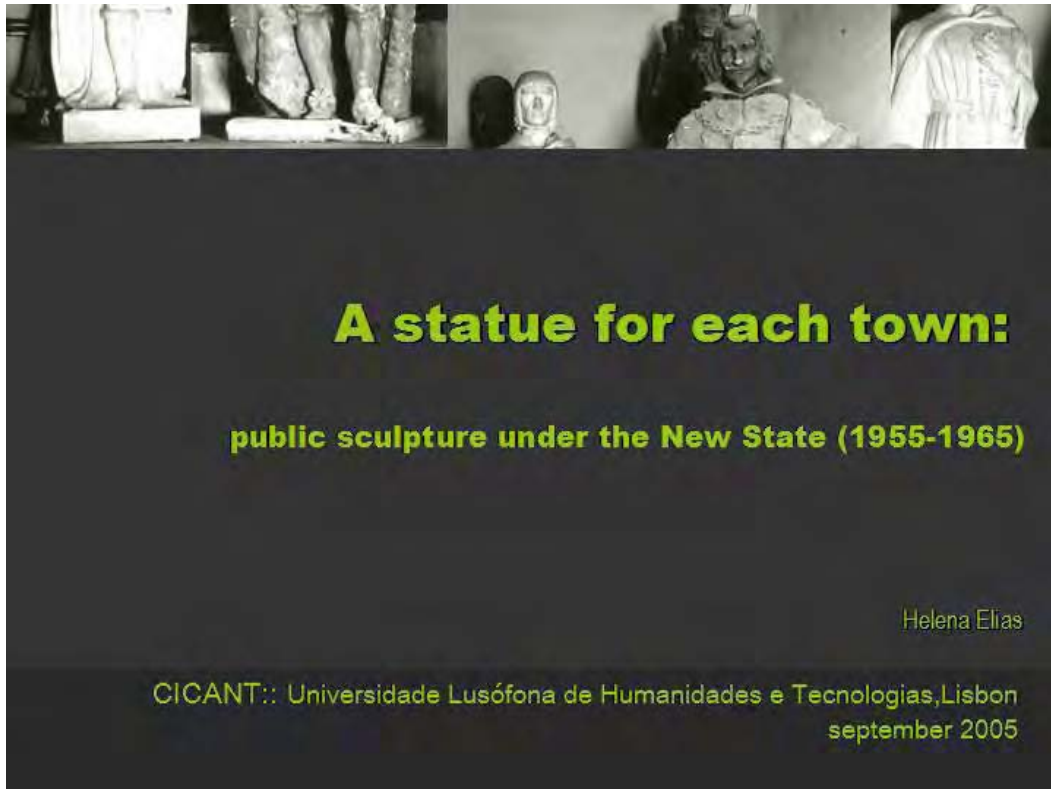


## A STATUE FOR EACH TOWN: PUBLIC SCULPTURE UNDER THE NEW STATE (1955 – 1965)

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- The deep commitment of the leading personae of the New State in emphasising episodes supporting their particular reading of the past is well-known.

introduction



Easter telegram linking three key dates: the foundation of nationality, the end of the Filipe dynasty and the present: one of many examples of ideological use of past events.

Note that 1940 is represented by monuments to these past key events.

- The New State addressed the issue of the heritage with conspicuous zeal. Actions upon the built heritage became a part of the educational ideological apparatus from the early 1930s.

introduction



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The restored historical sites are associated with moments in the nation's existence imagined as victorious.



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Furthermore, historical events would greatly benefit from being connected to historical characters: a potential for historical drama is set up.



Along with the restoration of a monument, the erection of a statue was envisaged to complete the historical scenario.

introduction



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introduction



In particular, it is expounded what presided the choice of the spaces where the statues were to be placed and the designation of the historical characters object of tribute.

introduction



Similarly to other European authoritarian and fascist regimes, statues allusive to historical characters or events were erected as monuments in most important Portuguese towns and cities.

the plan of statues



the plan of statues



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Special emphasis on medieval Kings, figures from the period of the discoveries as well as distinguished Portuguese writers.

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1955:1965

the plan of statues

medieval	discoveries	others
		
10 orders	7 orders	3 orders

the plan of statues



The Ministry of Public Works (MOP) represents central administration in what concerns public works related to the built heritage.

The role of the MOP was to coordinate different moments in town planning, namely the urban arrangements where a commemorative statue was envisaged.

the plan of statues



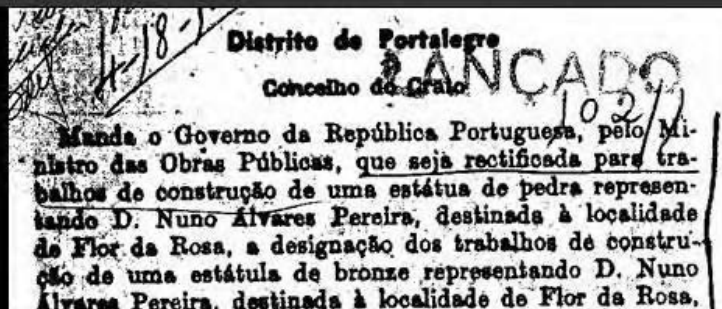
As an authoritarian regime based on a corporative organization, the New State had taken control of the country by regulating the entire citizen's life.

The mayor of the city was directly nominated by the Government, to represent local power and to collaborate with MOP.

How does this authoritarian/corporative form of state organization impacts on the process of statue order and placement?



the plan of statues



Excepting Lisbon and Porto, municipal authorities had to little budget from the State to spend. Central Administration had assigned to itself the erection of the statue, and doing so, MOP had the legitimacy to control the ordered statues.

Indeed, Central authorities had both the money and the power to control urban planning as well the statuary policy.

the plan of statues



As for the role of municipality on these works, its contribution was usually the making of the pedestal, although supervised by the Central administration services.

Occasionally the idea of erecting a statue was first supported by the local authorities who opened a public subscription. Nevertheless, the money obtained could barely cover the ground-works.

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There were also administrative procedures in order to assure that the artworks are well aligned with New State's ideological directives for historical representation. If necessary, MOP would call for the collaboration of Portuguese History Academy (APH).



the plan of statues

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Nevertheless, consulting APH was facultative. All the work ordered by MOP should be submitted to the fine-arts department of the Educational Board of the Ministry of National Education (JNE).

the plan of statues

This consultation with JNE would happen twice: when the sculptor presented the maquette and when his clay model was ready.

When approved, the model was considered ready to be reproduced in stone or bronze.



the plan of statues

This conference maquette; second, when his clay model was ready.

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the plan of statues

The Educational Board claimed for less dynamic compositions: emphasis should be given to the iconic value of the historical character.

When the maquette of the statue of King Sancho I was presented to JNE, the artist was asked to remove the personage of a little boy who was carrying the charter of the city of Guarda.



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the plan of statues

The Statue of Sancho I should celebrate the year the King fought against the “almorávide” saracen troops to conquer Algarve.



In Portuguese provincial cities, reshaping the historical sites followed a pattern: the statues would be placed in a square, mostly renamed for the King and within the surroundings of an historical monument or notable building.

the surroundings



the surroundings

How does MOP promote the re-shape of the historical sites?



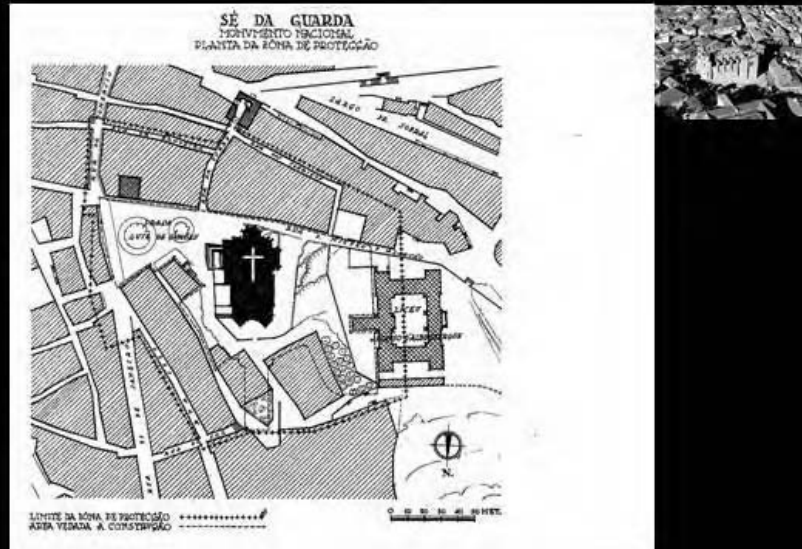
the surroundings

Aspects of the urban fabric around historical monuments and buildings were reshaped in order to articulate those historical buildings with its surroundings.

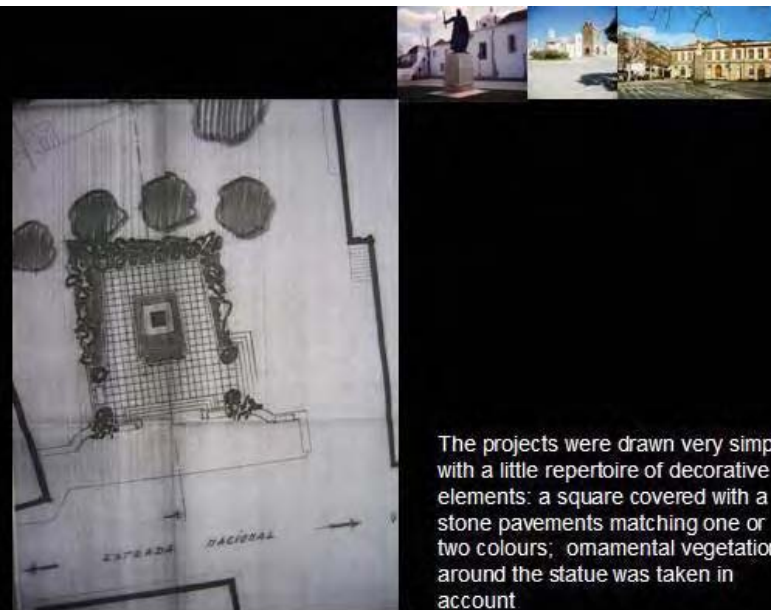


It was a priority for the Minister of Public Works to set up a protection area for the sake of the aesthetic enhancement of the historical monuments or building.

the surroundings



the surroundings



The projects were drawn very simple with a little repertoire of decorative elements: a square covered with a stone pavements matching one or two colours; ornamental vegetation around the statue was taken in account

the surroundings



Intervention from MOP on areas of protection of historical monuments was influenced by:

Charter of Athens (1931)

“Surroundings and Neighbourhood of ancient monuments should be given special consideration.”

Charter of Athens (1933)

“Application of hygienist measurements” in the surrounding of the historical monuments.

the surroundings



Lagos Waterfront, Algarve

Often the restoration technicians (MOP) determined to change dramatically the surrounding area, claiming that it was too unhealthy due to poor housing.

If necessary, demolitions were made to remove old construction obstructing the viewing of the monument.

Interventions would change space morphology and thus its functionality

the surroundings



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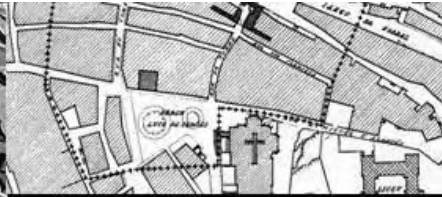
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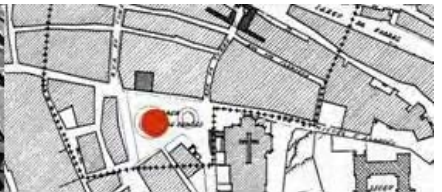
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Both Central and local authorities saw the renewed surroundings as the proper background for the historical buildings and a good opportunity to increase tourism.

With the embellishments and the urban ameliorants new squares with statues characterized the areas of protection for historical monuments and buildings.

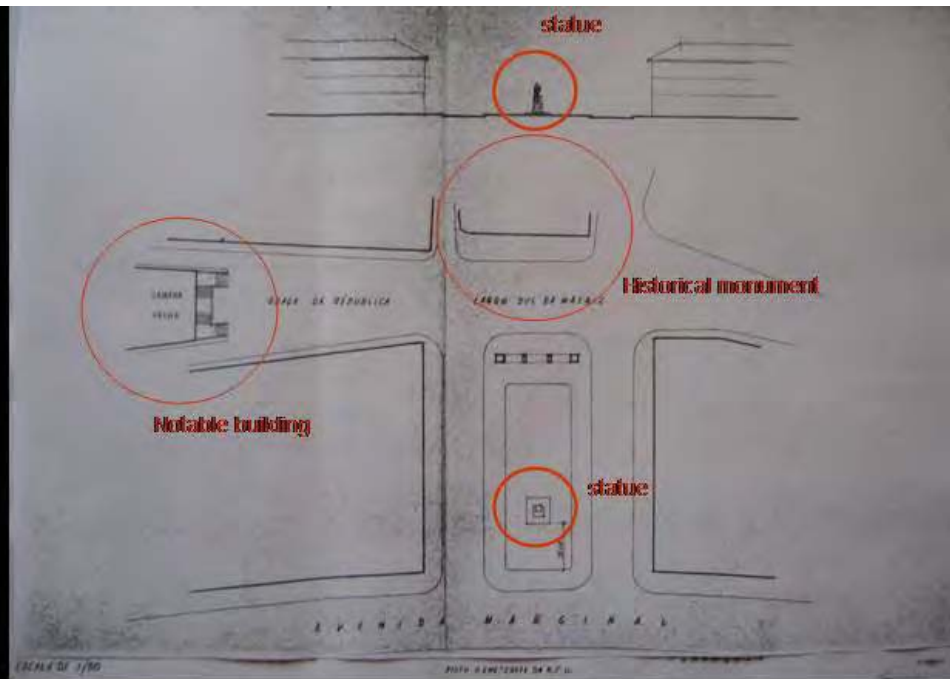
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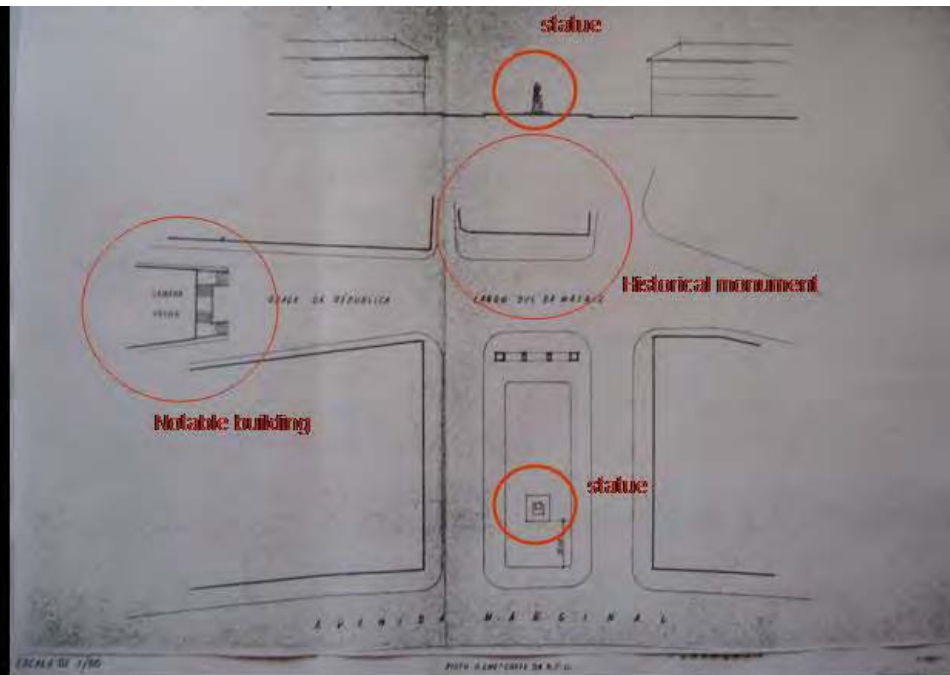
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the surroundings



The plan for the localization of the statue was articulated with the plan for the protection area.

the surroundings



The JNE was also requested to evaluate the quality of the integration of the statue in a given historical site.

The historical monuments or buildings and the statue became prominent elements in the renewed public space.

conclusions



Both statue and historical monument or building would call for a passive fruition.



conclusions




The formula “**restored historical monument and surrounding area with a statue**” became a current one for the embellishments and ameliorants of the provincial cities.

Most of the urban interventions were made possible by a systematic action of MOP who was able to control different levels of town planning and to articulate these with statue placement.

With a powerful administrative and technical infrastructure, the New State imposed its urban policy for historical sites.






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The outcome of such policy was the creation of sceneries, generally composed of a statue placed against a background laden with historical value and associated to a historical fact.

Such sceneries were envisaged, within the regime's educational ideological apparatus, to enlist the illiterate masses and lower middle classes into a form of perception of that historical fact consentaneous with the political agenda of the New State.



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In these sceneries history is staged with two objectives:

- to invent heroic characters associated with the town's key moments;
- to promote a form of civic commemoration destituted from citizens' active participation.

The first objective would allow for the New State to emerge as a present day counterpart of the hailed heroic character. The second objective would prevent commemorations from becoming creative moments, thus inhibiting the drive for political change.

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