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research

THE ROLE OF ITALIAN ARCHITECTURAL  
CULTURE IN THE PROCESS OF COSMOPOLITANISM  
AND INTERNATIONALIZATION OF PORTUGAL IN  
THE 20TH AND 21TH CENTURY



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# PROJECT DESCRIPTION



We are witnessing an unprecedented amplification of Portuguese culture, which has transformed a strip of land on the edge of the ocean into a place of international convergence. And architecture has contributed to making Portugal a central place in the international cultural debate.

## **The question that gives rise to the idea of the project is:**

What role has Italian architectural culture played in this process of internationalization?  
How and if has it contributed with schools, magazines, books on architecture, to make cosmopolitan architects such as Távora, Siza and Souto de Moura, and later architects linked to the city of Lisbon, such as Carrilho da Graça, Gonçalo Byrne, the Mateus, among others?

## **And vice versa:**

How much and in what way has Italian architecture welcomed the Portuguese influence?  
Which methods, which values characterize Portuguese architectural practice, have influenced the Italian debate?

A tradition that goes beyond the limits of architecture and enters other disciplines such as travel literature. Although Portugal, excluding the case of Francisco de Hollanda ("Dialogos em Roma (1537 - 1538) who travelled to Rome in the 16th century, only began to consider Italy as a travel destination in the 19th century, this delay was mainly due to geographical conditions (the Alps were a considerable physical separation) and then to the lack of infrastructure suitable for travelling by carriage. It was only with the completion of the last Alpine section in 1880 that Italy was easily reached from Portugal in a few days by train.

Since then, we have important examples of accounts of the Italian landscape and cities by Portuguese travellers, starting with Antonio Alves Mendes da Silva Ribeiro with his "Itália. Elucidário de un viajante", 1878, Jaime Cortesão, "Itália azul", 1922, Ricardo Jorge, "Passadas de erradio", 1922, Justino Montalvão, "A terra encantada: sensações de Pisa, Florença e Siena", 1911; Carlos Santos, "Como eu vi Itália", 1928; Abel Salazar "Uma primavera em Itália", 1934; Vasco César Carvalho, "Viagem à Roma", 1953.

Travel stories that certainly influenced architects who chose Italy in the 20th century as a destination to update, expand, perfect, architectural culture.

An interesting example are the scholarships for specialisation abroad that the Gulbenkian Foundation gave to meritorious Portuguese architects from 1959, the year of its foundation.

Bologna to study in the “Centro di studio e Informazione per l’architettura Sacra”, in 1960, where he came into contact with Cardinal Lercaro (1891-1976), architects Giorgio Trebbi (1926-2002) and Glauco Gresleri (1930-2016), an experience that would greatly influence his profession and the creation of the MRAR movement.

We should also remember Alcino Soutinho (1930-2013) who, in 1961, made a trip paid for by Gulbenkian, visiting a series of museums to understand what kind of methodology was applied in the existing heritage project. A journey that lasted a year and that brought him to confront different realities that would influence him in his subsequent career.

Duarte Castelbranco (1928-2015), who goes to the Institute of Urban Planning Technology at the Milan Polytechnic to attend the “Curso de atualização in Urbanística Técnica”, in 1962. José Luis Pinto Machado (1927 -2021), who goes to the Milan Polytechnic in 1957-58 to attend the course of “arquitetura e urbanismo rurais”, and returned to Itália in 1962 to study the Agrarian Reform, as he was an employee of the “Junta de Colonização Interna”.

One of the results will be the publication of an important book “A arquitetura rural e reorganização fundiária italiana. Relatório de uma visita de estudo”, published in 1964. As Rita Marnoto states in the publication dedicated to Italian architects in Portugal (1), they do not simply transport construction models, ways of using materials or options for urban insertion, so that they can be replicated *ipsis verbis*, as if that were possible.

The field of architecture and the exchanges provided by the work carried out in Portugal by Italian architects show how elements of Italian origin intersect with local construction techniques and functions of use or networks of commissioners which imply their specific re-elaboration. In order to answer these themes, this project aims to build a SYNOPTIC MAP that visualizes all the relationships that existed in architecture between Italy and Portugal in the XX-XXI centuries.



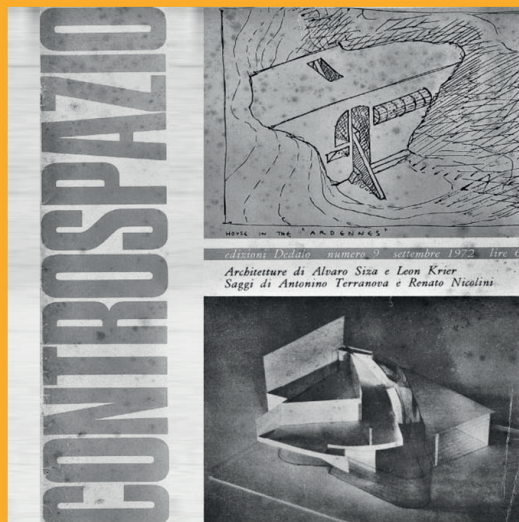
Fernando Távora, Pisa, 1947



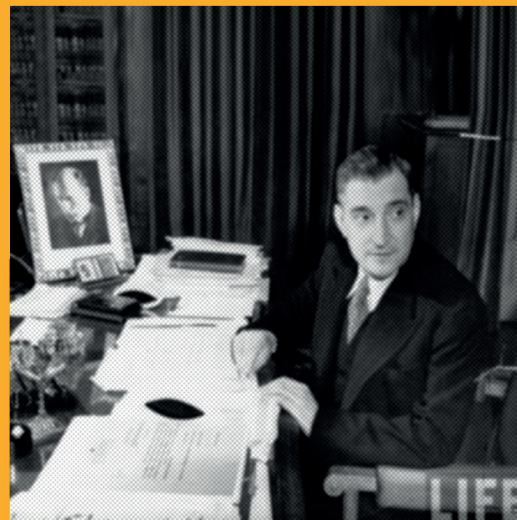
Travel to Italy, Duarte Castelbranco, Orlando Sá Nogueira, Jorge Viera, 1950



# IMAGES



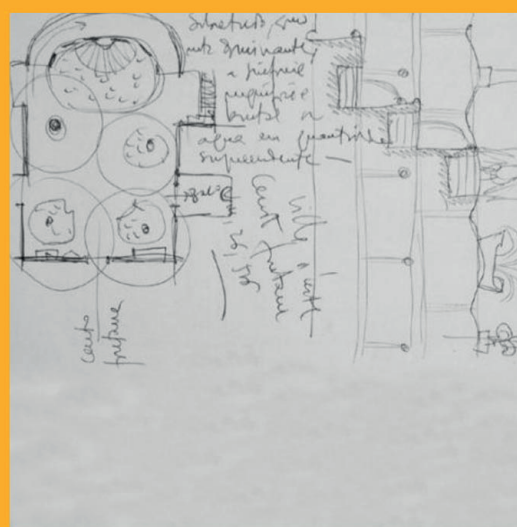
Magazine Cover Contospazio, 9  
Private archive Nuno Portas, 1972



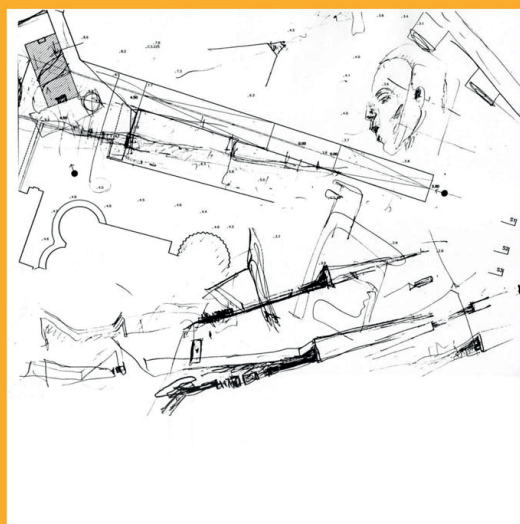
Oliveira Salazar with Mussolini's Portrait.  
F. Bernard HoffmanHoffman – Life Magazine, 1940



Alvaro Siza, Roma, outubro 1980



Távora: drawing from the book  
'Villa Adriana e Villa d'Este' FIMS archive  
Ovato Court and Hundred Fountains, 1956



Alvaro Siza, Eduardo Souto de Moura, Naples, Station Município



# ABOUT PROJECT

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR/ PI**

RAFFAELLA MADDALUNO

**INTEGRATED RESEARCHERS OF CIAUD**

AMÍLCAR DE GIL E PIRES; CATERINA ANASTASIA; JORGE NUNES;  
STEFANOS ANTONIADIS ELIT

**COLLABORATING RESEARCHERS OF CIAUD**

CAIO C. CASTRO

**EXTERNAL RESEARCHERS**

ANTONIO LABALESTRA, CARLOTTA TORRICELLI, ELISA PEGORIN,  
JOÃO LUIS MARQUES

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**KEYWORDS**

ITALY, PORTUGAL, CONTAMINATIONS, ARCHITECTURE, SYNOPTIC MAP

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**PARTNER INSTITUTIONS**

POLITECNICO DI BARI – FACULDADE DE ARQUITETURA;  
ALMA MATER STUDIORUM – UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

**EXPECTED FUTURE PARTNER INSTITUTIONS**

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI ROMA TRE | DIPARTIMENTO DI ARCHITETTURA;  
UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI FERRARA – DIPARTIMENTO DI ARCHITETTURA

# OBJECTIVES

In spite of the copious information on the subject, there is no comprehensive general study that provides a complete and unified vision that extends to our days.

There is any global map that visualizes, summarizes and returns, in its many facets, the context we deal with and this is the first objective that the research project aims to achieve.

Thus the first step of the project will therefore be to define the context, i.e. the nature of the relationships, trying to establish the RULES of the CODE of this communication between the two interlocutors, through the analysis of all the EXISTING DOCUMENTS.

These relationships in a first classification can be divided into: exchanges in the working environment, academic environment, constructive environment, theoretical environment, personal environment, political environment.

A second phase will be the interpretation of the data collected, and the CRITICAL ANALYSIS of the results of the mutual influences and after analyzing, in a critical way, the various layers of INTERPRETATION.

The main result will be an analytic map, which will display all these interrelationships, which will accompany an exhaustive publication where the various levels of reading and interpretations of the phenomena will be explained, as well as a series of cards that deal with every single protagonist, every cited work, every bibliographic work, every event.



# RESULTS

**All this is possible only through the application of two key concepts: international COOPERATION and SHARING.**

It is planned to organize an annual international conference where we will try to invite other researchers and institutions to share themes related to the project. Participation in national and international conferences is foreseen, with the respective publication of papers or book chapters.

**As a final result, a book with the theme of research is expected to be published.**

This study will contribute to strengthen the relationship with Italian academic and research institutions (Alma Mater University of Bologna, Faculty of Architecture of Bari, Faculty of Architecture Roma la Sapienza, Università IUAV di Venezia- with which the undersigned has collaborated previously and continues to forge relations currently) and will help to the clarification of the processes for which these two countries have always felt a mutual cultural attraction in the past, until today. Through the organization of annual shared events, we will try to analyze the results and use them for a more careful analysis of our recent years, trying to understand if the nature of these relationships has changed and how it interacts with the current society of the two countries.



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