

Art and politics in the former "Portuguese Colonial Empire". The monument to Mouzinho de Albuquerque in Lourenço Marques

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Abstract

In 1940, a monument to Mouzinho de Albuquerque is inaugurated in the former capital of the Portuguese Colony of Mozambique, Lourenço Marques. The result of a lengthy commissioning process, this homage to one of the main heroes of the colonial pantheon becomes a center-piece in the many political rituals which had become common-place during the 1930s. The concepts of aura and cult value are used to analyse its "traditionalist" aesthetics and the role it played in political spectacles, arguing that it obeys a strategy of representation of the public space as "Empire".

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Colonial statuary in the former Portuguese colonies

[1] In the context of the study of the relationships between art and politics in the 1930s and 1940s, one of the lesser known cases (outside Portugal) is the art created under António Oliveira Salazar's *Estado Novo* ("New State").¹ This dictatorial regime, final outcome of the military coup of 1926, lasted from 1933 till the 1974 revolution, being marked, during the 1930s, by an (ambiguous) approximation to the fascist regimes which, for a time, seemed to head towards a "New Order" in Europe.² One of the more interesting dimensions of this art is its overseas projection in what was at the time called the "Portuguese Colonial Empire", only comparable to the efforts of Mussolini's Italy to create a "Fascist Empire" in Northern Africa through major investments in urbanism and architecture.³ Portuguese urban heritage in the former colonies (Angola, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe, Cape Verde, Guinea, Macau, Portuguese State of India and East Timor)

¹ In the last decade, several studies have provided important new perspectives on the public art and architecture of the *Estado Novo*. See, for example, Pedro Vieira de Almeida, *A arquitectura no Estado Novo: Uma leitura crítica. Os concursos de Sagres*, Lisbon 2002; Guilherme de Abreu's doctoral thesis, *Escultura pública e monumentalidade em Portugal (1948-1998). Estudo transdisciplinar de história da arte e fenomenologia genética*, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa 2006 (unpublished); and Nuno Rosmaninho, *O poder da arte. O Estado Novo e a Cidade Universitária de Coimbra*, Coimbra 2006.

² See Manuel Loff, *"O nosso século é fascist!" O mundo visto por Salazar e Franco (1936-1945)*, Oporto 2008.

³ See Mia Fuller, "Building power: Italy's colonial architecture and urbanism, 1923-1940", in: *Cultural Anthropology* 3 (1998), Nr. 4, 455-487. On Portuguese colonialism in the 20th century, see Malyn Newitt, *Portugal in Africa. The last hundred years*, London 1981.

has been receiving increased scholarly attention, which shows the interest in this still largely unexplored area of artistic production.⁴ An overview of the architecture, urbanism and public art in Portuguese Africa has recently been published by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.⁵ The study mentions a large, though not exhaustive, number of statues and monuments, most of which have, after the independencies of the former colonies, been displaced or destroyed.

[2] Almost without exceptions, the African statues were created in Portugal by Portuguese sculptors. The reason would not only have been the lack of qualified artists in the colonies, where artistic education was only slowly implanted, mostly on private initiative and frequently challenging both official academism and colonial policy.⁶ Colonial policy explicitly aimed at "Portugalizing" overseas territories, seen as integral part of the nation.⁷ For the main architect of the new "colonial empire", Armindo Monteiro (1896-1955), minister of Colonies during 1930-1935, the question at stake was this: "Portugal can be just a nation that possesses colonies or it can be an Empire. The latter would be the spiritual reality of which the colonies are an embodiment."⁸ The second option would be adopted in the 1930 Colonial Act, appended to the new Constitution of 1933. The second article states it "is of the organic essence of the Portuguese Nation to fulfil the historical function of possessing and colonizing overseas territories and to civilize the native population [...]".⁹ As José Manuel Fernandes wrote, this "political readiness to define a 'colonial space' in ideological and mythical terms, with a view to creating a new idea of Empire based on strong historical symbolism and commemorative practices", is clearly legible in its public art, architecture and urbanism.¹⁰

⁴ For example, the international conference "África: Arquitectura e urbanismo de matriz portuguesa", held on 27-28 January 2011 at the Universidade Autónoma in Lisbon.

⁵ José Manuel Fernandes and Filipe Thermudo Barata, ed. coord., *Portuguese heritage around the world: Architecture and urbanism, vol. 2, Africa, Red Sea, Persian Gulf*, scientific coord. José Mattoso, Lisbon 2012. The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation has also started to make this information available online at the Heritage of Portuguese Influence portal (<http://www.hpip.org>, last accessed 30 January 2013).

⁶ Well-known examples in Mozambique are the architect Pancho Guedes (b. 1925) and painter Malangatana (1936-2011). On the artistic context, see Alda Costa, "Revistando os anos em que Pancho Guedes viveu em Moçambique: As artes e os artistas", in: *As áfricas de Pancho Guedes. Coleção Dori e Amâncio Guedes*, exh. cat., Lisbon 2010, 24-39.

⁷ See Luis Reis Torgal, *Estados Novos Estado Novo. Ensaio de história política e cultural, vol. 1*, 2nd ed., Coimbra 2009, 467-498.

⁸ Armindo Monteiro, *Para uma política imperial. Alguns discursos do Ministro das Colónias Doutor Armindo Monteiro*, Lisbon (undated), 56. "Portugal pode ser apenas uma nação que possui colónias ou pode ser um Império. Este será a realidade espiritual de que as colónias sejam a corporização." Unless otherwise indicated, quotes have been translated by me. The original text is given in footnotes.

⁹ "É da essência orgânica da Nação Portuguesa desempenhar a função histórica de possuir e colonizar domínios ultramarinos e de civilizar populações que neles se compreendam [...]" See Torgal, *Estados Novos Estado Novo*, 475-476.

¹⁰ José Manuel Fernandes, "Sub-Saharan Africa – Architecture and urbanism", in: Fernandes and Barata, *Portuguese heritage around the world*, 237.

[3] General studies on 20th century Portuguese sculpture usually mention the main works created for Africa, but abstain from examining this specifically colonial context.¹¹ Taking into account the places and social contexts for which these monuments were commissioned implies analysing their ideological objectives beyond mere propaganda and, above all, the political uses they were put to. They need to be studied at the crossroads of urbanism, colonialism and public art,¹² including the commemorative and expositive context of which they were often part, and especially the panoply of ceremonial practices which was one of their main purposes.¹³

[4] This approach means going beyond the perspective, often adopted in relation to Portuguese 20th century sculpture, of artistic "delay", a persistence of 19th century aesthetics well into the 20th century due to the conservative nature of the Portuguese political regime.¹⁴ Such a resistance against "modernism", or, more precisely, this balancing between modernizing and traditionalist forms, surely was a major issue.¹⁵ It was, however, a more complex question than simple incapacity or unwillingness to innovate, as I think the case of the Monument to Mouzinho de Albuquerque which is analysed here shows. This monument, inaugurated in 1940 after a lengthy process, actually in the Museum of Military History in Maputo, was dedicated to one of the main figures of the Portuguese pantheon of colonial heroes. Considering the official investment in this work, the place where it was installed and the political role it would fulfil, it is arguably the most important monument placed in the former colony of Mozambique.

[5] This article is organized in four parts. At first, the lengthy commissioning process is resumed, taking into account the local and national context and the ideological

¹¹ Examples are the pioneering study of José Augusto França, *A arte em Portugal no século XX (1911-1961)*, 4th ed., Lisbon 2009, first published in 1975, or more recent studies by Joaquim Saial, *Estatuária Portuguesa dos anos 30*, Lisbon 1991 and Lúcia Almeida Matos, *Escultura em Portugal no século XX (1910-1969)*, Lisbon 2007. To contribute to a better understanding of Portugal's colonial sculpture was one of the aims of my master thesis, on which this article is based. See Gerbert Verheij, *Monumentalidade e espaço público em Lourenço Marques nas décadas de 1930 e 1940: Dois casos de estudo*, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa 2012 (unpublished).

¹² On the relation between monumentality and colonialism, see Rebecca M. Brown, "Inscribing colonial monumentality: A case study of the 1763 Patna Massacre Memorial", in: *The Journal of Asian Studies* 65 (2006), Nr. 1, 91-113. The characteristic instability of the colonial context prompts Brown to defend a specific "colonial monumentality". Such instability can, however, be seen as a more extreme case of the instable and contradictory nature of the modern monument in general, understood according to an essentially patrimonial logic and object of multiple and at times conflicting discourses, as Alois Riegl already indicated in his *Der moderne Denkmalkultus, sein Wesen, seine Entstehung* (Vienna 1903).

¹³ See Maria Isabel João, *Memória e império. Comemorações em Portugal (1880-1960)*, Lisbon 2002.

¹⁴ See, for example, José Manuel Fernandes, "Mozambique – Introduction", in: Fernandes and Barata, *Portuguese heritage around the world*, 502. Joana Brites problematizes this dichotomy between "modernism" and "classicism", see "Entre o poder da arte e a arte do poder: Modernismo versus neoclassicismo monumentalista na arquitectura das décadas de 1920 a 1940?", in: *Revista Portuguesa de História* 37 (2005), 411-435.

¹⁵ See Patrícia Esquível, *Teoria e crítica de arte em Portugal (1921-1940)*, Lisbon 2007, 71-79.

investment in the figure of Mouzinho de Albuquerque during the early 1930s. Next, I will confront the program and final project of the monument, paying special attention to the way the colonial context was translated into images of stone and bronze. Then, the social use of the monument in political rituals will be explored, in order to evaluate its role in the staging of a politically instrumental hero cult. Finally, the intermingling of political, social and aesthetic values in the monument and the political stage it provided will be studied, taking as a point of departure Walter Benjamin's concept of the aura.

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A monument to Mouzinho de Albuquerque in Lourenço Marques

[6] The urban history of Lourenço Marques, former capital of the Colony of Mozambique (actual Maputo), is relatively well studied.¹⁶ Born from a small settlement in the extreme south of Mozambique, it becomes increasingly important during the 19th century as one of the main entrances to the south-African hinterland. In 1887 it is granted the status of city. The same year, a Public Works Expedition, made up of military engineers, arrives from Lisbon to provide the new city with appropriate infrastructures and its first urbanization plan, signed by António J. Araújo.¹⁷ The plan organizes the future expansion of the city according to a regular network, still observable today, formed by streets, blocks, squares and public buildings. At the same time, it restructured the streets of the old *Baixa* ("Downtown", the old settlement) and made an effort to expand transportation infra-structures (port, railway) which laid down the foundations for Lourenço Marques' rapid growth during the 20th century as one of the main ports on the East-African coast.

[7] Lourenço Marques is thus a very recent city, marked by its modern urbanism and architecture; but it is also a city "without memory", as remarks André Ferreira,¹⁸ in the sense there are almost no traces left from before the 20th century. As one local historian wrote in 1960, "the past of Lourenço Marques consumed itself, leaving no traces."¹⁹ It was, as well, a very diverse city, which never really had a fixed identity. While dominated by foreign, especially British, interests, other communities – African, Indian, European,

¹⁶ See João Sousa Morais, *Maputo: Património da estrutura e forma urbana. Topologia do lugar*, Lisbon 2001; André Faria Ferreira, *Obras públicas em Moçambique. Inventário da produção arquitectónica executada entre 1933 e 1961*, Lisbon 2008; and Brigitte Lachartre, *Enjeux urbains au Mozambique. De Lourenço Marques a Maputo*, Paris 2000. Besides, there are older but still valuable studies, such as Alexandre Lobato's *Quatro estudos e uma evocação para a história de Lourenço Marques*, Lisbon 1961, and *Lourenço Marques, Xilunguine. Biografia da cidade*, Lisbon 1970.

¹⁷ Morais, *Maputo: Património da estrutura e forma urbana*, 85-98. See also António J. d'Araújo, *Lourenço Marques. Conferencias na Sociedade de Geographia*, Lisbon 1891.

¹⁸ Ferreira, *Obras públicas em Moçambique*, 22.

¹⁹ Lobato, *Quatro estudos e uma evocação para a história de Lourenço Marques*, 9.

Chinese – thrived and, until the *Estado Novo* put an end to their (public) cultural assertion during the 1930s, marked their presence.²⁰

[8] A portrait of the city on the eve of the 1930s can be found in the first four volumes edited by the photographer José dos Santos Rufino which sought to depict the colony, published in Hamburg in 1929 with introductory texts by Mário Costa (1893-1968).²¹ The city's representation is marked, on the one hand, by its commercial infrastructures; not by coincidence, one of its first major buildings was the neo-classical railway station of 1910.²² On the other hand, it appears as a distinctly bourgeois city, marked by its large, tree-lined avenues, residences and leisure equipments such as stores and theatres. It is this dimension (explicitly opposed to "Africa") which, according to Mário Costa, defines the image of the city:

Large avenues, some of which about four thousand metres long, flanked by beautiful cottages which, for their part, parade small, capriciously designed gardens[;] an geometrical, elegant and correct arborisation; with a seal of civilization that impresses the most refined tourist; a large, clean and hygienic city [...]²³

[9] Even after becoming the colonial capital, state investment in a "proper", monumental image of the city is slow, with major building projects to house the new administrative structures endlessly postponed.²⁴ Complaints about the "monotony", lack of central points and grandiosity are frequent. Thus, in 1925 Brito Camacho (1862-1932), High Commissioner to Mozambique in 1921-1923, regrets the lack of monumental buildings.²⁵ A decade later, local official João José Soares Zilhão (1887-1979) characterizes the general aspect of the city by its "lack of spirituality" and its "restrictive, not to say coarse, utilitarian aim."²⁶ Still in 1945, the geographer José de Oliveira Bóleo (1905-1974) writes that:

²⁰ See Jeanne Marie Penvenne, "João dos Santos Albasini (1876-1922): The contradictions of politics and identity in colonial Mozambique", in: *The Journal of African History* 37 (1996), Nr. 3, 419-464.

²¹ José dos Santos Rufino, *Álbuns fotográficos e descritivos da Colónia de Moçambique*, Hamburg 1929, 10 vols. Digital reproductions of these albums are available at The Portal of Memories of Africa and the East (<http://memoria-africa.ua.pt/collections/AFDCM/tabid/174/language/en-US/Default.aspx>). On these albums, see Ana Cristina Nogueira da Silva, "Fotografando o mundo colonial africano. Moçambique, 1929", in: *Varia Historia* 25 (2009), Nr. 41, 107-128.

²² A project by the engineer Alfredo Augusto Lisboa de Lima (1867-1935), at the time director of Lourenço Marques' port and railway station. The facade, a project of architect José Ferreira da Costa (1850-1919?), was only finished in 1916.

²³ Rufino, *Álbuns fotográficos e descritivos da Colónia de Moçambique*, vol. 1, *Lourenço Marques: Panoramas da cidade*, v. "Largas avenidas, algumas de cerca de quatro mil metros de comprimido, ladeadas por formosos chalés que, por sua vez, ostentam na sua frente pequeninos jardins caprichosamente delineados[,] uma arborisação certa, elegante, geométrica; com um cunho de civilização que impressiona o mais requintado turista; cidade higiénica, limpa e ampla [...]"

²⁴ A 1952 Urbanization Plan still identifies as one the major problems the lack of proper installations for the administration, and proposes a new, monumental "Civic Centre" on the Maxaquene embankment, which, except for one building, isn't realized. See Ferreira, *Obras públicas em Moçambique*, 102-109.

²⁵ Manuel de Brito Camacho, *Terra de lendas*, Lisbon 1925, 21.

The grid, which at first enchants, ends up fatiguing with its monotony. One observes the absence of centres of urban convergence, public squares with monuments, secondary centres [...]²⁷

[10] As we will see, the idea of "monumentalizing" and "nationalizing" the city is one of several objectives present in the process of the monument in question.

[11] After the successful defeat of local resistance to the Portuguese colonial project in 1895-1897,²⁸ in 1898 it is made capital of the Colony, at the expense of the Island of Mozambique in the north. Mouzinho de Albuquerque (1855-1902)²⁹ played, together with António Enes (1848-1901),³⁰ a decisive role in these military campaigns, which secured Portuguese sovereignty of the area. His famous defeat and capture of the last emperor of the Kingdom of Gaza, Ngungunyane (c. 1850-1906),³¹ catapulted him almost overnight to a truly mythical status, giving a concrete example of the Portuguese "colonizing capacities" and boosting the national auto-esteem, which had been deeply affected by the British Ultimatum of 1890.³² Mouzinho de Albuquerque would become, for more than half a century, a model of unattainable heroism, exhaustively explored by the *Estado Novo*.

[12] It is in this context that the proposal for a monument to Mouzinho de Albuquerque arises during the 1910s, shortly after the inauguration in 1910 of the monument to António Enes.³³ It would, thus, be its logical companion. In 1916 a commission, presided by the Governor-General, is formed.³⁴ Shortly after, Portugal enters the First World War,

²⁶ João José Soares Zilhao, *Lourenço Marques. Ensaio geográfico*, Lourenço Marques 1937, 19. "[...] falta de espiritualidade, de intuito utilitário confinado, para não dizer grosseiro [...]"

²⁷ José de Oliveira Bóleo, *Geografias das cidades. Lourenço Marques*, Lisbon 1945, 11. "A quadrícula, que ao princípio encanta, acaba por cansar com a sua monotonia. Observa-se a não existência de centros de convergência citadinos, praças públicas com monumentos, centros secundários [...]"

²⁸ See René Pélissier, *Les campagnes coloniales du Portugal, 1844-1941*, Paris 2004, 152-164 and 177-181.

²⁹ A cavalry officer who distinguished himself in the military campaigns of the 1890s in Southern Mozambique. He led the capture in 1895 of Ngungunyane, leader of the vátua, the main opposition to the Portuguese colonial project in this area, and the final defeat of the vátua tribe two years later, in Macontene. He held the positions of Governor of the district of Lourenço Marques (1890-1892), Military Governor of the district of Gaza (1895) and Governor-General of Mozambique (1896-1898). In 1898 he resigned this position and returned to Lisbon, due to conflicts with the metropolitan government. He committed suicide in 1902. On Mouzinho de Albuquerque and his cult, see Aniceto Afonso, "Mouzinho de Albuquerque, o herói dos heróis", in: *História de Portugal*, ed. João Medina, vol. IX, Lisbon 1993, 255-262.

³⁰ Governor-General during Mouzinho's 1895 campaign and responsible for major improvements of Lourenço Marques during the 1890s.

³¹ Also written as "Gungunhana", "Ngungunhane" or "N'gungunyane".

³² The 1890 Ultimatum finished longstanding dreams of a great "Portuguese Africa" linking Angola and Mozambique. See Charles E. Nowell, *The Rose-Colored Map. Portugal's Attempt to Build an African Empire from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean*, Lisbon 1982.

³³ The statue, modelled by Portuguese sculptor Teixeira Lopes, is actually installed in the Museum of Military History (Maputo).

³⁴ The main source for the commissioning process of the monument is *Relatório e contas da Sub-comissão Executiva de Lisboa do Monumento em Lourenço Marques ao Comissário Régio de*

and further steps are delayed until the last years of the First Portuguese Republic (1910-1926), with substantive increases of the monument's funds in the first years of the military dictatorship.³⁵

[13] In 1928, a sub-commission is created in Lisbon to study and realize a competition among metropolitan artists. It is mostly composed of officials or ex-combatants who participated in the Mozambican military campaigns of the 1890s and 1916-1918, some of whom afterwards made careers in the colonial administration of Mozambique and elsewhere.³⁶ But it is only in 1936 that the competition is held, after a major contribution the year before of 450 000 *escudos*, almost half of the fund, by the colonial government of Governor-General José Cabral (1879-1956).

[14] As one historian notes, it is fundamentally between the 1920s and 1950s that the city gains effectively an urban dimension, accompanying its growing national status.³⁷ During these decades, one of the main investments aims at the reformulation and reinforcement of the city's public spaces, a central project of which was the creation of a large square named after Mouzinho de Albuquerque (actual *Praça da Independência*). This square will become one of the main centres of the city, accompanying the movement of business and services from the old *Baixa* to the new avenues around the square. The official's monument was, probably during the 1920s, inserted as centre-piece of the large roundabout in the middle of the square, built to organize traffic between the *Baixa*, the new avenues inland and the booming residence areas to the north-east (Polana, Ponta Vermelha). The importance given to this square can be deduced from its qualification as "monumental", which no other square merited, and is confirmed by the inclusion of a new Town Hall and Cathedral.³⁸

[15] As already mentioned, the lack of proper monuments is largely felt among the cultural elite and officials. Lourenço Marques is held to be "a modern and progressive city, but poorly endowed with buildings and monuments."³⁹ The idea to build a "monumental

Moçambique Joaquim Mousinho de Albuquerque, Lisbon 1941 (hereafter *Relatório e contas*).

³⁵ In 1924-1925, the metropolitan government provided the bronze necessary. Between 1926 and 1930 about a third of the previewed cost of 1000 000 *escudos* is obtained through private and state contributions. The value of the *escudo* was in 1931 fixed by law at 110 *escudos* to 1 pound.

³⁶ The commission's first president was General Alfredo Augusto Freire de Andrade (1859-1929), former Governor-General of the Colony of Mozambique (he inaugurated the monument to António Enes), followed, after his death, by general Ernesto Maria Vieira da Rocha (1872-1952), who had been *aide-de-camp* of Mouzinho.

³⁷ Morais, *Maputo: Património da estrutura e forma urbana*, 129-130.

³⁸ The town hall is projected above the square already in the late 1920s. The Cathedral is inserted after the municipal government donated an adjacent plot to the ecclesial authorities. On the process of the cathedral, see João Francisco dos Santos, *Guia da Catedral de Lourenço Marques*, Lourenço Marques 1944. On the town hall, see Alfredo Pereira de Lima, *O palácio municipal de Lourenço Marques*, Lourenço Marques 1967.

³⁹ M.S. de Freitas e Costa, "Memória descritiva da Catedral" (1936), reproduced in: João Francisco dos Santos, *Guia da Catedral de Lourenço Marques*, 54. "Lourenço Marques, cidade moderna e progressiva, mas pobrezinha em edifícios e monumentos [...]"

square" seems therefore to be enthusiastically anticipated, for example by Mário Costa in 1929:

[S]oon construction will start on the great roundabout [*rotunda*], above the large and animated Avenida Aguiar [actual Avenida Samora Machel], where the monumental equestrian statue to the late glorious Mousinho de Albuquerque will be erected.⁴⁰

[16] Nonetheless, only from 1935 on these projects will be realized, probably because of financial difficulties in the aftermath of the 1929 crash, with government budgets tightly overseen by financial minister Salazar.⁴¹ In 1935, the modern Cathedral project is authorized, being built in 1936-1944, largely financed by the State. The project, a *pro bono* contribution by the city's railway director Marcial Simões de Freitas e Costa, opts, for aesthetic as well as practical reasons, for a stark formal vocabulary that seeks to take maximum advantage of the use of concrete.

[17] For the Town Hall, built in 1940-1947, a competition among architects is opened, won by Carlos César dos Santos (1893-1966), a Portuguese who had lived in Brazil since 1917. This building contrasts with the modernizing outlook of the Cathedral, recovering the academic ideal of "beauty" both in its austere neo-classical front, organized by a rustic ground level and a superior level animated by the vertical rhythm of composite pilasters, and in its eclectic interiors, scattered with more or less learned references to Portuguese history and architecture.⁴²

[18] The monument was, thus, to be part of new "civic axis" (Fig. 1) with monumental intentions, a new public space which would mark the city's imaginary, centralizing the main local government and religious buildings.⁴³ This also indicates the importance to have a closer look at what "civic cult" or social context it was intended for. As Ferreira has noted, it marks, within its urban context, the introduction of ideological state references in public architecture production.⁴⁴ Later (probably during the 1960s), this message was written in the pavement in front of the town hall: "*Aqui também é Portugal*" ("This is also Portugal"). Both History (in the historicist formal language of the town hall) and Present

⁴⁰ Rufino, *Álbuns fotográficos e descritivos da Colónia de Moçambique, vol. 3, Lourenço Marques: Aspectos da Cidade, Vida comercial, Praia da Polana, etc.*, v. "[N]ão tardará também o início dos trabalhos para a grande Rotunda, ao cima da ampla e vistosa avenida Aguiar, onde será levantada a monumental estátua equestre ao saudoso e glorioso Mousinho de Albuquerque."

⁴¹ In the case of the Cathedral, which was, in this phase, financed by the church and private donations (though later it would receive large state support), doubts from town officials about the "aesthetics" of its location successively postpone the start of construction works. See Santos, *Guia da Catedral de Lourenço Marques*, 42-43.

⁴² Local historian A. Pereira de Lima (1917-1976) insists on this conformity with an ideal of "beauty", which doesn't surrender to the "deceptive" idea of "cement as creator" (*O palácio municipal de Lourenço Marques*, 15). In fact, the formal classicism conceals the systematic use of cement in the building's structure and cladding, a mixture of cement and stone powder that simulates massive stone.

⁴³ Morais, *Maputo: Património da estrutura e forma urbana*, 147.

⁴⁴ Ferreira, *Obras públicas em Moçambique*, 88.

(in the modern, though severe, forms of the Cathedral⁴⁵) faced the hero which, as well, was seen as the link between past glories and present ambitions.



1 Map of the centre of Lourenço Marques around 1945, with the "civic axis" marked in red. Based on a map published in *Moçambique – Documentário Trimestral* (1945), Nr. 43 (available online: <http://memoria-africa.ua.pt/DesktopModules/MABDImg/ShowImage.aspx?q=MDT/MDT-N024&p=101>)

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Program and project: the representation of a colonial hero

[19] Probably, the colonial propaganda efforts of the mid-30s, to which Mouzinho's deeds were central, boosted the will to finish this monument.⁴⁶ Mouzinho became the mythical mirror in which the regime could see the Portuguese "colonizing capacities" which it was imposing as foundation for its ideological edifice. It is certainly no coincidence that around the same time another major monument to Mouzinho is proposed, but never realized, in Lisbon.⁴⁷ Together with other proposed, but unrealized, monuments to Afonso I of Portugal (c. 1109-1185) and Henry the Navigator (1394-1460), it would symbolically represent three "foundational" moments of "national history": the foundation of the nation, the overseas expansion and the consolidation of Portuguese sovereignty in Africa.

⁴⁵ Official discourses assume this meaning explicitly, though both buildings shouldn't be reduced to this ideological dimension. The Cathedral, for example, is considered a demonstration of the Portuguese colonial capacity. See *Boletim Geral das Colónias* 20 (1933), Nr. 234, 404. The complete series of the *Boletim Geral das Colónias* is available at Memória de África (<http://memoria-africa.ua.pt/collections/BGCBGU/tabid/176/language/en-US/Default.aspx>).

⁴⁶ An exhibition dedicated to Mouzinho's memory was realized in 1935 (see *Catálogo da exposição de Mousinho de Albuquerque, no 40.º aniversário da tomada de Chaimite*, exh. cat., Lisbon 1935). A large number of publications on the subject, ranging from solid historical research to pure propaganda and fiction, appears in the middle 1930s. See Filipe Gastão de Almeida Eça, *Notas bibliográficas acerca de Mouzinho de Albuquerque*, Lisbon 1952, for an exhaustive bibliography.

⁴⁷ A commission was created for this end. See "Monumento a Mousinho de Albuquerque", in: *Boletim Geral das Colónias* 12 (1935), Nr. 128, 121-124.

[20] As has already been mentioned, the competition opened in March 1936.⁴⁸ Contrary to the rhetorical customs of the time, its program is quite sober. There is no commendatory preamble to justify the monuments erection, nor is it punctuated by the usual verbal flowerings that would allow the competing artists to grasp the "spirit" of the monument to be projected.⁴⁹ A precise indication of the structure is, however, mentioned: an equestrian statue on a pedestal with two reliefs on its sides, representing the two major episodes of Mouzinho's military career: the "feat of Chaimite" (28 December 1895), that is, the capturing of Ngungunyane, and the "charge of Macontene" (21 July 1897). In its front, there was to be a bronze allegory representing the colony's tribute to the hero, and on the back side inscriptions which recall the main deeds of Mouzinho's political career as Governor-General of Mozambique. It is, thus, a traditional structure, which recalls so many equestrian monuments of soldiers and kings throughout Europe, preceded by an allegory which reminds the figures of fame which decorate many nineteenth century busts and statues. As we will see, this "traditionalistic" option would be fully explored by the winning project. Besides this traditional tendency, no further mention is made about the desired aesthetics.



2 Unknown photographer, Mouzinho de Albuquerque in 1897. Source: Wikipedia Commons (<http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ficheiro:Mouzinho.jpg>)

[21] Much attention is given to the definition of the two reliefs and especially to the representation of Mouzinho's main fellow officials during his campaigns. The program

⁴⁸ *Diário do Governo*, II Series, Nr. 65, 19 March 1936.

⁴⁹ It can be compared with some other programs appended by Joaquim Saial to his *Estatuária portuguesa dos anos 30*. The aesthetics which the new regime should adopt for its public sculpture was a major topic of debate during the 1930s. See Esquível, *Teoria e crítica de arte em Portugal (1921-1940)*, 71-75, and Margarida Acciaiuoli's doctoral thesis, *Os anos 40 em Portugal: O país, o regema e as artes*, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 1991 (unpublished).

appealed to the "historical truth" to justify the inclusion of these portraits, but it should be mentioned that most of them were the very members of the Lisbon sub-commission. There was, as well, a widely known iconographic reference available: a famous photograph of 1897 of Mouzinho on his horse during his campaign against the Namarrais tribe (Fig. 2), also reproduced as an aquarelle by Alfredo Roque Gameiro (1864-1935).⁵⁰ This model would directly inspire the winning project.

[22] Some of these ideas had already been proposed for the Lisbon monument by José Capelo Franco Frazão (1872-1940), Count of Penha Garcia and president of the *Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa* (Lisbon Geographical Society), the projects main backing institution. He defended the dedication of the pedestal to Mouzinho's comrades and the didactic possibilities of the monument. Within the "rebirth of a colonial spirit", the monument should be both tribute and pedagogical example: "The statue of Mouzinho will remind the future generations, with an indisputable authority, of their duty."⁵¹



3 Simões de Almeida and António do Couto, *Maquete for the Monument to Mouzinho de Albuquerque*, 1936. Source: *Relatório e contas da Sub-comissão Executiva de Lisboa do Monumento em Lourenço Marques ao Comissário Régio de Moçambique Joaquim Mousinho de Albuquerque*, Lisbon 1941

[23] The competition is won by the project "Africa" of the architect António do Couto (1874-1946) and the sculptor José Simões de Almeida (1880-1950), who had worked

⁵⁰ On the images of Mouzinho and their diffusion, see João, *Memória e império*, 475-476.

⁵¹ "A estátua de Mousinho lembrará às gerações novas, com uma autoridade incontestável, o seu dever." Conde de Penha Garcia, "Monumento a Mousinho", in: *Boletim Geral das Colónias* 12 (1936), Nr. 126, 47-48.

together on the Marquês de Pombal monument (1914-1934) in Lisbon after the death of its author, Francisco dos Santos (1878-1930). The project (Fig. 3) follows the main topics of the program. The statue adopts a naturalistic aesthetics, very much in the style of Simões de Almeida, taking as its model the 1897 photograph.⁵² Though often vilified in Portuguese art history, for its obvious 19th century aesthetics,⁵³ it does justice both to the requirements of the program and the intention which the artists stated in their "Descriptive memory".⁵⁴ There, they mention their preoccupation of a "faithful interpretation" of the hero's personality and the avoidance of "attitudes which would approach the ridiculous."⁵⁵

[24] The sculptor clearly didn't search to cite the iconographic tradition of anticipated action which, since the Renaissance *condottieri*, marks the occidental equestrian tradition. This explains the immobility of man and horse, stressing the "serene attitude" and the "deep thoughts" which, according to the artists, would have occupied Mouzinho before his battles.⁵⁶ The use of a photographic image made it possible to reconcile the "realism" which the required "historical accuracy" asked for and the stereotypical representation necessary for the mythical dimension of the figure, which had already surrounded this image. It is both a portrait and an ideal, enhanced by its scale and immobility, as well as the emphasis on vertical elements in the stern pedestal, animated by the bronze reliefs (Figs. 4-5).

[25] One of these reliefs shows Mouzinho and his fellow officials in the charge of Macontene (Fig. 4).⁵⁷ The other relief depicts the moment of the capturing of Ngungunyane, when Mouzinho de Albuquerque forces him to sit down in sign of humiliation (Fig. 5).⁵⁸ The last of these reliefs was modelled by Leopoldo de Almeida (1898-1975), one of the most important sculptors during the *Estado Novo* who was also

⁵² José Fernandes Pereira stresses the attention to detail and the elaborate narrative sequence of the whole. See Pereira, "Estátuas equestres", in: *Dicionário de escultura portuguesa*, dir. J.F. Pereira, Lisbon 2005, 281. It should be mentioned that the "effect of the detail" Pereira mentions would hardly have been visible at the original height of about 10 metres in the middle of a busy roundabout.

⁵³ See, for example, critiques by Saial, *Estatuária portuguesa dos anos 30*, 166, and Matos, *Escultura em Portugal no século XX (1910-1969)*, 354.

⁵⁴ Reproduced in *Relatório e contas*, 11-17.

⁵⁵ *Relatório e contas*, 17. This is possibly a reference to another equestrian statue by Maximiano Alves (1888-1954) for a monument to João Maria Ferreira do Amaral (1803-1849), inaugurated in Macau in 1940, in which the rider appears full of pathos with his sword held high on a rearing horse. See Saial, *Estatuária portuguesa nos anos 30*, 167-171. The statue was transferred to Portugal in 1992 and re-sited on the *Alameda da Encarnação* (Lisbon).

⁵⁶ *Relatório e contas*, 17.

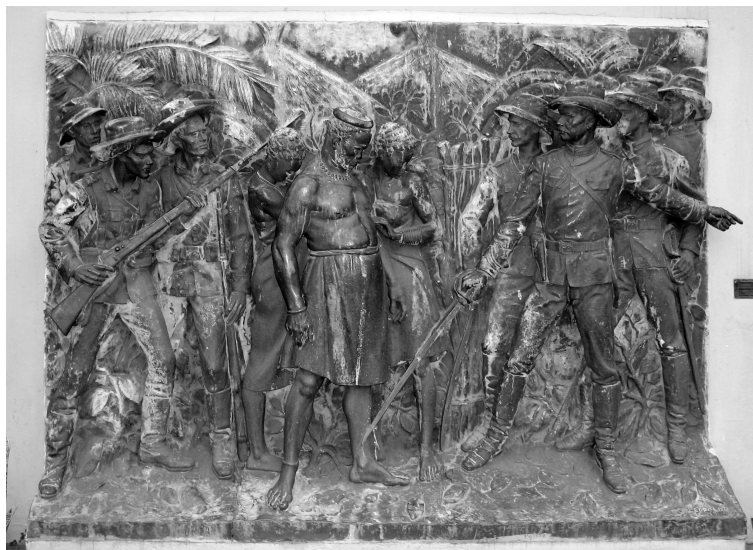
⁵⁷ Depicted are Vieira da Rocha, Mouzinho de Albuquerque, Aires de Ornelas e Vasconcelos (1866-1930), Manuel de Saldanha da Gama Ferrão de Castelo-Branco, Conde da Ponte (1874-1945) and the ensign Reis (?).

⁵⁸ From left to right are depicted Joaquim Marreiros (?), Ngungunyane with two of his women, Aníbal Augusto Sanches de Miranda (1865-1939), Mouzinho de Albuquerque, Eduardo do Couto Lupi (1874-1948) and the ensign and medic Francisco Maria do Amaral (?).

part of the jury. The participation of the jury member on this project is not clear, but comparing both reliefs suggests that Leopoldo de Almeida's more hierarchical compositions and mystifying immobility was considered better suited than his more naturalistic inclined former teacher to the iconographic intentions which it had to express.



4 Simões de Almeida, *The charge of Macontene*, 1936-1940, bronze, 2,80 x 1,90 m. Museum of Military History, Maputo (photograph provided by Diogo Alves)



5 Leopoldo de Almeida, *The capture of Ngungunyane*, 1936-1940, bronze, 2,80 x 1,90 m. Museum of Military History, Maputo (photograph provided by Diogo Alves)

[26] In these reliefs, two points need to be made. Firstly, the opposition between natives and colonialists is pointedly marked, an "us" and a "them" shown in struggle (the classically inspired cavalry charge is depicted clearly as an asymmetric power relation) where the first eventually obtain victory. The main content is, thus, the representation of the "art of commanding and obeying", where Mouzinho commands his blindly obeying soldiers and forces Ngungunyane, through an act of great symbolic violence, to obey as

well. This strongly contrasts with another element at the same level, the allegory in front of the pedestal: A woman, in classical European dress, guides by hand a native boy, representing the civilizing role which Portuguese colonialism had assigned itself (Fig. 6).

[27] It is interesting to note that there was an effort of the sculptor to show the hero in this light – more as a "civilizer" than as a conqueror –, being, according to the authors, faithful both to the "will of the Hero" and the "truth of History".⁵⁹ Both the statue and Simões de Almeida's relief show the hero unarmed. In the last, unlike the other soldiers, he doesn't raise his sword, but rather his hand, showing the way forward to the others. Leopoldo de Almeida's relief somehow parts from this narrative, as already has been mentioned, and it is clear that the monument as a whole does not succeed completely in affirming this more pacific version of Mouzinho's deeds, much less so to a public which knew well the stories of conquest and battles.



6 Simões de Almeida, *Allegory representing the tribute of the colony of Mozambique to Mouzinho de Albuquerque*, 1936-1940, bronze, 2,70 m (height). Actual location unknown (probably destroyed). Source: *Relatório e contas da Sub-comissão Executiva de Lisboa do Monumento em Lourenço Marques ao Comissário Régio de Moçambique Joaquim Mousinho de Albuquerque*, Lisbon 1941

[28] We can consider these representations on the ground level – the allegorical and historical representations – as ways to mediate the hero's equestrian portrait, combining both the violence and the paternalism inherent to colonialism. There is, of course, a contradiction between these two sides (war and peace), which derives, ultimately, from colonialism itself. But the portrait can be seen as an attempt to solve this contradiction.

⁵⁹ *Relatório e contas*, 16.

As a personification of the colonialist, both warrior and civilizer, it represents the image of the reconciliation operated by the supposed virtues and civilizing propensity of Portuguese colonialism. We can read the necessary elevation of the official to the realm of the heroic, ensuring the unity of the nation and the obedience of the enemy, in the formal language of the monument. Mouzinho is object of an apology, but nonetheless figured in a dryly realist way, stripped of any obvious rhetorical mechanism and legitimated by a well-known photograph. This posits his image as a "fact" which (a frequent trope of *Estado Novo* discourse) surpasses "mere" words. The statue could be discussed as form, but not in relation to its "historical accuracy".

[29] A speech read by interim Governor-General José Nicolau Nunes de Oliveira (1890-1954) during the ceremony of the laying of the foundation stone in 1936, exposes this view. Beyond the rhetorical flowerings, one can find a series of assumptions or common places which can help to better understand the role of art in the ideological dimension of the monument:

Poor and limited are the means available to men to give form and sensible expression to the ideas and sentiments that animate and guide him, because the absolute victory of spirit over matter will always be [...] an unattainable illusion [...] The work of art, even when carved by the hands of genius and warmed by its divine breath, always falls short of the artist's dream, and even more of the votive intent that anxiously searches to reveal itself in it. I do not know, however, what better suited homage a thankful nation can pay to those noble men who conquered immortality for her, than capturing their faces and figures in marble or bronze, exposing them [...] in the colourful scenery of a public square [...] to the awe and praise of those to come.⁶⁰

[30] The monument should capture the "face and figure" of the hero, expose it publicly and subject it to a cult. The statue is, thus, held to be a mask, unable to fully capture the hero's personality. It should be noted that it is one of the most "naturalistic" images of Portuguese statuary of the 1930s whose representational value is questioned. For Nunes de Oliveira, there is a certain failure inherent to any image, unable to make present the "ideas and sentiments" which animate its creation. It is, ultimately, an empty image, which can only poorly refer to the "real" greatness of the hero.

⁶⁰ José Nicolau Nunes de Oliveira, "Oração a Mousinho", in: *Moçambique: Documentário Trimestral* (1936), Nr. 9, 7. "Pobre e limitados são os meios ao alcance do homem para dar forma e expressão sensível às ideias e sentimentos que o dominam e conduzem, porque a vitória absoluta do espírito sobre a matéria será sempre [...] uma quimera irrealizável [...]. Assim também na escultura, a obra de arte, mesmo quando talhada pela garra do génio e aquecida pelo seu sopro divino, fica sempre aquém do sonho do artista e mais longe ainda da intenção votiva que ansiosamente procura nela a exteriorização reveladora. Eu não sei, todavia, que mais adequado preito uma nação agradecida possa render aos varões assinalados que para ela conquistaram a imortalidade, que fixar-lhes a máscara e o vulto no mármore ou no bronze, a expô-los [...] na colorida cenografia dum praça pública [...] à admiração e à prece dos vindouros." The complete series of *Moçambique* is available online at Memória de África (<http://memoria-africa.ua.pt/collections/mdt/tabid/206/language/en-US/Default.aspx>).

[31] Such emptying of monumentalized images and the memorial dimension of the monument has already been mentioned as characteristic of the *Estado Novo* statuary.⁶¹ One of its aims would be to produce a *distance* between historical representation and present reception, opening up space for the manipulation of its meaning. In a certain sense, the failure of the image as representation is necessary; it produces a distance to the historical referent which allows it to appear as something above history, as myth. As has been mentioned before, the detailed naturalism of the statue is lost through the visual distance between figure and spectator. Obeying, thus, on the one hand to the plight to represent Mouzinho as truthful as possible (independently from the possibility of reading this accuracy), it can also be seen as the necessary monumentalizing of the image through the strategies of statuary: scale, visual distance, height. The statue, within its apparently inescapable facticity, has then the function of concealing the ideological, and ultimately mythical, dimension of the politically legitimizing pedestal narrative. It produces an "effect of the real", in Roland Barthes' terms.⁶²

[32] The "hero" is, of course, a symbolic structure on which values are projected that embody the "national identity", surpassing the human dimension of the historical man or woman it nominates. All the more so for a regime which considered its heroes "the 'leaders' that personify the national consciousness, that incarnate the soul of the nation, that embody the desires of the collective, that give life to the people's wishes."⁶³ It is emptied in order to become an idealized representation of the community. These points appear clearly in a text freely distributed during the inauguration of the monument in 1940:

Among those who fulfil their duty [...] and the heroes exists an abyss of difference: [the last] transcend, by definition, common understanding. [...] The supreme category of the hero is granted, by spontaneous and irresistible consensus of the people, to those men that one day sublimely expelled their aspirations and yearnings, and [demonstrated] this potential of action [...] that brings into being in order to remain and seals indelibly an epoch of success. [...] And of the legends [which they become] the soul of the people constructs heroic archetypes, powerful syntheses [...] in which, conformed to the subtle parameter of race, only the essential qualities and circumstances enter.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Matos, *Escultura em Portugal no século XX (1910-1969)*, 289.

⁶² Roland Barthes, "The reality effect", in: *The rustle of language*, trans. Richard Howard, New York 1986, 141-148. Elsewhere, he writes that "the denoted image [...] plays a special role in the general structure of the iconic message which we can begin to define [...]: the denoted image naturalizes the symbolic message, it innocents the semantic artifice of connotation." *Images music text*, trans. Stephen Heath, London 1977, 45.

⁶³ António G. Mattoso, *Erros de história: Resposta a um crítico*, Lisbon 1944, 596. "[...] são os 'chefes' que personificam a consciência nacional, que corporizam a alma da nação, que incarnam os desejos da colectividade, que dão vida aos anseios da Grei." On the hero in the ideological discourse of the *Estado Novo*, see Arlindo Manuel Caldeira, "Poder e memória nacional: Heróis e vilões na mitologia salazarista", in: *Penélope* (1995), Nr. 15, 121-142.

⁶⁴ João José Soares Zilhão, *Mousinho*, Lourenço Marques 1940, 5-6. "Entre os homens que cumprem o seu dever [...] e os heróis, há um abismo de diferença: [os últimos] por definição transcendem o entendimento normal. [...] A categoria suprema de herói é outorgada, por espontâneo e irresistível consenso dos povos, àqueles dos seus homens, que um dia exalaram com

[33] Under clear influence of Thomas Carlyle's theory of "Great Men" or Keyserling's "symbolic figures" (both cited in Nunes de Oliveira's "Oração a Mouzinho"), Mouzinho is placed beyond the "common understanding", within the realm of myth and archetype. This separation between the realm of "great men" and "great deeds" (which is the realm of "History" as understood by *Estado Novo* ideology, based on the regressive – palingenetic⁶⁵ – conception of time, as a continuous return or realignment of a decadent present to the nation's origins) and that of the "common men", of day-to-day life, in which the homage to the first takes place, is clearly affirmed. The distance produced by the monument serves this organization.

[34] According to this heroic conception of history, the hero is History's instrument, erupting into the course of time to conform, again, the community to its mythical origins. In other words, the hero is the face or the mask of "History". That is, in the end, the "truth" the monument produces. Only to heroes, or "leaders" (*chefes*), it is given to act upon time. The realm of "History" is reserved to heroic intervention, excluding "ordinary" people to participate, other than by *post factum* acclaim. The monument is part of a strategy which attempts to direct the commemorative act it expresses to the rewriting of history as unattainable "History" and its subject as a transcendental "national community".

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Ritual and the staging of "History"

[35] The 1930s and 1940s are generally considered the high period in which the ideological coordinates of the *Estado Novo* are construed, fixed and propagated. As one of its main historians, Fernando Rosas, wrote, it is the moment where the regime defines a clear and aggressive discourse which should find a "new order" for the society at large, in order to "re-educate" the people within the frame of a regenerated, imperial Nation.⁶⁶ The self-legitimizing revision of the past and the fixation of a mythical idea of a "Portuguese essence" beyond time and class were inherently part of this ideological assertion.

[36] Paul Valéry (1871-1945) noted, in his ambiguous preface to the French translation of one of the main propaganda texts of the *Estado Novo*, that the means the dictatorship uses are based on the exploitation of (or operating on) sensibility: "[C]ertain objects,

sublimidade suas aspirações e seu querer, e [...] evidenciaram [...] essa potência da acção [...] que funda para permanecer e sela indelêvelmente a época do sucesso. [...] E das lendas [a que passam], a alma dos povos constrói os arquétipos de heróis, sínteses poderosas, [...], em que entram apenas as qualidades essenciais e as circunstâncias essenciais, conformadas ao subtil parâmetro da raça."

⁶⁵ On the concept of palingenese, see Roger Griffin, "The palingenetic political community: Rethinking the legitimation of totalitarian regimes in inter-war Europe", in: *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 3 (2002), Nr. 3, 24-43.

⁶⁶ Fernando Rosas, "O salazarismo e o homem novo: Ensaio sobre o Estado Novo e a questão do totalitarismo", in: *Análise Social* 35 (2001), Nr. 157, 1033-1034.

directed entirely at the senses, are to be assured to the masses of the population, – some of them real, others imaginary."⁶⁷ This "visual seduction" of the masses, based on the pragmatic separation of political reality and its public representation, has, indeed, already been pointed out as the common aesthetic denominator of the *Estado Novo* and familiar regimes.⁶⁸ This implicit "aesthetization of politics" was assumed by Salazar himself in his famous (and certainly staged) interviews to António Ferro (1895-1956), his future director of propaganda.⁶⁹

[37] Though this "seduction" is more rapidly associated with political spectacles such as the Nuremberg rallies in Nazi Germany, which, though appealing to the ancient lineages of *Blut und Boden*, mobilized all modern arts to maximize its impact, it can be argued that also in the case of such a traditionalist work as the Monument to Mouzinho the modern, massified public space was a defining feature. As Luís Trindade shows, the public space in Portugal is, in this decade, authoritatively redefined by the *Estado Novo*, in what he terms a "silent war about the control of the symbols and rites" of the representation of the community.⁷⁰ Monuments and architecture, as well as other visual arts, played an important role in this attempt at the monopolizing of collective representations, as studies of some of the main artistic projects of the regime have shown.⁷¹ The city tends to become a panorama of signs of power and the Nation, and of a new "collective memory" which in sculpture, held to be in its "golden age",⁷² found its main visualization.

[38] One of the main official uses of statuary was to act as anchor within the public space for commemorative practices. These sought to exalt the past and the "national" tradition, reinvented as a source of legitimation for a social reorganization and to assert an "integrationist" nationalism where State, Nation and regime seemingly fused, equating opposition with anti-nationalism and turning questions of collective representation a State affair.⁷³ These rituals should be understood as mediating and interpretive practices of the images embodied in the monument, fixing their reading and positioning the "social bodies", in which attendants were organized according to their filiations and hierarchical and social positions.⁷⁴ The "correct" reading was proposed through verbal and gestural discourses. As such, they codify the very same image of society that is proposed in the

⁶⁷ Paul Valéry, preface to António Ferro, *Salazar: Le Portugal et son chef*, trans. Fernanda de Castro, Paris 1934, 18: "[...] certains biens très sensibles seront assures à la masse de la population, – les uns, reels, les autres, imaginaires."

⁶⁸ Alexandre Cirici, *La estética del franquismo*, Barcelona 1977, 20. The relation of the Portuguese *Estado Novo* to fascism and familiar political regimes is still polemic. See its discussion by Torgal, *Estados Novos Estado Novo*, 282-337.

⁶⁹ António Ferro, *Salazar: O homem e a sua obra*, Lisbon 1933.

⁷⁰ Trindade, *O estranho caso do nacionalismo português*, 159.

⁷¹ See, for example, Almeida, *A arquitectura no Estado Novo*, on the main monumental projects and Acciaiuoli, *Exposições do Estado Novo*, on official exhibitions in the 1930s.

⁷² António Ferro, *Arte moderna*, Lisbon 1949, 36.

⁷³ João, *Memória e império*, 92.

monument; they become, as well, national allegories which, temporarily, embody the idea of an organic, unified and orderly society. They discipline bodies towards images and allocate them different visibilities and capacities of speech.

[39] The first great moment of such a colonial "politics of the spirit"⁷⁵ in Mozambique is the inauguration on 11 November 1935 of the *Padrão da Grande Guerra*, a First War Memorial, on the *Praça Mac-Mahon* (actual *Praça dos Trabalhadores*) in Lourenço Marques.⁷⁶ This initiative of the Portuguese Commission of First War Memorials (*Comissão dos Padrões da Grande Guerra*, CPGG) started in the early twenties as a memorial to the fallen during the 1916-1918 war efforts in northern Mozambique.⁷⁷ When a competition was opened among Portuguese sculptors in 1930, the initial memorial intention had changed to a celebration of Portugal's secular colonial efforts, aiming at the creation of a political stage for commemorative practices.⁷⁸ The winning project by sculptor Ruy Roque Gameiro (1906-1935) and architect António Reis Camelo (1899-1985) explores this change of focus powerfully, notably in the importance given to the aggressive female allegory of the Nation, supported by four scenes of struggle and sacrifice. The implanting of the monument was accompanied by the creation of large open spaces, fitting for mass ceremonies. During the second half of the 1930s, a large number of public commemorations and solemnities is here promoted by *Estado Novo* institutions, not only reminding those dates related to the First World War, but also to the (mythical) foundation of the Nation, the rise of the regime and colonial history. It is as well the generic place of representation of "Portugal", where recruits take their oath and official visitors pay homage and lay wreaths.

[40] Another major moment in the staging of political rituals in the Mozambican capital was the 1939 presidential visit by António Óscar de Fragoso Carmona (1869-1951)

⁷⁴ On the political role of commemorations and other rituals, see Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The invention of tradition*, Cambridge 1983; David I. Kertzer, *Ritual, politics & power*, New Haven/London 1988; and Paul Connerton, *How societies remember*, Cambridge 1989.

⁷⁵ "Politics of the spirit" was the official name for Ferro's propaganda programs. See Yves Léonard, "O império colonial salazarista", in: *História da expansão portuguesa*, vol. V, 10-30.

⁷⁶ On this monument, see Matos, *Escultura em Portugal no século XX (1910-1969)*, 187-196; Saial, *Estatuária portuguesa nos anos 30*, 40-49; Rita Mega, "Os Monumentos aos Mortos da Grande Guerra", in: *Dicionário da escultura*, 405-407; and my own analysis in *Espaço público e monumentalidade em Lourenço Marques*, 31-58. An important source is a *Relatório geral da Comissão dos Padrões da Grande Guerra (1921-1936)*, Lisbon 1936, written by general Norton de Matos (1867-1955).

⁷⁷ On the history and activity of the CPGG, see Sílvia Correia, "A memória da guerra", in: *História da Primeira República Portuguesa*, ed. Fernando Rosas and Maria Fernanda Rollo, Lisbon 2010, 349-370. On the impact of the First World War in Mozambique, see Aniceto Afonso, "Portugal e a guerra nas colónias", in: *História da Primeira República*, 287-300.

⁷⁸ Eduardo Augusto Azambuja Martins (1877-1966), a local member of the CPGG, stresses these aspects in a 1927 report, reproduced in *Relatório geral*, 116. He cites the existence of war memorials in South-African, and the habit of international delegations of laying wreaths and paying homage, as example. This passage from memorial to monument is clearly indicated in the competition's program, transcribed in "A grande guerra em África", in: *Boletim Geral das Colónias* 7 (1931), Nr. 67, 166-170.

(Fig. 7).⁷⁹ For the occasion, several temporary constructions were raised throughout the city. On 25 July 1939, an allegorical parade was organized, composed of 33 vehicles which represented all the aspects seen as significant of colonial policy.⁸⁰ Many of these allegorical and heroic representations followed monumental models. The last vehicle, representing the Empire, directly cites a well-known proposal by the brothers Rebello de Andrade (Carlos, 1887-1971, and Guilherme, 1891-1969) and Ruy Gameiro for a 1935 competition for a major monument to be raised in Sagres. The vehicle dedicated to Mouzinho de Albuquerque shows a figure on a rearing horse, full action, which is almost the exact opposite of the monuments' statue (Fig. 8).



7 The Praça MacMahon during the reception of president Carmona in 1939.
Source: *Alguns aspectos da viagem presidencial às Colónias de Cabo Verde, S. Tomé, Moçambique e Angola e da visita do Chefe de Estado à União Sul-Africana realizadas em Junho, Julho, Agosto e Setembro de 1939*, vol. 2, Lisbon 1940
(available online at Memória de África, <http://memoria-africa.ua.pt/DesktopModules/MABDImg/ShowImage.aspx?q=VP/VP-1939-2&p=18>)

⁷⁹ See the albums which document this voyage, *Alguns aspectos da viagem presidencial às Colónias de Cabo Verde, S. Tomé, Moçambique e Angola e da visita do Chefe de Estado à União Sul-Africana realizadas em Junho, Julho, Agosto e Setembro de 1939*, Lisbon 1940, 2 vols. Available online at Memória de África (<http://memoria-africa.ua.pt/collections/visitaspresidenciais/tabid/205/language/en-US/Default.aspx>).

⁸⁰ Photographs of these vehicles are reproduced in *Anexo ao album da viagem presidencial a África. Cortejo alegórico, festival nocturno, iluminações*, Lisbon 1940. Available online at Memória de África (<http://memoria-africa.ua.pt/DesktopModules/MABDImg/ShowImage.aspx?q=VP/VP-1939-A&p=1>).



8 Allegorical vehicle representing the "Occupation". Source: *Anexo ao album da viagem presidencial a África. Cortejo alegórico, festival nocturno, iluminações*, Lisbon 1940 (available online at Memória de África, <http://memoria-africa.ua.pt/DesktopModules/MABDIImg/ShowImage.aspx?q=VP/VP-1939-A&p=15>)

[41] 1940 is a year rich in commemorations and political spectacles as well. Throughout the Portuguese Empire, the proclamation of Afonso Henriques as first king of Portugal in 1140 (though it might also have been 1139) and the "Restoration of National Independence" on 1 December 1640 were recalled and celebrated in what were called the "Centenary Commemorations".⁸¹ The most visible act of this year of commemorations was the "Exhibit of the Portuguese World" in Lisbon, conceived after the example of other International Expositions during the 1930s, though the start of the war impeded most invited countries to participate.

[42] Locally, there was, as such, a functioning framework and *modus operandi* for the staging of mass ceremonies, which, from then on, will also be developed on the Mouzinho square. The inauguration of the Monument to Mouzinho (Fig. 9) was, however, not only inserted in the 1940 commemoration program, but also in the local celebration of the 45th anniversary of the capture of Ngungunyane in Chaimite. It was preceded by a two-day trip by officials and former combatants following Mouzinho's itinerary 45 years before.⁸² During this symbolic re-enactment, a series of commemorative acts were organized in the main places of this itinerary – Languene, Chaimite and Macontene – were three small monuments or *padrões* were inaugurated.⁸³ The ceremonies ended around the

⁸¹ The many activities, solemnities and urban "improvements" which integrated these commemorations can be followed through the numbers of the *Boletim Geral das Colónias* of 1940 and 1941. See especially *Boletim Geral das Colónias. Dedicado às comemorações centenárias da Fundação e Restauração Nacional, na Metrópole e no Império: 1140-1640-1940* 27 (1941), Nr. 187.

⁸² See "A homenagem de Moçambique a memória de Mousinho", in: *Boletim Geral das Colónias* 17 (1941), Nr. 189, 114-119. Andrade Velez (1871-1942), Luis Cândido da Silva Patacho (?), Joaquim Marreiros and Eduardo Lupi had come from Lisbon, representing both the sub-commission and the former companions of Mouzinho.

⁸³ On these *padrões*, see Verheij, *Espaço público e monumentalidade em Lourenço Marques*, 76-77. *Padrão* is a commonly used designation for memorial-like monuments. It reminds the stone

monument, covered with the national flag. Formations of the Army, Navy and the paramilitary youth organization *Mocidade Portuguesa* ("Portuguese Youth") paid homage, while high representatives of the state, army and Mouzinho's family were seated on a temporary tribune. Speeches were given⁸⁴ and the monument unveiled, followed by a military parade and a salute by representatives of the natives which expressed, according to the official account, their "contentment" for their "liberation of the despotic dominion of the vátua [Ngungunyane's tribe]."⁸⁵

GLORIFICAÇÃO DE MOUSINHO DE ALBUQUERQUE



9 Photographic composition showing the inauguration of the Monument to Mouzinho de Albuquerque, 1940, in *Moçambique – Documentário Trimestral* (1940), Nr. 24 (available online at Memória de África, <http://memoria-africa.ua.pt/DesktopModules/MABDImg/ShowImage.aspx?q=/MDT/MDT-N024&p=101>)

[43] It should be noted that the urban organization of the Mouzinho square, though apparently completely conditioned by the demands of modern transportation, could be suitably adapted to the orderly organization of military and paramilitary units and the crowds. The complex drawing of the roundabout – an attempt at organizing movement⁸⁶ – and the inscriptions of the names of Mouzinho's 1897 itinerary in the pavement (as proposed by the artists) provided the possibility to change the square temporarily into a static form, where images and people circulated slowly and the "Empire" could be staged.

markers of Portuguese sovereignty which used to be placed on newly discovered land during the 15th and 16th century, three of which were rediscovered by the *Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa* in the first decades of the 20th century, and had, as such, suitably "imperial" connotations.

⁸⁴ The speeches, by Governor-General José Tristão de Bettencourt (1880-1954) and Commission member António Martins de Andrade Velez, are reproduced in *Relatório e contas*, 21-29.

⁸⁵ "Inauguração do monumento em Lourenço Marques", in: *Boletim Geral das Colónias* 17 (1941), Nr. 189, 124.

⁸⁶ According to the urbanist João António de Aguiar (1906-1974), the aim of this design, never implanted, was to create separate traffic lanes for passenger and cargo vehicles. See his *Plano geral de urbanização de Lourenço Marques, vol. 2, Memória descritiva e justificativa*, 1952 (unpublished), 143.

The cult of the monument and the production of aura

[44] José Amaro Júnior wrote, in his biography on the author of the 1935 War Memorial, Ruy Gameiro, that the "proper notion" of public sculpture involved a dialectical relation between the movement inherent to a work of art and "the frozen movement of the masses."⁸⁷ Its aim would be

to line off the disturbance of the general uniformity that marches without knowing how to walk, sees without knowing how to look, imposing on them that they sustain their path for a second, to affirm to them – 'I am, I represent, I symbolize'.⁸⁸

[45] Here, a conception of the monument is implied which takes into account the modern, massified public space in which it is placed. The emptiness of its monumental assertion (which doesn't have its own predicate) needs a play of movements and suspensions to induce its significance, which, as we have seen, could be obtained through rituals. The public work of art needs to suspend the "non-knowledge" of the masses, to confront their "universal literacy", to use a term from Clement Greenberg,⁸⁹ in order to fix a stable meaning.

[46] Though the solution of Ruy Gameiro in his *Padrão* is rather different from the Monument to Mouzinho, the latter's authors were well aware of this new, orchestrated mass consumption of public sculpture. They chose, however, to work against this:

We think it is [the statue's attitude] which best adapts to the character and tendencies [of Mouzinho], avoiding intentionally attitudes of a 'cowboy-like' horseman, which might be the delight of circus audiences or cinema halls, but are not worthy of a Man that entered immortality, nor of the severe lines of the architectural composition of our project.⁹⁰

[47] This is all the more interesting as it attests that the "traditionalism" of the monument was an intentional option. The main opponent is, indeed, identified as what Walter Benjamin around the same time defined as the "distracted attention" of modern mass consumption.⁹¹ The monument attempts to introduce, thus, a certain degree of "dignity" and severity into the public space, considered appropriate for the memory it

⁸⁷ José Amaro Júnior, *O escultor Ruy Roque Gameiro. Subsídios crítico-biográficos*, Lisbon 1943, 26. "[...] o parado movimento das multidões."

⁸⁸ Amaro Jr., *O escultor Ruy Roque Gameiro*, 26. "[...] a demarcar a alteração da uniformidade geral que marcha sem saber andar, olha sem saber ver, impondo que suspenda o caminho por um segundo, para lhes afirmar – eu sou, eu represento, eu simbolizo."

⁸⁹ Clement Greenberg, "Avant-garde and kitsch", in: *Partisan Review* 6 (1939), Nr. 5, 34-49.

⁹⁰ *Relatório e contas*, 17. "Achamos ser esta a posição que melhor se adaptava ao seu carácter e tendências, fugindo os autores com intenções propositadas de posições de cavaleiro 'cow-boyano', que poderão ser o regalo de plateias de circo ou de salão de cinema, mas que não se compadecem nem com o Homem que entrou na imortalidade, nem com as linhas severas da composição arquitectónica do nosso projecto de monumento."

⁹¹ See Walter Benjamin, *The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction*, trans. J. A. Underwood, London 2008, 32-35.

embodies. It is in this public space that the discourses of Nunes de Oliveira or Zilhão Soares, beyond their exalted nationalism, place the monument as well. It aims at the creation of a context of cult and "pedagogy". The public space which it is held to create is, hence, not the autonomous aesthetic realm of art where works can (putatively) be judged by their degree of formal innovation or rupture with the given aesthetic limits; a space in which the political-ideological use the Monument to Mouzinho is put to would be little more than an illegitimate intervention from outside the realm of art.

[48] As we have already seen in the speech of Nunes de Oliveira, the proper place to judge the work was to be that of "History" and cultic intention. The monument was, in other words, supposed to *produce* a space of cult in proper – state organized – rituals. Nunes de Oliveira says this explicitly: "[I]t is no coincidence that I use this expression [religious rite and feverish cult], because the monument to Mousinho will indeed be a place of pious pilgrimage, altar of our nationalist devotion, prayer in stone of our patriotic fervour."⁹²

[49] In the inaugural speech by Andrade Velez, this religious motive is again invoked: "I never felt more lively nor more present the sublime expression: – SACRED ALTAR OF THE FATHERLAND", after which he added that Mouzinho had been a "saint" for which such an altar was the "right and proper place".⁹³ The "pedagogical" role the monument had to fulfil, especially to the younger generations, is also explained:

It should be noted that Mousinho used as a potential able to execute his plans a handful of young men [...]. That's why we, old today, call the Portuguese Youth of today [...]! Follow the example of yesterday's youth. Fulfil, devotedly, the orders of the Leader, so that the historical fact of our progress and our aggrandisement may continue to be repeated, for the greater glory of Portugal.⁹⁴

[50] The hero cult is, thus, also an attempt at inculcation of the values, not so much of bravery and heroism, but obedience and blind confidence in the "leaders".

[51] As Igor Golomstock already has noted in his study of "totalitarian art", the (political) art work tended to have a cult status: "Each of these works is an image in the original sense of the word: a symbol of greatness and goodness, a sacred sign, an object

⁹² Oliveira, "Oração a Mousinho", 7-8. "[N]ão é ao acaso que eu me sirvo desta expressão [rito religioso e fervoroso culto], porque o monumento a Mousinho será efectivamente local de piedosa romagem, altar-mor da nossa devoção nacionalista, oração petrificada do nosso pátrio fervor." This kind of vocabulary was common, see for example Vieira da Rocha, "Mousinho, figura imortal", in: *Boletim Geral das Colónias* 12 (1936), Nr. 128, 37.

⁹³ *Relatório e contas*, 28. Capitals in the original. "[...] nunca senti mais viva nem mais consubstanciada dentro de mim a sublime expressão: – SAGRADO ALTAR DA PÁTRIA."

⁹⁴ *Relatório e contas*, 29. "Portuguese Youth" (*Mocidade Portuguesa*) was also the name of the official youth organization. "Devemos salientar que Mousinho utilizou como potencial capaz de dar acção e execução aos seus planos, um punhado de homens jovens [...]. Por isso nós, velhos de agora, chamamos a Mocidade Portuguesa de hoje [...]. Segui o exemplo da mocidade de outrora. Cumpri, devotadamente, as ordens do Chefe, para que se continue a repetir o facto histórico do nosso progresso e do nosso agradecimento, para maior glória de Portugal."

of adoration or an icon."⁹⁵ It is exactly this approximation of a political aesthetics to a "civic religion"⁹⁶ that marks official discourse on the Monument to Mouzinho. The terms used separate between the banal realm of day-to-day life and the "sublime" or "sacred" realm of the heroic and the "Nation". The monument can thus be understood not only as a form of material inscription (of memory and power relations) but also as a dispositive that produces a certain kind of space – a space of representation, in Henri Lefebvre's sense,⁹⁷ a space in which a community can see its own mirror image, or in which it is impelled to do so. It produces, thus, a putatively collective discourse, founded on the setting apart from "normal" space, both on the level of representations as of practices, of a space where the "Nation" shows itself.

[52] It is ritual which gives consistency to this "other space". This cultic role, closely connected to an appeal to tradition and history as forms of legitimization of representation, can be approached by Walter Benjamin's definition of the auratic image in his Artwork essay of 1936. As is well known, for Benjamin the aura defines the art work by its singularity and its authenticity, the here and now of the original which, paradoxically, places it always at an insurmountable distance.⁹⁸ The ritual impedes the viewing of the work on its own terms, placing it always beyond, at an unattainable distance (reinforced by the physical distance which a monument implies). It is, then, not a simple ideological "illustration", but an essential element for the staging of the community which this ideology only dreamt of.

[53] The work of art should function, according to official discourse, as a mirror.⁹⁹ But, as Henri Lefebvre has noted, if the mirror is "real", the space inside the mirror is imaginary.¹⁰⁰ It is the alleged reflexive, and revealing, quality which was sought in the monument that can be understood through the idea of a deposition of auratic values. The gaze of the monument which, according to another Benjaminian definition,¹⁰¹ is returned

⁹⁵ Igor Golomstock, *L'art totalitaire. Union Soviétique – IIIe Reich – Italie fasciste – Chine*, trans. Michèle Levy-Bram, Paris 1991, 317: "Chacune de ces oeuvres est une image, au sens original du terme: un symbole de grandeur ou de Bonheur, un signe sacré, un objet d'adoration ou une icône."

⁹⁶ See George L. Mosse, "Fascist aesthetics and society: Some considerations", in: *Journal of Contemporary History* 31 (1996), Nr. 2, 245-252.

⁹⁷ See Lefebvre, *The production of space*, 33-39.

⁹⁸ In Benjamin's famous definition, it is "a unique manifestation of a remoteness, no matter how near it may be". *The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction*, 9.

⁹⁹ It was held to be a "padrão [marker] of what Lusitanian virtues are able of and a stimulus of aggrandisement", "mirror of all virtues of a race", for Mouzinho "had the virtue of revealing to the world our capacity [...] of architects of empires and he had, above all, the virtue of revealing us to ourselves." Oliveira, *Oração a Mouzinho*, 6-7. "[...] um padrão do que podem as virtudes lusíadas e estímulo de engrandecimento [...] espelho de todas as virtudes de uma raça", "[Mouzinho] teve a virtude de revelar ao mundo a nossa capacidade [...] de arquitectos de impérios e teve, sobretudo, a virtude de nos revelar a nós próprios."

¹⁰⁰ Lefebvre, *The production of space*, 182.

¹⁰¹ Walter Benjamin, "Central park" (1939), trans. Lloyd Spencer, in: *New German Critique* (1985), Nr. 34, 41.

during the experience of the aura became, in the programming of a collective experience of the monument, the gaze of power. The spectacle this gaze regarded was, on the one hand, the "barbarism" of native "disorder", on the other, the sacrifice, obedience and eventual victory of colonialism, as represented in the pedestal. It allowed for the legitimizing play of substitutions able to confer a degree of reality, however imaginary, to the "Portuguese Colonial Empire".¹⁰²

[54] By creating its own temporality, ritual guarantees the existence of the aura of the art work. It is precisely this differentiation of spaces and density of temporalities, on which the aura thrives, that the spatial approximation and temporal simultaneity which characterize modern society tend to destroy. Benjamin's thesis is that, in the tendentiously homogeneous time and space of the modern world, the art work emancipates itself from its ritual dependency, finding its proper ground no longer in the realm of tradition but in that of politics.

[55] The two options for this art necessarily grounded in politics are, then, the "politicizing of art" or the (fascist) "aesthetization of politics". The latter is, as much as the former, inevitably marked by the modern massification of the public space and of the production, reproduction and circulation of images. Fascism, as is explicitly stated in Benjamin's preface and conclusions to his 1935 essay, puts the ritual and auratic values traditionally immersed within the work art at the service of political spectacle.¹⁰³

[56] From this perspective, we can read such an attempt at the (re)production of auratic values in the Monument to Mouzinho and its appeal to tradition and the authority of likeness. What characterizes the monument is its resistance to the desecration of art and representation, closely entwined with the sacralisation of history and politics operated by the *Estado Novo*. The "aura", the value of cult, is a premise for such organization of the public space as is at stake here, investing it with the aura of authenticity and authority. The monument – prone to tradition, resistant to innovation – endowed the historical figures the regime chose to represent itself with these values, while, at the same time, sculpture seemed to gain with the seal of (mythical) "History".

[57] In the ceremonies around the monument, each one was prompted to interpret his or her role in the city envisioned by the *Estado Novo*. There is, thus, an attempt, at

¹⁰² According to Henri Lefebvre, "each monumental space becomes the metaphorical and quasi-metaphysical underpinning of a society, this by virtue of a play of substitutions in which the religious and political realms symbolically (and ceremonially) exchange attributes – the attributes of power; in this way, the authority of the sacred and the sacred aspect of authority are transferred back and forth, mutually reinforcing one another in the process." *The production of space*, 225.

¹⁰³ Susan Buck-Morss notes that, for Benjamin, fascism only manages the aesthetization of politics, it does not create it. The key to understand such aesthetization is the overcoming of perceptive alienation "by a phantasmagoria of the individual as part of a crowd that itself forms an integral whole – a 'mass ornament,' [...] that pleases as an aesthetics of the surface, a deindividualized, formal, and regular pattern." See Susan Buck-Morss, "Aesthetics and anaesthetics: Walter Benjamin's Artwork essay reconsidered", in: *October* 62 (1992), 35.

several levels, to discipline the organization of public space and its collective representations, accompanied by the active destruction of other spaces of political manifestation.¹⁰⁴ This management of the aesthetization of politics, a staging of an "organic" community and its history, was the context for the Monument to Mouzinho. At a time, and in a place, where both this community and the traditional value of aura were rapidly dissolving, the politics of this monument is to insist in its reproduction.

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Conclusion

[58] The reading proposed here tried to avoid both to consider the monument as a simple propaganda image and as an essentially autonomous work of art. Rather, it was sought to clarify the interplay of political, social and aesthetic values which conditioned its conception and its use. The reading of the meaning of the monument – as hero cult, political propaganda and collective representation – needed a complex mechanism of ritual and discourse that framed and fixed the relation between work of art, collective memory and the present it was claimed to represent, giving consistency to the attempt to reduce the public space to a univocal image of a united and obedient people.

[59] One of the underlying aims of this study is, thus, to the question the apparent legibility of *Estado Novo* statuary. In fact, the regime needed these seemingly transparent and controlled national collective representations, without the ambiguities or conflicts of the social organization pervading them. Therefore, this apparent transparency as simple ideological illustration must be questioned from within the social context and the political determinations which condition its conception and its use. Reintroducing the cleavages which mark any social context, and all the more so in a colonial context, seems necessary to fully understand the place and role of public sculpture in these contexts.

[60] It is as well necessary to understand the complex fate of this and other monuments after the independencies of former Portuguese colonies in 1975. The Monument to Mouzinho was, as most other statues in Mozambique, disassembled. In the case of Maputo, a Portuguese fortress¹⁰⁵ served as the place to assemble the city's statues, forming a kind of museum or resting place for the former heroes.

[61] In a fictionalized retelling of the statues' toppling, Mozambican writer Mia Couto describes how, as the statue fell, the aura which seemed to animate it evaporated:

It seemed [the statue] sighed sadly, as if Mouzinho was confiding us an infinite tiredness of posing for the myth's portrait [...] In the end, Mouzinho is just a

¹⁰⁴ The best example would be the *Praça 7 de Março*, until the start of the 1930s the very centre of political discussion and negotiation of the ever-fluctuating limits of identity and power. On this, see Jeanne Marie Penvenne, "João dos Santos Albasini (1876-1922)", 419-464; and Verheij, *Monumentalidade e espaço público em Lourenço Marques*, 78-83.

¹⁰⁵ The *Fortaleza da Nossa Senhora da Conceição* from the beginnings of the 19th century, though almost entirely reconstructed during the 1940s. After 1975 it became the Museum of Military History.

name, a fake hero. The brutalities of domination surpass this lonely horseman. A legend was made of the soldier, and it was this tricky device that most hurt.¹⁰⁶

[62] For the stories' narrator, the melancholic fall of the statue firmed the collapse of the colonial order:

When the statue has already finished its fall, inside those Portuguese [i.e. the settlers'] eyes, horse and rider continue to tumble, now without art nor elegance. [...] There is a world that ends.¹⁰⁷

[63] Having lost its pedestal, placed at ground level in the fortress, it has lost the distance that endowed Mouzinho's figure with its heroic aura. Indeed, it seems that, today, its rather his melancholy, that early carried him to suicide, which seems to manifest itself. The statue seems, as Mia Couto writes, to express before all the tiredness of the heroic pose he was made to perform.



10 José Cabral, *Maputo*, 2002, published in *Urban Angels*, exh. cat., Lisbon 2009 (reproduced with permission from the author)

[64] In the end, it is this image which, maybe, is a more truthful representation of the Empire after its end, and the broken dreams left as a legacy to the new Republic of Mozambique. A 2002 photograph by José Cabral (b. 1952), who happens to be the grandson of the Governor-General of the same name who granted large part of the monuments' funds in 1935 (see above), captures such an image where the past "flashes up at the moment of its recognisability"¹⁰⁸ (Fig. 10). In it, he pictures his son climbing the

¹⁰⁶ Mia Couto, "A derradeira morte de Mouzinho", in: *Cronicando*, Lisboa 1991, 161-163. "[...] pareceu provir [da estátua] um suspiro triste como se Mouzinho nos confiasse um infinito cansaço de posar para o retrato do mito [...] Afinal, Mouzinho é apenas um nome, um herói contrafeito. As brutalidades da dominação excedem este solitário cavaleiro. Do militar fizeram lenda e era esse artifício que mais magoava."

¹⁰⁷ Couto, "A derradeira morte de Mouzinho", 162-163. "Quando a estátua já terminou a sua queda, por dentro daqueles olhos portugueses, cavalo e cavaleiro continuam a tombar, já sem arte nem aprumo [...] Há um mundo que termina."

¹⁰⁸ Walter Benjamin, "On the concept of history" (1940), trans. Edmund Jephcott and Howard Eiland, in: *Selected writings*, vol. 4, 1938-1940, ed. Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings, London 2003. On the photographer, see Alexandre Pomar's foreword and the artist's biography in

relief of the cavalry charge led by Mouzinho. The elimination of the distance which gave the monument its plausibility as a representation of a *status quo*, and which, as Couto's narrator seems to suggest, means the loss of its heroic aura, is here pictured as a profanation.

[65] The complexity and the weight of the inevitable persistence of the colonial legacy remain present, and seem almost to have an intimate proximity to the present and the future. It is not possible to dispatch history to a museum. But at the same time the image seems to translate the (deeply ambiguous¹⁰⁹) hope of Couto's narrator that, after the necessary symbolic death of the statue, the Mozambican people would be finally able to discover their own future, to build their own place upon the ruins of the past, "without anyone telling us what to do."¹¹⁰

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José Cabral. Urban angels, exh. cat., Lisbon 2009.

¹⁰⁹ See on this Luís Madureira, "The quasi-object of (national) identity: Popular illusions and official dreams of emancipation in Mia Couto's *Cronicando*", in: *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 84 (2007), Nr. 4, 519-535.

¹¹⁰ Couto, "A derradeira morte de Mouzinho", 162.