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*DOCOMOMO Journal*, 50.  
Peter Ferretto, 2014.

“Rien [...] n’aura eu lieu [...] que le lieu.”  
Stéphane Mallarmé, *Un coup de dés*, 1897

The historiography of Modernity in architecture has seen quite a few additions in the last couple of decades. One is able to identify two main lines shifting this revision. First of all, the French philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) recently called for a new inventive faculty of ‘architectural difference’. Following the philosophical tradition to use the architectural model he recalled Descartes’s (1596-1650) metaphor of the founding of a town and came to the point that “this foundation is in fact what is supposed to support the building, the architectonic construction, the town at the base”. The contribution of Derrida was, in fact, very important for questioning Modernity and Architecture as he had enlightened the importance of the ‘place’ considering that “each architectural place, each habitation has one precondition: that the building should be located on a path, at a crossroads at which arrival and departure are both possible”. In other words he pointed out that “the question of architecture is in fact that of the place, of the taking of place in space.” Finally Derrida considers that there may be an undiscovered way of thinking belonging to the architectural moment, to desire, to creation. Architecture must produce “places where desire can recognize itself, where it can live”<sup>1</sup>.

The other important revision of the history of modernism has to do with the urbanism critique starting from the assumption that Modernity and urbanism are linked and cannot be seen as separate discourses. After the CIAM’s influential concept of the functional city situated between a kind of utopian and

1 DERRIDA, Jacques, “Ove il desiderio può abitare”, Interview with Eva Meyer, *Domus*, vol.671, 1986, pp.17-25. For the English translation [Jacques Derrida, Architecture where desire may live] see Neil Leach (ed.), *Rethinking Architecture: a reader in cultural theory*, London and New York, Routledge, 1997.

# Where desire may live or how to love mass housing: From Cold War to the revolution

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scientific socialism, today generic urban sprawl and the megalopolis may give rise to what one may call culturalist urbanism. In the 1960s Françoise Choay (1925-) advocated a specific culturalist urban planning seen as a counterpoint to progressive and generic urbanism. For her the essential issue was a matter of value<sup>2</sup>. In fact, this culturalist urbanism theorised by Camillo Sitte (1843-1903) or Patrick Geddes (1854-1932) and put into practice by Ernst May (1886-1970) or Heinrich Tessenow (1876-1950), following the principles of the Garden City, were somehow condemned by the so called progressive and functionalist town planning which was based on the theories of Ludwig Karl Hilberseimer (1885-1967) and the postulates of the IV CIAM, known as the Athens Charter (1943).

The industrial society is urban, producing metropolis, conurbations<sup>3</sup>, and industrial cities or great housing ensembles. The word urbanism is as recent as the contemporary city. The problem of the city emerges increasingly during the 19<sup>th</sup> century at the same time as Engel's statement on the *Housing Question*<sup>4</sup>, addressing an interrogation over the structure and the significance of the social relation in an urban industrialized context.

2 CHOAY, Françoise, *L'allégorie du patrimoine*, Paris: ÉditionsduSeuil, 1992.

3 The term was coined by Patrick Geddes (1854-1932) to designate urban agglomerations which invade an entire region as a result of capacity to attract a city. Geddes shared with conviction to Ruskin that social processes and spatial form are related. And to that extent that changing the spatial form it was possible to change the social structure as well. This was particularly important in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century when industrialization dramatically altered living conditions. The ideals of Geddes had great international movement, his most famous admirer was the theoretical urbanist Lewis Mumford. See *Cities in Evolution*, 1915, Williams and Norgate.

4 ENGELS, Friedrich, *The Housing Question*, Printed according to the 1887 edition collated with the text of the newspaper and translated from German, Moscow, 1970.

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From the *quadras* of Brasilia (1960), to the Pedregulho Housing Unit (1947) or the Chandigarh *celules*, from the *qinquenal* DDR Plans for Stalinallee, that would soon be renamed as Karl Marx Allee in Berlin under the socialist post II World War reconstruction to urban landscape heritage concept defended by Bandarin and Von Oers, the word ‘urbanism’ appeared for the first time in 1910 (Bardet, 1959) in the *Bulletin Géographique de Neufchatel*, followed by the creation of La Société Française des architectes-urbanistes founded in 1914, and finally by L’Institut d’Urbanisme de L’Université de Paris created in 1924<sup>5</sup>. The Larousse dictionary definition reads: “the science and theory of human settlements”<sup>6</sup>. The fact is that the emergence and expansion of the industrial society gave birth to a discipline which distinguished itself from the former Urban Arts by its reflexive and critical character and by its scientific aim. Urbanism as a discipline aims to achieve scientific universality and Housing begins to be considered the key issue for the construction of the city.

The emerging developments in Asian cities must also be brought to discussion, namely in Japan, in the scope of the creation of the *Metabolist* group followed by the *Investigations in Collective Form*<sup>7</sup> conducted by Fumihiko Maki (1928-) in 1964. Addressing high density and considering the link between the buildings and the space within, or the life between buildings<sup>8</sup>, as the starting point that justifies delving deeper into the relationship that connects urban design and contemporary cities or the connection that stands between technology and human need.

In fact the debates that followed the World Design Conference (WoDeCo, Tokyo, 1960) on the search for a ‘total image for the 20<sup>th</sup> century’ pointed out among worldwide designers, architects and planners, viewpoints and intellectual ideas concerning the future of the city, particularly in the wake of technological and scientific advancement in industry. At the time of the WoDeCo, progressive architects formed the *Metabolism* group and proposed their concepts for dealing with the increasing complexity of rising cities. Debating over the ideal city and promoting a kind of experimental architecture based on the ideas of lifestyles and communities for a new era, its biological name suggests that buildings and cities should be designed in the same organic way as the material substance of a natural organism propagates, adapting to its environment by changing its forms in rapid succession. In UK the *Archigram* (1961)

5 It is very interesting to notice that Urbanism as an academic discipline only appears at the École des Beaux Arts in 1953.

6 Science et théorie de l’établissement humain, in: Larousse Dictionnaire.

7 MAKI, Fumihiko, “Investigations in Collective Form”, *The School of Architecture 2 - A Special Publication*, St. Louis, Washington University, June 1964.

8 GEHL, Jan, *Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space*, London, Ed. Island Press, 2011.



Kisho Kurokawa,  
Nakagin Capsule  
Tower, Tokyo, Japão,  
1970-1972.  
© Ana Tostões, 2015.



Bruno Taut, Siedlung  
Britz, Berlin,  
Germany, 1925.

group would follow these ideas within a Pop culture trend and at the same time approaching a kind of High Tech architecture that was emerging with the support of critics like Rayner Banham (1922-1988)<sup>9</sup> and architects like James Stirling (1926-1992) or Smithson (Alison Smithson, 1928-1993; Peter Smithson, 1923-2003), approaching a new *brutalist* hybridization.

From the Soviet Block the belief in a kind of massive housing production, which in scale and image goes far beyond any of the French HLM (1950), attempts to answer the serious Housing question that moved Engels within its socialist vision of the capitalist worldwide progression. The post-Second World War dimension referred to the future of our environment and the heightened complexity to deal with it. The later CIAM discussions brought social and intensive public aspirations in order to develop strategic tools in making our physical environment. Fifty years ago, in 1964, at WoDeCo, the urban designers asked why, what and how they should design. Therefore, in our days, between North and South, East and West, the aim is to deepen understanding of the process and to find the paths for the future. This future that we may create with such an awareness may, generously, give us the tools for increasing the qualities of architecture and city planning. After Second World War the plan turned into a program and the time dimension became one of the keys for the future. As Fernando Távora (1923-2005) related in the 1960's WODECO, "everybody insists on the same idea: the necessity to create a link between man and technology regarding formal matters"<sup>10</sup>. Also Fumihiko Maki, in 1964, argued: "we must see our society as a dynamic field of interrelated forces, a dynamic equilibrium [...] which will change in character as time passes"<sup>11</sup>. He believed that searching for new formal concepts in contemporary cities, lay in the magnitude of recent change due to the unprecedented rapid and extensive transformations in the physical structure of society, the rapid methods of communications, technological progress and its impact upon regional cultures. Redefining collectivity implied that elements and linkages become designed with a contextual consideration. Finally, the concerns over the dramatic change in contemporary cities has led us to address environmental questions, ecological requirements and sustainable needs as vital values to ensure a sustainable future.

In *Scenes de la Vie Future*, Georges Duhamel (1884-1966) described his fantastic megalopolis visions. At the same time the emerging new discipline, sociology, pointed out in this broad context the question

9 BANHAM, Reyner, *Architecture of the Well-Tempered Environment*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.

10 TÁVORA, Fernando, *Diário de "bordo". Estabelecimento de Texto*, Porto, Associação Casa da Arquitectura, 1960.

11 MAKI, Fumihiko, "Investigations in Collective Form", *The School of Architecture*, No. 2 - A Special Publication, St. Louis, Washington University, June 1964.



Ernst May, Neus  
Frankfurt, Frankfurt,  
Germany, 1925-1930.  
© Ana Tostões, 2015.

Heinrich  
Tessenow, Hellerau  
Neighborhood,  
Dresden,  
Germany, 1911. ©  
Medienfuzzi, 2009.

of the individual and freedom. Georg Simmel (1858-1918) anticipated the megalopolis concept in his study *The big cities and the life of the spirit*, recognizing the dual role of the cash economy, stimulating in man the tendency for abstraction and the development of intellectual faculties in detriment of affectivity, while providing the depersonalization of human relations. The anger against the big city, opposing the passion for nature, emerged in thinkers such as John Ruskin (1818-1900) or Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900). For them the value of life is only made of details, diversity, individuality, and so the source of anger lies in the capitalist economy. And so, man became insensitive to differences between things, because the meaning and value of these differences, and thus of things themselves, is regarded as negligible.

The search for the ideal city in the 20<sup>th</sup> century has to do with both the functional city and the Garden City theories. The former envisages the megalopolis, the second the sprawl of the suburb. Following Howard's Garden City concept, the 'New Towns' formula is rooted in UK under the scope of the London City Council reconstruction actions after Second World War. The movement had a tremendous impact crossed over with the high-rise functional city: from Helsinki's Tapiola (1950) or Lisbon's Olivais Neighbourhood. These developments must quote Howard's Garden City Movement raising and inspiring the Modern Movement urbanism: from the *Neue Sachlichkeit* Bruno Taut's Siedlungen (1924-1930) or May's *Neues Frankfurt* (1925-1930) enterprise to the Tessenow's *Hellerau Neighborhood* (1912), from Tel-Aviv new city (1950) to Brasília (1960) or Chandigarh (1953) new capitals which revealed specific political and cultural targets.

### The Iberian Case

The public housing process developed in the Iberian countries during the 1950s and 1960s, in the scope of the Cold War, has acquired extraordinary levels of innovation in international terms, contributing to the definition of an alternative path for the Western Modern Movement crises during the period after Second World War, through the relationship between western references and local traditions.

For mapping the neighborhood in both Spain and Portugal during the Dictatorship period it is necessary to first understand the radical achievements of the Spanish Democratic Republic before the Civil War that took place between 1936 and 1939. In fact the first radical experiments on housing occurred in the scope of the Spanish progressive republic. This is the case of Casa Bloc, Barcelona, (Sert, Subirana, Torres Clavé, 1931-1936), through the composition of 6 volumes with 6 floors gathering 3 superposed duplex celules connected by open air galleries ('street in the air' as they would be called in the late 1960s by the Smithsons) referring to Le Corbusier (1887-1965) and some more recent soviet experiments, namely the Narkomfin and other projects by Moses Gynsburg (1862-1938) linked to the CIAM's first formulas on the *Existenzminimum* concept.

In Madrid, on a bourgeois scale, Casa de las Flores (1930-1932) by Zuazo represents a new prototype of block with an inner collective courtyard, reminiscent of some of the Viennese Hoff, but clearly showing a southern way of life using outdoor domestic spaces such as the long private verandas that served the



Patrick Geddes,  
Tel Aviv General plan,  
Israel, 1925-1929.  
© Nitza Metzger-Szmuk,  
Dwelling on the  
Dunes Tel Aviv.  
Modern Movement  
and Bauhaus Ideals,  
Paris, L'Eclat, 2004.



Juscelino Kubitschek  
/ Lúcio Costa e Oscar  
Niemeyer, Brasília,  
Brazil, 1956. ©  
Marcel Gautherot,  
Arquivo Central do  
IPHAN.

spacious apartments or the commercial arcades on the first floor. The El Viso neighborhood in Madrid represents the approach to an upgraded German *Siedlungen*, amalgamating different functions, such as schools, offices, hospitals and different housing typologies including large single family modern villas with nice gardens.

The Sevillian Complex block of Houses and Bus stops is a rare case of a Modern Movement typology that emerged in the period after the Spanish Civil War in the first big city conquered by Franco: Complex of Housing and Bus Station del Prado de San Sebastián, Seville, 1938-1944.

## 1. Pure and hard Francosim Salazarism

The dictatorship started earlier in Portugal than in Spain, where it started after the victory of Franco in 1939. Thirteen years before, since the beginning of the Portuguese *Estado Novo* regime in 1926 the autocracy was dominant and soon the economic strategy defined by Salazar would be based on stressing the pastoral country aiming to avoid any kind of industrialization. Beyond the dominant rural economy policy, the image of the regime stands on believing in an enormous worldwide empire. The dictator, in order to justify his clear and autocratic command, underlined the metaphoric message. In 1940 the centennial exhibition held in the main symbolic place of the nation, Belém, where the discoveries of the cinquecento started was the very last brilliant highlight of this discourse.

The approach has to do with two key lines: on one hand the social housing production with a rural neighborhood approach during the 1930s. Repression was present in the everyday life of citizens, and this had a specific echo, especially in Portugal, in the public housing process where the projects repeated the single familiar Nazi *Heimatstil*. The housing policy stands as one of the control processes to dominate the people's mind, the proper social customs, the appropriate behaviors in order to maintain 'public order'. In this scope the Nazi *Heimatshutz* concept, recalling the desired rural image in suburban settlements promoting individualist behavior through the single minimum house with a minimum garden was the basis of the social housing neighborhood policies defined in the 1930s which remained at least until 1945.

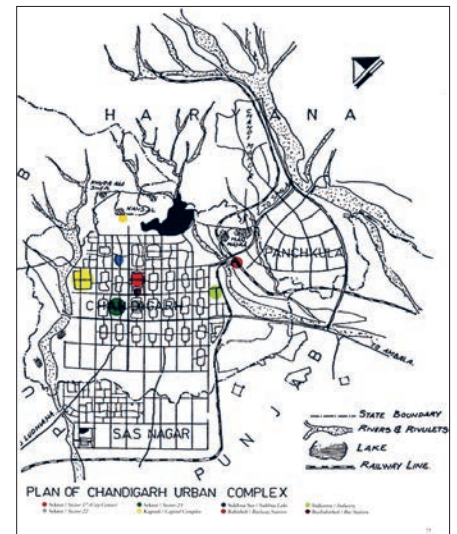
In this framework projects such as the Bairro do Alvito and Bairro da Encarnação (Paulino Montez, Lisboa, 1938) Bairro Madre de Deus (Luís Benavente, Lisboa, 1938-1943) e Bairro Norton de Matos (Januário Godinho, Coimbra, 1944-1950) are included.

On the other hand, the historical and symbolic representation of the nation, following Nazi Germany, Stalin's Soviet Union or Mussolini's Italy, was the peak of the glorious imperial fascist image which is assumed between 1938 and the end of Second World War in Lisbon, following the Nazi's Speer campaign of the "Modern German Architecture" exhibition displayed in Lisbon by the architect himself. These urban complexes were composed by the tallest buildings ever seen in Lisbon.

Soon Madrid would follow this approach. Avenida Castellana would be managed in 1941 as the great apparatus that would later be represented in the 1950s by the Plaza de España complex made with clear references to the glorious image of the Soviet Moscow Piazza with skyscrapers.

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Le Corbusier,  
Capitol Complex,  
Chandigarh, India,  
1962. © Ana Tostões,  
2013.

Plan of Chandigarh  
Urban Complex,  
Chandigarh, India,  
1962.

© Stanislaus von Moos,  
Le Corbusier:  
Elements of a  
Synthesis, nai010  
publishers, 214.

## 2. Modernization under the sign of the Cold War

During the post-Second World War years of European reconstruction, architectural production in Spain and Portugal presented some political and cultural parallelisms, such as the Franco and Salazar dictatorships. It is time for the shift, first in Portugal, later in Spain, to embrace progressive modernity.

It helps to mention the evident parallelism of actions and events in both countries: The creation of the ICAT in 1947 was soon followed by the holding in Lisbon, in 1948, of Portugal's first National Congress on Architecture, where Le Corbusier was publically referred to for the first time and which was a turning point in housing concepts with the architects claiming for their social mission also in political terms. Spain had its turn the following year with the fifth National Assembly of Architects, with the presence of Sartoris (1901-1998) and Gio Ponti (1891-1979). 1951 saw the formation of Grupo R in Barcelona, the recovery of Le Corbusier in the National Architecture Magazine and the group ODAM in Porto, 1953 the signing of the Alhambra Manifesto in Granada and the holding of the 3rd UIA Congress in Lisbon in 1953 and the Spanish group, surprising enlightening the Cold War circumstance, presented one of the *poblados* at the UIA Congress that astonishingly took place in Moscow, in 1958.

The public housing program would be the main research theme for architects following an intense line of development in which different sources, such as the Italian INA- Casa, the New Towns of the London City Council or the Nordic countries' neighborhood solutions were translated and assimilated with local culture. The paradox is that – like in the non-western countries of the soviet block – the remaining 'fascist' regimes from the period after the Second World War that characterized the two Iberian countries, evolved in the direction of the interpretation and hybridization of the democratic neighborhood western examples.

The Fisac Housing proposal for Cadena presented in the competition of Madrid Architects College (COAM, 1949), the project of the Manzanares river borders in Madrid presented by OSH at the Berlin Internationale Bauausstellung (IBA) in 1957 or the Montbau Neighborhood for Barcelona (1957-1965) by Bonet I Castellana, are some of the novelties that came from Spain.

In Lisbon, in 1945, the Housing law changed, finally allowing to plan neighborhoods based on multifamily housing as one of the results of the approach to the free western countries.

The sequence of the Lisbon neighborhoods designed since then, exposed the actuality of the discussions and patterns of the moment. In fact, the architect's plans overcame the Salazar dictatorship's desires or intentions. The power discourse was replaced by the western democratic lines on housing development. Thanks to the Cold War circumstance, although being still a terrible dictatorship regime, the Portuguese international policy was dubious about supporting the victorious allied nations, mainly the UK, and their housing reconstruction guidelines through Sir Patrick Abercrombie's (1879-1957) London Plan and the New Towns program.

Alvalade is a neighborhood of 230 hectares of municipal development that follows the rural land ex-



Paulino Montez,  
Bairro do Alvito,  
Lisbon, Portugal,  
1937-1938. © AML.

Paulino Montez,  
Bairro do Alvito,  
Lisbon, Portugal,  
1937-1938.  
© Ana Tostões.

propriation campaigns on the outskirts of the urban area, which then constituted Lisbon, triggered by the President and Minister of Public Works Duarte Pacheco. Setting the number of 45,000 inhabitants, it would be served by a transport network based on rail, trams and buses.

The neighborhood is organized from eight-cell, 'housing units' structured from a central element: the elementary school. For the first time, an integrated urban area provided "the coexistence of dwellings of various social categories," supported by a series of equipment: schools, markets, civic centers, sports park, small industry etc. The traditional *École Urbanisme de Paris* concepts are subverted with some Athens Charter ideas applied in particular units. The construction of Alvalade was partially guaranteed by the State, and even in areas intended for private construction, municipal control was assured by order of architectural projects to qualified professionals, and lots then sold, with plans previously approved by auction. This process ensured control of the urban image that everyone still admires today.

Olivais North, Olivais South, and Chelas corresponded to urban large-scale operations, involving the construction of infrastructure, housing and immediate equipment housing. Triggered by a public initiative in the late 60s, they were integrated into the expansion strategies of Lisbon and disposal of the housing deficit. The whole defines a continuous territory with about 737 ha, which corresponds approximately to one tenth of the total area of the municipality of Lisbon.

Olivais Norte results from a plan influenced by the Athens Charter ideas, subverted by an international style contestation mainly with references to INA-Casa, especially in the Pereira and Portas design, covering about 40 hectares planned for a population of 10,000 inhabitants spread over 2500 homes.

Olivais Sul is like a new town plan, mixed with Athens Charter zoning and supported by an organic infrastructure pattern recalling some inspiration from the Finnish Tapiola, with large green areas. With an area of 187 ha, it has been planned for about 8,000 dwellings to be distributed in a population of approximately 38,250 inhabitants. The proposed scheme is based on a cellular structure, hierarchical and zoned in functions, according to the theoretical framework proposed in 1945 by Abercrombie and already experienced in Harlow.

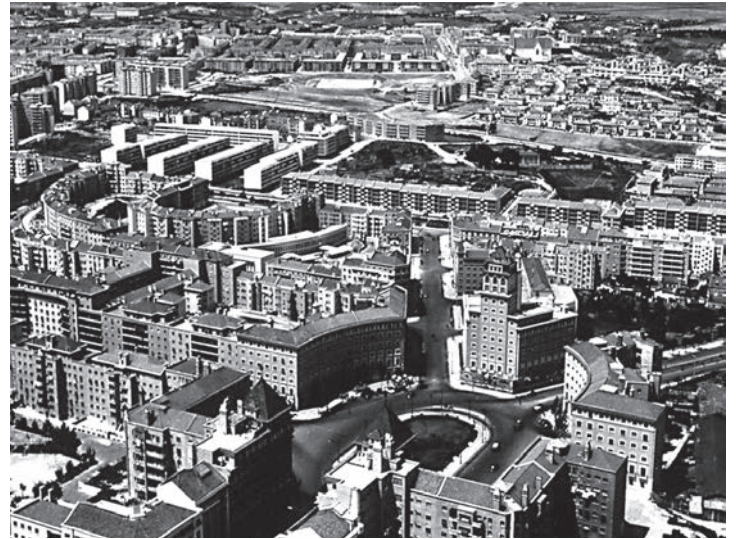
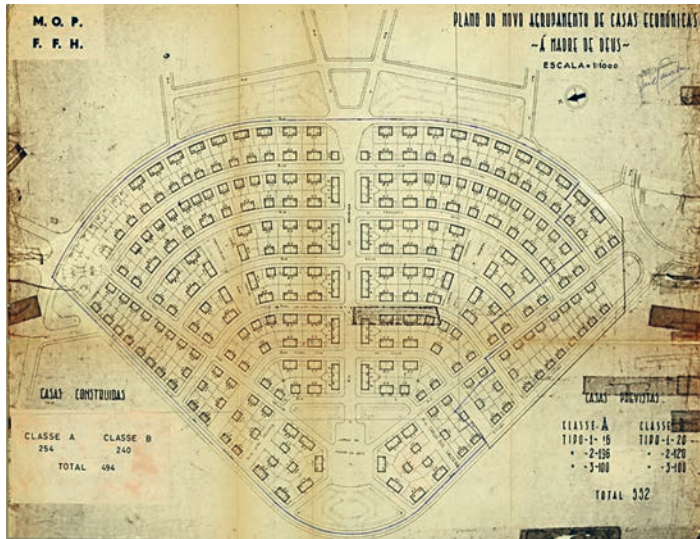
Chelas occupies about 510 ha and it was planned to build 11,500 dwellings, for a total of about 55,300 inhabitants. It is a typical Candilis and Wood (Toulouse-Le Mirail) plan, subverted sometimes by astonishing mega structures transporting the aim to re-design the city with the invention of a big square proposing an intense urban pattern.

### 3. From the *Pobladors de Colonización* to *Architecture and Revolution*

The 1950s are also the years of the search for an identity in terms of culture and architecture. In Portugal conducting the Survey on vernacular architecture would have profound consequences on the way architectural discipline would grow.

This openness during the 1950s, and ongoing until the end of the regimes in the mid-1970s, emerges also





1937-1938.

Luís Benavente,  
Bairro Madre de  
Deus, Lisbon,  
Portugal, 1938-1943.

Faria da Costa,  
Alvalade  
Neighborhood  
Urbanization  
Plan, Lisbon,  
Portugal, 1945.  
Ruy Athougua e  
Sebastião Formosinho  
Sanchez, Estacas  
Neighborhood,  
Lisbon, Portugal,  
1949-1958.  
© *Rassegna*, 54, 1993.

with the plans for Madrid by Franco's regime but I wish to stress a very unique program called colonization settlements or *Pobladors de Colonización*: which means new territorial settlements created with the aim of achieving both population and rural or industrial production balance in all the 'great' Spain.

The National Institute of Colonization (INC) was a body created in Spain in October 1939 under the Ministry of Agriculture. Its creation was motivated by the need for a social and economic land reform, after the devastation of the Civil War. The main purpose of it was to make the necessary transformation of the productive space by reorganizing and reviving the agricultural sector and increasing agricultural production. Between 1945 and 1970, the INC built over 300 villages of colonization in Spain that would house 55,000 families, promoting the largest migratory movements undertaken by the Spanish state in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In fact it is a very singular development and an opportunity for the architectonic culture to experiment housing typologies and neighborhood patterns in spectacular landscapes. On creating new towns or villages these national programs brought together the best Spanish architects in the exercise of designing completely new settlements through research on popular architecture as an inspiration blended with Modern Movement concepts. Fernández del Amo (1914-1995) was one of the architects who conceived an enormous quantity of these neighborhoods. Born out of the Portuguese Revolution of 25 April 1974, SAAL (Local Support Ambulatory Service) unleashed one of the most exciting processes of 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture. The project, started in August by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development of the second Provisional Government, directed by the architect Nuno Portas (1934-), was intended to face the demanding housing needs of disadvantaged communities across the country.

The radical creativity of the program was based on the involvement and direct participation of the population in the design process of their new houses. This collective adventure would transform several architects' perceptions about their professional social role, and initiated a process of intense and profound changes, not only regarding social housing, but also related to the design process itself. SAAL was crucial for the internationalization of Portuguese architects, and for the visibility of their contribution to the urgent debates that were taking place in Europe and all around the world concerning the social and political role of architecture. Active until October 1976, SAAL completed, within its twenty-six months of existence, around 176 projects that involved more than 40 000 families from north to south. 40 years after Serralves organized an exhibit that will be moved to CCA in May showing the impact of the process today.

During SAAL's brief period, housing became the main architectural theme. Its complexity is even greater than its achievements as it had astronomic success carrying out housing operations conducted by the technical brigades who had completed on-site projects and given support to the population.

It is interesting to analyze Álvaro Siza's (1933-) statement "On the method of work that the brigade, as a technical group, intends to implement. The brigade does not take simplistic positions such as to learn from the people or teaching the people. The goal is that the inhabitants can control the degraded areas



Olivais Norte  
Neighborhood,  
Lisbon, Portugal.  
© *Revista Arquitectura*,  
81, 1964.

Nuno Teotónio  
Pereira, Nuno Portas,  
António Pinto  
Freitas, Olivais Norte  
Housing, Lisbon,  
Portugal, 1957-1968.  
© *Revista Arquitectura*,  
81, 1964.

where they live, in terms of ownership and recovery. The technical brigade, together with the group of residents, defines the priorities for each time, adopting a permanent critical position. Rigor is not a limit to the dynamics of the process. Rigor is not a limit to the imagination”<sup>12</sup>.

SAAL was important as an alternative way of building a city with popular participation and as a specific form of response to housing needs. For architects, that were not used to working for low-income clients, SAAL was simultaneously a job, a generous commitment, and an adventure. It was the opportunity to intervene in the city in operations with clear urban implications, especially in Porto, where interventions were really within the city. In typological terms, the options were very uniform, using the single-family house, in accordance with the *Siedlungen* housing models of the 1930s. But also reflecting the CIAM discourses on *Existenzminimum*, the core of the city, and the Habitat issue linked to Mediterranean inputs namely to Casablanca’s Michel Ecochard’s (1905-1985) repetitive grid patio house system and to the ‘architecture for the poor’ concept defended by Hassan Fathy (1900-1989).

Casal das Figueiras (1975-1976) in Setubal, designed by Gonçalo Byrne (1941- ), is one of the best examples of the SAAL process, through the rehousing of 600 families. From the landscape point of view it was an innovative plan since the building typologies are related to the topography. The solution of the long, narrow allotment, running in parallel with the contour lines, was a way to lower costs by avoiding construction of large retaining walls. After all, it is the houses, with their half-meter thick walls, that become a type of ladder supporting the sloping ground.

Finally the resulting public space is privileged by the view. There is a clear relationship between geography and the settlement of the chosen urban fabric that results in the use of a production process based on beams supporting the brick slab and the screed. In the end, the precisely worked out construction system proved to be less expensive than the option of constructing high-rise towers that would have had a terrible impact on the landscape.

The Bouça neighborhood project (1975-77), in Oporto, by Siza Vieira, was also envisaged as a form of acting in the city, questioning high-rise solutions through planning forms.

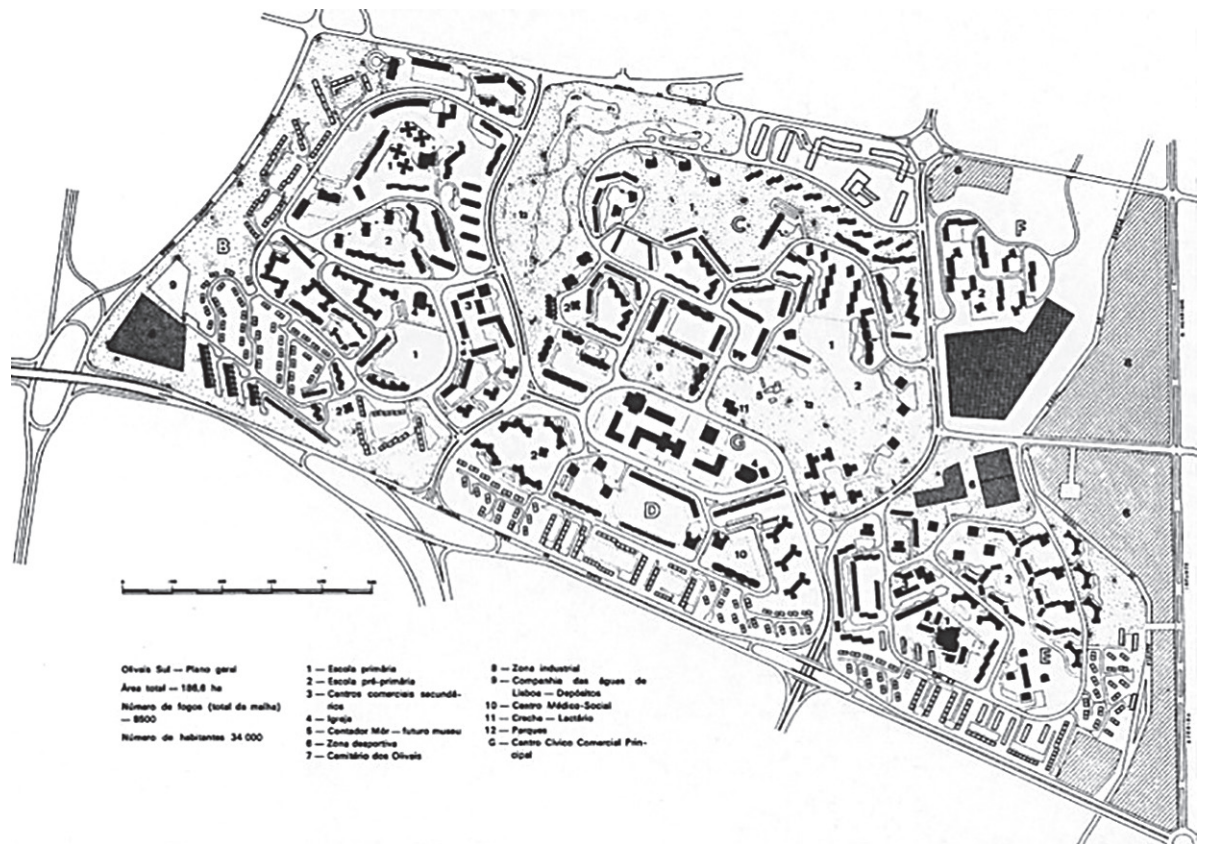
The Bouça neighborhood is a housing ensemble that contains one hundred twenty-eight houses arranged in four parallel low-rise blocks, four storeys high, that comprised duplex (two storey) apartments superimposed on one another with the access from the exterior. A long wall that delimits the north side of the building complex, protecting it from the impact of the adjacent railway line, confines the blocks perpendicularly to their parallel layout. Not only the composition of the facades, resulting from the disposition of the exterior access stairs, but also the articulation system which interconnects the complex, maintains continuity between interior and exterior, creating elongated courtyards between the four blocks and garden spaces that are perceived as public space.

12 Álvaro Siza Vieira, in: *Lotus Internacional* 13, p. 80-93, Milan, 1976.

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José Rafael Botelho  
and Carlos Duarte,  
Urbanization Plan,  
Olivais Sul, Lisbon,  
Portugal, 1961.  
© GTH-CML, s/d.



Siza addressed the problem of building in this area for those in need, as a challenge to find another way to create housing, facilities and public spaces. The southern end of each row of buildings contained the community facilities, such as laundry, library and community meeting spaces as part of a strategy that was not only formal, but was primarily social.

The achievement of the project was highly influenced by the determination of the first residents, coming from the underprivileged areas of the Bouça neighborhood, who fought, during the revolution period, for the right to decent, adequate housing.

After the revolutionary period, during nearly three decades of progressive deterioration, the unfinished project stood as a monument to the tenacity of the populace. Some people considered the evolution of this neighborhood as a focal point of social problems, while others criticized the degradation of an emblematic piece of work by the most internationally renowned Portuguese architect.

In April 2004 the Oporto municipality began the urban and housing regeneration of the neighborhood, including the comprehensive rehabilitation of the construction of the buildings, in order to improve the environmental comfort of the houses and completion of the initial plan with the envisaged public spaces to ensure the cohesion of the project's intervention with the urban fabric. At its conclusion in 2006, the neighborhood was finally reborn with the construction of the 3 originally planned facilities and 72 new houses to complement the 56 existing.

The rehabilitation of the existing buildings and the conclusion of the original project, while keeping the original design, improved the quality of the housing and added new volumes: an underground car park, commercial spaces and green areas between the blocks. This qualitative renovation brought new inhabitants to the Bouça neighborhood and new life into this space that today is an integral part of the city as an urban area enjoying a successful community experience.

### Place identity and the creation of a place of memory

Portas' role as Ministry of Housing and Urban Development Secretary, a key personality at a key moment, demonstrates the coincidences between his skill as an architect and skill as a politician.

Housing discussions led to the promotion of the sense of proximity between architecture and politics. Through a complex process, they were available to discuss different disciplinary concepts and the in-



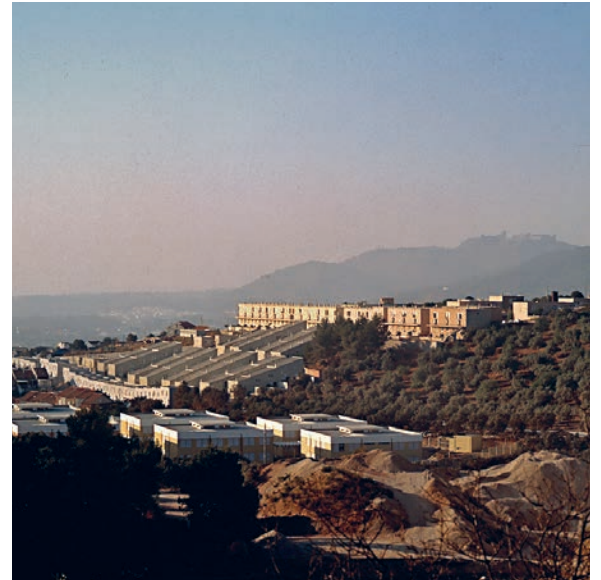
Manuel Táinha, Olivais Sul Housing, Lisboa, Portugal, 1961-1967. © Ana Tostões.

José Luis Fernández del Amo, Poblado de Colonización El Realengo, Alicante, 1960.  
Servicio Histórico, Fundación Arquitectura COAM.  
Legado José Luis Fernández del Amo.  
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#### ANA TOSTOES

Where desire may live  
or how to love mass  
housing: from cold war  
to the revolution



José Luis Fernández  
del Amo, Pueblo de  
Colonización,  
El Realengo,  
Valencia, 1957.  
Kindel © Herederos  
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Palacio.

Gonçalo Bryne,  
Casal das Figueiras  
Neighbourhood,  
Setúbal, Portugal,  
1975-76.

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habitants' preferences, searching for technical solutions within a required low budget in order to design and personalize the habitat according to life experiences. There was collective participation thanks to the housing cooperatives that linked the inhabitants of shacks and slums. This principle of participation gave form to the decisions about what to build, and how to build it in the hands of the users. Finally, the social role of women deeply changed as their presence in the public discussion found a significant place by dominating the participation process with a sort of ancestral survival energy.

The right to housing is the right to quality of life. Through the dynamics inherent in the SAAL operations, populations had the opportunity to discuss the importance of living space standards and the need to assure the fundamental basic infrastructure of urban and social facilities in order to create and promote the necessary roots for the development of forms of sociability that were anchored in the appropriation of the public space. Public transportation, leisure facilities for children, schools, nurseries, parks, day-care centers for the elderly, health centers and sports were the goals envisaged as anchors for 'the right to a place'.

What makes this process so special is that SAAL is the Portuguese architectural culture of 25 April 1974, as it represents the image of the architectural production process. The architects were to meet one of the great ambitions of the modern architectural debate addressing the main issue of the Habitat. In fact, beyond all the key issues stands for the value of place Identity and Cultural or landscape heritage preservation.

**Ana Tostões** PhD is architect, architectural critic and historian. Chair of DOCOMOMO International and DOCOMOMO Journal Editor ([www.docomomo.com](http://www.docomomo.com)). She is Full Professor at Instituto Superior Técnico, Lisbon University, where she is in charge of the architectural PhD program and of the architectural history and theory disciplines. She has been invited professor at FAUP, EPFL, ETHZ, UTSOA, RSA, ETSAB, ETSAN. She has a degree in Architecture (ESBAL, 1982), a master's degree in History of Contemporary Art (UNL, 1994; *Os Verdes Anos na Arquitectura Portuguesa dos Anos 50*, FAUP Edições, 1997) and a PhD (IST-UL, 2003) on culture and technology in Modern Architecture (*Idade Maior*, FAUP Edições, 2015). Her research field is the theory and history of architecture and construction of the twentieth century, focusing on the worldwide cultural transfers. On these topics she has published books and scientific articles, curated 9 exhibitions, taken part in juries, scientific committees, given lectures in European, American, Asian and African universities and acted as peer referee of Scientific Journals. She coordinated the research "Exchanging World Visions" focused on the Sub-Saharan African architecture (1943-1975). Tostões has been vice-president of the Portuguese Order of Architects and the Portuguese section of the International Association of Art Critics. In 2006, she was awarded the title of Commander of the Order of Infante Dom Henrique.



Gonçalo Byrne,  
Casal das Figueiras  
Neighbourhood,  
Setúbal, Portugal,  
1975-76.

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*cipação 1974-1976,*  
Porto: Fundação de  
Serralves, 2014.



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Vieira, Bouça  
Neighbourhood,  
Oporto, Portugal,  
1974-2006. ©  
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