

**Critique architecturale
et débat public**

sous la dir. de **Hélène Jannièrè & Paolo Scrivano**

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clara architecture recherche



N°7
CLARA - architecture - recherche

Débat au Palais des
congrès de Lille,
27 mars 1990. Source:
Archives nationales
du monde du travail
(Roubaix) - Fonds
Euralille, cote 1997
010 1478.

Éditions de
la Faculté
d'Architecture
La Cambre
Horta de
l'Université
libre de
Bruxelles

Abstract This article examines the main conditions that provided the foundation of architectural criticism in Portugal, at the dawn of the twentieth century. The juncture formed by the first architecture magazines *A Construção Moderna* (1900–1919) and *A Architectura Portuguesa* (1908–1930) is here taken as the key circumstance that permitted the rise of a mutually dependent condition between the architect's new professional status in the bourgeois society and the identification of architectural criticism as a specific practice. By analyzing these magazines as two overlapped ways of accessing and communicating architecture, this article argues that the construction of architecture's critical discourse in Portugal went far beyond disciplinary *knowledge* and that non-specialized *opinion* should also be considered in such a construction. Together, *knowledge* and *opinion* provide the frame for a reflection on the dynamic ways whereby the distinct perspectives of the intellectual and political projects resulted in continual renegotiations of the architecture frontiers and trajectory.

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doi.org/10.3917/clara.007.0030

Overlapping Boundaries: Knowledge and Opinion in Architectural Criticism at the Dawn of the Portuguese Twentieth Century *

Introduction: from the reader to the public

Democracy came; there were gas lamps; free and mandatory education was introduced; the Marinoni machines were installed, printing 100,000 journals per hour; Clubs, Romanticism, Politics, Liberty, and Phototypia. Everything was done by means of steam and cogwheels and aimed at the masses. The individual, such a marvelous thing, and of such delicate mechanics, disappeared. The crowd began to move, governed by an instinct, an interest, or an enthusiasm. It was then that the Reader was gone, [...] and in his place the man of letters saw before him the mob called the Public, who reads aloud and hastily in noisy streets.
(Queiroz, 1886: 10–11¹)

By the end of the nineteenth century, the influent Portuguese writer and critic Eça de Queiroz (1845–1900) expressed, in the above terms, both great enthusiasm and a certain anxiety surrounding the replacement of the “Reader” by the “Public”. In his account, that expansion from the individual “Reader”

– “a person of knowledge and of taste, friend of Eloquence and Tragedy, who occupied his luxurious idleness to read” – to the “greedy and rude crowd called the Public” (Queiroz, 1886: 6) was not a mere shifting of scale. It was, rather, a totally new paradigm that followed the trends of the new Western democracies, bounded up with the strong transformations of the cities and shaped by the powerful influence of print media.

The “Public” or, more specifically, the *public opinion* was, indeed, the central entity in the ascending bourgeois society and one of the crucial conditions for the raising of a critical discourse in the field of architecture, as we shall see later. Strongly aligned with key concepts as the Kantian utopian image of a cosmopolitan frameless civil society, or the concept of *public sphere* as later theorized by Jürgen Habermas (1962), *public opinion*, alongside print media, was considered in Portugal the “fifth power”² or the “invisible court” of society, stronger than “magistrates and laws, than ministers and the King” (Filangieri, 1898: 5), becoming the essential

* This article is based on a paper originally given at the first *Mapping Architectural Criticism* international symposium “Architectural Criticism Between Public Debate and Autonomous Discipline” (January 18–19, 2016: Université Rennes 2 and Archives de la critique d’art, Rennes).

1 Translation by the author.

2 In late nineteenth-century Portugal, the term “Fourth Power” – first mentioned by the political philosopher Edmund Burk hundred years earlier –, was used to mean the “moderator power” of the King, as defined by the Constitutional Charter in 1826. The term “Fifth Power” was widely diffused in the Portuguese political culture in order to emphasize that the sphere of influence and moderation of journalism went far beyond the sphere of royalty’s action (Sardica, 2009: 21).

mechanism through which citizens engaged in “rational public discourse to comment on society, culture and policy as a public affair” (McQuire, 2012: 602).

The period between the so-called “industrial phase” (Tengarrinha, 1989: 211–215) of journalism – over the last decades of the nineteenth century – and the Republican triumph in 1910 has been defined as the “Golden Age” of the written press, in which Portuguese public opinion “ascended to the age of majority” (Sardica, 2012: 21). At that time, the astonishing growth in number of newspapers, monthly reviews, and illustrated magazines³ was crucial for drawing the arena of criticism – targeting new audiences and creating both new tensions as well as new opportunities for the men “of letters” to find themselves as critical voices in the transformation of cultural and socio-political life. The newspapers were an accessible, cheap and easy way for the “Public” to understand the “broad and complex movements of Thought and Action”, in a period in which the pace of time was in charge of “reducing to news and images the most complex and wide facts of the Spirit or Life” (Queiroz, 1927: 374).

The architectural debate was not isolated from this wider trend. On the contrary, as can be predicted from this flow of ideas, it was in the public sphere – shaped by the mass circulation press –, that the critical discussion on architecture first emerged. Indeed, several authors have argued that the establishment of a “public space of discussion” was one of the main conditions for the production and dissemination of architecture debate and criticism (Jannièrre, 2008, 2009: 139–140; Nussaume, 2015; Wittman, 2007, 2012, 2015). Also, recent studies that provide valuable insights into the genesis of

architecture’s print culture⁴ have been considering that illustrated journals, daily and weekly newspapers, and other non-specialized print media helped to shape a “virtual public sphere” in which the architecture changes “could be absorbed and normalised” by a wider public (Hultzsich, 2017). In this sense, I will use the Portuguese case to understand under which conditions architecture criticism emerged in a specific cultural and historical conjuncture.

Despite the vibrant debates raised by the Portuguese intellectuals of the 1890s in the mass circulation press – about the city, the monuments, the building activity and the taste –, the identification of criticism as a specific practice in the field of architecture did not occur until the turn of the century. The publication in the early twentieth century of the first architecture magazines, *A Construção Moderna* (1900–1919) and *A Architectura Portuguesa* (1908–1930), lies behind such an identification.⁵

In what follows, I shall not reconstruct the history of these magazines, which have already been subject of study (Figueiredo, 2007; Mesquita, 2011) and particularly scrutinized in the context of two research projects.⁶ The actors, contents and discourses that shaped these magazines are already well known; however, the reflection about the dynamic ways whereby a less informed *opinion*, stated in the mass circulation press,

3 According to a detailed statistic published in the early twentieth century, it was estimated that in 1880 there were 200 newspapers in Portugal; almost 400 in the mid-1890s; and 592 in 1900 (Aranha, 1900: 45–47).

4 This topic has been developed in detailed investigations. See, for example, Anne Hultzsich (2017: 9). See also the research project “Printed & The Built” (2014–2017) lead by Mari Hvattum at Oslo School of Architecture and Design (<https://theprintedandthebuilt.wordpress.com/>), whose conclusions were recently published in Hvattum et Hultzsich (2018).

5 In this article, the titles of the first Portuguese architectural magazines are written according to the spelling rules used in the early twentieth century.

6 I should mention the research project *Arquitetura(s) de papel* (2004–2007), coordinated by Marieta Dá Mesquita, which produced a digital archive of early twentieth-century architectural projects throughout the magazine *A Construção Moderna*; and the research project *The Site of Discourse* (2013–2015), coordinated by Rute Figueiredo and Paulo Tormenta Pinto, which was the first inquiry on the Portuguese architectural periodical press and professional journals of the twentieth century (<https://sitediscourse.org>).

interacted with a more systematic *knowledge* disseminated in the architectural periodical press is a matter that asks for a deeper research. It is precisely this dynamic dialogue between *opinion* and *knowledge* that constitutes the central subject of this article.

My argument is that the study of architectural criticism should consider the notions of *knowledge* and *opinion* – borrowed from the field of literary criticism – as closely related and mutually dependents. In the words of the British literary critic Frank Kermode in his referential book *Forms of Attention* (1985), criticism is not considered a discipline but a long and intricate “conversation” between *knowledge* and *opinion*. Following this author, *opinion* should be regarded as “the expression of taste” (Hunter, 1991: 82), in which the impressions or judgments proffered by the mass press are not necessarily grounded on evidence or disciplinary knowledge and professional expertise. According to Kermode, “the preservation and valorisation of works is achieved by means of argument that may not be truly worthy of the name” (Kermode, 2010: 65). Additionally, the notion of *knowledge* is here taken as a shorthand term to refer to a set of discourses, values, codes as well as to a vocabulary shared by a group of experts and shaped under architecture’s specific disciplinary view.

Enquiring on this idea, I will scrutinize, first, on the position of the architect in the new public sphere and at which point did *opinion* become a canon-making engine able to legitimize discourse and to distinguish architects. Second, I will ask how and to what extent did the introduction of a new specialized media shift the identity of the architect and the focus of debate on the Portuguese architectural field, thus identifying architecture criticism as an expertise practice. More precisely, by taking the specialized and non-specialized journals as the main sources of the analysis, this article will inquire on the intricate ways in which *knowledge* and *opinion* intersect.

The “habit of light judgements” in the late nineteenth century

In late nineteenth-century Portugal, the appreciation of architecture had become an attribute of “good taste” and a sign of intellectual and socio-economic distinction: “nowadays, every civilized man has the duty to be interested, or at least aiming to be, in the great expressions of civilization” (Queiroz, 1945: 230). Therefore, the bourgeoisie was demanded to comment on the works of art and architecture – a hard task for those who passed their “busy worldly idleness” in other kind of activities. This meant that, the best would be – as Eça de Queiroz acidly noted – “to appeal to those whose profession and expertise is to provide opinions and sentences: the critics, with their retail store in the newspaper” (*ibid.*: 231).

Undeniably, *opinion* was the main driving force in that process and carried an overpowering cultural meaning deeply embedded in late-century bourgeois society. *Opinion* became the great canon-making engine in the construction of taste, as well as in the identification of values and authors in architectural field – functions that had exclusively belonged to academy before. Nonetheless, the implications of *opinion* were also particularly significant in the public, because *opinion* was “only and always based on a very small side of the truth, of the action, of the man, of the work, which became visible at a glance, before our elusive and hurried eyes” (*ibid.*: 196).

The writer Ramalho Ortigão (1836–1915), whose talents ensured readership in the newspapers, was perceived by others as the critic *par excellence*, since he – “as a warrior who in an arsenal is quickly armed for an urgent battle” (Queiroz, 1927: 40) –, had accumulated a vast encyclopaedical knowledge (Carvalho, 1902: 2). Ortigão, nevertheless, did not identify himself in such a status. The deficit of “specialism” – in his words – made him but a “communicator of personal impressions, a hiker who passes over time, telling things that he saw and expressing the feelings that some of such things had inspired him” (Ortigão, 1947: 163).

In fact, regarding the architecture field, the critics were still far away from

the professional and disciplinary knowledge, classifications, vocabulary and practices. These limitations – that opened an unsolved tension between the Critic and the Architect – did not, however, disturb the exercise of *opinion*, nor did they challenge the “habit of light judgments” (Queiroz, 1945: 196).

At that time, the architectural debate was still conducted by critic-writers who published their comments either in daily newspapers or in periodical art magazines.⁷ Into the “mosaic” layout of the newspaper (McQuire, 2012: 602) – an “index of the way that modernity produces both fragmentation and continuity”, as McQuire (*ibid.*) argued drawing upon Anthony Giddens’s (1991) view –, their comments on architecture were placed on the same page side by side with everyday events, mixed with the political-ideological slogans and the most current social themes. These comments were, thus, framed under the notion of occurrence and their fragmented approach “unified only by the time of their occurrence (the present) and by the authority of the medium” (McQuire, 2012: 601).

In these circumstances, while in the press the critic increased authority in the formulation of *taste*, the public voice of the architect had become irrelevant. Accepted by the public as a new spiritual power (Catroga et Carvalho, 1994), the critic carried a long tradition in the field of literary criticism. Moreover, the main actors of the cultural and political scene came from the newspapers’ world and acquired an image of competence and authority in the mobilization of the public opinion. Almost all these actors

were writers, journalists and opinion-makers – like Eça de Queirós, Fialho de Almeida, Oliveira Martins, Ramalho Ortigão, Teófilo Braga, Luciano Cordeiro, just to name a few – who belonged to a young generation of intellectuals that, since the 1870s, had claimed the rejection of the Liberal and individualist values of the Romantic aesthetics, were ideologically invested in a Republican project of cultural renewal, and took a “very high social and historical mission” in the “ascending and progressive march of civilization” (Armelim, 1909: 3–4). Therefore, the press became a key instrument in the “country’s sociocultural reorganization” (Sardica, 2012: 348) and the critic-writers began to be the strong voices of such process.

Given the powerful influence and reputation of the critic-writers in the public sphere, it is not surprising that the architect simply underestimated the value of his contribution as a critical voice in society. But architects were also unable to question the authority of the critic-writers in the evaluation of architecture and powerless in reinforcing boundaries between *knowledge* and *opinion*. In the late-1890s, the architects – too much identified with the Romantic idea of artist and influenced by the values of History and Archaeology⁸ –, did not exist as a professional class, while the journalists experienced, since 1880, the first forms of professional association (Sardica, 2009). Nor had they a media to legitimate professional protests, in which the debate could be raised, produced and publicly disseminated.

In Portugal, the architect appeared isolated at a time in which, on the one hand, the engineer enjoyed an expanding control in the growing city, and, on the other, the builders had long been leading the architectural activity.⁹ “Jupiters of a new religion,” in the words of the art critic José de Figueiredo (1872–1937), the engineers

7 Since the early nineteenth century, architecture was sporadically published in art magazines and illustrated journals, such as: *Jornal de Bellas Artes* (1816–1817); *O Panorama, jornal literario e instrutivo da Sociedade Promotora de Conhecimentos Úteis* (1837–1858); *Jornal de Bellas Artes* (1848–1884); *Artes e Letras* (1872–1884); *A Arte* (1879–1881); *A Arte Portuguesa* (1882–1884); *Arte Portuguesa, revista archeologica e de arte moderna* (1895); *Arte* (1895); *Gazeta Illustrada* (1901); *A Cidade e os Campos, revista mensal ilustrada* (1900–1910); *Os Serões, revista mensal ilustrada* (Lisboa, 1901–1911); *A Arte e a Natureza em Portugal* (1902–1908); *Arte e Vida* (1904); *O Occidente* (1878–1915).

8 Until 1902, the architects were included in the *Real Associação dos Architectos Civis e Archeologos Portuguezes* (Portuguese Royal Association of Civil Architects and Archeologists). This entity was mainly dominated by archeologists and art amateurs.

9 For a parallel discussion on the professional polemic, see Lipstadt and Mendelsohn (1980).

gathered in their hands “all the elements of nature, elements that dominate and that take off the most wonderful results, overcoming distances, transforming the natural currents into economic ones and powerful engines, fire at speed, and taking away from thousands of metres, with the speed of light, the human thought” (Figueiredo, 1908: 26). Furthermore, the builders quickly understood the urgency to enter into “the mass press communion” (“Synthese”, 1893: 1), giving voice to their claims in a monthly professional publication – *A Construção* (1896–1918). In this publication and for the first time in the public opinion, the builders raised an important polemic, challenging the authority of the critic-writers – “vast legion of encyclopaedic dentists and men of seven instruments” (“A conclusão do edificio dos Jeronymos”, 1898: 7) – in the evaluation of architecture.

In 1895, some voices from the field of architecture, such as Rosendo Carvalheira (1861–1919) and Adães Bermudes (1864–1948), accompanied intensively this polemic in daily newspapers such as *O Século*, *O Dia* and *O Diário de Notícias*, as well as in public conferences. Two interconnected, however distinctive, subjects were under intense scrutiny: the lack of quality and the proliferation of a foreign taste in the city – “living documents of all classes’ ignorance in matters of art and taste” (Monteiro, 1906: 19); and the absence of the architects in the exercise of their expertise practice. At the end of the century, the architects finally realized that their participation in the public debate would strongly contribute for the good progress of the city and the political role of architecture – “who do not notice, hopelessly, that the cities have been made, un-made and re-made without plan, without nexus, according to the political demands, under the municipal leaders’ will, before whom the power of the influential politician has replaced [...] the authority of the architects” (Bermudes, 1895: 35).

It was at this point that the architectural periodical press came as the key mechanism for enabling the rise of new orders of thought on the practice and representation of architecture, as well as for raising debates

and supporting the architect’s credibility as a critical voice in the public opinion.

Print media and the rise of architectural criticism

The first magazine specifically dedicated to architecture and engineering in Portugal was launched in 1900. The publication of *A Construção Moderna* might be seen as the institution of the first instrument of mediation between the architect and the public; it was also an instance of disciplinary self-reflection and a place for the promotion and dissemination of architectural knowledge. The publication of a second magazine in 1908, *A Architectura Portuguesa*, would reinforce the status of the architect and the presence of architecture in society. Unlike *A Construção Moderna*, which focused on the professional elites, *A Architectura Portuguesa* set up its editorial strategy on the presentation of the architects and architecture toward the public opinion. Taken together, these publications created a key context that allowed the rise of a mutually dependent condition between the architect’s new professional status in the bourgeois society and the introduction of architectural criticism as an autonomous practice.

A Construção Moderna: delimiting architecture criticism

Published by the builder and journalist Nunes Colares (1850–1928) and jointly directed and edited by the architect Rosendo Carvalheira and the engineer Melo de Matos (1856–1915), *A Construção Moderna* had a great impact on the architect’s professional identity, leading to the foundation of the Portuguese Society of Architects two years later.¹⁰ This was, thus, one of the magazine’s key achievements, one that led to distinguish the architect as an expert and architecture criticism as a specific practice inside the interdisciplinary logic of the publication. (Fig.1)

10 It is also worth noting that, until the publication of the Portuguese Society of Architects’ Yearbook, in 1905, *A Construção Moderna* was the exclusive media for the communication of the architect’s associative activities.



Fig. 1 Cover page from the first issue of *A Construcção Moderna* (1900). Source: Biblioteca da Ordem dos Arquitectos Portugueses.

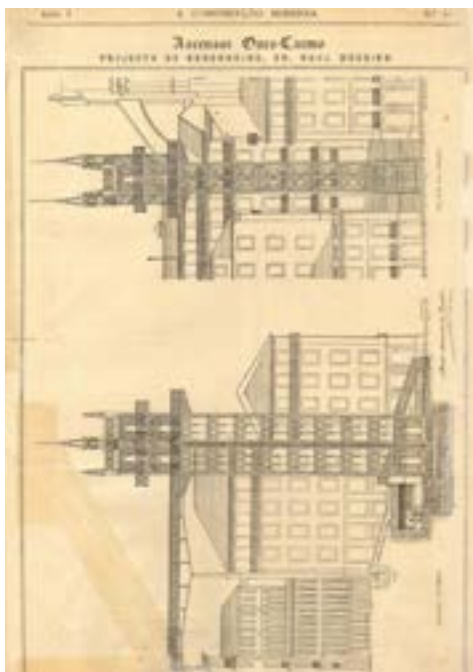


Fig. 2 Presentation of models of Portuguese architecture from *A Construcção Moderna*. Source: “Ascensor Ouro-Carmo” (1900). Biblioteca da Ordem dos Arquitectos Portugueses.

Distributed on a biweekly basis and normally featuring a first page with pictures and twelve columns of text – accompanied by some illustrations and photogravures –, *A Construcção Moderna* was a professional magazine that aimed “to deliver and update all the knowledge produced in the architecture field, as well as everything that one should know about the difficult practice and art of building”, as stated in 1906 (“No começo do setimo anno”, 1906: 2). (Fig. 2) The two young practitioners, Carvalheira and Matos, were responsible for the editorial and disciplinary framework of the magazine. While the first – educated as an architect at the *Instituto Industrial e Comercial de Lisboa* (Industrial and Commercial Institute of Lisbon) – had been involved in architectural heritage interventions, Melo de Matos – who developed part of his studies as an engineer in Belgium – was totally invested in public services and in conceiving new infrastructures of the city – not surprisingly he was also the author of a literary fiction entitled *Lisboa no ano 2000* (Lisbon in the

year 2000). Undoubtedly, the pair architect-engineer questioned the Romantic idea of the architect as artist, as above mentioned, and qualified the architect as a technician actively involved in the production of the modern society.

Grounded on that disciplinary dialogue, the magazine functioned as a nodal point in which all the questions formulated in the previous decade converged and were posed into new directions. In fact, while in the 1890s such questions were posed retrospectively – why, over the nineteenth century, architecture was not able to consolidate its own style? –, now the same questions were placed under a prospective view – how could architects conceive a new style that would last for the future generations, mirroring both the national aspirations and the progress of modern society? (Fig. 3)

The crucial challenge was to find an idea of modernity capable of connecting different architectural subjects, as suggested by the title of the magazine. “Modern” meant, firstly, searching for new formal and



Fig. 3 Technical articles occupied a significant space in the magazine. Source: Silva Ribeiro (1900: 4), Biblioteca da Ordem dos Arquitectos Portugueses.



Fig. 4 The discussion on the North-American skyscrapers followed the international debate. In this case, the article was translated from the French *Bulletin de la Société des architectes diplômés par le gouvernement*. Source: Trowbridge (1904: 19), Biblioteca da Ordem dos Arquitectos Portugueses.

functional solutions, new materials and new construction processes – particularly iron and concrete (Matos, 1900: 5) – which would reflect the development of contemporary technological progress and solve the extensive problem of what had come to be known as “economic housing”.¹¹

While *A Construção Moderna* usually presented Portuguese architectural works in its first page, it also paid attention to international discussions, as in the case of the reports on the new movement of the Chicago school,¹² publishing extensively on the

North-American skyscrapers.¹³

In addition, the magazine hosted other important debates, often reproduced from foreign journals and magazines such as the Spanish *La Construcción Moderna*¹⁴, the London newspaper *The Illustrated Carpenter and Builder*, and the French magazine *La Construction Moderne* – probably the main foreign reference for the Portuguese magazine.¹⁵ (Fig. 4)

“Modern” implied a “pluralistic conception of style”, confronting the several “tendencies and schools” (“Ao principiar o terceiro anno”, 1902: 4); moreover, it meant

¹¹ See among others: “Casas Baratas” (1904); “Habitações Economicas” (1907); “Casas Economicas” (1907).

¹² In the early twentieth century, the discussion on North-American skyscrapers followed, albeit with a few years of distance, the emerging debate in French architecture journals such as *La Construction moderne*, *L'Architecture* and *Bulletin de la Société des architectes diplômés par le gouvernement*, and was contemporary of the publication of impressive double-page photographs in the newspaper *L'Illustration*. On this specific subject see Leitner (2016).

¹³ The connection between the new building technologies and the notion of style was recurrently discussed in *A Construção Moderna*, see among others: “As casas de muitos andares nos Estados Unidos” (1900); “As construções das ‘cardas das nuvens’ na America do Norte” (1903); “As casa altas de New York” (1908).

¹⁴ On Spanish architecture journals published in the late nineteenth century, see Castaner et Gérard (1990).

¹⁵ For the study of French architectural reviews, see Lemoine (1990); Saboya (1991, 2002).



Fig. 5 Example of the “scientific inquiry” on Portuguese vernacular architecture. Source: “Arquitetura Pittoresca” (1902: 52), Biblioteca da Ordem dos Arquitectos Portugueses.



Fig. 6 Promotion of architecture models of *casa portuguesa* (1901). Source: “Casa de estilização portuguesa do sr. Rey Collaço” (1901), Biblioteca da Ordem dos Arquitectos Portugueses.

the definition of new criteria derived from a “national evaluation” of such tendencies, as well. Among these, in 1902 *A Construção Moderna* launched a “scientific inquiry” (as it was called) on Portuguese vernacular architecture, from which several hypotheses were drawn as a possible basis to create a new spatial and formal model of national housing. “How to nationalize the housing architecture?” was the key question that mobilized criticism in an impassioned campaign¹⁶ then called *casa portuguesa* (Portuguese house).¹⁷

Furthermore, “modern” was understood as a project of professional dialogue. Built

on an interdisciplinary perspective¹⁸ – as inferred from the names included in the editorial board –, the evocation of modernity required to touch “all the branches of human knowledge that the architect [had] to know”, as such overcoming both the lack of knowledge of the technicians and the professional tensions emerged in the last decade between architects, archaeologists, civil builders and engineers: “within a civilized and organized society, the field for all expertise

16 The word “campaign”, widely used by the Portuguese intellectuals in the early twentieth century, means here an organized sequence of actions to achieve a specific aim.

17 The study of “Casa Portuguesa” is now an important research subject with an extensive literature. See, among others: André (2018); Toussaint (2014); Ramos (2013); Maia (2012); Vogliazzo (1988).

18 Regarding magazine’s collaborators, architects, engineers and critics all enjoyed the same status, namely among them were: A. Rígaud Nogueira, Adães Bermudes, Adolfo Marques da Silva, Alfredo Ascensão Machado, Alfredo Maria da Costa Campos, Álvaro Machado, António José Dias da Silva, Artur J. Machado, Carlos Bandeira de Melo, Francisco Carlos Parente, Frederico Evaristo da Silva, Henrique B. Gonçalves Moreira, Hermenegildo A. Faria Blanc, Henrique das Neves, João Lino de Carvalho, Joaquim António Vieira, Jorge Pereira Leite, José Alexandre Soares, José Cecilio da Costa, José C. Ferreira da Costa, José Luiz Monteiro, José Marques da Silva, D. José Pessanha, José Teixeira Lopes, José Theriaga, Leonel Gaia, M. R., Manuel J. Norte Junior, Nicola Bigaglia, Raul Lino, Ventura Terra.

must be defined without shock or fighting” (“Sociedade dos Architectos Portuguezes”, 1903: 28), one could read in a text included in *A Construção Moderna* in 1903. In coincidence with the foundation of the Portuguese Society of Architects, it was also mentioned: “In our country, what we miss is a sincere cooperation of all – science, art and work, are the synthetic object of this cooperation. United, they will be a redemptive force. Fragmented, they are but dispersed forces that polarize and lose their useful action and their social significance” (*ibid.*). As evidenced, the mobilization of the professional elites against the old disciplinary struggles was strongly aligned with the Republican project. (Fig. 5-6)

“Modern” meant, lastly, a project of architectural criticism, distinguishing a field of expertise and confining boundaries between *knowledge* and *opinion*. The processes by which such boundaries could be established and publicly accepted had involved the identification of the architect as the member of a professional class – a fundamental step to establish authority and legitimacy in the public opinion, helping this entity not only to “legitimate group claims to privilege”, but also to develop a set of shared conventions (Swidler, 2012). The consequence of this step was that the architect, as an expert, started to distinguish himself from the broader fields occupied by the engineer, the builder and the archaeologist, thus becoming an integral part of the contemporary critical discourse in architecture. In fact, it is clear that the architect in Portugal came into public existence as part of a professional elite, by the distinction and symbolic capital provided by the magazine.

A Architectura Portugueza and the architect-educator

The launching of a second magazine in 1908, *A Architectura Portugueza – revista mensal de construção e de architectura pratica* (The Portuguese Architecture – monthly magazine of construction and practical architecture) directed by the same owner Nunes Colares, would increase the legitimacy of the architect’s work and identity in the eyes of the public opinion.

Published on a monthly basis, this magazine followed the Italian model of *L’Architettura Italiana – periodico mensile di costruzione e di architettura pratica* (1905–1934).

As the Italian magazine, *A Architectura Portugueza* was printed on paper *couché* and included projects illustrated with high-quality photographs¹⁹, normally accompanied by a carefully written narrative – authored by both the critic-architects as well as the critic-writers – accessible to a wider specialized and non-specialized audience. The affinity with the Italian magazine rested not only on formal, graphical and material qualities, but also on aspects of different nature. In fact, both magazines took the education of the public’s taste as their central purpose, offering a collection of national architectural models that were in line with the revision of the architect’s professional identity as well as with the ideological project of cultural renovation that was then under way in both countries. (Fig. 7-7a, 8, 9)

During the first year of publication, the magazine invited the most prestigious critic-writers – such as Ramalho Ortigão, José de Figueiredo, Abel Botelho, António Monteiro, Gabriel Pereira, Ribeiro de Almeida, among others – to express their opinions on the works of architecture. It also invited all the Portuguese architects to display their works as well as critic-architects to write about such works.

A Architectura Portugueza’s editorial strategy was, therefore, totally built on the pair architect-client – a topic ostensibly discussed within the Portuguese Society of Architects – reinforcing the intellectual authority of the architect as “the author” of architecture and distinguishing the “good taste”, “intelligence” and “sophistication” of the client in calling an expert to contribute to the aesthetic qualification of the city. In these terms, the magazine underlined the will to “collaborate in the raising of the moral and intellectual level of the profession by making active propaganda” within a context

19 For the study of the word-image relationships in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries see Hultzsch et Moreno (2016).



Fig. 7-7a Cover and opening page from the first issue of *A Architectura Portueza* (1908). Source: Biblioteca da Ordem dos Arquitectos Portugueses.



Fig. 8 Cover page layout from *L'Architettura Italiana* (1909). Source: Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma.

Fig. 9 Opening page from the first issue of *L'Architettura Italiana* (1909). Source: Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma.

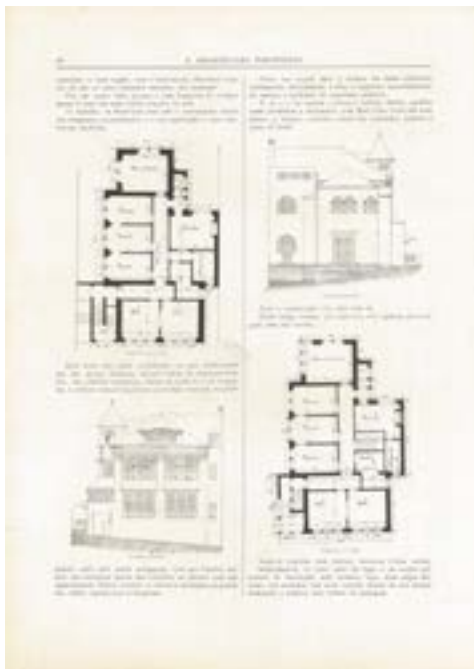


Fig. 10–10a Examples of Portuguese architecture represented by technical drawings and photographs published in a supplement. Source: T.C. (1909: 30, XV), Biblioteca da Ordem dos Arquitectos.



in which “everyone had obtained the title of architect, even without having the most elementary principles necessary for such an honourable profession”.²⁰ (Fig. 10-10a)

However, after the establishment of the First Portuguese Republic in 1910, the comments, words and selected works moved the centre of debate away from aesthetic views to a much more complex engagement with the identification of architecture as a space for the formulation of ideological messages. The articles that were supposed to be critical approaches to contemporary architecture provided an opportunity to talk about political matters, as well as to express widespread ideological thoughts on the architectural discourse in general. In such a publishing project, the critic-architect – both as expert and as educator – concentrated efforts on the education of the public’s taste, involving

the promotion of varied campaigns and the introduction of slogans on the quality of the architecture and the role of the architect in the renovation of national architecture.

(Fig. 11)

The magazine wanted to create a strong civic movement, consolidating symbols that gave expression to an abstract idea of *nation*. Titles such as “traditional architecture”, “traditionalism”, “traditional aestheticization”, “modern traditional architecture”, and dozens more expressions build around the “national question” found their way on the journal’s pages, leading to the invention of a new idea on “Portuguese architecture”. The architect became then identified in the public opinion as the great “educator” in such invention: “the architects, more than any other artists, should take the role of educators and translators of the national ideas, feelings and aspirations” (“Sociedade dos Architectos Portuguezes”, 1905) – as expressed a few years earlier in the pages of *A Construção Moderna*. In these magazines criticism collaborated with architecture in a project of cultural transformation.

20 Letter signed by Nunes Colares, 1906. “Sociedade dos Architectos Portuguezes” (13 March), in *Livro de Correspondência da Sociedade dos Architectos Portuguezes, 1905–1906*. Lisbon, Archives of the Ordem dos Arquitectos Portugueses.

Conclusion

By analysing the conditions that permitted the rise of architecture criticism in Portugal at the dawn of the twentieth century, this article tried to reflect on the coexistence of the concepts of *knowledge* and *opinion* and on their usefulness in the study of architecture criticism.

Architectural magazines such as *A Construção Moderna* and *A Architectura Portuguesa* played a fundamental role in the formation of new conventions of architectural criticism and in the establishment of specific canons of *taste* in the public sphere. No doubt, each magazine was a distinct publishing project, based on different editorial approaches, with different graphic layouts, geared toward well-defined types of audiences, and inviting the readers to espouse diverse interpretations regarding the same architectural works and professional debates. Still, they both equally worked as a dynamic “conversation” – recalling Kermode’s expression – between *knowledge* and *opinion*, about architecture’s dilemmas and choices, professional inclusions and exclusions, having the “education of taste” as a common project.

While *A Construção Moderna* framed its strategy toward the professional elite by ordering and confining subjects under a disciplinary view, *A Architectura Portuguesa* set up its editorial approach on the presentation of the architects and the architectures regarding the public opinion. In fact, without investing in criticism, the architects could hardly have acquired disciplinary self-confidence and relevance in the public sphere. In turn, without the participation of the architects in the construction of the public opinion, architecture criticism could not build a discursive strategy as an autonomous practice.

Together these magazines functioned as a kind of mirror-game, in which the politically motivated idea to find a national language was reabsorbed by both the public and the architects. The Portuguese case makes clear that this mirror-game was the great canon-making engine of criticism, calling for the revision of the architect’s professional identity and mobilizing public

opinion to look at the ideological mission of architecture. Therefore, architecture criticism exceeded the mere task of advancing evaluations or propounding judgments, working as a broader political, social and professional activity in which *opinion* and *knowledge* mutually cooperate in the service of cultural renovation.

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ISSN : 2295-3671
GTIN 13 (EAN) : 977-2295-367-07-6
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Remerciements

Ce septième numéro de la revue a reçu le soutien financier de la Faculté d'Architecture La Cambre Horta de l'ULB. Les auteurs et éditeurs les en remercient.

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