Colonial, anticolonial and post-colonial museums, collections and exhibitions: introductory note

Museus, coleções e exposições, coloniais, anticoloniais e pós-coloniais: nota introdutória

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The encounter of audiences with collections and exhibitions, in a given space, has a long and complex history (Bennett, 1995). This encounter constitutes a hermeneutical challenge, which changes every now and again, according to the needs of the moment and the objectives of each society and culture. The connection of objects and audiences, in a given time and context, is both complex and fluctuating. Museums, collections and exhibitions project representations of the world and narratives of the life of human communities, which conform to the standards of the most diverse curators, which sometimes have antagonistic views. Museums, collections and exhibitions are always regulated by political and programmatic objectives, and for that reason, they are open to multiple interpretations. Either the initiative of national states, revolutionary forces, or even counter-revolutionary movements, supporting established regimes, or on the contrary, attempting to alter the established order, museums, collections and exhibitions observe regimes of truth, that is, a general policy that elects certain discourses and makes they work as true (Foucault, 1980). Such a regime constitutes the condition for the possibility of the representations that a given community makes of itself and its time, as well as it formulates possibilities of meaning for the understanding of what is human. Audiences are not an abstract entity, and are naturally composed of people who have objective social and economic conditions of life; they do not exist a priori, but are the result of learning, reading and opportunities. To a certain extent, audiences are, as Warner (2002) points out, conditioned by the existing conflicts between interpretative ideologies and the intuitions of circulation, and it is from the controversial, provisional and infinite encounter between audiences and collections and exhibitions that Culture Audiences are made and unmade.

Museums are legitimate and legitimizing institutions for different discourses on the way memory is built, and they can play an important role in political transformations. Since they can no longer be ivory towers, they contain the possibility of destabilizing firm assumptions about the legacy of colonialism, dictatorship, genocide and war, with all

that these regimes and events involve in terms of injustice and discrimination. Museums have power, which can either be used to deconstruct established memory narratives, or to build new ones. As stated by Aldrich (2009), the challenge facing the heirs of colonial museums and collections is to stimulate and fulfil curiosity about the contemporary world, constructing bridges between collections and exhibitions and post-colonial communities, without denying or hiding the colonial conditions and historical complexity of the wonders on display.

Naturally, today more than ever, museums compete with multiple public and private *fora*, and with the endlessness of social networks spaces, for the interpretation of cultural heritage and the construction of memory (Berrett, 2012). If there are already numerous examples that allow us to trace the change from museums with encyclopaedic information worthy of princes of the renaissance and domestication of audiences, submission to visiting routines and rigid ways of seeing, to more inclusive museums, that promote active participation, open to the agency of audiences and more attentive to multiple voices and interpretations, many museums are still attached to a nation rationale, organizing themselves in order to project a homogeneous identity and limited relationships (Macdonald, 2003).

In the case of exhibitions, which are organized for predetermined time periods and which may leave memories of pacification and connection or of rupture and withdrawal, the study of the materials that survive (artefacts, catalogues, media news or posters), although unable to reproduce the experience of the exhibitions, allow the reconstruction of records of various discursive constructions. It follows that we can reflect on the articulation between the collections that exist in very specific places and the exhibitions made with them, and the aspirations, values and positioning of societies. We can even raise a series of questions that help us to think about this subject, such as the ways we choose to represent inconvenient and conflicting pasts, or how museums can write the history of the future with collections from the past.

This issue of the *Lusophone Journal of Cultural Studies* seeks to explore all these dimensions of museums, collections and exhibitions, that is, their representations, narratives and memories, when they intersect with the colonial, the anti-colonial and the post-colonial, that is, with the rescue, the denunciation and representation of subordination, and also with the legitimation of social movements. This number consists of seven thematic articles, three articles in the "Varia" section and a book review.

In the text "Looking for Mozambique in the National Museum of Ethnology, Portugal", a text framed in the project "Memories, cultures and identities: how the past weights on the present-day intercultural relations in Mozambique and Portugal" (FCT/ Aga Khan), João Sarmento and Moisés de Lemos Martins explore the presence and invisibility of Mozambique at the Museu Nacional de Etnologia (National Museum of Ethnology), Lisbon. Despite Mozambique being quite central to the creation of this museum in colonial times, today, the museum's Mozambican collection is not very significant in the museum public exhibitions. Conducting a detailed analysis of the few Mozambican objects in display, Sarmento and Martins show how important it would be to decolonize

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the museum, articulating past, present and future, moving from the indigenous to the cosmopolitan, from tradition to innovation.

Lilia Abadia presents, in "Reconfigurations of lusotropicalism in monumental museums in Portuguese-speaking countries", a reflection on the national identity discourses in a selection of museums in Brazil and Portugal. Abadia proposes three different positions, which she names monumentalities, that enunciate, with different degrees of intensity, the lusotropicalist discourse. At the Museu Histórico Nacional (National Historical Museum) in Rio de Janeiro, there is a "monumentality inspired by tradition", that is, a monumentality based on the great narratives of national identity. At the Museu Nacional de Etnologia (National Museum of Ethnology) in Lisbon, we are faced with a "hidden monumentality", that is, the denial of an imperialist origin and epistemic violence. Finally, at the Museu Afro Brasil (Afro Brazil Museum) in Sao Paulo, Lilia Abadia identifies "antimodern monumentality" as a dominant position that seeks to build a counter-hegemonic discourse.

In "Decolonizing the museum: exhibition and mediation of African assets in European museums", Maria Isabel Roque focuses on the decolonization of museums, a process that implies rethinking power relations, cultural identities, devolutions, sharing curatorship and new exhibition proposals. Thinking in particular of the Europe-Africa relationship, and of the representations and presence of Africa in European museums, the text goes through examples of policies and cultural positions in European museums, which show the durability of ethnocentrism and the persistent flaws in the contextualization of objects and narratives. Defending the inevitability of the museum's decolonization process, the text emphasizes the need to question the colonial past, accepting it, but scrutinizing it, embracing policies that promote the diversity of readings and the inclusion and advancement of dialogue between voices from various communities.

Eduardo Adolfo Lichuge, in the text "Objectification of the Chopi music in the 'First Portuguese Colonial Exhibition' (Porto, 1934)", analyses the imperial ideology of the *Estado Novo*, its political agenda and the practices of cultural representation in a specific event. In particular, it investigates how Mozambican Chope musicians, *timbila* players, and their music, were decontextualized and transformed into objects for imperial consumption during the Colonial Exhibition of Porto in the 1930s. The author shows how the senses and meanings of Chope music as a cultural practice were transformed and circumscribed to acts of folk representation through Western performative models, and their aesthetics and morality.

In the text "Former football player Arthur Friedenreich in museums in the city of Sao Paulo", Bruno Abrahão, Francisco Caldas and Antonio Soares discuss the ambiguities of racial identification in Brazil through the figure of Arthur Friedenreich, the first great football idol Brazilian at the time of amateur football. With the study of the presence and representation of this footballer in museums in Sao Paulo, Brazil, the authors show how "Fried" or "el Tigre" was built as a symbol of the success of mixed-race football and a figure that marks racial tensions and whitening processes.

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Antunes Rafael Kaiumba Pinto and Maria Manuel Rocha Teixeira Baptista explore, in the text "Exotization in the colonial and post-colonial period: the case of Portugal dos Pequenitos", the absence of decolonization in the colonial representations of the theme park Portugal dos Pequenitos, built in Coimbra, in the 1930s. The text explores the origin of the discourses and representations that frame this place, and shows how even nowadays, Portugal dos Pequenitos treats colonialism as an anachronistic form of entertainment.

Carla Almeida, Bruno Abrahão and Francisco Caldas present the text "The Northeastern Brazilian dances in the museums about Luiz Gonzaga 'the king of baião'". Almeida discusses how museums as places of memory, represent the figure of Luiz Gonzaga, a Brazilian composer and musician, popularly known as the "Rei do Baião" (king of Baião). The study was carried out in three museums in the state of Pernambuco, Brazil, and illustrates the importance of perceiving the ways in which the musical culture of the northeast of the country, which carries in itself the dryness, joy, creativity, poverty and injustice of the Brazilian *Sertão*, is transmitted through museum exhibitions.

The "Varia" section presents an analysis of two literary works by Portuguese-speaking African authors, a reflection of the role of media in the construction of Africa, over time, and a study on literary tourism as part of cultural tourism, and the construction of digital itineraries in Lisbon, inspired by the writer Fernando Pessoa. In "Critique to reality in *Terra sonâmbula* and *Chuva braba*: culture, lyricism and memories", Martins Mapera focuses on African literature in Portuguese as a cultural manifestation that participates in the construction of identity. He analyses two novels: *Chuva Braba* (1956) by Cape Verdean Manuel Lopes and *Terra Sonâmbula* (1992) by Mozambican Mia Couto. Although departing from different times and spaces, both works share, in their approach, traces of instability, insecurity and unrest of the characters, in the context of experiences in situations of war and misery. In "Memories and narratives of Western media in Africa", Celestino Joanguete focuses on the production of news and reports about Africa by the main international radio and television channels. Joanguete presents an analysis that covers the relationship between the media and the continent, from the role of radio as a means of expanding Western imperialism, to the emergence of new narratives by African media, intermediated by contemporary social networks. In "Literature and tourism in digital: Lisbon and Fernando Pessoa", Bruno Sousa and Ana Anjo review the concepts of cultural tourism and literary tourism, and reflect on the potential of digitalization in tourism. In particular, the authors focus on tourism in the city of Lisbon, and more specifically, on the role that literary tourism can play. Taking the writer Fernando Pessoa as a case study, they discuss, in an exploratory way, the literary places of this writer in the capital, whether of a biographical nature or referring to his works. These places can be the transformed into personalized digital literary itineraries.

To conclude this issue, Vítor de Sousa presents a review of Lorenzo Macagno's book *A invenção do assimilado. Paradoxos do Colonialismo em Moçambique* (2019). According to Sousa, Macagno's work, which combines Political Anthropology and Social History, makes a critical analysis of the history of the assimilation process in Portuguese

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Africanist politics, in the period between the end of the 19th century and the mid-20th century.

Translation: João Sarmento

Acknowledgments

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Moisés de Lemos Martins is Full Professor at the Department of Communication Sciences of the University of Minho. He directs the Centro de Estudos de Comunicação e Sociedade (Communication and Society Research Centre), which he founded in 2001. He is the Editor of the journals *Comunicação e Sociedade*, *Revista Lusófona de Estudos Culturais/ Lusophone Journal of Cultural Studies* and *Vista*. He holds a PhD from the University of Strasbourg in Social Sciences (Sociology). He has published in the area of Sociology of Culture, Social Semiotics, Sociology of Communication, Visual Semiotics, Intercultural Communication and Lusophone Studies. He directed for ten years the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Minho (from 1996 to 2000, and from 2004 to 2010). He was president of Sopcom – Portuguese Association of Communication Sciences, from

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