

PORTUGUESE INTERNATIONAL PAVILIONS AND NATIONAL STYLE — ARCHITECTURE TENDERS SHAPED BY POLITICAL AND CULTURAL AGENTS

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ABSTRACT

Universal exhibitions were true emblems of modernity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as vehicles of artistic and technical paradigms of each country. Portugal's participation, from the first Republic to the regime encompass different political and economic circumstances which moulded the strategies to adopt in each participation, and therefore the architectural style that should be used to convey a certain image of the country. The concept of 'Empire' dominates the discourse, to be translated into appropriate architectural options of its exhibition pavilions. This sparked a debate between architects and key cultural and political agents, selected as jurors for the architectural tenders held for the Portuguese Pavilions. Evaluating these events means identifying pivotal participants, their proposals and their thoughts on the issue of a representative national style. This particular period also dwells with the issue of implementing modern architecture, distanced from eclectic historicisms yet rooted in vernacular elements.

KEYWORDS

International Exhibitions | Portuguese Pavilion | Architecture Tenders | National Style | Propaganda and power

International Exhibitions fostered architectural and technological vanguards that constituted pivotal points for true modernism, encompassing artistic experiments that live on today as memories, drawings, video and photographic records. Some structures persist, not only as residues of these extraordinary events, but also as iconic references. These events affected profoundly the development of architectural history, through the buildings displayed and revolutionary ideas that were explored. Under the motto of promoting international relations, both hosting countries and foreign participants sought to take advantage of the opportunity to display and expand their technological progress and economical supremacy. The uniqueness of each country was enhanced through industrialization, trade and development, alongside a cultural standpoint, through its history and artistic production. The exhibition medium translated into the specific design of national pavilions, in order to incorporate a set of own identity references (Greenhalg, 2011). Their impact spread far and wide, influencing many countries, such as Portugal [Fig. 01].

The Portuguese Pavilions erected in these events constitute important case studies for the evaluation of experiences in expositive architectures and how they aspire to showcase a certain national profile. After the nineteenth century, when Portugal had entrusted the design of these buildings to foreigners, the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1900 marks the first architectural tender among Portuguese architects. The design of national pavilions in the twentieth century was then in the hands of our architects, through tenders or direct invites, always subjected to specific ideological, aesthetic and stylistic orientations, igniting arguments and diatribes among architects and other cultural agents.

In many cases, architecture fulfills the function of a scenic vessel, a vitrine in order to project the image of Portugal abroad, both of progress and historical evocation (Thiesse, 2001). Thus, the pursuit for defining the 'national style' in relation to building an image of the

'Portuguese Empire' dominate the discourse, translated into architectural options in these Pavilions, between the First Republic and the . These constitute the boundaries and time frame for this present study, comprising about a dozen exhibitions between 1915 and 1970 (Neto, 2017). Examining the Pavilions of Portugal, within this chronological framework and typology, allows the evaluation of core outlines in the development for contemporary architectural thought among us. There were nine participations of Portugal in these International and Universal Exhibitions, involving the construction of a national pavilion:

- Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco 1915, Arch. António do Couto (assigned)
- Independence Centenary International Exposition, Rio de Janeiro, 1922, Archs. Cottinelli Telmo, Carlos Ramos and Alexandre da Cunha — Honor Pavilion; Archs. Rebello de Andrade — Pavilion of Portuguese Industries (tenders)
- Ibero-American Exposition, Seville, 1929, Archs. Rebello de Andrade (tender)
- Internacional and Colonial Exposition, Paris, 1931, Arch. Raul Lino (tender)
- Paris Universal Exposition, 1937, Arch. Keil do Amaral (tender)
- New York World's Fair and Golden Gate Exposition, San Francisco, 1939, Arch. Jorge Segurado (assigned)
- Brussels World's Fair, 1958, Arch. Pedro Cid (tender)
- Expo'70, Osaka, 1970, Arch. Frederico George (assigned)

Examining the Pavilions of Portugal, within this chronological framework and typology, allows the evaluation of core outlines in the development for contemporary architectural thought among us. It is proposed an overall critical assessment of Portuguese pavilions — in the perspective of the architectural field — as well as questioning key issues for the inception of modernism in Portugal. There are three key aspects in dealing with the fundamental aspects of the expositive architectures, in correlation with 'national identity'.

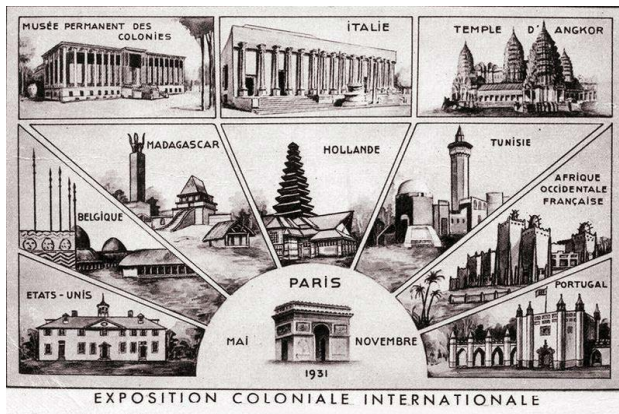


Fig. 01. Postcard for the 1931 International Colonial Exhibit, in Paris.



Fig. 02. Architecture tender Jury for the Portuguese Pavilion in 1929 Iberian American Exhibit, in Seville. The selected project by the Rebelo de Andrade brothers stands behind them. Torre do Tombo National Archive, Lisbon (EPJS-SF-001-001-0009-0367C).

THE PARTICIPATION OF PORTUGAL: POLITICAL DECISIONS, TENDERS' CONTROVERSY, 'STYLE' AND 'PORTUGUESE MODERNISM'

It is vital to analyze the Portuguese participation in these crucial vectors: establish the political circumstances that preceded the decision to participate in tenders, as well as the conditions to do so and consequently the strategy to adopt. The specific situations and the state of the art on architectural thinking conditioned what was asked of the architects, on how to best represent Portuguese culture and architectural style. Finally, it is vital to evaluate how the architects responded and the chosen designs.

Most of the time, the political decision comprised a call for tender between Portuguese architects, making it mandatory to explore who participated and the works presented, as well as a whole range of issues raised from these proceedings (Toussaint, 1997). One of the tenders' key aspects was the wording of the respective statements,

where it was often solicited a "national appearance". This request was subsequently regarded either as an oppressive restriction or an apparent liberation that was inherently ambiguous, triggering a series of controversies surrounding the design of the 'Pavilion of Portugal'.

Overviewing a general analysis on the several architectural competitions held to choose the project for the construction of the "Pavilion of Portugal" in international exhibitions for this period, one can conclude on the great importance national architects devoted to these competitions [Fig. 02]. This investigation allowed the formulation of two synoptic tables, assembling data gathered of the participants in these competitions, as well as the appointed jury [tabs. 01, 02].

tab.01

ARCHITECTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE PORTUGUESE PAVILION'S ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS 1922 -1956

Competitors						
		1st Place	2nd place	3rd place	Honorable mentions	Others
Rio de Janeiro 1922	Portuguese Pavilion	Cottinelli Telmo, Luís Alexandre da Cunha e Carlos Ramos	Pedro Rodrigues Machado	Eugénio Correia e Paulino Montez	Pardal Monteiro José Marques da Silva	?
	Pavilion of Industries	Carlos e Guilherme Rebello de Andrade e Alfredo da Assunção Santos	Pedro Rodrigues Machado	?	?	?
Seville 1929		Carlos e Guilherme Rebello de Andrade	Cassiano Branco e Carlos Dias	Cottinelli Telmo	—	Tertuliano Marques, Jorge Segurado Paulino Montez Cristino da Silva Francisco de Oliveira Ferreira
Paris 1931		Raul Lino	Carlos e Guilherme Rebello de Andrade	Carlos Ramos e Adelino Nunes	—	Álvaro Machado, Ferreira da Costa, Rogério de Azevedo, Norte Júnior, Victor Piloto, Cassiano Branco Carlos Dias
Paris 1937		Francisco Keil do Amaral	António Maria Veloso Reis Camelo	Artur Simões da Fonseca	Raul Lino João Simões	Francisco de Oliveira Ferreira Henrique Taveira Soares
Brussels 1956		Pedro Cid	—	—	—	Maurício de Vasconcelos João José Malato, José Luís Tinoco e J. Américo d'Oliveira Francisco Figueiredo Sebastião Formosinho Sanchez Rui Mendes Paula Manuel Taíinha

tab.02

MEMBERS OF THE JURY CONVENED FOR THE PORTUGUESE PAVILION'S ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS 1922 -1956

Jury						
	President	Members				
	Comissioner	Fine Arts School/ Academy	Committee of Art and Archaeology / Superior Committee of Fine Arts /Education Ministry	National Society of Fine Arts	Society of Portuguese Architects	Others
Rio de Janeiro 1922	Alfredo Augusto Lisboa de Lima	João António Piloto	?	?	?	?
Seville 1929	Manoel Gonçalves da Silveira Azevedo e Castro	João António Piloto	José de Figueiredo António Augusto da Costa Mota José Alexandre Soares	—	Luís Alexandre da Cunha José Urbano de Castro	—
Paris 1931	Manoel Gonçalves da Silveira Azevedo e Castro	José Alexandre Soares	António do Couto Abreu Luciano Freire José de Figueiredo José Simões de Almeida	Adolfo Marques da Costa António de Brito (Porto)	José Urbano de Castro	—
Paris 1937	António Ferro	Luís Cristino da Silva	Paulino Montez	António do Couto Abreu	Pardal Monteiro Adelino Nunes	Jorge Segurado Francisco Franco
Brussels 1956	José Penha Garcia	Jorge Segurado	—	—	José Pessoa	Francisco Keil do Amaral Mário Neves Manuel da Silva Martins

The debate around the issue of a “Portuguese Style” was not confined to the great international exhibition of 1900, and the following architectural tenders in the first half of the twentieth century granted the opportunity for architects to express their views on the subject, entering a hitherto restricted debate to historians and other intellectuals. This circumstance was not without some friction among the members of the jury and competitors. The Pavilion of Portugal would then mirror the complex conjecture on the issue of ‘national style’, and tenders — particularly the choice of winning projects — are an excellent barometer in assessing the eclectic references adopted at the time.

In order to implement this image, it was necessary to choose an architectural style not only representative of past glories, but also a reflection of the current theories on what it should be. After the historical eclecticism of Portuguese pavilions during the nineteenth century, Ventura Terra’s projects emerged as the harbinger of a new era in Portuguese architecture. However, the inspiration in the Parisian Beaux Arts did not satisfy the intellectual factions of the time, setting in architectural history the confrontation between the winner and the design inspired by Portuguese vernacular architecture by Raul Lino, compared by Bordallo Pinheiro. José de Figueiredo, prestigious art critic and director of the National Museum of Ancient Art, dubbed the Colonies Pavilion as a “clothing flat iron” (Figueiredo, 1901). Also not pleased with Lino’s proposal, Figueiredo suggests hesitantly, the Romanesque. His idea of a ‘national style’ was not yet formed, and was only stated — and implemented — later on.

This reflection was driven by the fall of the monarchy, where the Ultimatum 1890 generated an excessive use of Manueline, pressing the model to exhaustion. The apparent incongruity in using this style in the Portuguese Pavilion at the Panama-Pacific Exhibition, without any tendering procedure, can only be explained by the troubled instability of the First Republic, with only five years since its establishment. With little time, scarce resources and a large Portuguese community in San Francisco to assuage, the idea was to assemble different decorative elements of the great monuments of Portugal, also picture on the pavilion’s interior as Tourism advertising. The architect Antonio do Couto Abreu designed the pavilion in this style as it was requested by the Commissioner, drawn from a suggestion by the minister in charge of choosing the plot in the grounds of the Exhibition.

It was, however, necessary a disruption from the monarchical “Estylo manuelinho”, and the search for alternative models reached the ‘quinto-joanina’ baroque-style inspiration, based on large manor houses and palaces of the eighteenth century. This stylization was very pleasing to José de Figueiredo, and their participation in the preparatory committee for the tender in Rio de Janeiro in 1922 was not a coincidence — since the statement called for a building on the “spirit of our brightest times of civil architecture”. The project of Carlos Ramos, Cottinelli Telmo and Alexandre Cunha was far from the linearity and dryness (Almeida, 1986) of the House Barros & Santos Ramos and Gil Vicente High school from his partners, establishing that there was a clear gesture of compromise in the eclectic pavilion’s design.

Modernity grappled with spreading to the Portuguese Pavilions, with faint and far apart requests. Jorge Segurado appealed for a modern and rational expression in 1927, anticipating the architecture tender for the Ibero-American event, to be held there in two years. However, his words did not correspond to the project that he presented for it. Many discrepancies could be pointed out, between the historicist stylizations presented in these tenders and other projects by the same authors. The ‘generation of compromisers’ in the words of Carlos Ramos, was exactly that particularly in the tenders for the ‘Pavilion of Portugal’ for Rio de Janeiro (1922), Seville (1929) and Paris (1931).

Debates and propositions to find a Portuguese architectural identity underwent a major change with the advent of the Estado Novo, where the confrontation with other totalitarian models that emerged in Europe precipitated a process of looking for a new national veneer (Acciaouli, 1998). In addition, the architects themselves felt the need to stop looking at the past and turning to the future, trying to prepare the first steps towards a modern yet Portuguese architecture. This attitude also reflected in the pavilions, which should be framed in architectural production, from 1934.

The refusal to collage international models, inspiration in the vernacular instead of monumental styles found a very particular tenderer in Raul Lino, a case absolutely paradigmatic and rather isolated. The consistency and specificity of his vision distances him from other architects, creating difficulty in defining Lino’s work. In the 70s, the label of “modern” by Pedro Vieira de Almeida caused controversy, but one cannot forget the positioning

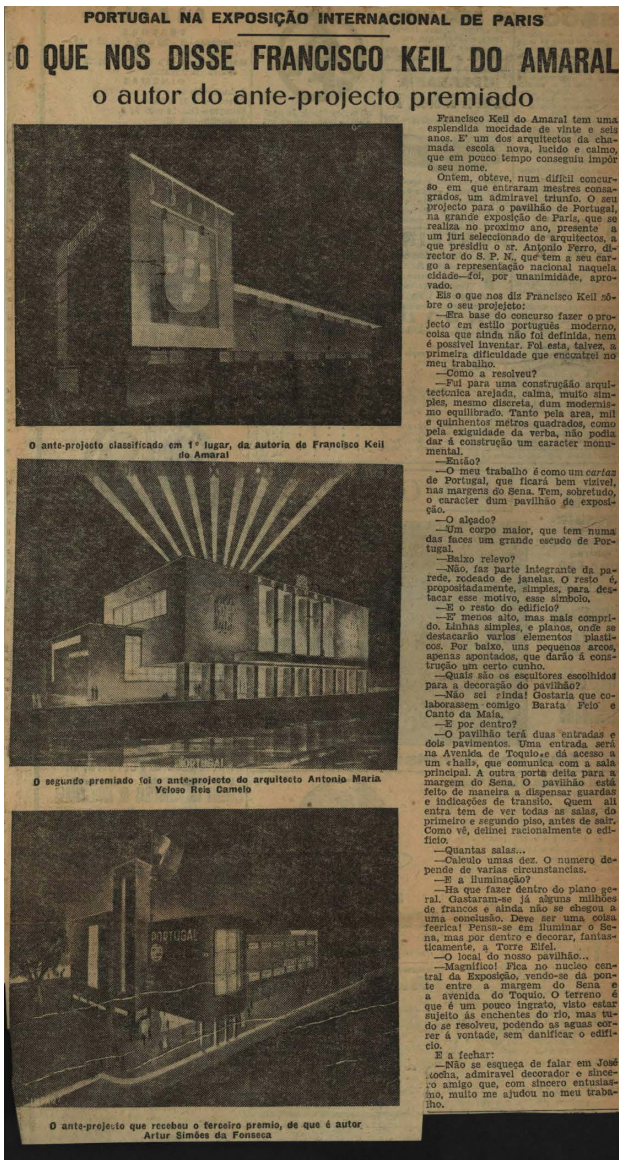


Fig. 03. Interview with Keil do Amaral, 1st prize in the architecture tender for the Portuguese Pavilion in Paris 1937. The article also features the designs for 2nd and 3rd place. *ário*, 22 sept. 1936. Torre do Tombo National Archive, Lisbon (SNI, cx. 483).

Cottinelli Telmo in his assessment of the projects for the Monument to Henry the Navigator competition in 1935. Although ‘medieval’, Telmo recognizes the modern character in Raul Lino’s proposal, and in drafting the manifesto Representation 35, the name of Raul Lino is emphasized, placed next to Cottinelli, presumably the author of the complaint for the tender.

The rupture of this ambiguous solution to compromise and the attempt to impose a modern style in Portuguese architecture comes with the establishment of the Estado Novo as a fertile ground for its effectiveness. This tender was the opportunity to aid the leader of the regime see how much it was needed an identifiable image that was not inferior to previous historical times. The modern could be a reference to take lead, without being strictly wedged to international models, but imbued with a

national feature. The idea appealed to Salazar, naming in charge Antonio Ferro and Duarte Pacheco to mediate the affirmation of the proposed model by this generation of architects.

This process reflected directly in the tender for the Portuguese Pavilion for the Paris Universal Exhibition in 1937, where for the first time the statement asked the architects to design a ‘modern but Portuguese’ building [Fig. 03]. However, the ‘generation of compromisers’, in the words of Carlos Ramos, did not participate in this tender, and the victory went to his disciple, the young Keil do Amaral. While this generation enshrines the “national modern” in the Mundo Português Exposition in 1940, Keil and Jorge Segurado designed the Pavilions of Portugal in Paris and New York, in its pure form and large surfaces prepared to receive the integrated

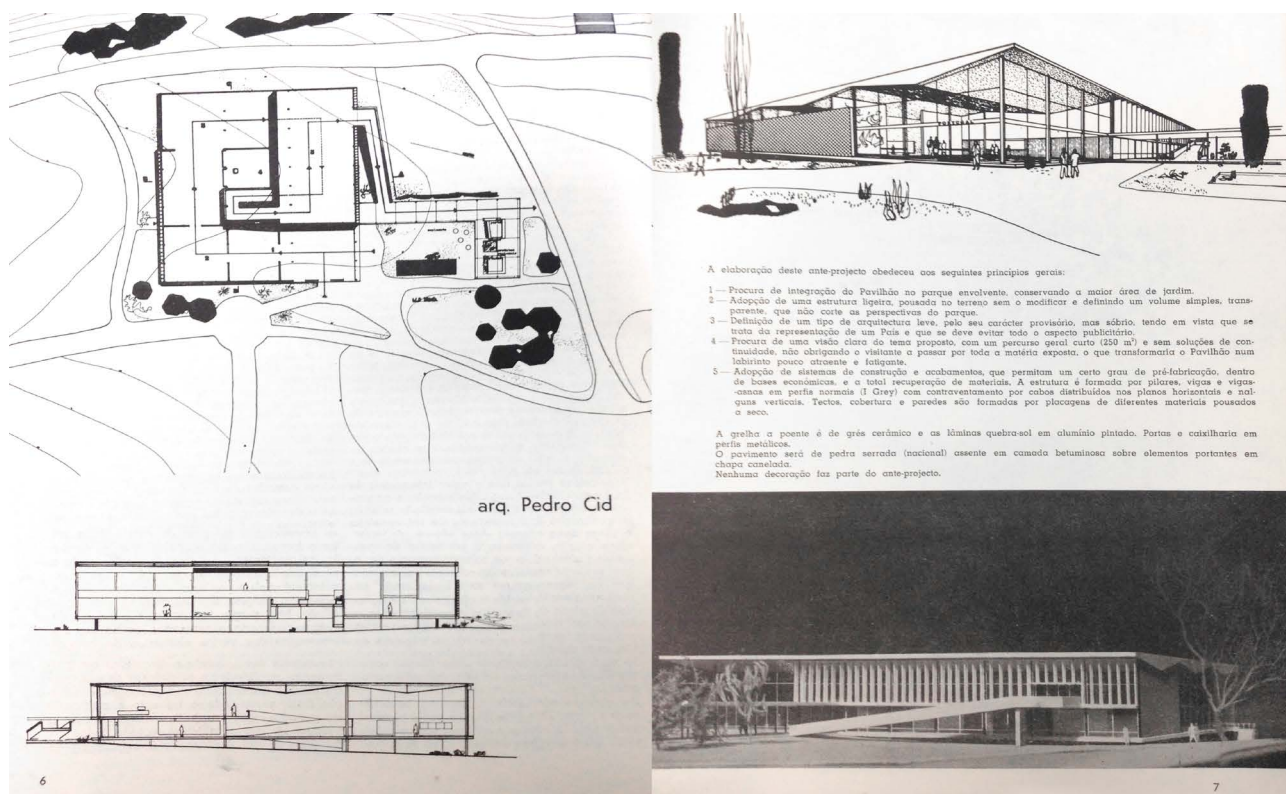


Fig. 04. Pedro Cid, winning proposal in the architecture tender for the Portuguese Pavilion in Brussels 1958; , n.º 57-58, jan.-feb. 1957, pp. 6-7.

decoration, in order to function as a large poster to promote Portugal abroad. If the Modern principles were adopted, other competitors in 1937 persist in historicist references, without giving signs of understanding or acceptance of the change that was being implemented. The very same Raul Lino foresees this paradigm shift, submitting a proposal in line with Pardal Monteiro's Art Deco, as seen in his design for Instituto Superior Técnico.

The struggle of these architects for enforcing their intentions to create architecture for the regime that it was both modern and national met its apogee in 1940. Eight years later, at the First National Congress of Architecture, these architects have been forced to confront their disillusionment with the regime, facing criticism in regard to the so-called 'Português Suave', rather than the consecration of their efforts. Keil do Amaral will take over as leader of the group of architects in Lisbon, rejuvenating the magazine *Arquitectura*; while Carlos Ramos would provide the educational environment necessary for the development of innovative thinking of architects such as

Fernando Távora (Tostões, 2008). From this point, two fundamental aspects of modernity developed in Portugal.

Many architects will express their desire to join and explore the concepts of CIAM, intervening in the city at the urban scale, according to Corbusier's doctrines. Pedro Cid's Pavilion at the Brussels World Exhibition in 1958 is presented as an overview of the principles of the 'International Style' [Fig. 04]. However, the project is criticized for his mischaracterization. Indeed, alongside the use of foreign models, some architects did not forget the intention to develop a language simultaneously refined and vernacular. The survey for Portuguese Regional Architecture had its importance in this search, and architects such as Nuno Teotónio Pereira and Nuno Portas would come to develop this third approach, long dreamed of by national architects. The last pavilion studied, designed by Frederico George, falls within this alternative path, unconcerned with the traditional-modern dichotomy and seeking only a solid conceptual and formal cohesion.

THE EXECUTION OF THE SELECTED PROJECTS: EPHEMERAL ARCHITECTURE AS A “TOTAL WORK OF ART”

It is also important to assess the “life” of the Pavilions, translated throughout the process comprising the project, whether by tender or assignment, construction, experience and afterlife of Portuguese pavilions. In the domain of integration of architectural design and exhibition program, the national pavilions built on foreign lands, between 1915 and 1970, undertook distinct configurations. The first exhibitions followed a model of simple showcasing, displaying a set of selected works, and along with industrial products, Fine Arts exhibits were held. The expositions subsequently evolved toward a model of commissions for works of painting and sculpture. In Seville, the decorated rooms were also replete with cabinets of agricultural, industrial and colonial products. In 1931, after choosing the architectural winning project, a tender for artists was launched under the supervision of the author of the architectural project. Slowly a team of artists from various specialties was formed, who shared the same guidance and learnt to work together towards the production of a consistent exhibit. Under the guidance of Antonio Ferro, and taking advantage of lessons learned from the 1931 exhibition, a new model was created. This consisted of a narrative-driven architectural design, enriched by decorations so as to advertise the political and ideological significance of the regime.

The pavilion in Brussels marks the triumph of contemporary modern art, although it appears somewhat scattered in the large glass ‘container’. That is not true in 1970, where the extensive experience in designing museums and executing decorative interiors of Frederico George allowed the architect to draw an exposition fully integrated with the architectural project, and the close collaboration with Daciano da Costa allowed for elevating the concept of total work of art — studied in 1929, tested in 1931 and improved in 1937 and 1939 — to a fully integrated whole.

The development of technical and constructive paradigms is also notorious when looking at these Pavilions globally,

where the choices were also conditioned by their transience, re-use and permanence. Metal structures covered by panels and rich ornaments modelled in plaster served the ephemeral pavilions in 1915 and 1922, built in Portugal and sent to San Francisco and Rio de Janeiro. However, the choice of materials in 22 was deliberate, since there had been the intention of being able to reuse the buildings, as eventually happened with their reassembly in the Park Eduardo VII, where today stands the Pavilion of Industries by brothers Rebello Andrade, reformulated by Jorge Segurado. Seville followed another model, where the intention of fixing the Portuguese consulate in Andalusia led to a combination of brick masonry system in the definitive segment and metallic structure in sections, to be removed after the end of the event, with care to maintain the remaining structure. Without any reuse plans for the Pavilions at the Colonial Exhibition in Paris, those were built with wooden structures and plaster.

The first exhibition of the Estado Novo followed common principles of construction, with reinforced concrete for the structure and the walls were executed in brick masonry. After demolishing the pavilion in the Seine riverbank, it was chosen to adopt a metal frame for the New York Pavilion, covered with cement mortar. Both pavilions have been carefully coated in stucco, where inside were applied murals integrated with the exhibition program. According to the principles of the ‘International Style’ the pavilion designed by Pedro Cid was executed in prefabricated materials, structural steel modules, large glazed planes, aluminum brise-soleils and ceramic stoneware. Osaka presented the only instance where the construction was entirely to the responsibility of a local firm, eventually offering an excellent opportunity for learning Japanese techniques on laying mortar. The structure was executed in steel, covered with plasterboard panels and copper foils for roofing. Traditional finishes were exported from Portugal, such as panels of ‘azulejos’ and regional marble sections.

FUTURE WORK

Finally, it is important to underline the existence of some prospects for future development. These relate mainly to the important source of knowledge deriving from the whole process of designing and executing a national pavilion. The practice of exhibition architecture as a typology was very conditioned in Portugal, where museums were installed in buildings adapted for this purpose, in most situations without design tendering procedures. The requirements for national pavilions cultivated this practice, providing invaluable experience to particular architects whom later come to embrace important museological projects. For example, the Rebello de Andrade brothers were nominated directly by José de Figueiredo for the expansion of the National Museum of Ancient Art, and Jorge Segurado

and the team of decorators who worked with him in Paris (1937) and New York (1939) were nominated by António Ferro for setting up the Museum of Popular Art. Raul Lino's expertise acquired in Paris, in 1931, was certainly useful to him in the important task as Superintendent of National Palaces, where he was responsible for their redecoration just before the Centennial Commemorations of 1940. And even Pedro Cid, after the experience in Brussels, will win the important tender, together with Ruy d'Athouguia and Alberto Pessoa, for the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Headquarters and Art Museum, to house the founder's collection. These are some of the possible paths and correlations to be made, a prismatic vision that this study of the Pavilions of Portugal allows to tread.

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