

# Nuno Portas and the Spanish influence on the definition of housing policies in Portugal in the period of democratic transition.

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## Abstract

Taking the housing crisis and the SAAL program as a central interest point of architects and sociologists in the aftermath of the Portuguese revolution, this chapter tracks the influence of Spanish architecture in Portugal and the relations of Portuguese and Spanish architects, signaling the main role of Nuno Portas. It begins by introducing the background of the architecture exchange between Portugal and Spain, since the 1960's, through the diffusion and interchange activities of Nuno Portas (section 2). It continues to discuss the role of architects on urban change during the revolutionary process from the viewpoint Joan Antonio Solans experiences and writings (Section 3). Then it takes on the social movements debate with Manuel Castells reflections and writings about the new housing policies and experiences (Section 4). Finally, a short reflection on the interchange of ideas and experiences between Portugal and Spain is presented in the conclusion (Section 5).

## 1. Introduction

In the outbreak of the Carnation Revolution of 25th of April 1974, the democratic transition in Portugal corresponds to an intensive period of architectural debate, associated to the international disclosure of the Portuguese production (1). Housing programs were the main issue addressed by a new generation of architects involved with ideals of the Revolution, being an important argument to mobilize people to the revolutionary process.

Nuno Portas (1934) became part of the first three Provisional Governments after the Revolution, as Secretary of State for Housing and Urban Planning, developing policies to encourage the active participation of citizens in the construction of their own habitat, seeking to overcome the gaps that existed at the time in the field of housing. In this context he fostered the creation of housing cooperatives and local support offices (2) (GAT). His greatest contribution in this governmental position was the creation of Local Ambulatory Support Service (SAAL) (3), a unique initiative that has indelibly marked the course of Portuguese architecture and public housing policies.

The program, which was available between 1974 and 1976, aimed at the constitution of neighborhood associations to work with the architects to build new houses in the same areas where they were living at the time. Architects were involved in with communities assuming a social meaning in their practice, which at the time configured the theoretical bases of architecture as discipline. SAAL Program catalyzed 169 operations, distributed from the north to the south of Portugal, which resulted about 8.000 dwellings (4).

Nuno Portas' political activity was an opportunity to experiment in the terrain the ideas and the research he had been done since his final thesis, presented at the Porto School of Fine Arts, in 1959. The document, entitled was *Social Housing: Proposal for its Architecture Methodology* (5), had been supervised by Adérito Sedas Nunes (1928-1991), a prominent sociologist, who had provided him the interest by social issues and a particular reading about the role of architects, facing problems of cities, in an epoch of new challenges resulting from the world economic shift, in the Second World War aftermath. The document, derived from the survey of different housing typologies produced by the architects of the modern movement, deepening the capacity of dwelling organization to be adapted to different family patters. Social analysis was highlighted broadening disciplinary field of architecture, for the side of social sciences.

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(1) AAVV - *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui – Dossier Portugal An II*, nº 185, de maio/junho de 1976 / GREGOTTI, Vittorio - Oporto. *L'esperienza dei Saal*, di Alexandre Alves Costa Interventi a S. Victor, Bouça, Lapa, Leal, Antas, Miragaia, Barredo, Lada Oporto. In AAVV - Lotus International – *Architettura nella Città Storica*, nº 18, 1978 / HATCH, Richard - *The Scope of Social Architecture*. New Jersey: New Jersey Institute of Technology, 1984 / VIEIRA, Álvaro Siza; ROUSSELOT, Christine; BEAUDOIN, Laurent - *Entretien avec Álvaro Siza*. In AAVV – *Architecture Mouvement Continue*, nº 44, 1978.

(2) In Portuguese, *Gabinete de Apoio Técnico*.

(3) In Portuguese, *Serviço de Apoio Ambulatório Local*.

(4) BANDEIRINHA, José António. *O Processo SAAL e a Arquitetura no 25 de Abril de 1974*. Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2011.

(5) In Portuguese, *A Habitação Social: Proposta para a Metodologia da sua Arquitectura*.

Portas sense of renovation on architecture was anchored by his interest about the culture of south of Europe and by his fascination about the neorealism movement on cinema, which inspired his position as editor of the *Arquitectura* magazine, since 1957. It is on this basis that he builds a critical judgment on the orthodoxy of the modern movement, which he opposed, at first through a neo-realistic sense, founded on the passion for cinema by Roberto Rosselini, Vitório de Sica and Luchino Visconti and at a second moment through hermeneutics that, incorporating the conviction of the open work, relativizes the abstract protagonist of forms, privileging concrete responses to the needs of society.

From 1962 until 1974, when he assumed government functions, Nuno Portas coordinated the Research Centre for Architecture, Housing and Urban Planning at the National Laboratory of Civil Engineering (LNEC) (6). At the Laboratory, he researched about the organizational structures of spaces, family aggregates constitution and its variation according to different life typologies. Those sociological studies, on the border of architecture discipline, embodied computer's recourses, available at the time, allowing the definition of patterns, and the creation of matrix understand logics previously apprehended at the empirical level. In this period, he expands his international network, sharing experiences, namely in Brazil with Carlos Nelson dos Santos (1943-1989), in Peru with Jonh Turner (1927) and in England with Leslie Martin. His participation and involvement, from 1967, in the Small Congresses of Architecture (7) will be a decisive moment, which will allow him to strengthen relations with namely with Oriol Bohigas (1925).

Two months after his taking office as Secretary of State for Housing and Urban Planning, Nuno Portas met in Lisbon a set of personalities linked to housing and city issues. The meeting was held on the 22nd and 23rd of June of 1974. During that weekend Bernardo Secchi (1934-2014), Jordi Borja (1941), Manuel de Solà-Morales (1939-2012), Manuel Castells (1942), Marcial Echenique (8) (1943) and Paolo Ceccarelli (1934), debated strategies and policies to tackle the shortage of houses in a complex context that included both the announced avalanche of popular actions claiming better housing conditions, as well as the real estate crisis resulting from the financial instability of the country (9).

Despite the pression resulting from the revolutionary events, that had driven to the public neighbourhoods' illegal occupation, particular those that belong to the Lisbon and Oporto municipality, Portas felt the understandable need to ponder rigorously and with distance the general lines of the policy to be followed. Between the 25th of Abril and 1st of May, right after the *coup d'état*, almost one thousand houses of Lisbon were taken by families that lived in slums, re-rented rooms, or similar situations. If some of those events resulted from a spontaneous process, there were others that resulted from an organized process conducted by political parties (10).

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(6) In Portuguese, *Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil*

(7) In Spanish, *Pequenõs Congresos de Arquitectura*

(8) Marcial Echenique is Chilean origin.

(9) BANDEIRINHA, ref. 4, pp.144.

(10) CASTELLS, Manuel. La question du logement au Portugal démocratique: Entretien exclusif avec Nuno Portas secrétaire d'état au logement du gouvernement provisoire portugais. *Espaces et Sociétés* n.º 13-14, Out.1974/Jan.1975, pp. 199-207.

Nevertheless, Portas considered the illegal occupation as ‘a drop in the ocean’ once the real housing needs in the capital were estimated in almost in one hundred thirty thousand houses.

For Portas and his multidisciplinary circle, constituted by architects, urban planners, economists, geographers and sociologists (11), Portugal situation was seen as the right opportunity to implement and test the ideas they had been debating both from the ideological and technical point of view. From the ideological side, it was a perfect occasion to involve and empower common people in the shift process, taking advantage of the communities' association capacity and the knowhow of the construct workers that in the many cases integrated the family nuclei to rehouse. From technical side, it should be seen as scientific issue, following the research work produced in the several urban laboratories which to they were connected.

Bernardo Secchi, belonged to the *Istituto Lombardo di Studi Economici e Sociali* (ILSES) and by the time he was professor of Economy of the Territory at the Ancona Faculty of Economics, working in the relationship between urban planning and economic planification. Paolo Ceccarelli had been working as researcher in urban studies at Joint Center for Urban Studies from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University, in the 1960s, before started his activity as professor of urban planning at Venice University.

Marcial Echenique had done his Ph.D in Barcelona, producing a thesis about the barracks at Montjuic (12), where he developed a systemic survey on the precarious housing that spread through the topography of the hillside of Montjuic, in Barcelona at the end of the 1950s, where people lived in precarious conditions, without electricity and water supply. The survey included an analytical study of some of these homes based on the design of examples, as well as a detailed sociological study of the families who lived there. In 1968, he had been integrated at the Centre for Land Use and Built Form Studies in Cambridge (LUBFS), being in charge of the “Urban Systems Study” project, between 1967 and 1973 (13). The study aimed at providing a computer aid to evaluate urban structure plans and a context for action area proposals medium-sized towns.

Manuel de Solà-Morales studied architecture and economics in Harvard, in the Master City Planning, coordinated by Josep Lluís Sert. He founded the Laboratory of Urbanism of Barcelona (LUB) (14), as a unit of the Department of Urbanism of the School of Barcelona, in 1968, following the inspiration of LUBFS Studies, that he had visited together with Nuno Portas. The initial work of LUB was based on the studies of the form of urban growth interpreting the specific processes of the city’s physical production and the way the various agents intervene in it. Special attention is given to the analysis of informal and self-built areas. Similar studies, joining architects and social scientists, will be conducted in Portugal concerning the large urban areas around Lisbon and Oporto cities.

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(11) PORTAS, Nuno. ‘SAAL/Curraleira Lisbon, Portugal’. In: HATCH, Richard. (ed.). *The social scope of architecture*. United Kingdom: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1984, pp. 262

(12) *El barraquismo de Montjuic*.

(13) GIL, Bruno. *Culturas de Investigação em Arquitectura - Linhas de pensamento nos centros de investigação, 1945-1974*. Doctoral Thesis, Universidade de Coimbra, 2016, pp. 298.

(14) In Catalan, *Laboratori d'Urbanisme de Barcelona*.

Manuel Castells, as a sociologist, opened the field to social sciences. He had been a researcher of the Laboratory of Industrial Sociology in Paris, from 1965 to 1967. At the time he was the director of the Seminar for Urban Sociology at the *Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales* of Paris.

Finally, Jordi Borja had studied law, geography, and sociology. In 1972, he also had founded the *Centro de Estudios Urbanos, Municipales y Territoriales* (CEUMT), a collective that, that resulted from a close collaboration between the cities of Madrid and Barcelona. Very active in the debate around urban social movements, Jordi Borja (together with Ricard Boix) authored an article about the Portuguese case, in an issue of the Spanish magazine *Jano Arquitectura* dedicated to this topic (15), gathering experiences from France, United Kingdom, Italy and Portugal. Titled *Urban movements in Portugal* it described the revolutionary and post-revolutionary political process, the housing crisis and demands and social movements for housing (16).

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(15) Manuel Castells reflections on these matters were also published on this issue.

(16) BORJA, Jordi and BOIX, Ricard. Movimientos urbanos en Portugal. *Jano Arquitectura* n.º 39, 1976, p. 47-58.

## 2. Nuno Portas as vehicle to promote exchange between Portugal and Spain

From the aftermath of the World War II, until the 1960s, the relationship between Portugal and Spain, in terms of architecture were almost non-existent. However, despite the different realities of the two countries at the time, there were some common issues. On one hand both dictatorships of Oliveira Salazar and Francisco Franco had resisted anachronistically in the scenario of the new world order. On the other hand, the conviction that nationalism produced a superficial representation of each country's identity, which was considered a limitation on the cultural sectors, including the architects.

This second aspect had motivated Portuguese architects to produce the survey on Popular Architecture (17), between 1955 and 1961 as a scientific research about the vernacular buildings' characterization and its relationship with the territory. This initiative, led by Francisco Keil do Amaral, involving teams spread by the regions from north to the south of the country, was in certain sense parallel to the "mediterraneanism" enchantment discussed in neighborhood country. The pavilion of Spain, demanded by Gio Ponti to José Antonio Coderch for the Triennale of Milan, in 1951, can be mentioned as a result of this, revealing the potentialities of the "uncontaminated" and resilient environment structured by the singularity of stripped architectures produced through the empiric knowledge of people.

On the 1960s the exchange between two countries was resumed, being intensified until the democratic transition, held in 1974 and 1975, respectively in Portugal and Spain. Architects had an important role on this process, debating paths to solve the lacks, namely, in terms of housing access.

The Portuguese *Binário* magazine, published in October 1960 and April 1961, respectively articles by Cesar Ortiz-Echagüe and Rafael Echaide, reveling in the western Iberian Peninsula that was happening debate in Spain at the time. The lengthy article by Ortiz-Echagüe entitled *40 years of Spanish Architecture* (18), was written in the sequence of the first Small Congress of Architecture, held in Madrid one year before, on the 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> of November. The article disclosed the production of an "orphan new generation", challenged to overpass misconceptions of nationalism and to recover the interrupted experiences of the GATPAC (19). Six months after, Rafael Echaide would continue the subject, in the 31st issue of the same magazine, publishing a set of recently built projects by Ortiz-Echagüe, Barbero and Joya; Lopes Iñigo, Geraldés and Subías; Martorel and Bohigas; Coderch and Valls; Peña Gancequi; and Miguel Fissac (20).

Following those articles, Spanish architecture started to feature, more recurrently, also in the *Arquitectura* magazine. From 1957 to 1974, Nuno Portas will participate in the directive commissions

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(17) In Portuguese, *Inquérito à Arquitectura Regional Portuguesa*.

(18) In Spanish, *40 anos de Arquitectura Espanhola*

(19) In Catalan, *Grup d'Arquitectes i Tècnics per al Progrés de l'Arquitectura Contemporània*

(20) PINTO, Paulo Tormenta; DELGADO, João Paulo and SARAIVA, Alexandra. Spanish post-war architecture in portuguese magazines (1946 – 1970) – the cases of A Arquitectura Portuguesa & Cerâmica e Edificação (Reunidas) and Arquitectura. *Histories of Postwar Architecture*, Bologna, 2020, pp. 116-130.

of the 3rd series of that magazine<sup>21</sup>. He will use the magazine, not only to reveal the Spanish “orphan new generation” in Portugal, but also as vehicle to promote exchange between both countries.

From the side of Spain this period, also corresponds to a reciprocal interest about what was happening in Portugal. The *Hogar y Arquitectura* (22), a magazine from Madrid directed by Carlos Flores, dedicated the issue of January/February of 1967, to Álvaro Siza’s first projects. The issue integrated also a critical review about Siza’s production by Pedro Vieira de Almeida (1933-2011), and a reflection about the young generation of Portuguese architects, which, in a certain sense, could also be considered as the Iberic neighbor’s “orphan generation”.

Under Nuno Portas’s editorial influence, the *Arquitectura* magazine dedicated the issue 73<sup>rd</sup>, of December 1961, almost entirely to Coderch and Valls (23). The Coderch and Valls' work represented the sense of realism that Portas was looking for in its own architecture, as the houses in Vila Viçosa, Praia das Maças and Sesimbra. A sort of 3rd way, which recognized the sense of place, the inspiration of popular knowledge but rejecting both historicisms and the modern movement orthodoxy.

The unexplored Mediterranean environment, that hosted Coderch and Valls’ architecture, in the end, had the same characteristics that Portas had found both in the landscape integrity of Alentejo’s interior, or in Atlantic coast proximity. Those experiences contained the ethical bases that he would later adapt in his policies to face housing scarcity. According to his strategy, the housing urgency could be solved with communities’ resources, through the production of an anonymous architecture, in line with Coderch's thought, expressed in the text “It's not geniuses we need now” (24), also published together with the work of the Catalanian pair, in 1961 (25). The Coderch and Valls team would be published again in the May/June 1966 issue, with the presentation of a hotel in Palma de Mallorca.

In April 1967, Oriol Bohigas invited Nuno Portas, to participate in the 8th edition of Small Congresses of Architecture, scheduled for May of the same year in Tarragona. Bohigas and Carlos Miguel were trying to extend the network to Portugal (26), since 1961. The subject of congress, organized by the group of Barcelona, was entitled as “The grouping of the dwelling: Study of the border territory between urbanism and architecture”. The congress was opened with a conference by Aldo Rossi, who recently had launched his book, intitled *The Architecture of the City* (27), in 1966 (28).

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(21) The commission was led by Frederico Sant’Ana (1957-1960) and Rui Mendes Paula (1960-1969)

(22) FLORES, Carlos (Ed.). *Hogar y Arquitectura*, nº 68, January / February 1967.

(23) Publishing the dwelling buildings in Barceloneta and Calle Compositor Bach, as well as the Ugalde House in Caldetas and the Camprodón in Girona

(24) In Spanish, “No son genios lo que necesitamos ahora”.

(25) Coderch’s text “*No son genios lo que necesitamos ahora*”, had been published for the first time in *Domus* magazine, in November 1961, just one month before of *Arquitectura* magazine.

(26) The first contact had been done with José Aleixo da França Sommer Ribeiro (1924-2006).

(27) In Italian, *L'Architettura della Città*.

(28) CORREIA, Nuno. O Nome dos Pequenos Congressos – A Primeira Geração de Encontros em Espanha 1959-1967 e o Pequeno Congresso de Portugal’. *Tesina Master Teoría y Historia de La Arquitectura*. Univertitat Politècnica de Catalunya: Departamento de Composición Arquitectónica ETSAB, 2010.

Portas leave Tarragona in charge of organizing the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the Conference in Portugal, that would occur in Tomar in December 1967. The congress followed the same organization of the previous one, under the theme of “Residential Zones: Common Territory of Architecture and Urbanism”. Despite, the mobilization of Iberic architects to the initiative of Small Congresses of Architecture, only one more edition would happen in Vitória, in October of 1968 (29).

After the venture Small Congresses of Architecture, the issue 107 of *Arquitectura* magazine of January/February 1969 (30), opened with and an editorial written by Nuno Portas and Rafael Moneo about the so-called school of Barcelona. Although the prominence of Barcelona and Catalonia in *Arquitetura* magazine, other characters and territories were also addressed. In May/June 1965, two proposals for the Euro-Kursaal competition in San Sebastian were published, in the issue 88. Sainz Oiza was also published in January/February 1967. In March/April 1968 was the tern of Arancil, Suarez-Inclan and Vilorio Garcia. In May/June of the same year, the square to Sanfermino and the Diester Factory in Saragoza, by Rafael Moneo were also published (31).

Despite the *Arquitectura* magazine's 3rd series extending to 1974 the last issue dedicate to Spain will occur in May/June of 1970, marking a turning point in the critical approach regarding the neighboring country. “A somber tone marked the pages of the issue, filled with photographs of glommy low-cost housing blocks. Articles by Ramon Maria Puig and Lluís Domènech and Cristian Cirici addressed a general pessimistic feeling, followed by Oriol Bohigas. Three articles were dedicated to the new Barcelona airport, illustrated in cartoonish style, combined images of modern discomfort with words such as “completely depressed” and “liberal”. Òscar Tusquets concluded the issue, reflecting about the relations between “imagination” and “power”, featuring the economic liberalization of Spain in the last period of Francoist regime (32).

The situation in Spain, mirrored what was happening in Portugal in the same period, particularly in the cycle led by Marcelo Caetano as Salazar’s successor. Between 1968 and 1974, the colonial war economy and an openness to foreign investment created a suitable environment for a sudden increase in the building industry in Portugal, namely in the areas of housing, tourism development, and infrastructure (33).

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(29) CORREIA, ref. 28.

(30) EMÍLIA, Cristina and FURTADO, Gonçalo. Ideias da Arquitectura Portuguesa em viagem. *Joelho nº3*, Coimbra, 2012.  
DOI:[http://dx.doi.org/10.14195/1647-8681\\_3\\_16](http://dx.doi.org/10.14195/1647-8681_3_16)

(31) PINTO, et al., ref. 20.

(32) PINTO, et al., ref. 20.

(33) PINTO, et al., ref. 20.



### 3. Juan Antonio Solans and the role of architects on urban change during the revolutionary process

Joan Antonio Solans' interest about Portugal, had begun in his pre-university course, before started his graduation as architect at the School of Architecture of Barcelona. By the time the course included subjects related to Sociology and Portugal. This experience had dictated his later path as urbanist at the municipality of Barcelona and also at Catalonia's government.

In his undergraduate experience, Solans devoted himself to draw up the census of barracks of Montjuic. The contact to a similar scenario in Portugal had consequences. Right after the graduation, he was invited to participate in the Review of the Master Plan for the Lisbon Region, between 1972 and 1974, until the Carnation Revolution, analyzing the dynamics of soil transformation in the metropolitan area (34). The plan, coordinated by the Directorate-General for Urbanization Services, defined, in 1961 (35), the concept of Lisbon Metropolis, as a territorial entity, socially diversified, and functionally dependent on the city of Lisbon. Completed in 1964, it sought to counter Lisbon's centralism by implementing a regionalist strategy that could correct the "urban effects of the disorderly expansion of the capital's suburbs" (36). Never fully implemented, the plan entered a revision process.

In Solan's study, land use changes were characterized and quantified throughout the 1960s, from rural soils to expectant soils and soils with urban use. It was clear that an extensive and rapid transformation was taking place, far beyond the real needs of demographic growth, without urban structuring and without any planning and land management framework. The growth resulted from the migratory movements of rural populations to the urban centers. At the time, the population increase extrapolated to the Lisbon Region, implied the necessity to build "125,000 new dwellings" (37). This study also showcases the importance for Solans of the diagnosis and urban analysis, also shared by Portas at the LNEC research. In an interview conducted by Portas in 1982, Solans highlights the importance of these analysis for understanding the "urban reality" (Fig. 1), decomposing, and analyzing its several components, and only then, set actions and regulations to manage future transformation.

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(34) ARROYO, Francesc. Joan Antoni Solans, el centinela del urbanismo catalán. *El País*, 15th January of 2000.

(35) SOARES, Bruno. Ordenamento e Planeamento do território no contexto metropolitano. In: CCDRLVT. Atlas da Área Metropolitana de Lisboa, 2013, pp. 247.

(36) AZEVEDO, Mário. O Plano Diretor da Região de Lisboa. *Binário - Revista mensal de arquitetura, construção e equipamento*, n.º108, Lisboa, setembro de 1967, pp. 118.

(37) ARROYO, ref. 34, pp.125.



In 1974, Solans saluted the arrival of Portas to government in an article published on the issue 2 of *Arquitecturas Bis* magazine, from July, entitled *Portugal and its Future* (38) (Fig.2). The article was followed by an interview to Portas himself, entitled *Portas to the Power* (39), republished from the Portuguese *O Século* newspaper, from 12th of June of 1974.

The title of Solans' editorial was withdrawn by the inconvenient book written by António de Spínola (*Portugal e o Futuro*) (40), published in 22nd of February of 1974 (two months before the Revolution). Spínola was former governor of the Portuguese colony of Guinea-Bissau and would lead the National Salvation Board (41), right after the Revolution (42). In that book, he defended a political solution, and not a military one, as the only way out of the after 13 years of the Overseas War. Spínola's inspiration was also used by Manuel de Solà-Morales in an article published on the same issue of *Arquiteturas Bis*, addressing the approval of the Barcelona County Plan, which he entitled as *Spínola in Barcelona?* (43), comparing the process to the new political situation in Portugal.

Solans started his article, mentioning the new perspectives that were opened by the Political change in Portugal to produce new architecture and building city. After the "popular party" of the Revolution, it was necessary to consider a new social balance and a new social pact to overpass unpredicted issues related with decolonization and with the inevitable economic crisis. The definition of a political matrix to be follow was dependent on the new constitutional text that was not written yet. Nevertheless, it should be considered that the peculiar urban structure of Portugal, integrating middle classes and military, required pondered decisions, especially in the capital, where important changes could come.

Solans argued that "the influence of certain people, who were in the 'dead side' with previous regime, in terms of physical building planning" could be more determinant, than the action of political parties, or even exiled politicians concerned to avoid "counter-reactions" (44).

Personalities such as the architect Nuno Teotónio Pereira and the economist Pereira Moura (1925-1998) were highlighted in the article, due their involvement "preparation of urgent measures to structure the bases of the new government" (45).

Teotónio Pereira (1922-2016) led a young generation of architects (46), including Portas who had initiated his practice supervised by him, in 1957. His office in Lisbon, at *Alegria* street (47), was a kind of school, where ideological principles oppositionists were debated. At the moment of the

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(38) In Portuguese, *Portugal e o Seu Futuro*.

(39) In Portuguese, *Portas ao Poder*.

(40) SPINOLA, António. *Portugal e o Futuro*. Lisbon: Editora Arcádia, 1974.

(41) In Portuguese, *Junta de Salvação Nacional*.

(42) Receiving the surrender of President Marcello Caetano, as representative of the Armed Forces Movement in the *coup d'etat*.

(43) In Spanish, *¿Spínola en Barcelona?*.

(44) AZEVEDO, ref. 36.

(45) AZEVEDO, ref. 36.

(46) Gonçalo Byrne (1941), João Paciência (1943), Pedro Vieira de Almeida (1933-2011), Pedro Viana Botelho (1948), Braula Reis (1927-1989) and Bartolomeu Costa Cabral (1929), among others, worked together with Nuno Teotónio Pereira.

(47) In Portuguese, *Rua da Alegria*.

Revolution, Teotónio Pereira was arrested in Caxias accused of conspiracy, being released, with the other political prisoners, on the second day after the event (Fig. 3). In the transition period, Teotónio Pereira maintained his political activity, namely as militating in Left Socialist Movement (MES) (48), although, without any governmental charge. Pereira Moura, for his part of it, would become minister in the first and fifth provisional governments with the social affairs.



Fig. 3 – Caxias, 1974. Release of Nuno Teotónio Pereira, political prisoner.  
Source: *Noticiário Nacional 1974. Arquivo RTP – Rádio Televisão Portuguesa.*

Demographic aspects and urban sprawl were for Solans the most important issues to be inverted in terms of planning. On one side, there was the emigration and low taxes of natality (49), on the other, there were the urban speculation and the waste of the urban soil in clandestine buildings and second residences. The situation in Lisbon was complex, the needs of accessible and qualified houses, the lack of employment, generated emigration fluxes to the center of Europe, the growth of slums, and co-housing, or over-occupation. The impact of emigration had such magnitude that shattered the demographic balance. Lisbon had lost 1.400.000 inhabitants, in one decade, which had broken the balance in the ratio of sexes (50). The economy was stagnated, enhancing deep social lacks.

In the last years of the regime, under Marcelo Caetano presidency, had been a certain increased of the of the acquisitive capacity of population resulting from “development” measures, which had been traduced in the demand for second residency and the remittance of capitals by emigrants seeking stability and forecast for a hypothetical return, which had generated the growth of suburbia areas by the replication of indistinctive housing blocks, so call as “soil bottlers”.

Facing the situation, Solans considered that the resolution of the problems “will be delicate, because it should affect necessarily the high bourgeoisie and the grand capital that was supporting real estate operations. According to himself, there were no other possibilities to drive the capital to the

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(48) In Portuguese, *Movimento Esquerda Socialista*.

(49) Low fertility taxes were also a problem, Lisbon Region had a demographic balance of natality, in the 1960s of only 100.000 inhabitants, which was similar to the growth that Madrid or Barcelona had in just one year.

(50) There were, at the moment, 87 men to 104 women, being the normal 100 men to 104 women.

productive development”, being the role of the architects relevant, because they had to answer to the demand of social wellbeing, under conditions of insolvency of a large part of this population.

Solans expectations, in the end, were convergent with Portas and his circle. That is, “the events in Portugal would allow promote an interesting process, and maybe the first examples of ‘architecture’ in self-construction in Europe”, with innovative solutions, beyond the resources limitations, of the opposition of some economic sectors. Concluding that mentioning a time of novelty and beauty, related to an “evolution, that was not in continuity”.

## 4. Manuel Castells and expectations about the new society

When the Revolution happened in Portugal, Manuel Castells had published, in 1972, his book *The Urban Question* (51) where he opposed Lefebvrian concepts of space production, to the idea of an urban system that can be divided in its three slopes: economic, political and ideological. The city as the space for the reproduction of work power, should provide through the public services (schools, hospitals, housing) the conditions to reach the development of communities, taking in account their symbolic expectations.

In this sense, the empowerment of Portuguese population, and their participation on the reconstruction of their own “urban system”, was something that generates the Manuel Castells’ enthusiasm. The exclusive interview with Nuno Portas he did, in the late 1974, was a sort of “manifesto” mirroring the expectations he had about the new social organization, promoted by the housing measures, defined by the provisional government under the orientation of his Secretary of State for Housing and Urban Planning.

Castells drove the interview in the political plan addressing that challenge should not be only to solve housing crisis, but the articulation of housing policies with the economic situation of the country, and the available assets to face the problems. According to Portas about 70% of the population did not have access to the private real estate market, reason why they depended on a public housing policy. A high fraction of the Portuguese population was in insolvency, due to the real estate speculation followed by bank sector.

The lack of State resources made it difficult to solve the problem, through its intervention. According to Portas, namely in social sectors, such as public health, education and social security, it would be necessary, to carry out a fiscal reform to increase public resources. In parallel, rising rents price, should be frozen, to avoid tenants’ inaccessible contracts and also to “block” the capital's interest in real estate, seen as a privileged area of profitability - “home should be seen as an essential good, non-commercial” (52).

On the other hand, it was necessary to control the economic measures impact on the small and medium construction companies, due to their fragile situation, maybe they could not support the policies, being the intention of the government all its supporting forces, to act essentially on the monopolist corporations. Referring to the SAAL program, Portas mentioned that a political and technical operation was under preparation, involving the subproletariat that was available in the urban areas. People were available to pay rents adjusted to their income, corresponding the lowest category to 25% of the minimum wage. Cooperative's sector should also be increased, taking advantage of the revolutionary popular mobilization.

Ten years later in, 1984, Manuel Castells commented the Portuguese Housing Policies from the democratic transition period, in the book *The Scope of Social Architecture*, edited by Richard C. Hatch. Castells tackled three main issues – Participation, Politics and Spatial Innovation. SAAL

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(51) CASTELLS, Manuel. *The Urban Question: A Marxist Approach*. Paris: Maspero, 1972, 1976. Trans. by Alan Sheridan. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1977; London: Edward Arnold, 1977.

(52) CASTELLS, ref. 10, pp. 199-207.

program in Portugal, together with interventions in Bologna and Madrid, were used as main examples, and as the most innovative cases of urban participation in Europe. Castells reinforced the importance of social strength to balance the capital and the State, being decisive to generate architectonic creativity in big scale. The edition also included an article by Nuno Portas relating the *SAAL and the Urban Revolution in Portugal*, illustrated with images of the interventions in Lisbon – in the neighborhood of Curraleira – and Oporto – in the neighborhoods of São Vítor, Antas and Leal. Portas explained the program and the housing policy followed by himself, as Secretary of State for Housing and Urban Planning, between 1974 and 1976, focusing on the active role of architects, and the multidisciplinary so called SAAL Brigades, that integrated engineers, sociologists and students. The participative role the communities was also mentioned, as well as the solutions adopted, and the financing strategy.

Curraleira intervention (Fig. 4), designed by José António Paradela and Luís Gravata Filipe was highlighted, and dissected as case study, demonstrating that the success of SAAL program, coming from user's involvement. Following Manuel Castells, "only if people control the city, will cities actually be built people."



Fig. 4 – Page of the chapter SAAL/Curraleira Lisbon, Portugal, from the book *The Scope of Social Architecture*. Source: HATCH, Richard. (ed.). *The social scope of architecture*. United Kingdom: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1984, pp. 264-265.

## 5. Conclusion

The interest of Spanish architects and social scientists on the Portuguese revolution and urban movements, is deeply expressed in the issue 30 of *CAU: Construcción, Arquitectura, Urbanismo* magazine, titled *Portugal, Year Zero* (53) (Fig. 5), entirely dedicated to the description of the urban and housing problems in the democratic transition period, as well as the main aspects of the policies being implemented.

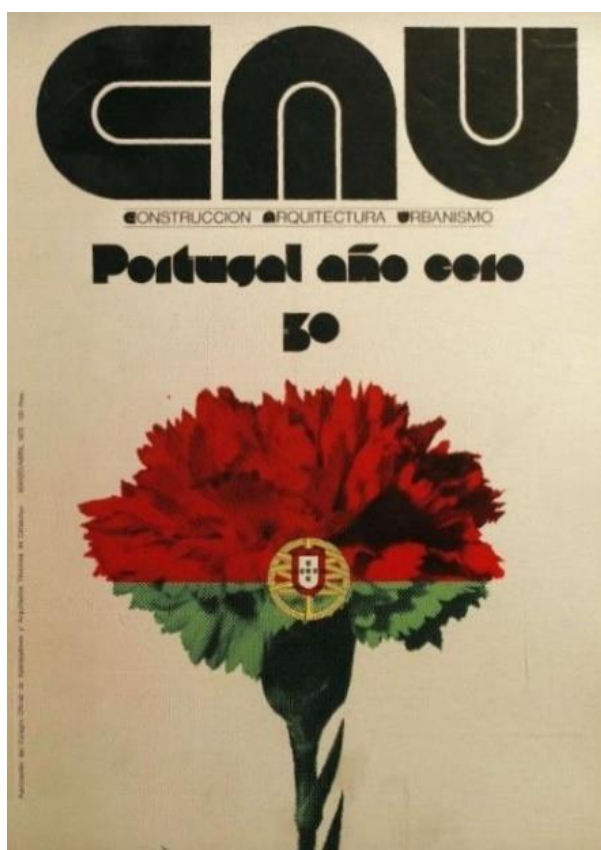


Fig.5 - Cover of *CAU* magazine, issue 30, 1975.

Source: *CAU: Construcción, Arquitectura, Urbanismo* magazine, issue 30, mar-apr 1975.

The presentation of the issue signals the novelty and the exceptionality of the Portuguese revolution, explaining the interest of the till then mostly ignored neighboring country, as Spanish themselves hoped for a democratic transition. Likewise, the conflicts that emerged in the subsequent period were also seen as possible in that hypothetical future. However, the publication does not intend to establish similarities, not to make generic assumptions or inferences to one country based on the experiences of the other, but to learn (and learn by doing) with Portuguese case: “(...) the experiences of others not only help us to get to know them, but also to have points of reference in our own activity” (54). Therefore, the tone of the publication is set around the

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(53) In Spanish, *Portugal año cero*.

(54) CORNET, Carles Oliver (coord.). *Portugal año cero*. *CAU: Construcción, Arquitectura, Urbanismo*, nº. 30, mar-apr 1975, pp. 31. In the original “(...) las experiencias de los demás no sólo nos sirven para conocerlos a ellos, sino también para tener puntos de referencia en nuestra propia actividad”.



description of the main revolutionary and post-revolutionary events, but mainly portraying a country where the dictatorship left complex problems to solve: the lowest per capita income in Europe, low labor productivity, high emigration, and alarming deficits in education, health, welfare, housing and infrastructure, etc. Questioning how to address these issues and to overcome the many shortfalls in the process of (re)constructing of a new society, the Portuguese revolution, is seen as a “kind of laboratory where many things are put to the test” (55).

In this showcase about the Portuguese case, several articles are authored by Portuguese architects, geographers, sociologists, mainly describing the socio-economic and urban context of the country, while others present the Spanish architects’ viewpoint on the housing policies in place. This collaboration and exchange of viewpoints it is presented as fruitful, a provides an exceptional opportunity to a reflection about the ongoing Portuguese transformation from both sides.

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(55) CORNET, ref. 54, pp. 35.