the claimed authenticity of the object was of course crucial for the belief). These symbolic objects were relics of the national past.

### 8.3.2 - People as objects

The Estado Novo not only put objects that had ideological value on display but also transformed people into objects on display. This applies to the use of the national heroes as objects of national pride, used as models of good behaviour and presented as examples to follow. However, it was not possible to have those heroes physically present in the exhibits. As a consequence, their statues or portraits played that role. Another case is the use of real human beings as objects of display. Especially in some temporary exhibitions human beings were displayed as curiosities. This occurred both with “natives” brought from the overseas territories and with other “natives”, who lived in the European territory in rural cultural

environments, at the time almost untouched by urban life. The two main examples of such practice were the exhibitions of 1934 in Porto and of 1940 in Lisboa.

In 1934 the Crystal Palace and its gardens became a miniaturised colonial Empire. Inside the exhibition area it was possible to admire animals and ethnographic objects brought from all over the Empire; it was also possible to taste exotic foods from Africa and Asia; to give the exhibition the colours of authenticity, "natives" from the colonies were also brought to Porto and lived in the gardens of the Crystal Palace for weeks. One of the reasons that attracted visitors to the exhibition was the possibility of seeing real "natives". Visitors were expected to stare in amazement at the sight of such "strange" human beings. In 1940, a Colonial Garden and a Section of Portuguese European Ethnography were two main parts of the Exhibition of the Portuguese World (Lisboa). Again, people from the colonies were brought to be displayed in the exhibition. But in the section of Portuguese ethnography other "natives" from rural villages of mainland territory were also on display. The similarities between these two sections of the exhibition question a possible interpretation of the presence of "natives" from the colonies as an act of racism. People were used as objects of display not because of the colour of their skins but because of their inner cultural significance as members of the "great nation" Portugal was to be presented as.

This use of human beings as objects of display demonstrates the importance of propaganda for the *Estado Novo*. The aims of the regime had to be served. To accomplish propagandistic goals the regime used objects as well as human beings without what would be considered today the due respect. The fundamental intention of temporary exhibitions - and of museums - during the *Estado Novo* was, first and foremost, ideological and political, rather than strictly cultural. Different display techniques were used in temporary exhibitions and in museums, although with almost the same objectives. Temporary exhibitions were meant to impress, to cause visual effect. The scenarios and the objects on display had to produce a vivid impression on the visitors and to engrave in their memories messages of ideological meaning. In museums, this kind of pressure was much weaker. It would not have been possible to have human beings permanently performing at the museums permanent exhibitions as in temporary exhibitions. The rigidity of the museum exhibitions, the total absence of life, the lack of contact with the external real world were some of the main differences with temporary exhibitions. These, by exhibiting people, had the touch of life that the museums lacked. Probably, this was also a reason why they were more



attractive for the public, and the public was fundamental for the success of the temporary exhibitions.

### 8.3.3 - Symbols

Museum objects were used as symbols, but inside museums and in temporary exhibitions the *Estado Novo* presented fabricated symbols of its ideology as well. Those symbols were amongst the objects on display, making it almost impossible to visit a museum or temporary exhibition without becoming imbued by their subliminal message. The symbols most commonly used were related with power, religious faith and socio-political values. The presence of such symbols in museums and in temporary exhibitions was not perceived as abnormal because they were common in day-to-day life. The two main symbols of the nation were the national flag and the national anthem, both used in official ceremonies at museums and temporary exhibitions.

Another symbol of the *Estado Novo* was the power of the army. Salazar stated repeatedly that only through force would it be possible to affirm and maintain the independence of the country. Immediately after becoming prime-minister, one of his decisions was the improvement of the army. The image of the Portuguese soldier, well equipped and prepared to fight for his country was an image of the *Estado Novo*, and its presence is documented in several temporary exhibitions. The comparison with Portuguese soldiers of other times evoked heroism, courage and discipline, all three characteristics that would enable Portugal to keep its independence against all enemies. Discipline was presented as a main civic virtue that led to respectable citizenship. Museums and temporary exhibitions would exhibit soldiers' uniforms, weapons and photographs of military parades, among others, as objects of display. The very notion of document and of museum object was stretched to include pieces of propaganda specifically manufactured for that purpose (an example would be the photographs of the Portuguese army in the 1940 exhibition). Again, this promoted the association of ideology to historical facts. In some temporary exhibitions this process was taken even further, as the main theme of the exhibition was, for example, the military occupation of the overseas territories.

As well as in the army, in all other aspects of social life discipline was presented as necessary to the accomplishment of common good. Symbols were also fabricated for this purpose. The image of the tree or of the pyramid (as in the exhibition of Paris - 1937 - or in Lisboa - 1940) was used to symbolise the social and political organisation of the country. On top, there was the Leader (*O Chefe*) who ruled over all the society and all the political structure of the regime. The leader was, incontestably, Salazar. In temporary exhibitions he was often represented in his academic garments, as a Professor of the University of Coimbra (the oldest and most prestiged of the country) therefore a symbol of authority, intelligence and civic superiority. Salazar and the President of the Republic were the two symbols of the political organisation of the country and their photographs hung in most public places. At the bottom of the hierarchy, even in museum's day-to-day life, the strong presence of the *Estado Novo* would be perceived. Almost every act could be seen as either pro or against the regime and, therefore, interpreted as a political action. The Portuguese administration had a strong hierarchical organisation and all civil servants were submitted to rigorous obedience. The state acted in a paternalistic way, assuming that on what politics were concerned, all citizens were under age. The role of the state was the imposition of order and discipline, the regulation of all public expenditure and the defence of national rights. All these symbols of the regime could be found in museums and in temporary exhibitions. Their presence strengthened the ideological message of the displays and emphasised the presence and the role of the *Estado Novo*. The regime used propaganda as a powerful instrument to spread and to impose its ideology.

As this research has aimed to prove, museums (in their quotidian) and temporary exhibitions (whenever settled) were scenarios of propaganda, *loci* of politics and ideology. The *Estado Novo* was aware of the power of such media and did not underestimate its value. Since a very early phase of the regime, museums, monuments, heritage and temporary exhibitions were under the protection of the State. The chronology of the legislation on heritage and museums and the use of temporary exhibitions clearly demonstrate that the *Estado Novo* intentionally invested money and effort in such means of propaganda. These were not options taken at a late stage of the regime, when trying to resist internal or external opposition; these were options taken since the late 1920's and kept constant, with minor adjustments, until the 1970's. Hence, all through that period, it was not

possible to visit a national museum without being exposed to propaganda. Perhaps more than in any other domain of the politics and propaganda of the *Estado Novo*, museums and temporary exhibitions were, from the beginning, the veritable face of the regime.

## **Appendices**

## **Appendix 1: List of Main Temporary Exhibitions of the *Estado Novo***

Date	Original name of exhibition	Translated name of exhibition	Place
1931	Exposição Timor	Exhibition Timor	Lisboa
1932	Exposição da Colónia da Guiné	Exhibition Colony of Guinea	Lisboa
1932	Exposição Industrial Portuguesa	Exhibition of Portuguese Industry	Lisboa
1934	I Exposição Colonial Portuguesa	First Portuguese Colonial Exhibition	Porto
1936	Exposição de Arte Gentílica - África Portuguesa	Exhibition of native African Art	Lisboa
1936	Exposição do Ano X da Revolução Nacional	Exhibition of the tenth anniversary of the National Revolution	Lisboa
1937	Exposição Internacional de Paris - Pavilhão de Portugal	International Exhibition of Paris - Portuguese Pavilion	Paris
1937	Exposição Histórica da Ocupação	Historical Exhibition of the Occupation	Lisboa
1939	Exposição Marítima do Norte de Portugal	Maritime Exhibition of the North of Portugal	Porto, Crystal Palace
1939	Exposição Internacional de S. Francisco	International Exhibition of San Francisco	Califórnia
1940	Exposição Etnográfica do Douro Litoral e II Feira das Colheitas	Ethnographic Exhibition of <i>Douro Litoral</i> and Second Harvest Fair	Porto, Crystal Palace
1940	Grande Exposição do Mundo Português	Great Exhibition of the Portuguese World	Lisboa
1947	Festas do oitavo centenário da tomada de Lisboa	Commemorations of the eighth centenary of the conquest of Lisboa	Lisboa
1947	Exposição 14 anos de política do espírito	Exhibition 14 years of spirit policy	Lisboa
1948	Exposição de Obras Públicas - comemoração de 15 anos (1932-1947)	Exhibition of Public Works - commemorations of the 15 years	Lisboa
1949	Exposição sobre motivos da Guiné de Martins da Costa	Exhibition on Guinea themes (Martins da Costa)	Lisboa
1949	Exposição de Arte Negra	Exhibition of Black Art	Lisboa
1951	Exposição de Arte Sacra Missionária	Missionary Sacred Art Exhibition	Lisboa
1951-1952	Exposição "Apontamentos de Viagem" de José Amaro Júnior	Exhibition "Notes of a journey" of José Amaro Júnior	Lisboa
1953	Exposição 25 anos do Governo da Nação	Exhibition 25 Years of Government	Lisboa
1955-1956	Portuguese Art 800 -1800	Portuguese Art 800 - 1800	London
1956	Exposição Agrícola	Exhibition of Agriculture	Porto
1957	Exposição Conheça a sua terra como país industrial	Exhibitions: Know your homeland as an industrial country	Lisboa
1960	Exposição Henriquina	Exhibition <i>Henriquina</i> (about Infant D. Henrique)	Lisboa
1961	Exposição em Elisabethville	International Exhibition in Elisabethville	Elisabethville
1961	XXV Feira de Bolonha	XXV International Fair of Bolonha	Bologna
1963	Exposição de Miniaturas Angolanas	Exhibition of Angolan miniatures	Luanda
1964	Exposição Etnográfica de Instrumentos Musicais e Máscaras de Povos de Angola	Exhibition of Musical Instruments and Masks of the people of Angola	Luanda
1964	Exposição "Como viu, através da sua objectiva, as Províncias Ultramarinas Portuguesas o jornalista Emile Marini"	Exhibition "How has the journalist Emile Marini seen the Portuguese Overseas Provinces through his photographic lenses"	Lisboa
1966	Exposição As Artes ao serviço da Nação	Exhibition The Arts serving the Nation	Lisboa
1968	Exposição da Alfaia agrícola Portuguesa	Exhibition of Portuguese Agricultural Implements	Lisboa
1968	Exposição Pedro Álvares Cabral e a sua época	Pedro Álvares Cabral and his epoch	Lisboa, National Art Gallery in Belém

## **Appendix 2: Synopsis of Interviews:**

**File: 01**

### **First Contact**

**Date:** 28/11/97

**Place:** MAS

**Name:** Adão Manuel de Oliveira e Silva; 52

**Institution:** MAS

### **First Interview**

**Date:** 20/12/97

**Place:** *idem*

**Tape:** (no tape)

**Total time:** circa 15 minutes

**Content:** identification; getting informer's confidence.

Minutes	talking about:
00-07	identification;
07-12	professional life; professional changes
12-15	(thank the informer)

### **Second Interview**

**Date:** 30/12/97

**Place:** *idem*

**Tape:** 1A

**Total:** circa 35 minutes

**Content:** identification; changes in professional life; working in the museum

minutes	informer was talking about:
00-03.30	Worked in museum Alberto Sampaio (1968) as guard; very low salary.
03.30-06.50	Good professional relationship with others; received entry payment in foreign currency from tourists and paid to museum with his own money;
06.50-12.40	[...]
12.40-15.50	late 1960s museum had 2 guards, a women to clean all the facilities and director;

15.50-17.00	Official visitors expected impeccable facilities and everything ought to be clean and in order; Director was very demanding.
17.00-21.50	Work was routine; some days only three visitors or even less; weekends with larger numbers of visitors but only in Spring and Summer; during Winter nobody used to visit the museum;
21.50-26.40	after 25/April/1974 nothing really important changed except some problems with colleagues;
26.40-30.10	He worked as guard in the castle; some difficulties with other guards (nobody liked to work in the castle in Winter)
30.10-32.50	[...]
32.50-35.10	(thank the informer)



**File: 02**

**First Contact**

**Date:** 10/1997

**Place:** (phone call)

**Name:** Jerónimo Ferreira (JF);

**Institution:** Museum Agrícola de Fermentões

**First Interview**

**Date:** 15/12/97

**Place:** Museum Agrícola de Fermentões

**Tape:** (no tape)

**Total time:** circa 20 minutes

**Content:** identification; dates of work in museum; getting informer's confidence.

Minutes	talking about:
00-08	identification;
08-17	turning points of his life;
17-20	(thank the informer)

**Second Interview**

**Date:** 30/12/97

**Place:** *idem*

**Tape:** 1B

**Total time:** circa 50 minutes

**Content:** first work in the Museum; different jobs in the museum; relationship with colleagues; official visits.

minutes	talking about:
02.33-05.21	Informer first memories about the museum, long before working there; when he was 12-14 years old he was working as a carpenter and he went to the museum in order to remodel a floor; the director of the museum shouted insults against the priest; the priest shouted back insulting the director;
05.21-08.53	second time JF remembers going to the museum was 18; his job was to restore and build some wooden furniture for the china;

08.53-12.07	JF was 35 years old when went work to the museum; in the museum only worked the director, a servant and him-self
12.07-14.12	description of the museum
14.12-19.28	great changes in mid-1960s
19.28-28.34	[...]
28.34-29.57	working ambience in the museum was good; director was a very exigent but friendly person.
29.57-33.16	JF remembers several official visits to the museum
33.16-44.24	[...]
44.24-46.39	[...] another important concern of the director was the conservation of the collections, especially the paintings that suffered because of the lack of environmental control.
46.39-49.54	[...] (thank the informer)

**File: 03**

**First Contact**

**Date:** /04/1997

**Place:** Letter-telephone

**Name of informer:** José Luís Porfírio

**Institution:** Director MNAA

**First Interview**

**Date:** 05/05/97

**Place:** MNAA

**Tape:** no tape

**Total time:** circa 40 minutes

**Content:** history of the museum; main collections; main archives.

<b>Minutes</b>	<b>talking about:</b>
00-08	description of museum; about collections; organisation of the museum.
08-17	history of museum; how different collections came in; first directors, their ideas and importance; the museum as a school of museology.
17-40	main archives of the museum; where to get information; what is available; the archive of photography; (thank the informer)

**File: 04**

**First Contact**

**Date:** /05/1997

**Place:** Letter-telephone

**Name of informer:** João Manuel Jacob

**Institution:** Director MAB

**First Interview**

**Date:** 06/06/97

**Place:** MAB

**Tape:** no tape

**Total time:** circa 50 minutes

**Content:** organisation of the museum; latest changes in the building; history of the collections; archives available to work with.

Minutes	talking about:
00-06	organisation of museum
06-18	history of museum; first directors; first collections; changes of 1930s;
18-26	inventories: old and recent; what is available in archives; main collections and reserves;
26-41	about salaries and people that worked in the museum; conditions of work in first decades of the century; local newspapers.
41-50	former directors and their ideas. (thank the informer)

**File: 05**

**First Contact**

**Date:** /04/1997

**Place:** Letter-Telephone

**Name of informer:** Adília Alarcão

**Institution:** Director MMC

**First Interview**

**Date:** 21/04/97

**Place:** MMC

**Tape:** no tape

**Total time:** circa 45 minutes

**Content:** origins of the museum; original building; collections; changes and options.

Minutes	talking about:
00-10	origins of the museum: the archaeological site, archaeological activities during the late 1950s and 1960s.
10-17	the original building; lack of space; decision to begin with major changes.
17-34	the changes in the building; what was the result; changes in the exhibition;
34-45	some bibliography (information) (I thank the informer)

**File: 06**

**First Contact**

**Date:** /05/1997

**Place:** Letter-telephone

**Name of informer:** Paulo Silva Henriques

**Institution:** Director MJM

**First Interview**

**Date:** 26/05/97

**Place:** MJM

**Tape:** no tape

**Total time:** circa 40 minutes

**Content:** origins of the museum; temporary exhibition about the museum in the 60s; the building

minutes	talking about:
00-15	origins of the museum; collections and acquisitions; main themes; political ideas and art collections;
15-28	a temporary exhibition about the museum in the 60s; criteria; objects on display; the political use of the museum in the 60s.
28-40	the building; changes and alterations; collections and reserves; (thank the informer)

**File: 07**

**First Contact**

**Date:** 26/05/99-30/05/99

**Place:** letter-e.mail

**Name of informer:** Bairrão Oleiro (BO), 76

**Institution:** retired

**First Interview**

**Date:** 14/06/99

**Place:** Home of interviewee

**Tape:** 2A/B

**Total time:** circa 93 minutes

**Content of interview:** origins of the museum; role of the interviewee; interviewee cultural background.

Minutes	talking about:
00.00-02.25	Origins of the museum; ideas of Virgílio Correia; BO did not agree with those; he had strong thoughts about best solution for the museum;
02.25-08.24	went to Spain in 1949 with a scholarship from the IAC; in that period there was a shortage of roman archaeologists in Portugal; when came back sent a long report to IAC (June 1950); in that report he suggested museum; his proposal included the idea of an archaeology school; João Couto said that someone had ruined his idea: he wanted a museum with a small coffee shop and instead he got a large restaurant with an adjacent museum; influence in the process from the ministry of Tourism.
08.24-12.14	The museum owns its existence to circumstantial episode: the minister of Public Works (Arantes de Oliveira) had friends in Condeixa; BO knew the minister was about to visit the archaeological site and asked to be present; BO managed to emphasise that the situation of Conímbriga was a disaster; minister asked for a complete report and for a plan to implement; BO produced both; the museum was the result;
12.14-16.11	One of first needs was to buy private properties in site area to prevent unauthorised digging; governmental backup; BO had two excellent collaborators (Jorge and Adília Alarcão); they went to UK study conservation methods; Conímbriga was a national reference in the fields of conservation and restoration; locals went work to museum; collaboration with the French.



16.11-12.12	second phase of the museum: rooms to the researchers; this achievement of getting the rooms is due to Adília Alarcão; she changed the museum and managed to achieve some of the original objectives;
20.12-22.27	The museum was built in a place where it was known not to have archaeological remains; Jorge and Adília Alarcão were essential to the success of the plan; when the French came a sentiment of brotherhood emerged. league of museum friends was created; still exists;
22.27-24.52	The quantity of archaeological material was huge; the biggest danger was the dispersion of that material; the creation of the museum put an end to that;
24.52-34.11	The museum only collects from the archaeological site; BO visited the museums of Pompey, Ostia and Ampurias; he mentioned these examples in the report he wrote (see above) (he quoted the report);
34.11-39.04	[...]
39.04-45.57	the second director of the museum was Adília Alarcão; BO thinks that this change benefited the museum as Adília had better preparation than himself;
45.57-56.33	[...]
56.33-61.53	during the Estado Novo BO received official support to go abroad and learn; he studied in Spain, Italy and France;
61.53-68.49	João Couto was one of the decisive influences in BO professional formation; he was a men of wisdom and good advise, always kind to his students and collaborators;
68.49-73.19	BO remembers that all governmental departments reclaimed the right to have museum objects as bibelots; he ordered a national inventory of such cases and found out that, just from the National Museum of Contemporaneous Art more than 400 objects were in such conditions; BO found accidentally an object belonging to the National Museum of Ancient Art "serving" as an ashtray in the Portuguese embassy of Madrid;
73.19-82.31	[...]
82.31-88.31	the decree of 65 was an important improvement;
88.31-93.15	[...] (thank the informer).

**File: 08**

**First Contact**

**Date:** 14/06/99

**Place:** MAP

**Name of informer:** Sebastião Gouveia Santos, 67

**Institution:** MAP

**First Interview**

**Date:** 14/06/99

**Place:** *idem*

**Tape:** 3A

**Total time:** circa 39 minutes

**Content:** Getting the job of night guard; working at the museum in the seventies.

minutes	talking about:
00-02.38	works in the museum as a night guard for 33 years; before coming to the museum worked in the SNI;
02.38-05.27	he knows about some working problems with other guards, but he never had any personal problems
05.27-09.22	he worked alone during the night watch; remembers when the guard Madeira got injured;
09.22-17.06	the work in the museum was a routine;
17.06-20.11	[...]
20.11-25.56	museum improved since 1968
25.56-28.42	during the night the guards had to walk through the museum verifying the security;
28.42-32.38	[...]
32.38-35.17	at the SNI he was a clerk;
35.17-37.18	he had a pistol but that was his personal gun and not a official gun provide by the museum;
37.18-38.25	[...]
38.25-39.11	(thank the informer)

**File: 09**

**First Contact**

**Date:** 15/06/99

**Place:** MAP

**Name of informer:** António Jesus Lopes Crucho, 56

**Institution:** MAP

**First Interview**

**Date:** 15/06/99

**Place:** *idem*

**Tape:** 3A

**Total time:** circa 25 minutes

**Content:** Getting the job of night guard; working at the museum in the 1970s;

Minutes	talking about:
00-02.10	[...]
2.10-03.46	he came working to the museum because a guard was needed; always worked during day; worked nights for exceptional reasons (during colleagues days off, holidays); he worked in "his" room where he was mostly alone;
03.46-04.58	visitors asked for explanations; he answered about objects functions
04.58-6.15	good work relationship with all other guards and museum staff
6.15-09.23	[...]
09.23-15.52	some times the museum received 3 o 4 buses of tourists at the same time;
15.52-16.27	exhibits was almost like they are now;
16.27-22.12	[...]
22.12-25.17	(thank the informer)

**File: 10**

**First Contact**

**Date:** /06/1999

**Place:** letter-telephone

**Name of informer:** Benjamim Pereira

**Institution:** MNE

**First Interview**

**Date:** /07/1999

**Place:** telephone

**Tape:** no tape

**Total time:** circa 15 minutes

**Content:** first information on my work; first comments of interviewee.

Minutes	informer was talking about:
00-03	presenting my work; asking for an interview.
03-07	discussing the meaning of the expression "a museum of the <i>Estado Novo</i> ".
07-12	clarifying my intentions and thesis objectives.
12-15	scheduling a meeting.

**Second Interview**

**Date:** 28/07/1999

**Place:** MNE

**Tape:** 4/A 4/B

**Total time:** circa 70 minutes

**Content:** the project the MNE; a decade of struggle against the *Estado Novo*; main exhibitions during the end of the 1960s and beginning of 1970s; acquisition criteria; the roles of Ernesto Veiga de Oliveira, Jorge Dias, Fernando Galhano.

minutes	talking about:
00-05.48	Bibliography concerning the museum; role of Veiga de Oliveira in the formation of museum; the beginning of the museum in 1962; interventions of the censorship (examples); the role of Jorge Dias; the existence of the museum was a struggle against the regime; the regime wanted a museum about the Portuguese colonies, but Jorge Dias wanted a museum about mankind.

05.48-10.55	the official project for the museum was colonialist; nevertheless the Minister (Silva Cunha) accepted the ideas of Jorge Dias, who wanted, at least, a museum about Portugal as a whole (colonies and European territory); in 1963 the acquisition of the collection of Victor Bandeira marked the victory of Jorge Dias
10.55-13.26	BP wonders how it was possible in ten years (between 1963 and 1973) to achieve such results; in April 1974 the revolution stopped the process of mounting the Museum;
13.26-16.32	the main concern of the team was the care for the objects and the collections; BP remarks that against the regime of the <i>Estado Novo</i> they built the museum and that after the revolution the museum was almost destroyed.
16.32-22.43	between 1974 and 1985 "it was a grey period".
31.11-31.46	(examples of acquisitions).
00.00-02.37	(tape 4/B) opposition to the acquisition of some collections was due to political options
02.37-05.35	the team was very strongly united
05.35-17.45	[...]
17.45-20.09	about the exhibition of 1940 in Lisboa: total lack of scientific concept behind the exhibition.
20.09-24.56	[...]
24.56-25.26	(thank the interviewee).

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### **Sources: hand-written, typewritten and photographs**

#### **Archive MAB**

Financial Documents  
Internal orders and notes  
Inventories  
Mail received (1934 - 1939)

#### **Archive MAS**

Copies of the mail sent by the Museum (1932-1938)  
Inventories  
Newspapers  
Official organisation and registration of collections

#### **Archive MNSR**

Copies of the mail sent by the Museum (1932 - 1972)  
Internal orders and notes  
Mail received (1944 - 1954)

#### **Archive MMC**

Internal documents  
Newspapers  
Papers and articles from the early stages of digs  
Photographs

#### **Archive MJM**

Internal documents  
Inventories  
Legislation

#### **Archive MNAA**

Copies of the mail sent by the Museum (1926 - 1955)  
Diaries of Directors  
Internal orders and notes  
Inventories  
Mail received (1936 - 1944)



**Archive MAP**

All documentation preserved since 1953 which includes folders of: Internal notes and orders; Staff; Finances; Statistics of visits; Exhibitions; School visits; Congresses; Furniture and equipment; Library

**Library MNE**

(Archive not accessible due to administrative reasons)

In the library: books acquisitions; newspapers.

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