

## **Heritage of Portuguese Influence as Erasure: Critical Perspectives on the Recreation of the Past in the Present<sup>1</sup>**

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**ABSTRACT:** Several attempts have been made to define and catalogue the “heritage of Portuguese influence,” but none has critically addressed the politics at work in such heritage. The colonial violence that effectively scattered this heritage across the world has often been erased and replaced by the exaltation of a Portuguese imperial past expressed through aestheticization. This paper exposes the materiality of such heritage through discourse analysis, starting by unpacking one concrete example, the Sete Maravilhas de Origem Portuguesa no Mundo competition in 2009, and tracking down the conditions of possibility (when, how, and why) for this discourse practice to emerge in the Jornadas Luso-Brasileiras do Património (1984) and the Primeiro Congresso do Património Construído Luso no Mundo (1987) and to endure in such objects as *História da arte portuguesa no mundo* (1998–99) and *Património de origem portuguesa no mundo* (2010–11) as part of a visual economy that entails the spatial and temporal flow of images and discourses. This paper also examines the endurance of an imperial episteme that feeds on the idea of a supposed “Portuguese world” and gives form to its complex.

**KEYWORDS:** coloniality, imperial episteme, visibility, “Portuguese world” complex

**RESUMO:** Várias tentativas foram feitas para definir e catalogar “o património de influência portuguesa,” mas nenhuma delas abordou criticamente a política que impregna esse mesmo património. Frequentemente a violência colonial que, justamente, fez com que esse património esteja hoje espalhado pelo mundo inteiro é apagada em favor da exaltação do passado imperial português expresso sobretudo através da estetização deste património. Este artigo examina, através de uma análise discursiva, esta materialidade tomando como ponto de partida o concurso das Sete Maravilhas da Origem Portuguesa no Mundo (2009) e rastreando as condições de possibilidade (quando, como e porquê) desta prática discursiva até às Jornadas Luso-Brasileiras do Património (1984) e ao Primeiro Congresso do Património Construído Luso no Mundo (1987), para

igualmente analisar a sua permanência em objectos como a *História da arte portuguesa no mundo* (1999) e *Património de origem portuguesa no mundo* (2010) como parte de uma economia visual que pressupõe o fluxo espaço-temporal de imagens e discursos. Este artigo também aborda criticamente a sobrevivência de uma episteme imperial que se alimenta de um suposto “Mundo Português” e dá forma ao seu complexo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: colonialidade, episteme imperial, visualidade, complexo do “Mundo Português”

### **Introduction: The “Wonders” Effect (or Heritage as Entertainment)**

Sete Maravilhas de Origem Portuguesa no Mundo (Seven Wonders of Portuguese Origin in the World) was a 2009 national popular competition whose goal was to publicize the “heritage” of Portuguese expansion. Few objects of critique have manifested quite so literally the endurance of an imperial episteme in the present. My use of imperial “episteme” follows Michel Foucault’s conceptualization of an unconscious apparatus that underlies the “conditions of possibility” for (imperial) knowledge to emerge, i.e., what can and cannot be said in a given time and place, whether in theory or silently invested in a practice, and what endures (Foucault [1966] 2005, xxiii-xxiv). The competition can be understood as a symptom of this underlying episteme.

Sete Maravilhas de Origem Portuguesa no Mundo [Sete Maravilhas] followed two previous and associated competitions, one global and one local. The New Seven Wonders of the World, sponsored by UNESCO, aimed at redefining the original seven wonders established two thousand years ago by Philon of Byzantium.<sup>2</sup> Its goal was to stimulate “global memory.”<sup>3</sup> Portugal’s Seven Wonders was held at the same time, followed similar selection and voting processes, and had sponsors at the highest levels, including Portugal’s Ministry of Culture, IPPAR (Portuguese Institute for Architectural and Archaeological Heritage), and the University of Évora.<sup>4</sup> Both events concluded in a ceremony held in Lisbon on July 7, 2007, and led to the establishment of the Seven Wonders Portugal Foundation. Two years later, this Foundation would organize the Sete Maravilhas analyzed here and subsequent competitions: Portugal’s Seven Natural Wonders (2010), Seven Gastronomic Wonders (2011), Seven Beach Wonders (2012), Seven Village Wonders (2017),<sup>5</sup> Seven Gourmet Regional Wonders (2018), Seven Pastry Wonders (2019), and, most recently, Seven Pop Culture Wonders (2020). This

generated a “wonders effect” as a means of branding Portugal for domestic consumption, unparalleled since António Ferro’s pursuit as head of the Estado Novo’s Secretariat for National Propaganda (SPN, later SNI) in the 1930s and 1940s, which molded the regime’s “politics of spirit” (Ferro 1950, 29).<sup>6</sup> Now it had become a capitalist endeavor dressed in national attire.

The Sete Maravilhas competition nominated 27 archetypal buildings spread across three continents, 22 of which were already classified as UNESCO World Heritage sites. Crucially, the competition had the support of the CPLP (Community of Portuguese-Language Countries). It also counted on IPPAR, the Ministries of Education and Culture, the Camões Institute, the University of Coimbra, and the National Commission of UNESCO. The kickoff press conference was held, symbolically, at Torre de Belém, and its commissioner, ex-minister António Vitorino, stated on the occasion: “We are a people who are proud of our history, and we continue to be a people of Diaspora. This project is a unique opportunity to reencounter our history” (“Património da Humanidade” 2008).<sup>7</sup> Luís Segadães, CEO of the New Seven Wonders Foundation, on the other hand, stressed that “Portuguese monuments can be found all over the world, which clearly shows the dimension and influence of the Portuguese presence on a global scale. Globalization began with the Portuguese” (“Património da Humanidade” 2008). Both statements set the tone for Sete Maravilhas: it was to be a celebration of the imperial narrative, here reframed as “diaspora” and “globalization”—euphemisms often used to this day to refer to the colonial enterprise.

The competition was eventually postponed due to the criticism that the selection criteria lacked scientific basis. Walter Rossa, Pedro Dias, and Paulo Varela Gomes, three art historians from the University of Coimbra, argued that some examples on the list “were not of Portuguese origin” (Rossa) or not what “the Portuguese did best” (Dias); there was also an “excess” of African locations and Brazilian historical cities (Varela Gomes) and the exclusion of key places like Cidade Velha in Cabo Verde (Andrade 2008). After these criticisms were considered and Pedro Dias invited as scientific supervisor, some of the originally excluded locations were included in the competition, but the “entertaining vocation” didn’t really changed (Andrade 2009). The seven winning monuments were the Diu Fortress in India; the Mazagão Fortress in Morocco; the Basilica of Bom Jesus de Goa in India; Cidade Velha/Ribeira Grande in Santiago Island, Cabo Verde; Saint Paul’s Church in Macau; Church of Saint Francis of Assisi in Ouro Preto, Brazil; and the Convent of Saint Francis in São Salvador da Bahia, Brazil.<sup>8</sup>



Fig. 1. “7 Wonders of Portuguese Origin in the World: Promoting National Identity since 2007” (<https://projetos.7maravilhas.pt/>)

This list reflects the imperial (and imperialist) narrative of a country “scattered” across different continents, while also occluding the colonial violence that effectively prompted this heritage to be built all over the world. Indeed, the voting website failed to mention that some of the sites bore concrete connections to the transatlantic slave trade (some were actual slave ports

or warehouses), despite the fact that UNESCO had registered them as heritage of the Atlantic slave route (UNESCO 2021). Furthermore, when visiting or studying such heritage, one is often led to forget that gilded wood carvings, luxurious marbles, exotic woods, precious metals, and gemstones, which embellish several of these monuments, are products of slave labor and extractivism forged by modernity/coloniality.<sup>9</sup>

Nevertheless, the competition stirred controversy among a few scholars, such as Gerhard Seibert (2009) who criticized the negation and manipulation of history operated by the competition, and Brazilian historian Ana Lucia Araujo, who, along with other colleagues, wrote an open letter stressing the violent histories connected to “these sites of death and tragedy” and calling for “respect to the history and the memory of millions of victims of the Atlantic slave trade” (“Carta aberta” 2009).<sup>10</sup> By the same token, Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2009) insightfully pointed out that “the gaze that is oriented to see the beauty of [these] monuments” within the competition is “also oriented not to see the unspeakable suffering of millions of Africans who . . . sacrificed their lives so that many of these monuments would come to life.”

The competition’s exaltation of a “glorious” Portuguese past expressed through the aesthetic value of this heritage ignored, by design, the sites’ contradictory and violent roles within the colonial project. It therefore expressed the coloniality at work in the present. With Sete Maravilhas, heritage thus became entertainment intended for mass consumption. This operation was performed with the complicity not only of the media, but also UNESCO, the Portuguese

state and its institutions, and, most strikingly, the University of Coimbra under the sponsorship of its rector, Fernando Seabra Santos.

Such widespread consensus is hardly surprising, however. It demonstrates the extensive range of the imperial episteme at work and its manifestation in resilient and recursive forms that, as Ann Laura Stoler noted, although they “don’t look or feel quite the same” as in the past, nevertheless “reenact” the imperial narrative in the present (2012, 501). This reenactment relies substantially on images and their circulation, as well as on the miniaturization and consequent portability of the empire, features that also mark other objects to be analyzed here (*História da arte portuguesa no mundo*, *Património de origem portuguesa no mundo*, and the portal *Patrimónios de influência portuguesa no mundo*). In this way, and through these means, the imperial past is not really past but a hegemonic position taken up in the present and/or reactivated and put into motion whenever necessary. But what were/are the exact conditions of possibility—when, why, and how—for this discourse to reemerge in the present?

This article performs a genealogical exploration that, unlike history, places the past in the present, questions the conceptual frame used to understand and study this heritage, and, in doing so, reproblematicizes it: why and how “that-which-is” called “património de origem/influência portuguesa no mundo” may no longer be “that-which-is.”<sup>11</sup>

### **The “Portuguese World” Complex**

Colonial domination, as Edward Said (1994) pointed out, was not based on violence and exploitation alone but also on cultural domination. This domination was impelled by “ideological formations” expressed through discourses that generated a “consolidated vision” manifested aesthetically.<sup>12</sup> This vision was further intensified by the late colonial state, which, as Benedict Anderson ([1983] 2010, 185) stressed, employed a unique way of imagining: by serialization.<sup>13</sup> Through infinite replication, this “late colonial imagining” was what made nations, their citizens, and a “national series” possible, enduring far beyond the end of colonialism, to be embraced by the postcolonial state.

Acting as the motor that propelled a “colonial imagining” and a “national series,” the 1940 Portuguese World Exposition put in place by the Estado Novo dictatorship (1933–74) would, for the first time, produce a “visuality” in the sense defined by Nicholas Mirzoeff: as “a discursive practice for rendering and regulating the real” (2011, 3). By invoking and summarizing a scattered, preexisting

imperial vocabulary and archive—historical characters, national heroes, myths, places, dates, and metropolitan and overseas folklore—and by coherently “serializing” them, the Exposition posited “the Discoveries” as Portugal’s golden age, telling the “exceptional” history of a small country that resisted the Moorish and the Spanish conquests, went to sea to escape its fate, “discovered” different lands, Christianized Africans and Amerindians, and finally found in Salazar a guide who would forge a new era of prosperity in a Europe divided by war. Immersed within the exposition, visitors could therefore travel from one historical moment to the next, from the colonies to the rural continental provinces and back, diving into the life of their ancestors and the glory of their past (*Comemorações centenárias* 1940; Acciaiuoli 1998; Vargaftig 2016).

Capturing the past, the present, and the future of an aspirational Portuguese world, visitors of the Exposition were led to believe that they indeed belonged to a particular world, simultaneously modern and traditional, colonial and metropolitan, urban and rural—in an “all-embracing aesthetics” (Bennett 2004).<sup>14</sup> This procedure is what Walter Benjamin famously labeled as the “aestheticization of politics” of fascist regimes aimed at “masking” their social tensions ([1936] 2006, 260)<sup>15</sup> or what Hannah Arendt has described as what distinguishes a totalitarian regime: it “thrives on this escape from reality into fiction, from coincidence into consistency” ([1951] 1962, 361).

As a deeply rooted consistency, this highly aesthetic and fictitious “Portuguese world” expressed in the Portuguese World Exposition and in a number of satellite events, such as the Portuguese World Conference,<sup>16</sup> established an ensemble of practices and discourses that came to define the truth claims so as to provoke a *belief*. The regime therefore created a naturalized and self-authorized worldview, the “Portuguese world,” and gave shape to its complex. A complex, Mirzoeff tells us, is a “life-world” to be “visualized” and, above all, “inhabited” in order for authority to be “administered” (2011, 5). The Portuguese world complex forged within the Portuguese World Exposition was an “imperial complex” (13) that proposed an ideal world, simultaneously fascist and colonial.<sup>17</sup> This complex would translate into forms that have merged and accommodated palimpsestically long after the empire’s decreed end.

Indeed, April 25, 1974, brought the end of Portugal as an imperial nation in praxis, but not the end of its “imagination,” as Eduardo Lourenço (1983) warned us.<sup>18</sup> With the establishment of democracy and Portugal’s integration into the European Union in 1986, this imperial complex was reconfigured, mostly through

the work of the Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses (National Commission for the Commemoration of Portuguese Discoveries), established that same year. In a formulation reminiscent of the 1940 Portuguese World Exposition, the commission's main objective was to remember Portugal's "epic effort" and to teach the "Portuguese of today" about its "great goals."<sup>19</sup> Promoted by the highest ranks of the state, this heavily financed hegemonic operation enable the continuity of an imperial episteme and its complex. The objects studied here make this imperial episteme and complex tangible and show the role of economic, political, and cultural elites alike in promoting it and ensuring its survival,<sup>20</sup> even if unintentionally. Such is the work of coloniality.

### ***Património Luso no Mundo: Heritage as Erasure***

It was against this unsettling (post)colonial backdrop that two events conveyed the foundation of Portugal's heritage policies: the Primeiras Jornadas Luso-Brasileiras do Património (First Luso-Brazilian Heritage Days), in 1984, and the Primeiro Congresso do Património Construído Luso no Mundo (First Conference of Lusitanian-Built Heritage in the World), in 1987. Heritage has always been mobilized in concrete moments in time, its very concept having grown out of nineteenth-century European fears of cultural decadence and political and social change. The Jornadas and the Congresso were not, however, the first time that efforts were made to define and preserve this heritage around the world. Indeed, the Estado Novo seemed to possess an understanding of the political value of "overseas heritage" at least since the 1930s and 1940s, as Vera Félix Maris (2016) has shown. The regime attempted to affirm its colonial policy through the conservation, restoration, and dissemination of its so-called heritage abroad, particularly after 1958, when it tried to refute worldwide condemnation and legitimize itself under the pressure of rising independence movements. A clear step to this end was creating a centralized model for safeguarding such heritage with the publication of the Decree no. 41787 of August 8, 1958.<sup>21</sup>

The Primeiras Jornadas Luso-Brasileiras do Património were held on March 12–16, 1984, at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon. Alfredo Viana de Lima (1913–91), a Portuguese architect with extensive experience in Brazil who was behind the classification of much of that heritage within UNESCO, set the basis of the Jornadas by referring to Portugal's "dilated dimension": "Throughout the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, there was a culture that dimensioned and . . . motivated cultures that were so different from each other.



... That culture was the Luso culture (we don't say Portuguese because it has a political content that the other term does not possess)" (Lima 1984, 18). He proceeded to highlight the role of both Portugal and Brazil in the making of a particular cultural and political geography:

Brazil and Portugal should keep in mind the primordial role that other peoples ... played in the construction of an identity full of affinities. From the far reaches of the Orient, passing through the Arab world, to the African immensity, as we know, we have received indelible marks that the genius and art of different peoples brought to the building of our heritage. There is therefore a Lusíada community, in which so many fundamental moments of an already universal culture are merged. (18)

Sponsored by the Gulbenkian Foundation (Portugal), the Roberto Marinho Foundation (Brazil), the Instituto da Cultura e Língua Portuguesa (Portugal), and the Fundação Nacional Pró-Memória (Brazil), among others, the main topics of the Jornadas were: Administrative Instruments for the Preservation of Built Heritage; Philosophy of Safeguarding Interventions; the Historical and Traditional Agglomerates and Their Surrounding Environment; and Frameworks and Public Participation in the Preservation of Common Heritage. The event, therefore, lay the foundations for a political and cultural geography that would come to be implemented in other events and objects. For example, Cidade Velha in Cabo Verde was already mentioned at the Jornadas as worthy of preservation (in the paper "Legislação existente ou a propor em Cabo Verde" by António Delgado). There was also an allusion to the Roberto Marinho Foundation's campaign to "preserve national memory," with references to Rio de Janeiro, Ouro Preto, Paraty, Curitiba, and Salvador, which came to be bastions of this heritage in Brazil ("Fundação Roberto Marinho: Campanha de Preservação da Memória Nacional" by José Carlos Barbosa de Oliveira).<sup>22</sup>

Architect and President of the Scientific Council of the Department of Architecture of ESBAL (Escola Superior de Belas Artes; School of Fine Arts) at the University of Lisbon, Augusto Pereira Brandão (1930–2018), who in those years was struggling to turn ESBAL's architecture department into an autonomous school (he eventually succeeded and became known as "the father" of the Faculdade de Arquitectura de Lisboa), forged a tentative concept to classify this heritage in his closing remarks at the Jornadas: "Património de Comunidade Mundial" (World Community Heritage). In hindsight, this concept seems sharper than those that



followed, although Brandão's proposal ends up falling in the same "originary" traps as future conceptualizations when he states that this heritage owes its "paternity" to Brazil and Portugal. According to his definition, "Luso-Brazilian heritage" was part of a much wider whole and its study should be extended "to all nations that contain portions of that heritage" (Brandão 1984, 200).<sup>23</sup>

Building on the foundations laid by the Jornadas Luso-Brasileiras, the Primeiro Congresso do Património Construído Luso no Mundo was held three years later, mobilizing a large community. It was organized by the Grupo para o Estudo do Património Arquitectónico Português fora da Europa (Group for the Study of Portuguese Heritage Outside of Europe) from the Faculdade de Arquitectura, by now part of Lisbon's Technical University. The group was formed by Ana Maria Figueiredo, Isabel Galvão Lucas, Margarida Valla, Nuno Ludovice, and Paula Ramos, most of whom were architects. Similar to the Jornadas, the Congresso was an event that had substantial political, social, and financial support. Its Honorary Commission included President Mário Soares, Prime Minister Aníbal Cavaco Silva, several ministers, rectors of Portugal's public universities, the president of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, and the president of the UNESCO National Commission. There was also a Portuguese Executive Commission composed of several architects, an Executive Commission for Brazil, an Advisory Commission, and a large number of sponsors (several ministries, the government of Macau, Brazil's Ministry of Culture, Lisbon City Hall, Fundação Nacional Pró-Memória, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, the Roberto Marinho Foundation, public companies such as Petrogal and TAP–Air Portugal, and private enterprises, such as Central de Cervejas and Grão Pará).

The three goals of the Congresso, according to opening remarks by Brandão, who was part of the Advisory Commission and had delivered the closing remarks of the Jornadas in 1984, were, first, "to make people aware" of "the great strength" of the "Lusitanian heritage" spread all over the "tropical world"; second, "to examine and to impress on our minds that one of the characteristics of this heritage is its formal nomadism" derived from "an enormous variety of overlapping cultures" that have "different attributes, according to their location, their origin, and the region and area where they are situated"; and, third, to learn more about the heritage's "state of conservation" as it "began before the majority of existing nations" (Brandão 1987b).

The different papers drew a particular geopolitical landscape of heritage recognized in later objects: once again, the importance of Brazil stood out, and the

inventory and classification of Brazilian heritage, namely in the context of the “Lusitanian colonization” of Santa Catarina. Other sites highlighted were the state of Minas Gerais; the historic cities of São Luís, Santos, Goiás, Salvador, and Diamantina; the Island of Mozambique; and Uruguay’s Colonia del Sacramento. Interestingly, there were also mentions of Singapore’s conservation efforts, Portuguese military architecture in Oman and Ormuz, coastal Portuguese settlements in Morocco, and even Beijing and Senegambia. Some of the participants would later publish on the topic they first presented at the Congresso, such as art historian Rafael Moreira, architect José Manuel Fernandes, architect Nuno Teotónio Pereira, and architects Fernando Távora and Alexandre Alves Costa.

In the inaugural session, Isabel Margato Valladares gave a paper entitled “Para uma definição do Património Construído Luso no Mundo” (Towards a Definition of the Lusitanian Built Heritage in the World), and later in the week there was another collective effort to define “Portuguese world heritage” in a presentation with the same exact title by the Grupo para o Estudo do Património Arquitectónico Português fora da Europa, the research group in Lisbon’s School of Architecture that, since November 1983, had been engaged in an exhaustive documental and bibliographic survey of “Lusitanian heritage.” Unfortunately, no conference proceedings were published after the Congresso, and therefore there is no way to access the definitions proposed in both presentations. However, the tone of the conference can be inferred from the paper titles published in the program brochure, in which, similarly to the Jornadas Luso-Brasileiras, descriptors like “Luso” and “Lusitanian” were employed at large to conceptualize this heritage.<sup>24</sup>

In addition, there was an entire section of the Congress devoted to the social function of heritage, conservation theories, methods, and even politics, such as “The History of the Portuguese Presence in Macau Is Told by the Portuguese and Chinese in Different Ways” (Francisco Figueira). Architect and theorist of architecture Michel Toussaint focused on the conservation of twentieth-century heritage (“Is the Twentieth-Century Architectonic Patrimony at Risk?”), a relatively undiscussed issue at the time, but which would become a central concern of his work. There were also papers on Macau, the Fortress of Diu, Ouro Preto, Pernambuco, the Cape of Good Hope, Alcácer Quibir, and an inventory of Portuguese settlements along the African coast—stressing a political and cultural geography in the making. Some proposals addressed the future of such heritage, as was the case of papers “Towards the Management of the Lusitanian Built Patrimony in the World” by the museum specialist Maria Natália Correia

Guedes—who had been head of the Direcção-Geral do Património Cultural (Directorate-General for Cultural Heritage) between 1979 and 1980 and the first President of the Instituto Português do Património Cultural (Portuguese Cultural Heritage Institute) between 1980 and 1984—and “The Role of National and International Authorities in Actions to be Developed” by architect and professor of Lisbon’s School of Architecture Fernando Moreira da Silva. Furthermore, and similar to what happened in the Jornadas, the Congresso also entailed guided visits to national heritage classics, such as the Jerónimos Monastery, and cultural trips to Sintra, Mafra, Óbidos, and Évora. A reception in the São Jorge Castle and a cultural session at Padrão dos Descobrimentos completed the program.

Importantly, the Congresso was coupled with an exhibition, the result of a survey on “Lusitanian built heritage in the world” carried out by the Grupo para o Estudo do Património Arquitectónico Português fora da Europa (“Catálogo” 1987). It contemplated four main topics: (1) spatial, chronological and typological characterization, a world map with the location of the main sites where they exist or existed, and the heritage that had already been subjected to inventory; (2) presentations of a few representative documents: cities and sites, civil architecture, religious architecture, military architecture, architectural language, building techniques, decoration, and iconography; (3) samples of paradigmatic heritage in five different sites: Mazaan (Morocco), Diu (India), Malacca (Malaysia), Colonia del Sacramento (Uruguay), São Luís do Maranhão (Brazil); and (4) examples of protective actions already undertaken (Macau, Toyyan, Imperial Palace, and Rio de Janeiro) and the presentation of restoration works that are urgently needed (“Catálogo” 1987). Writing in the (not randomly) trilingual catalogue, Augusto Pereira Brandão summed up what seemed to be the overall tone of the exhibition, a “Lusitanian heritage panorama”:

The Lusitanian Culture is not one of domination and influence, it is rather a culture of symbiosis and as such a culture of exchanges. Throughout this exhibition, the Lusitanian world comes up with no compulsory expressions, creating a leitmotiv, but as agglutinant factors. From Ethiopia to China, such different moldings in form and in time! . . . From Malaca to S. Luís of Maranhão, what dispersal! . . . From Cachéu to Amboíno, what contrast! . . . From Rio de Janeiro to Mozambique island, how complementary! It is this vast and “sacred” panorama we attempt to show to whoever wants to see, feel, and love. (Brandão 1987a)<sup>25</sup>

The conference and the associated exhibition were thus the first survey and bibliographic, cartographic, and iconographic effort to define this heritage, “seeking to fit the different urban morphologies and architectonic types into a whole, so as to facilitate the perception of fundamental features in its chronological evolution,” according to the Grupo para o Estudo do Património Arquitectónico Português fora da Europa. It aimed at educating and holding all cultural entities to account, in order “to perform, as quickly as possible, such actions as to avoid its irreparable loss” (“Catálogo” 1987).

Looking back, it seems that the Jornadas and the Congresso were a national response to the UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and National Heritage, which Portugal had signed in 1979. Both events proposed a preservation doctrine, in which such heritage is understood as unique, its study is the domain of experts (architects, museum specialists, and historians), and its significance is immutable and lies in the past. While the proposed concept—Património Construído Luso no Mundo (Lusitanian Built Heritage in the World)—did not stick, both events shaped a geopolitical framework that enabled the endurance of the imperial and fascist “Portuguese World” complex, as forged by the 1940 Exposition long before the regime’s demise. This complex manifested itself in an uncritical discourse on such heritage—one of erasure and naturalization of the colonial past, which also helped appease the anxieties of a “return to Europe” for Portugal.

### **História da Arte Portuguesa no Mundo: Heritage as Aestheticization**

If the 1980s events—the Jornadas and the Congresso—were responding to an anxiety crisis over the loss of the empire in 1974 and Portugal’s entry into the European Union in 1986, then in the 1990s the field of Portuguese art history developed a new subfield with its own specialists, projects, and conceptual vocabulary that continued to make the empire’s materiality an opportune (and opportunistic) topic of inquiry. These were building on previous works, such as German Bazin’s *L’architecture religieuse au Brésil* and Mário Tavares Chicó’s *A cidade ideal do Renascimento e as cidades portuguesas da Índia*, both published in 1956, which had enlarged the scope of Portuguese historiographical research to artistic productions resulting from colonial expansion.

In a way, it was art historians’ response to the architects’ protagonism in the aforementioned events and in studying the objects of imperial heritage.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, as in the past, the field was also responding to a specific context,



Fig. 2. Heritage as aesthetics: Pedro Dias, *A história da arte portuguesa no mundo: O espaço do Índico, 1415-1822* (1998)

in which Portugal was trying to forge a neocolonial policy that materialized in a “humanist” rhetoric: Lusofonia, a geopolitical space “united” by the Portuguese language.<sup>27</sup> This new rhetoric became official through the establishment of the CPLP in 1996, in which Portugal claimed a sort of sovereignty over the language, the “proper” way of speaking and writing it, as the (empire of) language became a prosthetic entity substituting for the loss of the real empire.<sup>28</sup> Historical idiosyncrasies prevented the establishment of Lusofonia as a fully neocolonialist endeavor; it emerged instead as a postcolonial myth with similar ideological purposes to those of the past (see Santos 2001). One event that particularly took hold of this transmutation process was the 1998 Lisbon World Exposition, or Expo’98. Dedicated to the theme of “The Oceans, a Heritage for the Future,” its official mission statement nevertheless espoused a discourse similar to that of the Portuguese World Exposition, though tempered by the quest for “knowledge about the oceans” (Relatório 1999, 18).<sup>29</sup> Expo’98 became a mirror of the Portuguese World Exposition, and its site, Parque das Nações, the mirror of Belém. By portraying Portugal both as a depoliticized empire without colonies and as a pioneer of a brotherly globalization that promoted a friendly encounter

between cultures, Expo'98 expunged Portuguese colonialism of any violence, confining this aspect of its history to the realm of a well-kept family secret.

Pedro Dias's *História da arte portuguesa no mundo*, a two-volume work published in 1998 and 1999, not only reflects this sociopolitical context but is shaped by the same lingering "imperial complex" (Mirzoeff 2011) forged within the Portuguese World Exposition and reconceptualized by Expo'98, while reproducing an ambiguous discourse on colonialism. Its two volumes, respectively dedicated to the "space of the Indic" (covering East Africa, the Middle East, India, and Asia) and "the space of the Atlantic" (covering the west coast of Africa, Brazil, and the Atlantic islands of Cabo Verde, São Tomé, Madeira, and the Azores), establish a chronology between the conquest of Ceuta (1415) and the "loss" of Brazil (1822). This chronology, in turn, reflects a particular ideology, expressed on the back cover of both volumes: "After this date, neither in Portugal nor in any of its overseas territories was reality the same as before; without Brazil, we lost our richest land and the most dynamic part of our society, beginning an irreversible decline, which practically returned us to the material and immaterial limits of 1444" (Dias 1998, 1999; my emphases).

On the same back cover, the oeuvre's goals are clearly stated: to study "the artistic phenomena resulting from the maritime discoveries and our territorial expansion," having as object "the aesthetics that we took overseas, to inhabited or uninhabited lands, and that, there, we practiced for our use . . . on equal terms with everything that resulted from the miscegenation of European art with the art of the people with whom we interacted" (Dias 1998, 1999; my emphases). The recurrent use of the first-person plural by Dias exposes an overidentification between the author and his subject, a common practice in the intellectual production of experts during the Estado Novo. In addition, the use of the term "interacted" (*interagimos*) is a widespread euphemism to refer to the violence of colonial encounters. Reflecting the tradition of art history within which it is inscribed, this wide-ranging work sought to include all artistic disciplines: urbanism, architecture, sculpture, painting, goldsmithing, furniture, fabrics, and even everyday objects.

Perhaps the clearest symptom of the imperial episteme and complex at work in the book is the fact that each chapter starts with an introduction referring to the role of the Portuguese here and there: "Portuguese in Ceylon"; "Portuguese Presence in the Persian Gulf and Middle East"; "The Portuguese in Malacca"; "The Establishment of the Portuguese in China"; "The Portuguese Presence in Japan," etc. "Presence" or "establishment," like "interaction," are euphemisms, and at no time is the word "colonialism" mentioned. This is a striking omission,



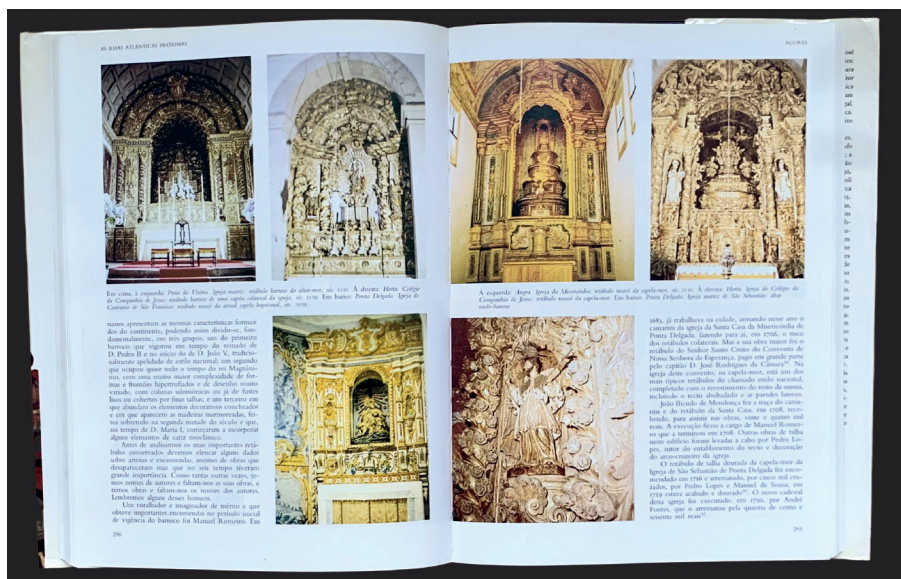


Fig. 3. Heritage as aesthetics: Pedro Dias, *A história da arte portuguesa no mundo: O espaço do Atlântico, 1415-1822* (1999)

given that fortresses are one of the main typologies throughout the different territories in a variety of forms and scales, a typology that the Portuguese indeed mastered and is, perhaps, the most poignant manifestation of such heritage. One cannot help but wonder why the Portuguese came to excel in the construction of fortresses wherever they set foot. Or, better put: why did the Portuguese need to build fortresses in the first place?

The euphemisms continue throughout the book: the contacts (*contactos*) and the bridging (*pontes*), not the violence; the shipments (*envios*) and the exchanges (*trocas*), not the conquests; the collection (*recolhas*) and the arrival of the works (*o chegar das obras*), not the result of the lootings. When mentioning the stay of Vasco da Gama's warship in India, Dias notes it "didn't result in any construction" (1998, 10). Perhaps Gama was too busy setting vessels and buildings on fire. Dias establishes an entire narrative of "interchanging" of art works and precious objects or "diplomatic offerings" that were transported "in the chambers of the ships"—so much so that they resembled "royal chambers" (18). Besides being loaded with "gifts," those very same ships were full of other cargo never acknowledged throughout the two volumes—enslaved people. Moreover, silver



and gold objects are referenced with no acknowledgement of the violence that produced them, be it slave labor or extractivism.

In the second volume, focused on the “Atlantic space,” a section of more than two hundred pages dedicated to Brazil effectively confirms the terms of Brazilian independence, determined by a white oligarchy willing to preserve, at least at the beginning, as much as it could of its European legacy that could also attest to its whiteness. The words “discovery” and “first contacts” (Dias 1999, 306) are used to exhaustion, as in a prayer that must be repeated to become truth. There is even a chapter entitled: “Branços, Pretos [sic] e Mulatos na Criação de uma Arte Tricontinental” (Whites, Negroes, and Mulattos in the Creation of a Tricontinental Art) (321), using the word *pretos* with no mention of its particular genealogy and racist overtones. *Cidade Velha* occupies six pages, but, as in the competition *Sete Maravilhas*, no mention whatsoever is made of its crucial role in the Atlantic slave trade (112–18).

It is a true feat to elaborate on the topic of colonial heritage so extensively, while expunging the one thing that constructed it. Perhaps this explains the lack of a conclusion and/or thesis—but the lack thereof is arguably a thesis in itself. A thesis that consists of a list of places, monuments, and objects indeed attests a Portuguese “art history in the world” to a particular aesthetics, but does not do so without violence. By not acknowledging the colonial violence, the oeuvre inevitably adds to it; its aesthetics of erasure is violent in and of itself. Ten years later, Pedro Dias (2008) repeated the feat, with the newspaper *Público* promoting an expanded, fifteen-volume version of *História da arte portuguesa no mundo*, now available to an even wider audience. There was a slight mutation in the title—*Arte de Portugal no mundo* (The Art of Portugal in the World)—but the rhetoric remained.

By producing what Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1997, 29) called a “bundle of silences” in the moments of “assembly,” “retrieval,” and “retrospective,”<sup>30</sup> Dias’s oeuvre becomes part of the same hegemonic historiography, with its inability to analyze the empire in a broader context and its propensity for an overidentification with its topic.<sup>31</sup> Such inability derives from the weight of an ideological historiography stimulated by the *Estado Novo*, which dictated the prevalence of provincial and exceptionalist readings of the empire. That such an ideological approach continues to endure long after the end of the dictatorship owes a great deal to the *Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses*.<sup>32</sup> Its extinction in 2002 and a concomitant shift in the related scholarship from French to Anglo-American influences coincided with the emergence



Fig. 4. The Empire in a Box: *Património de origem portuguesa*, edited by José Mattoso (Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 2010–11)

of other readings, namely in the works of Francisco Bethencourt around the same time and under the same editorial umbrella as Dias’s—the *Círculo de Leitores*, intended for a large audience and wide circulation.<sup>33</sup>

Referring to studies on twentieth-century Portuguese architectural heritage in Africa by architects and historians of architecture José Manuel Fernandes and Ana Tostões, Nuno Domingos noted how, through the “aestheticization of history,” heritage “became a tale of empire” (2016, 8). Elsewhere, Domingos also stresses the role of an uncritical discourse on heritage that ends up naturalizing colonialism and reifying the grand narrative

on Portuguese colonial rule (2015, 251–52). This naturalization is precisely what Dias’s oeuvre accomplishes overall. Dias’s *História da arte portuguesa no mundo* is a clear product of the specificities and even inabilities of art history in Portugal, demonstrating how it is shaped by the weight of architects and historians alike. As keepers of an “Authorized Heritage Discourse” (AHD), according to their own ideological agenda, they tend to focus more on chronology and on formal and aesthetic features and less on the fact that such heritage is constructed, as Laurajane Smith has pointed out, through a continuous process of (colonial) conflict, being a “struggle over power” (2006, 281; see also Smith 2012). It is as if both the object and the exercise of art history existed outside of power relations, specifically those forged by colonialism and its legacies. But heritage is never about aesthetics (even when it is), but about how power has been expressed and negotiated, then and now.

### The Empire in a Box: Heritage as Miniaturization

The most recent attempt to frame and reconceptualize this heritage is a monumental three-volume work published in 2010, *Património de origem portuguesa no mundo*.<sup>34</sup> The work took three years to produce and was edited by historian José



Fig. 5. *Património de origem portuguesa no mundo*, vol. 1: América do Sul, edited by Renata Melchior Araújo

Mattoso and commissioned by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's then-president, Rui Vilar. In its atlas-like form, it systematizes knowledge related to "Portuguese heritage around the world," focusing on architecture and urbanism and listing it by region and in alphabetical order. It includes 2,300 buildings and about 530 sites—churches, fortresses, prisons, warehouses, manors, palaces, private houses, large residential buildings, hotels, banks, high schools, cinemas, post offices, factories, gardens, streets, and squares—in Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, São Tomé, Cabo Verde, Timor, and India; in addition to Uruguay, Sri Lanka, Macau, Indonesia, Ethiopia, and Tanzania. Its publication was the corollary of previous actions promoted by the Gulbenkian Foundation, from the support it gave to the events previously discussed here—the Jornadas Luso-Brasileiras and the Congresso do Património Construído Luso no Mundo—to the restoration of buildings and monuments, beginning shortly after the foundation's inception in 1956.<sup>35</sup> *Património* is therefore partially a showcase of Gulbenkian's actions and its role in the "making" of such heritage.

In the general introduction to the work, Mattoso explains that the choice of the inventory model was deliberate, but that each volume is preceded by a study

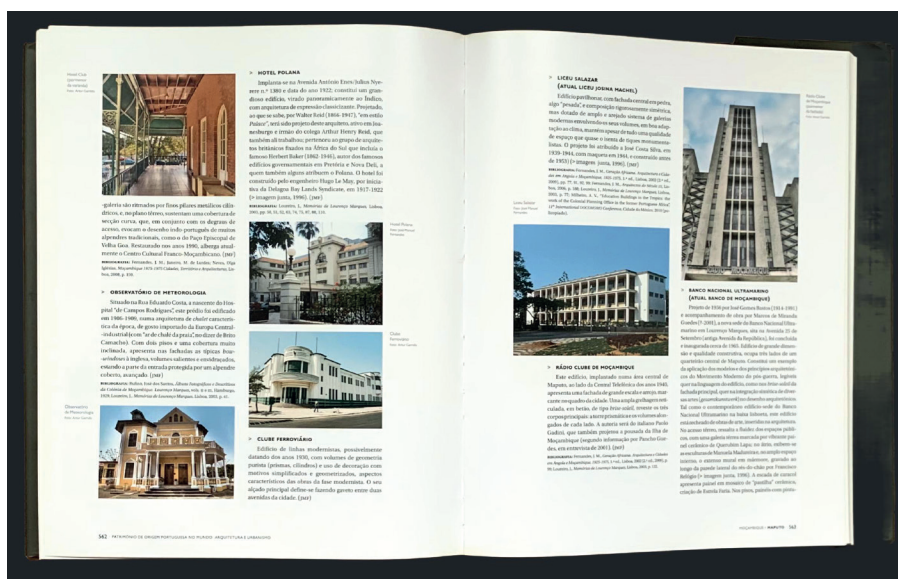


Fig. 6. *Património de origem portuguesa no mundo*, vol. 2: África, Mar Vermelho e Golfo Pérsico, edited by José Manuel Fernandes and Filipe Themudo Barata

in which the historical and cultural issues pertaining to each case are considered, framed, and given meaning, placing the objects within a geographic, diachronic, and civilizational context (Mattoso 2010, 1:15–16). Mattoso also stresses that there was no intention to produce “new research” but only to present a “state of the art” (15), systematizing information dispersed in specialized publications. The goal was to create a corpus and an object of study—that of the “heritage of Portuguese origin” as the result of an “encounter of cultures” (15). This discourse translates, even if unintentionally, the same orthodox position in regards to the history of the Portuguese empire and its heritage as described above. It is the same orthodoxy that leads Mattoso to advise against value judgments about the past, namely in historical research (12), so as not to project present contingencies onto the past (13). Mattoso seems to disregard that history is always a construction of the past in the present, and that referring to such heritage as a product of a “meeting of cultures,” as he does—using a contemporary conceptual framework—is also anachronistic on its own terms. Heritage (as history), as Rodney Harrison points out, is “always chosen, recreated and renegotiated in the present” (2013, 169).

The first volume of *Património* is dedicated to South America and coordinated by architect Renata Malcher Araújo, with academic contributions from Portugal and Brazil. It is divided in four sub-areas, which correspond, roughly, to the main stages of Portuguese colonization, starting on the coast (“A costa”), advancing south (“O sul”), then entering the hinterland (“O sertão”) and, finally, the Amazonian region (“A selva”). Some of the places included that preserve a more extensive and significant set of heritage are Diamantina and Ouro Preto, in the state of Minas Gerais; Salvador, in Bahia; as well as Belém, Goiás, and Natal. The chronology is focused on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century buildings based on metropolitan models, and successively linked to the sugar, gold, and diamond cycles in a historical period marked by the exploitation of slave labor.

The second volume of the set is divided in two parts: one devoted to Northern Africa, the Persian Gulf, and the Red Sea (coordinated by Filipe Themudo Barata) and the other dedicated to Sub-Saharan Africa, which includes Cabo Verde, the Gulf of Guinea, São Tomé, Angola, Mozambique, and East Africa (coordinated by José Manuel Fernandes). Predominant places include warehouses and fortresses on the coast to serve the “India Run” (Carreira das Índias) and the slave traffic. Inland presence became more common later on, starting in the nineteenth century, with the construction of military structures in river valleys and structures for the exploration of raw materials. The third volume, dedicated to Asia and under the coordination of Walter Rossa, is mostly focused on the heritage of the State of India and related to the Portuguese Patronage of the East, including Sri Lanka, Bengal, Macau, Nagasaki, and Timor.

The project reveals different sensibilities towards Portuguese imperial heritage, not only throughout the oeuvre, but also in the public presentation of the book and in a 2011 conference that followed. For the president of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, this historical heritage is “one of the perennial testimonies of the passage across the globe by the Portuguese, the fingerprint of the authors of the first globalization” (Rolim 2010; original emphasis), echoing the discourses given just a year before by the sponsors of the Sete Maravilhas. Mattoso, on the other hand, in contrast to his introductory text to the oeuvre, emphasized in the newspaper *Público* that realism “rejects fantasies and illusions” and that remembering such heritage “in the midst of a financial and economic crisis [of 2010–15]” can “serve as a stimulus” to “overcome yet another difficult step in our history.” Surprisingly, he concluded that





Fig. 7. *Património de origem portuguesa no mundo*, vol. 3: Ásia e Oceania, edited by Walter Rossa

we should not, however, forget a fundamental difference: in the past, overcoming the European crisis took place, to a large extent, at the expense of the life and work of thousands and thousands of slaves: today, it can only be achieved through effort, solidarity, and the intelligence of a free citizenship, conscious of human rights. (Coelho 2011)

Mattoso's ambiguous discourse finds echo in the distinct positions of the coordinators of the three volumes, revealing a certain conceptual unease. For Filipe Themudo Barata, the heritage of Portuguese origin “is that which would serve the strategic, colonial interests of the Portuguese empire” (Coelho 2011); Fernandes, on the other hand, prefers the term “matrix” because the Portuguese presence or influence was spatially and chronologically diverse and expressed in a variety of typologies and styles (Coelho 2011). In his introduction to the second volume, Barata (2010, 23–33) does not question the term, and neither does co-editor Fernandes, who asserts the “specificity” of such heritage in terms of implantation, structural feature, urbanism, scale, and the use of accessory materials (Fernandes 2010, 185). On the other hand, Araújo (2010, 20–45), in her introduction to the first volume, stresses she uses the term “heritage of Portuguese

origin” because “it is part of the Portuguese cultural heritage in the broad sense. . . . Not because the Portuguese have bequeathed it to other cultures, but because they share it and carry it as their own cultural baggage” (23). Of all four authors, Rossa is the most critical of the term, proposing “influence” instead of “origin,” elaborating that “in the case of Asia, if one used the concept of origin, it would have to considerably reduce the number of items” (Coelho 2011). In his introduction to the third volume Rossa (2010, 20-61) implies that the concept of “influence” is less restrictive, which is crucial in the case of Asia due to the “polysemic” way in which this heritage manifests (21). The diversity of colonization, including through religion, the state, miscegenation, and individual adventurers, makes it difficult to speak of origin: “the border between what can be considered to be of origin is ambiguous. . . . What should count? The order? The authorship? The program? The formal expression?” (59).<sup>36</sup> Rossa ventures further to define heritage as “not history, but something that the present witnesses,” entailing not only “contextualization,” but also “questioning” (23).

The diverse sensibilities expressed in the respective introductions reflect different stances toward Portuguese colonial heritage, but throughout the oeuvre it seems consensual that heritage is less about historical ownership and more about something that can only be understood as “shared.” Two years later, in 2012, the launching of an interactive public portal associated with the project, the HPIP Portal (*História do Património de Influência Portuguesa*; History of the Heritage of Portuguese Influence, [www.hpip.org](http://www.hpip.org)) translated what Rossa had already proposed in *Património*, consolidating yet another shift in the narrative: from *origin* to *influence*. Conceived as complementary to the volumes and as a perpetual “work in progress,” this bilingual portal enables various forms of research: by authorship, by chronology, by location, or by name. The heritage inventoried in the portal, ranging from 1415 to 1999, is open to collaborations, which means that any user can add text, send photos, or make corrections (which are subsequently assessed by the portal’s managers, the Universities of Coimbra, Évora, Técnica, and Nova de Lisboa) (Lopes 2012). The portal therefore democratizes the production of knowledge by enabling this repository of heritage to be accessible worldwide and open to updates.

Since the publication of the three volumes of *Património* in 2010 and of the portal, an international PhD program was launched at the University of Coimbra in collaboration with several universities from the ex-colonies, including Universidade Federal Fluminense (Brazil) and Universidade Eduardo Mondlane



(Mozambique). Like *Património*, the program is partnered with institutions such as Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and UNESCO, and it has recently been designated as the “Cátedra UNESCO em Diálogo Intercultural em Patrimónios de Influência Portuguesa” (UNESCO Chair in Intercultural Dialogue in Heritage of Portuguese Influence). Its goal is to “contribute to the construction of alternative views to the hegemonic agendas of globalization” (“Apresentação” 2016). The PhD program seems to be the corollary of previous efforts promoted by the university, including two meetings of WHPO (World Heritage of Portuguese Origin network), the second of which culminated in the (rather slippery) *Declaration of Coimbra*.<sup>37</sup> Named *Patrimónios de Influência Portuguesa* (Heritages of Portuguese Influence), the PhD program expresses yet another change in the lexicon: besides the switch from origin to influence with the launching of the *Património* portal, now “heritage” becomes “heritages,” in the plural. In 2015, Rossa and Margarida Calafate Ribeiro justified these shifts in a book with the same title as the PhD program:

There is no heritage with a single origin. . . . Everything depends on the context from which the gaze falls, with Portuguese influence being the common operator that, using history, organizes and disciplines the limits, without, however, constraining them. Influence at different levels and heights of interculturality: formal and informal, administrative or spiritual, commercial or migratory, colonial and postcolonial. . . . The Portuguese influence overflows in space and time the formal limits of the empire’s successive geopolitical configurations, producing intense and diffuse transculturalities, celebrated and hidden, ostensible and sensitive, that postcolonialism fragmentally absorbs. (Rossa and Ribeiro 2015, 20–21)

In the same volume, Renata Malcher Araújo (2015), the editor of the volume dedicated to South America in the three-volume *Património*, distinguishes between the concepts of influence, origin, and matrix, signaling the conceptual and political discussions that animated the years 2010 to 2015. These discussions are imprinted on *Património*, the online portal, and the PhD program and Araújo sums them up. The title of the three-volume set began as *Património português no mundo* (Portuguese Heritage in the World), which ultimately became *Património de origem portuguesa no mundo* (Heritage of Portuguese Origin in the World). The published English translation, however, carries the title *Portuguese Heritage around the World*.<sup>38</sup> The discussion of the database after editing the volumes resulted

in the name *Patrimónios de Influência Portuguesa* (Heritages of Portuguese Influence), the same as the PhD program at the University of Coimbra (Araújo 2015, 58). Araújo further explains that, in the Gulbenkian project, both “matrix” and “origin” refer to the chronologies in which the heritage from different parts of the world was or is linked to Portugal, as the project relied mainly on a chronological framework. Both words imply a Portuguese “lineage.” The idea of origin implies the existence of a formal lineage that seeks to internationally affirm a particular geography and its diffusion, claiming it as identity. Because matrix is related to the diffusion of forms, the formalist hierarchy does not consider the countless exchanges, negotiations, and transformations that inform heritage. Influence, in turn, is more fluid, but ambiguous enough to risk sublimating or whitewashing the violence of colonization. Still, according to Araújo, influence enables the possibility to think about the resistances and cultural hybridizations. However coercive the “methods of influence” may be, its outcomes are not entirely predictable and often result from elected or imposed reciprocal processes (2015, 57–59).

The concept of “influence” took hold, and Rossa (2015) published an article for a wider audience in the newspaper *Público* the same year, emphasizing precisely this formulation. At the same time, he suggested that, because this heritage does not belong to Portugal, its destruction must be accepted and entered into the (colonial) equation. Rossa’s position seems to insinuate that the very process of “ruination” and its study as actual “ruin,” as Ana Laura Stoler (2013, 1–37) noted, opens up the possibility of another history of the Portuguese empire and, concomitantly, of uncovering, understanding, and perhaps overcoming its afterlives.

Such stance entails more than changing the noun when the problem is the adjective (not insignificantly, the PhD program is now known by its nickname, *Patrimónios*). It also entails refusing the impulse to miniaturize the empire for consumption—be it in a luxury box as in *Património de origem portuguesa* or with a click as in the digital portal *Património de Influência Portuguesa*—a process that has traumatic contours, in which repetition and wide circulation are key.

### **Conclusion: Heritage as Colonial History of the Present**

In this article, I have unfolded a genealogy intended to track down “afterlives” (Stoler 2016) of the Portuguese empire, i.e., the endurance, reproduction, and consumption of an imperial episteme and its complex at work in the present.

Departing from the analysis of the Sete Maravilhas competition (heritage as entertainment), I identify the first efforts to resuscitate this heritage through the conceptual lens of the term “Património luso no mundo” in the Jornadas Luso-Brasileiras do Património and the Primeiro Congresso de Património Construído Luso no Mundo in the 1980s (heritage as erasure of colonialism); the aestheticization performed by art history in *História da arte portuguesa no mundo* in the 1990s (heritage as aestheticization); and the forging of *Património de origem portuguesa* and its dilution into *influence* in the form of high-fashioned objects in the 2000s and 2010s (heritage as miniaturization of the empire). Furthermore, I show that this heritage, like the writing of history, has more to do with the present than with the past. Indeed, the objects I analyzed here frequently responded to the sociopolitical anxieties of their respective presents: the “loss” of the empire (1974–75) and the entrance into the European Union (1986); the incapacity of pursuing an effective neocolonial politics through CPLP (1994), or Lusofonia, and the handover of Macau (1999); and the financial crisis (2010–15).

In tracing this genealogy, I aim to shed light on the failed attempts to find a proper word with which to label Portuguese colonial heritage around the world. This unsettling process expresses what Stoler (2011) designates as “colonial aphasia,” that is, “a dismembering, a difficulty speaking, a difficulty generating a vocabulary that associates appropriate words and concepts with appropriate things” (25). This “colonial aphasia” manifests in a difficulty of understanding the relevance of known and spoken truths that are systematically silenced and/or made invisible. For Stoler, this is not a problem of memory, nor a product of amnesia or ignorance, but, very often, of “active occlusion of knowledge” (2011, 25).

After all, the “heritage(s) of Portuguese influence” is not an ensemble of sites and buildings, as the objects analyzed here propose in their erasure, aestheticization, and/or miniaturization of the empire. Rather, it is what has occurred, and still occurs, at the sites themselves. Further, it is who decides which monuments are worth preserving and for whom. Indeed, to reproblematicize this heritage, to make the problem problematic, academics must question as well who has been determining it to be Portuguese and, for that matter, that people need to know about it today and in what terms. Who continues producing knowledge about this heritage and who still profits from it? How is this knowledge being produced? To what end?

In this regard, I implicitly argue that a “coloniality of seeing” sustains the “coloniality of knowledge,” and that the objects I analyze here materialize this

colonial equation; they are situated at the very heart of the process of knowledge production and accumulation fundamental to the colonial project.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, colonialism inaugurated an epistemological tradition still in place today, molded by image-making and image-reading: images do not illustrate arguments; they are themselves the colonial argument. Sixteenth-century atlases and maps, with their “view from nowhere,” first inaugurated a colonial imagination that established a “proto-orientalist reasoning,” which obfuscated its very locus of enunciation—the West (Mignolo 1995, 327–29). This colonial imagination was then fully rationalized in the Enlightenment, namely through the *Encyclopédia* of Diderot and d’Alembert and nineteenth-century scientific atlases, as a new, vision-based scientific reasoning aimed at standardizing objects, preserving the ephemeral, and distributing the inaccessible, in order to train the “expert’s eye” (Daston and Galison 1992, 85) and help built scientific “objectivity” (Daston and Galison 2010). Twentieth-century colonial photographic albums provide yet another layer to this genealogy of “technologies of colonial rule” (Stoler 2002). These technologies, which also include colonial architecture, monuments, and archives, as well as the scientific disciplines that flourished under the domain of colonial institutions, were essential to the construction and narration of empires and function as idealizations, redemptions, and purifications of the violent history of colonialism.

Therefore, colonial domination relied on a long lineage of objects, which the objects analyzed here belong to and speak to, which help convey a “consolidated vision” (Said 1994) and a particular way of “imagining”—by way of “serialization.” This “imagining” endured beyond the end of colonialism and permeated not only the postcolonial state (Anderson 2006), but most importantly knowledge production to which the objects analyzed in this article attest: they compile, serialize, and visualize the Portuguese empire through “its” heritage spread across the world. As such, the objects studied here are not only key players in the narration and memorialization of the nation; most significantly, through the process of miniaturization of the empire and its portability in luxurious bindings, they are part of a whole “visual economy” (Poole 1997, 3–12). This economy entails the spatial and temporal flow of colonial discourses and images and recreates the past in the present.

Invested with a documental power and in the name of “historical truth” and “objectivity,” these memorialist pieces, in their format, reproduction, and massification, paradoxically serve one purpose: to politically and ideologically eternalize a colonial epistemicide and, through this process, fabricate ways of

eternalizing it in the present. In so doing, these objects manufacture a postcolonial identity dependent upon an imperial “visuality” (Mirzoeff 2011) that feeds on the idea of an alleged “Portuguese world” and its “wonders,” enabling the enduring of the Portuguese-world complex, an “imperial complex” first forged within the Portuguese World Exposition (1940), in the present. Along with other books that have focused on colonial and imperial visibility, namely photography, these pieces perpetuate the spell of the empire they often seek to unpack, reframe, or resituate. In doing so, they nostalgically reverberate an imperial episteme that ends up becoming a prosthetic substitute for a politically repressed absence. As I have also tried to demonstrate, this episteme, in turn, can reconstitute its imperial subjects and their subjectivity at any point in time.

Because of this, the objects analyzed here are part of the colonial histories of the present. As academics, we need to start questioning the (colonial) ontology of our own work and forge new ways of producing knowledge on this heritage without trying to control the narrative or stop time through old conceptual frames. Heritage is more than inheritance. It is the very experience of movement—i.e., time itself. Rather than preserving and studying heritage as such, academics should also study this movement, what has happened to it over time: the ruination, devastation, and even its (iconoclastic) destruction. Because the Portuguese empire lives on in complex ways, this destruction is part of history as well (though it has not yet touched historiography, which, a bit naively, still believes in the untouchability of heritage). In studying this heritage, it is not so much a history that is needed, but rather a phenomenology that can unleash the very *experience* of such heritage. Only in this way will we be able to give shape to another history, redeeming history and its images from historiography and historians.

## NOTES

1. I would like to acknowledge the invaluable input of the reviewer, of editor Anna Klobucka, and of João Mário Grilo.
2. The seven wonders of the ancient world were the Pyramid of Giza, the Colossus of Rhodes, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Lighthouse of Alexandria, the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, the Statue of Zeus at Olympia, and the Temple of Artemis, all located in the Mediterranean basin.
3. People from across the world chose from 21 monuments narrowed down from an original list of 177. The new seven wonders are the Great Wall of China, the city of Petra in Jordan, the Inca city of Machu Picchu in Peru, the Mayan pyramid of Chichen Itza in Mexico, the Taj Mahal in India, the Coliseum in Rome, Italy, and the statue of Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Two other international competitions followed, the New Seven Wonders of Nature and the New Seven Urban Wonders. See <https://about.new7wonders.com/>.
4. 793 monuments were filtered down to 77 by experts, and then further down to a final list of 21 by an advisory board from the University of Évora. Portugal's Seven Wonders are now the Tower of Belém, the Monastery of Jerónimos, the Guimarães Castle, the Monastery of Batalha, the Monastery of Alcobaça, the Pena Palace, and the Óbidos Castle. See <https://projetos.7maravilhas.pt/>.
5. This competition received by far the most attention from the public and was strikingly similar to the contest to elect the most Portuguese village held in 1938 by the Estado Novo, which culminated in the election of the village of Monsanto, to this day still known by that label.
6. Ferro coined this term in his celebrated 1939 speech, "Politics of the Spirit," delivered before Salazar in order to establish his own agenda. In 1943, taking stock of his ten years at the head of the SNP's cultural policies, Ferro declared that he hated "modernism," preferring the term "vanguardism" to characterize his "Politics of the Spirit." However, this vanguardism was to be divorced from internationalism through the "work of nationalization." In this way, Ferro laid the foundations for a nationalist avant-garde based on a return to tradition and a "revival of folk art" (Ferro 1943, 17–18). For Ferro's role in this process, see Acciaiuoli (2013).
7. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from Portuguese are mine.
8. See the list of the contest's finalists and winners at <https://projetos.7maravilhas.pt/portfolio-items/7-maravilhas-de-origem-portuguesa-no-mundo/#Vencedores-Mundo>.
9. Decolonial authors have shown that coloniality is constitutive of modernity and described how power is structured within it. There is no modernity without the production and reproduction of coloniality, which, as Walter Dignolo pointed out, is the "dark side of modernity". See, among others, Dignolo (1995) and Quijano (1992).

10. This open letter was signed by 802 people, among them historians Arlindo Manuel Caldeira (the only Portuguese historian who signed), Mariana P. Candido, Michel Cahen, Christine Chivallon, Myriam Cottias, Hebe Mattos, Maurice Jackson, Hendrik Kraay, Jane Landers, and Jean-Marc Masseaut.

11. Drawing from Nietzsche, Foucault's genealogy is a form of "effective" history without recourse to a chronological interpretation of events. Genealogy is the history of knowledge that is to be determined. In other words, it uses the forms that have escaped the institutionalization of knowledge in various cultural and social structures without reinterpreting, discovering, or emphasizing new events in order to discover hidden meanings that have been neglected by history. Instead, genealogy is an attempt to reproblematicize the event, to make the problem problematic, not to find a truer history: "the final trait of effective history is its affirmation of knowledge as perspective" (Foucault 1984, 90).

12. For Said (1994, 62–189), this manifested in nineteenth-century literature at the height of empire. I argue here that this operation is still in place today through academic works, in particular those aimed at wider audiences.

13. Anderson's main thesis is that communities are distinguished not by being false or authentic, but by the way or style in which they are imagined. Imagination implies creation rather than mere invention, which entails seeing the nation as a cultural artifact in its own right, narrated by other cultural artifacts that endow the nation with a sense of tangible reality ([1983] 2010).

14. Tony Bennett (2004) has explored the ways in which expositions from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries produced an "exhibitionary complex" aimed at a "specular dominance of totality" that "sought to make the whole world, past and present, metonymically available in the assemblages of objects and people [it] brought together . . . to lay them before a controlling vision." Furthermore, this exhibitionary complex constituted a gaze that placed the visitors "on the side of power" and by doing so visitors interiorized the idealized view of colonial-fascist power (122).

15. For a thorough analysis of Benjamin's aestheticization of politics see Jay (1992).

16. The conference, which in effect was a series of events, took place between July and November of 1940, in Lisbon, Porto, and Coimbra, with the participation of many Portuguese and foreign historians; its proceedings were published in nineteen volumes. See *Congresso do Mundo Português*, 19 vols. (Lisbon: Comissão Executiva dos Centenários, 1940).

17. Mirzoeff (2011) establishes three complexes within "visuality": the "Plantation complex" (1660–1860), the "Imperial complex" (1860–1945), and the "Military-Industrial complex" (1945–present).

18. Lourenço put it bluntly: "Salazar's mythology of ourselves, proven to be untrue in practice, has triumphed at a symbolic level. We can continue to be the *same* although we are now *different*. Once again the manipulation of discourse saves us an examination of our conscience" (1983, 20; original emphases).



19. The decree that created the Comissão states: “500 years . . . have passed since some of the most important discoveries, with special emphasis on the rounding of the Cape of Good Hope (1487), the arrival in India (1498) and the discovery of Brazil (1500). . . . The scientific character, careful preparation and firm definition of goals and their pursuit deserve to be remembered as a project of mobilization on a nation-wide scale by the Portuguese of today, who can draw valuable lessons from the values and determination that enabled reaching such vast and great goals.” Decree 391/86, November 22, 1986. <https://dre.tretas.org/dre/8391/decreto-lei-391-86-de-22-de-novembro>.

20. I am alluding to the work of Antonio Gramsci (1971), who defined hegemony as the cultural and ideological means whereby the dominant groups in society, including, fundamentally but not exclusively, the ruling class, maintain their dominance by securing the “spontaneous consent” of subordinate groups, including the working class. This objective is achieved through the work of “organic intellectuals” and it entails a negotiated construction of a political and ideological consensus, which incorporates both dominant and dominated groups.

21. This law expanded the tasks of the Direção-Geral de Obras Públicas e Comunicações (General Directorate of Public Works and Communications) from architecture and urbanism to covering “monuments of national interest.” Thus, the Directorate would be responsible for the inventory, classification, conservation, and restoration of Portuguese monuments erected overseas (Maris 2016, 175–98). See also *Diário do Governo* no. 172/1958, Série I (August 7, 1958), <https://dre.pt/web/guest/pesquisa/-/search/351913/details/normal?q=41787>.

22. I thank the anonymous reviewer of this article for calling my attention to the fact that the Roberto Marinho Foundation publicized its crucial role in the preservation of heritage in Brazil, albeit mostly by using public funding.

23. Brandão expands on this: “Never again will Portugal be able to speak, in an exclusive way, of its capacity to build, to make heritage, as never again can Brazil consider the heritage built within its borders only its own. . . . The current geographical coordinates of the two countries are a hoax when we try to understand and study their cultural past. It is enough to determine that the Portuguese-Brazilian cultural framework goes with Martins Afonso de Souza to India and accompanies Tomé de Souza from Portugal and India to Brazil; it reaches Brazil and Angola with Salvador Correia de Sá. This cultural past lives in those segregated people who traveled, from Monomotapa, from Goa, from Moluccas to Brazil, or in João Ramalho siring hundreds of children in the plateaus of São Paulo. A great cultural blending overtook the world all over the place where Portuguese culture crossed. . . . The entire world community changed with this amazing cultural miscegenation of which our two countries are today a product and the outcome” (Brandão 1984, 200).

24. The titles in English here are as translated in the program: “A Question of Genetics, a Question of Soul” (Márcio Viana), “Morphology of the Lusitanian Town” (Maria João Madeira Rodrigues), “Defense and Praise of a Safeguarding Attitude about the Calouste Gulbenkian

Foundation's Basic Contribution towards the Protection of the Patrimony Built by the Portuguese in the World" (João Campos), "The ICOMOS, the Letter of Venice and the Lusitanian Built Patrimony in the World" (Sérgio Infante), "The Portuguese Route" (Rogério Lobo), "The Cultural Heritage: Portugal and the Cultural Patrimony's Protection in the New Portuguese Speaking Countries" (Francisco Keil do Amaral), "Goa, Malaca and Ormuz or 6 Reasons for Defending the Portuguese Built Patrimony in the World" (Eduardo Kol de Carvalho), "Reflections on the Defense and Conservation of the Patrimony Built by the Portuguese in the Non-European World or Variations about an Ambition" (Carlos Antero Figueiredo), "There Is Interbreeding in Every Culture [*todas as culturas se amestizam*]" (Michel Parent), "Lusitanian Pillories in the World" (Vasco Salema). Program of the 1.º Congresso do Património Construído Luso no Mundo, Faculdade de Arquitectura de Lisboa, March 23–27, 1987.

25. Original English translation in the catalogue.

26. The two events seem to have contributed to the autonomy of architecture from Lisbon's Fine Arts School, as a more technical discipline in need of a school of its own, separated from painting and sculpture. Concomitantly, at the time, Portuguese art history was also working towards its establishment as a discipline independent from history departments.

27. The invention of Lusofonia, according to Alfredo Margarido, was enabled by collective amnesia in relation to the violence that had been exerted on the vast majority of those who speak Portuguese in the world today (2000, 6).

28. Eduardo Lourenço (1999) has noted that Lusofonia fills an imaginary space of imperial nostalgia, but it can only be lived as a "multipolar space" (164) within which each subject must open up and listen to the other, without any pretensions of "communion or universalism" (188): an "old and mythical common house of all and of no one" (192).

29. "To commemorate the historical significance of the Portuguese Discoveries in the final decades of the fifteenth century, which culminated in the first sea voyage to India made by Vasco da Gama in 1498, and the commemoration of the arrival of Pedro Álvares Cabral in Brazil in 1500. The thematic aspect of EXPO'98 was nevertheless not merely limited to the aforementioned historical commemoration . . . the aim of which was to place the oceans, their diversity and essential role in the equilibrium of the planet, at the center of the attention of the international community. . . . A strictly historical approach was therefore eschewed in favor of an orientation that approached the theme in terms of its future and related it to science, politics, technology, and art" (*Relatório* 1999, 18).

30. Trouillot explains: "Silences enter the process of historical production at four crucial moments: the moment of fact creation (the making of *sources*); the moment of fact assembly (the making of *archives*); the moment of fact retrieval (the making of *narratives*); and the moments of retrospective significance (the making of *history* in the final instance)" (1997, 29; original emphases).

31. For a recent discussion on Portuguese imperial historiography see Ferreira (2016). For a revision of the bibliography on the empire, see Curto (2015).

32. In 2003, Francisco Bethencourt opined that in the “game of compartmentalized and routine studies, reproduced in an environment of university libraries of an appalling poverty, numbed by individual and group quarrels without any intellectual interest, historiography is the poor relative of the creative movement of deconstruction of the imperial memory” (2003, 77).

33. See Bethencourt and Chaudhuri (1998). Later contributions include those of Diogo Ramada Curto (2007, with Francisco Bethencourt) and Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo (2010), not to mention Brazilian scholars such as Luiz Felipe Alencastro (2000), João José Reis (1993; 2015), Roquinaldo Ferreira (2012), and Mariana P. Cândido (2013). These new developments, however, have rarely resonated outside of academia and Brazilian historiographical contributions have had almost no echo in Portugal.

34. This work was published in English as *Portuguese Heritage around the World*.

35. These monuments include the Fort of Príncipe da Beira, in Rondônia (Brazil); the House of Nacarelo, in Colonia del Sacramento (Uruguay); the Fortress of Arzila and the Portuguese cathedral of Safim (Morocco); the Fort of São João Batista de Ajudá (Benin); the Fort of Jesus, in Mombasa (Kenya); the Fort of Quíloa (Tanzania); the Fortresses of Hormuz and Qeshm (Iran); the Church of the Rosary in Dhaka (Bangladesh); the Portuguese Feitoria de Ayutthaya (Thailand); and the Church of São Paulo in Malacca (Malaysia). There were also interventions to preserve cultural assets in museums, and dedicated to the inventory and classification of archives (Maris 2016, 167–75).

36. This leads Rossa to even question the widespread term “Indo-Portuguese,” which is perceived as limited when comparing it with other taxonomies—northern, Goan, Malabar (2010, 55–56).

37. In 2006, the University of Coimbra hosted the first international meeting of WHPO, promoted by the Portuguese National Commission of UNESCO, the IGESPAR (Institute for Heritage Management), and the Portuguese Committee of ICOMOS, which established principles of conservation. In the 2010 meeting, WHPO formulated its goals in the *Declaration of Coimbra*, signed by dozens of conservation experts and representatives of twenty-five countries. The signing ceremony was presided over by the UC rector, the President of Portugal, and representatives of the Portuguese government. For more details, see Amendoeira and Aguiar (2015).

38. José Mattoso, ed., *Portuguese Heritage around the World*, 3 vols. (Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 2010–12).

39. The coloniality of seeing is an optical unconscious that consists of a series of superpositions, derivations, and hierarchical recombinations, which interconnect, in their discontinuity, the fifteenth century with the twenty-first, the sixteenth with the nineteenth, and so on (Barriandos 2011). The coloniality of knowledge is the ongoing colonial access to knowledge and its distribution, production, and reproduction; a process that excludes and occludes other epistemes and disregards other ways of knowing and producing knowledge (Mignolo 1995).

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INÊS BELEZA BARREIROS is a cultural and art historian interested in the migration of images across time and space and the ways in which the colonality of seeing sustains the colonality of knowledge. She is an integrated researcher at ICNOVA, FCSH-UNL, and editor of *La Rampa—Art, Life and Beyond*, and she has been working in documentary films that explore the relationship of cinema with other arts, such as architecture, landscape, and painting. She holds a PhD in Media, Culture and Communication from New York University, an MA in Contemporary Art History from FCSH-UNL, and a BA in History and Art History from Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa. Among several articles and book chapters, she is the author of "*Sob o olhar de deuses sem vergonha*": *Cultura visual e paisagens contemporâneas* (2009).