



## Article

# Segregation in Housing and Urban Forms: An Issue of Private and Public Concern

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**Abstract:** The Mapping Public Housing investigation project (MdH), based at the University of Porto, Faculty of Architecture, Centre for Studies in Architecture and Urbanism, is building a database of State-subsidized residential architecture in Portugal designed between 1910 and 1974. An ongoing survey of laws directly or indirectly influencing housing construction, and of their concretization, allows for a reading of the influence of the State in housing architecture. This paper will focus on two scopes of segregation through housing design in the Portuguese 20th century, both in private initiatives—the “Ilhas”, low rent housing built in the backyards of Porto in the first half of the century—and in public investments—using the example of the “Affordable Houses”, a housing programme created by the Portuguese dictatorial regime in 1933 in which the buyers of the houses were subjected to surveillance by the State. An ongoing context of market pressure caused by speculative real estate investing and mass tourism, suggests an evolution of the original processes of segregation into systems of gentrification, transforming the cultural and social fabric.

**Keywords:** social housing; dictatorship; corporatism; segregation; gentrification; authoritarianism; Portugal

## 1. Introduction

As is generally the case in Western European countries, at the start of the 20th century, the main urban centers in Portugal suffered a fast surge of population through demographic hikes caused by accelerated industrialization of national production. From 1890 to 1910 industrial workforce increased 21.5% and in 1930 manufacturing employed 31% of the population of Porto—the second largest city in Portugal—and 25% in the capital city, Lisboa. Some of the most profound impacts of this population hike were the lack of housing and an overload on city infrastructure. Particularly in Porto, heavy demand for housing invigorated a private urban rental market focusing on precarious solutions of very low construction cost, namely slum islands (“ilhas”), a type already used in the city, which some authors associate with the back-to-back housing from the Victorian period due to ties created through wine trade.

The “ilha” was composed of rows of small houses of about 16 sqm (170 square feet) set over narrow parcels of medieval origin about 5.5 m (18 feet) wide. With no sewage or water supply, with shared toilets, the “ilha” was made up of houses of a single room and a small façade with a door and a tiny window facing the central exterior passageway. Usually these sets of houses were located in the back of a building where the developer lived, concealing the access and creating an urban façade for the “ilha”.

As a leading Portuguese hygienist said, “the poor classes, the world of proletarians, vegetate bent over in humid and gloomy cavities, with no air and no light, forsaken by a vile speculation [...] an energetic protest is essential against such neglect, against such ineptitude, against such criminal madness” (Jorge 1885, p. 50). Along with densification strategies in vacant 19th century

buildings—known as “honeycombs”—the “ilha” type of occupation set a clear image of the contrasts that fed city growth and opposed the interests of commercial and industrial bourgeoisie to those of the working class. This slum islands could hide a squalid reality behind beautiful façades, separating it from large city embellishment works underway by the local administration. Increasingly visible epidemics and the sanitary collapse of main cities gradually transformed the neutral position of the liberal monarchic government on the subject of dignified housing promotion, opening it to the urgency of the “hygienic city”. However, the development of legislation focusing on salubrity control and a minimum level of legal demands did not alter the situation profoundly.

Except for a handful of cases of philanthropic and cooperative promotion, of little to no social impact, until the fall of the Monarchy and implantation of the First Republic (Primeira República) in 1910, the supply of low-cost housing was dominated by houses with poor living conditions. From 1918, the State will, in theory, take over the responsibility of guaranteeing a comfortable, salubrious house to those whose economic resources limit their access to the free market. The following decade saw a debate on the housing question focused on the selection of the most appropriate typologies, the best ways of promoting and financing and on the level of investment to be taken on by the State, a discussion that would only have a concretization in 1933.

In the transition decade of the 1920s, defined by a deep financial crisis in the aftermath of the First World War, housing initiatives were located outside of the urban nuclei, where large free areas were available that enabled the favored solution of single-family houses with a private garden. These initiatives would become, throughout the 20th century, structural elements in the growth of the main cities. Simultaneously, urban centers will keep increasing in worker population, lodging them in “ilhas” houses illegally built inside city blocks. By the end of the decade, deep divisions within Portuguese society were reflected in the political discussion and a sequence of short-lived governments.

The political and social instability of the young republican institutions escalated to the brink of civil war and a breaking point in 1926, when a coup installed a military dictatorship. Although several limitations to freedom of speech and press were immediately activated, the next few years were of intense political activity from those opposing the new regime. This was adeptly managed by top figures of the regime, particularly Antonio de Oliveira Salazar (1889–1970), an economics professor at the University of Coimbra who was selected in 1928 to the post of Minister of Finances. He had already taken the post in 1926, immediately after the military coup, but had abandoned it after another military upheaval two weeks later, effectively demarking him from the most visibly violent months of the military dictatorship. Salazar’s proximity to conservative groups and intellectual elites increased his room for maneuver as he established a system of severe austerity, taking personal control of all government spending.

The success of this policy, which cannot be detached from an intense economic effort of the last years of the Republic<sup>1</sup> that resulted in a stronger financial situation then would appear in 1926, led to his appointment to head of government, with the title of President of the Council of Ministers, in 1932.

Salazar formed a small team of close collaborators, hand-picked from social and economic elites. These collaborators would prepare the basis for a new regime, a conservative, anti-parliamentarian, anti-democratic, Corporatist State. Although it drank from several sources, with a particular focus on the Italian corporatist regime of Mussolini, there lies an innovation of Salazar’s political construct, as it was based not on a military domination of policy and politics, as is found in Germany and Italy, but on the intelligentsia. We find in this an origin to deeply bureaucratic, law-abiding public institutions.

The formation of a new regime, yearning for a recovery of an imperial mythical past and devoted to a vibrant nationalist future, resulted in the publication of a new constitution in April 1933, establishing the New State (Estado Novo), the result of the “National Revolution” of 1926, a replication

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<sup>1</sup> After a deep financial crisis in the post-war years, public deficit was stabilized by 1924, through a policy of gradual consolidation of public finances that would be disrupted in the years of the military dictatorship (Mata 2010; Rosas 2012).

of the Italian case and a name the New State also used for several years and that would be, mostly subtly, reflected in the most political of housing initiatives, the Affordable Houses (Casas Económicas) Programme, where one finds some late uses of the term<sup>2</sup>.

The Affordable Houses Programme was the first nationally scaled housing program in Portugal and it lasted almost as long as the New State, as it was instituted in 1933 and, although it was not completely revoked, it lost its political charge and importance after the fall of the dictatorship in the military coup of April 1974 that guaranteed free elections and a democratic regime. The founding decree of the program, number 23.052, was published in September 1933 among a group of other fundamental decrees of the New State that institutionalized the corporatist organization of the regime. Those decrees included the National Charter for Labor—deeply rooted in the Italian Carta del Lavoro—, and the re-creation of Guilds and Unions as the basis of labor organization, the former a reclaiming of the medieval structures for business owners and the latter a taming of the revolutionary term for workers organizations. The set of decrees also included the creation of the National Institute for Labor and Welfare (Instituto Nacional do Trabalho e da Previdência, INTP), which would report to a Sub Secretariat directly under Salazar and be responsible for approving the creation of new guilds and unions, overseeing all labor relations.

The “domestication” of workers and of their formal structures was a fundamental part of the Portuguese dictatorship’s approach to Corporatism. By integrating these structures into the State’s organization, simulating an interpretation of workers as equals among them and of unions as equivalent to guilds, the New State deflated them of their demanding powers, derailing any potential courses towards revolution and eliminating class struggles. The New State developed an expertise in managing expectations and concessions, using social divisions and disagreements in its own advantage, and housing is one clear example of this attitude. Bureaucracy was in the New State seen as a guarantee of power, an insurance against insurgence structured around a hierarchical pyramid topped by a dictator present in everyday life (Rosas 2012)

Today, the variable urban forms generated in this historical process coexist in the city and house different economic sections of the population. We will focus on two types: the public housing estates made up of single-family houses in extensive occupations, and the intensive occupation of areas of the traditional urban fabric. The latter includes the local phenomenon of the “ilha”, a central element to an understanding of the levels of urban segregation as it still exists today with poor housing conditions. The “ilhas” represent a specific form of land occupation deeply rooted in the urban structure and based on communities with strong neighborly bonds, a paradigm that has influenced the City Council’s intervention in housing in the 1930s and a housing movement called SAAL that followed the 1974 revolutionary coup, as a part of a process of replacing precariously built “ilhas”, overcrowded and unsanitary, by decentralizing the design process and involving the inhabitants in the political and architectural discussion (Bandeirinha 2007). Using as basis the research under development by the MdH investigation project, this paper will analyze some examples of worker and social housing. While focusing on the multiple social origins of their inhabitants, the resulting communal structures and their internal transformations, we will see how instruments of segregation and control were generated through formal and informal processes of self-regulation, state surveillance and legal associations of users.

## 2. Materials and Methods

Since 2013, the Mapping Public Housing (MdH) investigation project has been developing a database of state-subsidized housing architecture in Portugal built between 1910 and 1974. This registry includes a survey of locations, authors, developers, types of funding, and dimensions, among other data.

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<sup>2</sup> The Entroncamento Affordable Houses Estate (MdH DB a245)—features a commemorative stone of its inauguration in 1952, “Year XXVI of the National Revolution”, at a time when the term had almost completely fallen out of use.

This registry is divided in two parts, one open to public at <https://mappingpublichousing.up.pt/en/> and a second, larger internal set of data, under collection through archive research, to be available later. This survey will not only be useful for investigation purposes but also for future interventions in housing heritage and discussion of new projects, informing not only architects and town planners but also engineers, contractors, developers and present or future inhabitants.

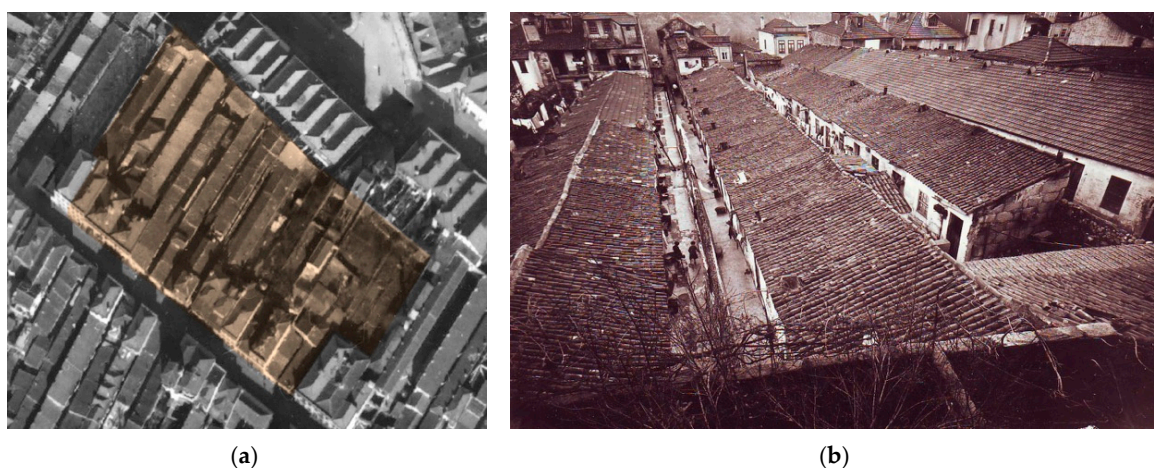
The MdH investigation project set as its main objective to establish for the first time programmed social housing production in Portugal as a case study, identifying an “other architecture”, usually anonymous and set apart from large historical and political narratives, opposing a new historiography of minor architectures to the orthodox architectural history focused on singular and iconic buildings. Using the built environment as a starting point, the MdH investigation project crosses the analytical method—the database—with a reflexive process, establishing common grounds between architecture, urban design, sociology, anthropology and other fields.

This article, focusing particularly on the estates listed in the Database as funded by the Affordable Houses Programme (identified with the prefix “CE:”, or listed by “1933 CE | Casas Económicas | decreto-lei 23.052”), sets two goals. The first is to review preconceived ideas on an architectural history in the 20th century where processes of differentiation in social, economic or architectural terms in social housing can be “arranged in tidy drawers” (Almeida 1970). The other is to clarify how these processes of differentiation, when used for specific purposes of control—particularly in an authoritarian police state such as the one that ruled Portugal from 1933 to 1974—, become processes of segregation. Differentiation, when radicalized for purposes of political or social control, originates instances of segregation, as noted in the selected case studies.

### 3. Discussion

#### 3.1. An Economic Interest on Segregation: The “Ilhas” Paradigm

As already mentioned, Porto at the turn of the century reached a high degree of industrialization, whose impacts on the city were, among others, a significant increase in the working-class population. Faced with the problem of housing deficit in the city, the local authorities and the State were unable to provide healthy and affordable houses to those coming to the city, mostly from the countryside. The proliferation of “ilhas” in the transition from the 19th to the 20th century reflects a process of overcrowding and environmental decay of the poor classes’ living conditions and the opportunistic view of small investors who filled as much as physically possible the land they owned in areas that had been peripheral to the city and were by then part of the urban center (Figure 1a,b).



**Figure 1.** “Ilha” (slum island) of Sao Victor, Porto, Portugal: (a) aerial view, circa 1939; (b) Photographic survey by Joaquim Madureira, circa 1930.



The “ilhas” phenomenon represented, to an extreme degree, the social incision and the political conceal of the city’s housing problem. Some authors note how the housing problem in larger cities reflects vividly and relevantly the inequality of working classes’ status in capitalist society<sup>3</sup>. Those working classes experienced several limitations besides housing problems, namely poor conditions for labor, low wages, nonexistent social protection in illness and unemployment and limited access to education.

Wealth and poverty had their own geographies within the urban context and the “ilhas”, particularly, represented ghettos installed inside bourgeois residential areas. In fact, by a kind of typo-morphological osmosis, bourgeois housing and the housing of the poor were inseparable, representing a historically unstable equilibrium between social and economic interests. Those situations could not be zoned and isolated according to modern planning practices of the 1930s.

These insalubrious areas were seen as potential lairs for uninformed contestation, generating unsubordinated masses with no doctrinal control from which a revolutionary danger could erupt and crush the ruling elites. It could be said that the precarious equilibrium that for a long time balanced economic interests and sanitary sustainability tacitly allowed for the existence of the “ilhas”. We see in this a consequence of several endogenous conditions: developer insistence and permissive supervising; frail State resources and a liberal ideological alibi of no intervention in the rental and construction markets; lack of clarity of housing demands in the political agenda of class organizations and socialist currents; the convergence between rural and industrial worlds as complement for precarious worker wages; and, mainly, a nonexistent organized and sustainable philanthropy that could establish affordable housing as a priority. Middle and high bourgeoisies were in charge of city administration and did not possess “the entrepreneurial capacity and broadness of view, both of the city and of their own social role, that would allow them to see their individual interests in the context of city development as a whole and in the wider context of their collective interests as a social class” (Teixeira 1996).

The “ilha” would remain a manifestation that was deeply adapted to a complex social and economic reality and represented, simultaneously, a panoptical form of social control that would be particularly apt for an industrial context as it served as a complement to the factory. The “ilha”, although not necessarily physically close to the factory, was a field for a “putting-out system” production that was characteristic of the early Industrial Revolution economies and was particularly used by the textile industries, as was the case. Through this system of precarious subcontracts, work occurred outside factory areas, invading the family space and intertwining itself with private life, involving every member of the family. Nonexistent social aid was compensated by informal balancing methods such as self-provision through cultivation of small kitchen gardens and animal husbandry. This kind of complementary subsistence is still found today inside city blocks, in separate parcels or associated to “ilhas”. The kitchen garden represents a fundamental element in the analysis of certain solutions that a cycle of “ilha” house improvements generated, in some cases truly setting apart from this paradigm of industrial city housing.

The “ilha” became a ‘microcosm’ that still lingers in several points of Porto, founded on the continuity of bonds within the family and among neighbors, forming strong connections that were able to upstand social welfare. The physical limitations of the housing unit and the forced sharing of certain facilities—such as toilets, baths and laundry areas—elevated to the common domain important steps of private daily life. The resulting social promiscuity led to systemic conflicts that could only be controlled through the establishment of sets of informal rules on management and use of common areas and the clarification of internal rights and powers (Pereira 1995).

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<sup>3</sup> As is the case of the historian Rui Ramos when he states that the housing problem was a sign of the “social question” in Portugal (Ramos 2011).

This self-regulation had its origins in the rural background of these communities and on the prominent social role of the woman. Most of these women would spend their day inside the “ilha”, looking after the younger children and keeping up with both domestic and outsourced work (Figure 2). By the middle of the 20th century there were about 14 thousand houses in “ilhas”, lodging 20% of the Portuguese population, a reality that would persist until the last quarter of the century. When the 1974 Revolution led to the affirmation of a democratic regime structured by socialist tendencies, a new public service of assistance to housing construction (Serviço Ambulatório de Apoio Local, SAAL—Local Support Ambulatory Service, 1974–1976) worked directly with inhabitants, organized in cooperatives and associations, to demolish several “ilhas” and transform them immediately into social housing following a model of rows of single-family houses. This operation refused the by then half a century old practice of concentrating new public housing in the periphery, focusing instead on these precariously occupied areas in densified urban contexts. The SAAL experience resulted in a new convergence between the typo-morphological heritage of the industrial city and the shared daily life of the “ilha”, abandoning its instruments of social control.

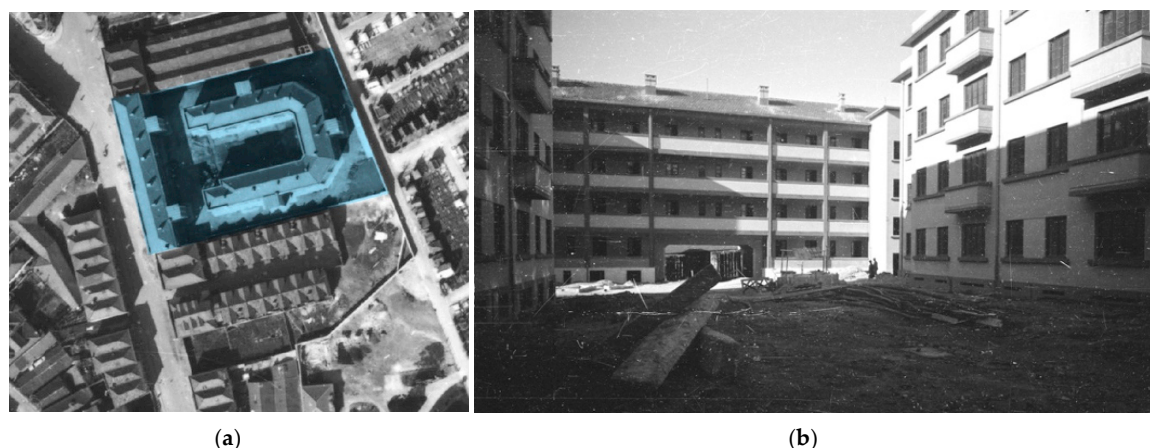


**Figure 2.** Interior of an “Ilha” in Porto, Portugal. Photographic survey by Câmara Municipal do Porto, circa 1960.

The “ilhas” and the SAAL estates were types of housing installed in the consolidated city. Contradicting the housing policies of the central administration, in 1936 the City Council built the first public collective housing estate in Portugal in the Sao Victor area, to the West of the historic town, the Rua Duque de Saldanha Block (MdH DB a6) (Figure 3a,b). The analysis of this specific territory is enriched by the historical contradictions it reveals in the political and economic status quo and in the kinds of segregation it promoted. On one hand, one still finds today a considerable quantity of “ilhas” generated in this part of the city close to important 19th century industrial areas but devalued by the presence of a cemetery to the East and of the train tracks to the South; on the other hand, as mentioned above, in the 1930s the City Council’s technical services developed the Rua Duque de Saldanha Block to house families evicted from “ilhas” to be demolished, focusing on supplying as much housing as possible in centrally located vacant lots to avoid peripheral areas where infrastructures such as sanitation, water supply and public transport were scarce.

The collective housing model was transformed immediately in a political weapon, in an attempt to link the city policies to European Socialist tendencies, branding as pejoratively “revolutionary” an operation that confronted the State’s official view of “public” housing, represented by the Affordable Houses Programme and its single-family, semi-detached houses. Many technical reasons disavowed the application of this particular model in the Porto context, such as fiduciary constitution of most properties and the essential proximity links between the population and production activities.

The average income of the “ilhas” inhabitants was also far from the reference values for the Affordable Houses. The City Council’s intention was to focus its investment in housing in an effort to reform the consolidated city, stratifying residential and industrial activities, mixing housing types and social classes and, finally, setting the tone for the participation of private capital real estate operations in the supply of affordable housing.



**Figure 3.** Multistory Residential Building at Rua Duque de Saldanha, Porto, Portugal (a) Aerial view, circa 1939; (b) Courtyard view—Photographic survey of construction circa 1937.

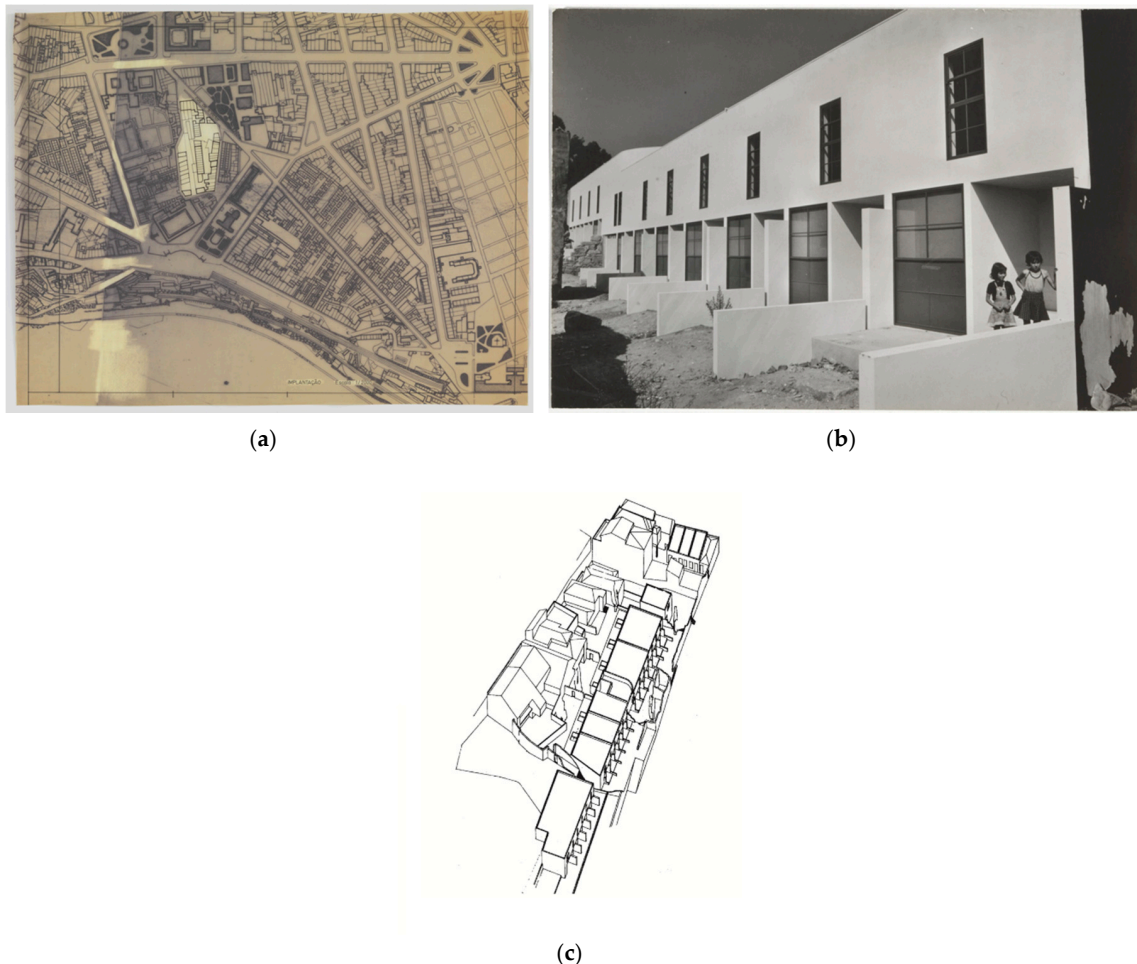
By importing and testing new spatial devices, through the use of multifamily buildings, the City Council “rehearsed ways of disrupting current small parcel-based cadaster” and “the building-street dependency through an extension of the public space to the interior of the block” (Mendes 2001). At the same time, the gallery housing model represented the city administration’s view of the preservation of social and functional diversity as an essential aspect of urban renewal.

In these new housing structures, which the municipality wanted to implement in other parts of the city, focus was on the public visibility of the ways of inhabiting of the lower-income social groups. The technical department of the city council was particularly attentive of the work of the Ghent municipality (Belgium), an advanced example of the production of social housing at the time (Gonçalves 2015).

Contrary to the “ilhas”, this solution revealed instead of hiding, integrating in the preexisting urban fabric a new architecture which resorted to simple and repetitive elements and new forms of building. To live in these new estates represented not only to achieve modern comfort, as rudimentary as it was, but also an escape to the social stigma of living in an “ilha”. In the case of the Saldanha Block, a panoptical architecture is perceptible, guaranteeing surveillance by a supervising entity as a safeguard for a catholic based morality centered on the family unit. Although household privacy was assured, the inhabitants of this small community were subjected to calculated trajectories when leaving the housing unit, crossing the exterior areas of the “U”-shaped building to the single access under the building facing the street, turning the patio and the access galleries into devices of sociability and control. We find here a process of superior regulation of social behavior set by the public administration—visibly represented by the figure of the “janitor”—as opposed to the self-regulatory phenomena informally developed inside the “ilhas”.

SAAL São Victor (MdH DB a825) (Figure 4a–c), designed by Architect Alvaro Siza in 1975 just 400 m (1300 feet) from the Rua Duque de Saldanha Block, consisted in an advanced solution of active participation of tenants in the design process (Figure 4a,b). Along with other workers organizations from dilapidated estates, the “Residents Association of Sao Victor” informed and validated the work of the “technical brigade” responsible for the design, building and management of the undertaking. Mediation with working classes, focused on the right to housing and to the city, resulted in a close

connection between the house, its architecture and its users. The democratic principle of participation, with all its conflicts and risks, anticipated the development of an idea of house, adjusting the house to the inhabitants' expectations. The resulting bond between dweller and emplacement would favor an integrated appropriation and, as far as possible, a permeable integration in the city.



**Figure 4.** Serviço Ambulatório de Apoio Local (SAAL) Estate of Sao Victor, Porto, Portugal, by Architect Alvaro Siza 1974–77 (a) Site plan; (b) View of main façade, circa 1977 (c) Axonometric view.

While the “ilhas” represent levels of maximized segregation, of which the main symbol is the existence of camouflaged limits that exclude them from public domain, the SAAL estates add up the continuity of scale and geometry of the surrounding city and an effective articulation with the existing public space to the “ilhas” model of neighborly connections (see Figure 4c).

Today, whichever the urban form, the continuous and hegemonic presence of social groups turned indigent by the accelerated modernization of the city is a determining factor in its marginalization. These areas shelter an aged population made up still of original inhabitants and low-income families who seek low rents following the recent context of economic crisis, including new residents from East European and African countries. Due to its excellent location in relation to the monumental historic center (classified in 1996 Cultural Heritage of Humanity Site by UNESCO), these complexes are today the object of real estate speculation that has led to an eviction of its residents to other districts located in metropolitan areas. However, there are other cases in which the spaces are qualified, resulting in new communities where the former occupants are mixed with young residents coming from different occupations and social origins (artists, craftsmen, students, etc.).



### 3.2. A Political Use for Segregation: The “Affordable Houses”

The inclusion in 1933 of the Affordable Houses decree among the structuring laws of the corporatist organization by the Portuguese dictatorial regime is certainly no coincidence. It is a demonstration of the view the regime had of housing as a fundamental question to be addressed in the construction of political stability. It does not imply, at first, that the regime saw housing as a service the State would have to provide, as early efforts to sell the few housing estates built by the First Republic show. But it certainly is seen as something in which the State control should be noticed and, as those efforts to sell estates failed and several city councils started developing their own housing initiatives, that control would become inevitable and grow to levels unforeseeable before 1933. So, most of those local housing initiatives were co-opted by the central government and placed under the protective umbrella of the Affordable Houses Programme.

The program itself was directly connected to the Corporatist State, as the houses were distributed by the INTP among public servants and members of officially recognized Unions. Membership of any of these groups did not imply accordance with the regime, but it meant at a bare minimum a public behavior that did not in any way challenge the power or raise questions about one's commitment to an apolitical daily life. The INTP, specifically the Head of its Affordable Houses Section, would also be responsible for intervention in any conflict between the inhabitants and the State, in a variety of scenarios, from cases of due rents to reprehensible behavior.

When an estate was built, the INTP would launch a competition to distribute the houses to household heads with a job, establishing a list of criteria that were related to job stability, age (minimum 21 years, maximum 40 years), household dimension and monthly income. The contract followed a principle of resolvable property, in which the family would for 20 years pay a monthly rent that covered the installment, life insurance and fire insurance. If the family missed payments or was considered to have an objectionable behavior, the State could order immediate eviction. Full property was also dependent on the establishment of a legally recognized homestead, that prevented seizing or sale of the family property, but this was not mandatory, creating several conflicts between the State and proprietors which had finished payments and wanted to take advantage of the growing property value of these houses. The distribution of houses was directly connected to the corporatist organization of the State, as only public servants and members of workers' Unions could apply for an Affordable House, effectively transforming the house into a reward for a tranquil integration within the State's structure.

The New State identified in the 1930s three groups in which housing demands were to be considered differently: farmers, fishermen and urban population. For each of these groups a specific solution was created. Farmers could apply for a house and adjoining land in the Internal Colonization program (*Colonização Interna*) from 1936. Fishermen had their own corporation (*Casas dos Pescadores*) from 1937 that would develop small specialized estates, isolating them. The Affordable Houses would develop estates near (but not in) urban centers, simulating small villages on the outskirts of cities. The sites for the estates were selected by the local councils, among locations that were already in public domain or that could be purchased. The preferred method was the negotiation and acquisition of land, but a 1938 decree allowed the expropriation, by order of the Public Works Minister, of lands deemed of public interest. The DGEMN services would study the suggested locations and analyze their building potential. Although most of these “villages” were later absorbed by urban development, at the time of their construction, be it for economy reasons or for isolation purposes, they were relatively far from urban areas (and therefore far from jobs), which would trigger a vast correspondence between inhabitants of Affordable Houses and the State institutions, requesting the setup of public transportation between the new “villages” and city centers.

In the first years of the program, when one inhabitant asked for permission to build a garage in his house, the head of the Affordable Houses Section at DGEMN responded that it did not seem viable for someone eligible for one of these houses to afford a car; however, some of the chosen locations implied the inhabitants had to pay a ticket price that was close to an average worker's daily income.

The program was created with two types of houses, A and B, to be distributed according to family income. Later, in 1943, two larger types were added, C and D, mirroring the transformation within the target audience. In 1956 another new type was created, called “a”, for families that could not afford the existing types. For each type there were models with one, two or three rooms (later in the program four rooms), according to family size.

These types would be throughout the program placed in groups of houses of similar size, effectively creating an internal division within the estates between families of different incomes, a separation that was perceived by the population (Pereira and Queirós 2012).

The Affordable Houses program was structured around a very specific view of the house or, perhaps more accurately, of the home. For all of its four decades of development, the independent house, with a flower garden in the front and a kitchen garden in the back was the backbone of the program. The most common model would be the semi-detached house, for a matter of economy and for an illusion of greater size, as from a distance those two halves were read as one archetypal house. If the references for these designs may be found in workers housing in France in the first decades of the 20th century, many other sources may have influenced this visual option. The view the regime had of the independent house in this context is not just a quote of other experiments in housing but also the result of a very selective reading of German and English Romantic influences, as a naïf version of the country house or a garden city filtered of ideas of communal living (Figure 5a,b). The regime was, however, aware of the latest international developments in housing and urban design, as it organized several missions to Italy, Austria and Germany to study affordable housing (Silva and Ramos).



**Figure 5.** Affordable Houses Estates in Porto, Portugal: (a) Entrance porch; (b) Street view.

A sense of community was clearly not a priority for the regime, as the analysis of the urban plans suggests in most of the estates, and until the end of the fifties we find a very limited offer of public space—very small squares or gardens, with no connection to public services, or at most a local elementary school and a church or chapel. The center of society is the family nucleus, and it is in that nucleus that life should be lived in the Affordable Houses estates. It would take more than twenty years for the regime to accept not only collective housing in these estates but also a view of urban life with a communal accent, with a younger generation of urbanists increasing housing density and free

green areas<sup>4</sup>, adopting the influence of an aging Modern Movement in Architecture, at a time when it had outgrown its golden age and was under intense debate in the European context.

The first decade of the program had been focused on adapting romantic models of country villages, rejecting street life by turning all houses to the sun and consequently confronting front façades with backyards. This organization resulted in very limited interactions within the estate, instigated mainly by the children's use of the street.

It is clear, or at least it is advertised as so, that the initial focus of the Affordable Houses program is in a State-level response to the shortage of housing for families with lower incomes, but the financial limitations imposed by a deficit-obsessed regime would quickly result in a transformation in the program's target audience. As the Affordable House was not exactly a service provided by the State but is in fact a loan without interest, to be able to pay the monthly rent meant having a monthly income larger than average—3 times the average income of a textile worker in the first phase of Amial, for instance (Pereira and Queirós 2012, 2013). So, the program focused much more on top employees of private incomes or public servants, who had not only larger incomes but a much more stable job situation. That transformation is reflected in the estates' architecture, not necessarily because of noticeably larger areas but through transformations in the internal organization of the houses, which in the first estates use very up-to-date experiments on minimum housing, achieved through reduced circulation areas and multipurpose family rooms. As the program ages and its audience changes, internal spaces fall back to very conventional views of the house, influenced by traditional divisions of the bourgeois house of the 19th century, to a point where service areas were created, including in many cases a maid's room, as well as specialized living areas—living room, dining room and, in some cases, drawing room (Figure 6).



**Figure 6.** Affordable Houses Estate of Amial, Porto, Portugal: view of the 2nd phase houses (1955–58).

The aforementioned transformation in the scale of the program did not mean, however, abandoning the model of the independent house, as it is present in every estate, varying in scale towards the last years of the regime, whether in the largest types—as in the estate of Viso—or in updated versions of the smallest types from the 1930s—as in the estates of São João da Madeira II (MdH DB a255) and Viana do Castelo II (MdH DB a760).

One need not identified by the inhabitants but quickly determined by the regime was that of surveillance, even before the first estate was built. In February 1934, not even six months after

<sup>4</sup> Those influences are clear in such estates as Viso (in Porto, MdH DB a11), the 2nd phase of Entroncamento (MdH DB a256) and Rossio ao Sul do Tejo (in Abrantes, MdH DB a258), among others.

launching the program, the Presidency of the Council of Ministries published a decree stating that the INTP should hire the necessary personnel to guarantee the supervision of each estate. This resulted in the creation of the position of “fiscal” (supervisor) for each estate (sometimes more than one per estate, depending on the number of houses). The creation of this post so early in the development of the program, before any estate was built, resulted in an almost panoptical presence of the State in the daily life of the inhabitants. Not only would the supervisor be granted a significant role in the internal relations and functioning of the estates, working as a mediator—and consequently as an insider—in internal conflicts, as simultaneously a continuous stream of correspondence will be set between inhabitants and the State services, with a large scope of subjects, from complaints about neighbors, requests for improvements or repairs or simply to state a general appreciation of the regime’s work. The supervisor would report directly to the INTP, once again connecting daily life and corporatist organization.

The estate of Amial, in Porto, is the largest estate in the city, built between 1935 and 1938 (first phase, 264 houses) and between 1955 and 1958 (phase two, 94 houses) for a population of about 1800 (Pereira and Queirós 2012, 2013). It may be seen as an example of the transformation operated within the program in the end of the 1930s, as the first competition to select a builder was halted in order to adapt the estate’s design to include larger houses (type B); the second phase, from the 1950s, reveals the aforementioned transformation of the Affordable House model, resulting in larger houses. Two other estates in Porto, Costa Cabral (MdH DB a9) and Marechal Gomes da Costa (MdH DB a3), have been subject to deep analysis (Almeida 2010).

The study of these estates, both by analysis of the archives of the state institutions related to the Affordable Houses Programme and interviews to surviving inhabitants, confirm suspicions that the deeply bureaucratic system developed by the Portuguese dictatorship to manage this and other programs was frequently warped by an informal network of requests, personal favors and by a concentration of decision power in a small number of heads of services—one head of the Affordable Houses Section at the INTP would travel to the city and personally interview candidates to assess of their proximity to the regime. Several records suggest behaviors indicating a corrupt system of distribution and management of houses, such as families visiting and selecting houses before distribution, and others keeping their houses even after moving to a different location.

This bending of the selection process evolved into the creation of a protected environment, as the population of the Affordable Houses estates became increasingly connected to sectors of society closer to the regime, such as top public servants; however, the presence of the State is felt in the relationship between families, between families and the supervisor and between families and the state services.

Although evictions did happen, the simple warning, in more or less aggressive terms, was the most common response to identified conflicts, as state and judicial services were sometimes hesitant in prosecuting a family with the penalty of losing their house. Morally questionable behaviors, as seen by the regime or by plaintiffs—adultery, alcoholism, domestic violence—are common subjects of complaints by neighbors to state services, revealing the existence of an informal surveillance besides the official one. Political activity was also a frequent cause for requests made by state services to the supervisor for further investigations on the habits of some inhabitants.

While other official or informal surveillance agents have been identified, such as officers of security forces and of the political police and members of the state party, National Union (União Nacional) (Pereira and Queirós 2012), in this context the estate supervisor retains a considerable power within the estate as the representative of the State in daily life and official connection between inhabitants and central services and as mediator in conflicts between inhabitants. The specificity of the supervisors’ functions reinforces the political charge of the post, as it implies no contact with bureaucratic organization or the estate’s daily management. He is not an estate superintendent, as the “dweller-acquirers” (“morador-adquirente”) were responsible for repairs and had to formally request any improvements that altered the houses; he is not an estate secretary, as bureaucratic requests and payments were handed directly by inhabitants in bank branches or through mail. His sole role is to



evaluate daily activities, from working hours, social and political activities, religious practices and moral behaviors, reporting any signs of misconduct.

As the single-family model implied a considerable cost that the State could not or did not want to absorb, rents for the Affordable Houses were never in tune with the incomes of the supposed target families. As state-subsidized housing assured a family property for some families of higher-income public servants or private sector employees, lower-income families were forced to the parallel market of low-cost housing that included the “ilhas” and other precarious forms of housing. The limitations imposed by the dictatorship to state-provided services such as housing and education forced a crystallization of a stratified society—“to each his own place”, as one of Salazar’s Ministers for Education put it (Pimentel 2011).

#### 4. Results: New Forms of Segregation or Gentrification

After the 1974 Revolution and the installation of a democratic regime based in socialist tendencies, public housing policies change. However, this change was already in the works before, from the pivotal point of a Housing Policy Conference that took place in 1969 and from the discussion generated in that event (Bandeirinha 2007). The announced transformation would result in the creation of the Fundo de Fomento da Habitação (FFH, Fund for the Development of Housing), a State institute that would from that point manage every housing program and initiative until then spread across institutions of variable scale and scope. While this transformation in housing policies is not the focus of this paper, it shows how by the final years of the dictatorial regime the conditions were created for a profound change in the approach to public housing and in the perception of the socioeconomic profile of the inhabitants to be lodged in future interventions.

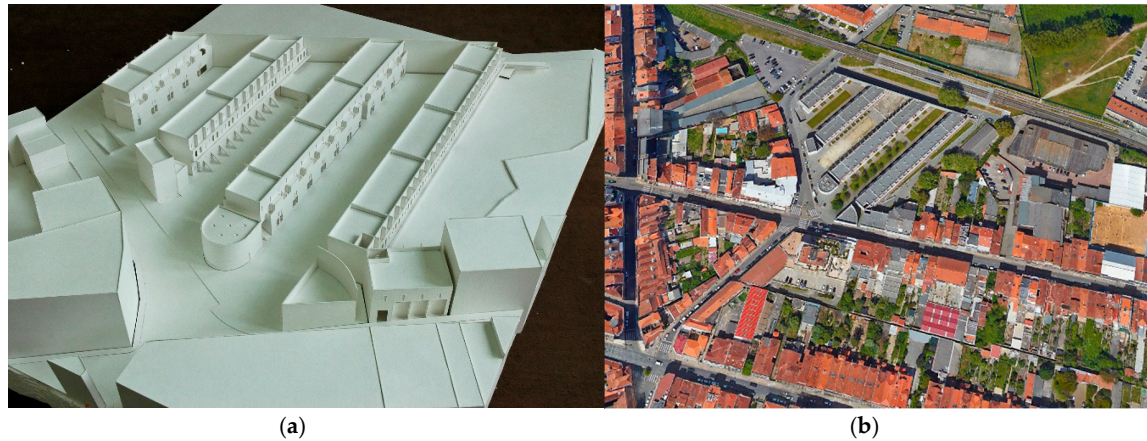
Nowadays, we find that the stigma of urban segregation is still present in the population of some estates or as even worsened, multiplied as it was by a liberal policy of urban growth that would transform specific estate locations into desirable real estate land for investment with a view on a population with larger incomes. We find here a consequence of the Affordable Houses Programme’s intention of creating a middle-class homeownership and of the mentioned conflict between the State’s goal of protecting and crystalizing family property and the inhabitants’ will to take advantage of the market value of their house. The transformation of the family house into a valuable, tradable commodity, able to be integrated in the real estate market, opened the door to the profound transformations in the reality of some estates. As the “social” house entered a speculative, capitalist market, it was converted into a “luxury” item.

The case mentioned above of the Marechal Gomes da Costa Affordable Houses Estate is an example of how these locations and these properties became prime real estate, integrated in an upscale market through speculative logics dependent on home credit bank policies. This and other estates witness a sequence of social class mix, segregation and, above all, gentrification. The latter implies the progressive replacement of social housing units and inhabitants by higher class houses and inhabitants, resulting in processes of transformation of local community dynamics and the resulting cultural and spatial changes. These estates are therefore examples of the gentrification in process in several parts of the city, forcing once again less favored communities to peripheral areas, themselves transforming the property value of the spaces they occupy.

The integration of the Affordable Houses estates in a free real estate market after the 1974 Revolution led in some cases, such as in the Marechal Gomes da Costa estate, to a hike in market value of their locations, more than of the houses themselves. As original homeowners passed the houses to younger generations or sold them for profit, the hike in values meant younger families with lower incomes were again unable to afford an Affordable House. While this process took years to progress and is still occurring in some locations of Porto (such as the Costa Cabral estate) a more recent process has been transforming the population of the “ilhas” and some SAAL estates.

The SAAL initiative, mentioned above, set from the inhabitants’ right to the city, contradicting the previous policy of relocating populations in peripheral estates. These participated designs were based

on central or populated areas, where those in need of housing already lived. In Porto we find some iconic instances of the pioneer SAAL movement, such as the Sao Victor Estate (1974–1977) (MdH DB a826) (Figure 7a,b) and the Bouça Estate (Phase 1 1973–1979; Phase 2 1999–2006) (MdH DB a827) (Figure 8a,b), both by Architect Alvaro Siza.



**Figure 7.** SAAL Estate of Bouça, Porto, Portugal, by Architect Alvaro Siza, 1st Phase 1973–78, 2nd Phase 1999–2006: (a) Model; (b) Aerial view, circa 2016.

The latter remained unfinished for several decades until its recent full renovation and conclusion. This process of conclusion followed the original designs and, interestingly enough, by the time it was built it was no longer of interest to the inhabitants' association because of the spatial characteristics of the house and because of its perceived imagery of “social housing”, a consequence of the experimental character of the design. The more recent houses were then integrated in the real estate market, and an estate that had been unfinished and dilapidated for years, subjected to processes of segregation of its users from the urban context they inhabit—one of the main streets of the city—was suddenly the target of a younger audience, of an intellectual and liberal background, who bought houses there. The Bouça Estate was quickly transformed from a “typical” social housing estate, with a view on improving the living conditions of the less favored population of the “ilhas”, into a fashionable quarter itself subjected to processes of gentrification, permeable to a new class and to new ways of living and inhabiting (Figure 8a,b).



**Figure 8.** SAAL Estate of Bouça, Porto, Portugal, by Architect Alvaro Siza, 1st Phase 1973–78, 2nd Phase 1999–2006: (a) Gallery access; (b) Direct access.

The growth of tourism in Portugal in the last few years, fueled by a new economy of low-cost flights and online word-spreading, caused, particularly in Lisboa and Porto, a pressing need for tourist accommodation that had a considerable impact in the daily life of the city centers. At first dilapidated areas were refurbished to create short-stay rental houses, but this process quickly evolved to pressure by landlords to free their properties by evicting low-rent tenants and to a search for different touristic experiences that have been reflected in the transformation of “ilhas” and apartments within SAAL estates into tourist accommodation.

Many factors have contributed to the transformations that occurred in the examples mentioned above, and further studies are essential to contribute to a reflection on the current reality of real estate pressure and strong demand for tourist accommodation. We find in this development of gentrification and transformation of the original character of estates and areas a radical update of processes of social and cultural segregation within their urban context.

Is collective housing possible without segregation? Even housing estates seen as historically successful examples are no strangers to mechanisms of segregation<sup>5</sup>. Why? Architecture, as an instrument of territorializing by means of erecting any building, a house or a set of houses, inevitably leads to differentiation. Difference is a constant: the north is different from the south, left from right, center from periphery, etc. Simultaneously, as noted by Bourdieu (1930–2002), differentiation and its distinctive signs determine “the space of lifestyles” (Bourdieu [1979] 1985). Repeated activities, such as eating, dressing up, hygiene . . . and inhabiting, are objectively quantifiable uses, which structure social classifications and set themselves a particular perception of the social world. One’s social identity is defined and reinforced by differentiation.

We mentioned cases where differentiation is set through several layers: geography and typology, but simultaneously economy, sociality, and perhaps even behavior. It sets the identity of the house and of the estate when confronted to the city but is also a part of the construct of how the inhabitants see themselves.

When natural differences in things and in lives are used as an instrument towards an end, these layers are malleable and usable to limit particular actions, to guide inhabitants in a certain way, to keep specific groups apart or to exert political and social control, through more or less repressive processes. Differentiation becomes segregation.

In the cases mentioned, in very distinct contexts of the 20th century in Portugal, the differences between rich and poor, or between obedient workers and the stranded proletariat are elements of a purposeful segregation towards a clear goal: creating submissive hierarchical strata with no aspiration for social ascension and improvements in the quality of life. While in the first example of the “ilhas” and popular buildings for speculation purposes, the stratus to maintain was that of a poorer class, stigmatized by bourgeoisie as a form of social control and management of a docile work force, in the Affordable Houses estates the “panoptical” surveillance and the conditions provided intended to keep the inhabitants away from revolutionary thoughts. In this case, social and economic segregation were presented as bargaining chips to secure a house; inhabitants should become model citizens, examples in moral and civic behavior, and were presented as “privileged” by the regime’s propaganda, not because of their particular conditions but because they had proved themselves worthy of a house “given” by the State. In exchange, surreptitiously, the State demanded political obedience. The Portuguese authoritarian regime set up segregation mechanisms in the private domain (the house) and in the public domain (the estate/neighborhood) to achieve exemplary cases of coercive militancy in paramilitary and civic institutions created to structure society. Simultaneously, it guaranteed the zealous support of the household—particularly the head of the household, gravitational center of the family—to the regime and to its institutions and methods.

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<sup>5</sup> As is clear in the vast interventions by Bruno Taut and Martin Wagner, among others, in the 1920s and 1930s in Berlin.



Housing policies developed by the Portuguese Corporatist regime focused on social and special segregation and multiplied the existing social inequalities and lack of housing. That is clear by the time of the 1974 coup, when housing conditions were dire as 25% of population lived with no habitability conditions: in 2.5 million houses, 52% had no water supply, 53% had no electricity, 60% had no sewage and 67% had no toilet; an estimated 600 thousand houses were necessary to cover housing needs (Ferreira 1987).

Proximity between these initiatives of segregation—the “ilhas” and the Affordable Houses—and their cultural and physical context—the bourgeois house and the city—is suspended and neutralized by their isolated location and mechanisms of differentiation; in this sense, they became counter-sites, heterotopias as described by Foucault (1926–1984) (Foucault 1968). Domination of the poorer and middle classes was achieved by exercising economical and/or political power. Implementing segregation mechanisms in private and public housing initiatives is an observable strategy, with a view to regulating the inhabitants’ ambitions of social mobility and transforming their life conditions. These mechanisms are easily transformed, within authoritarian and unequal contexts, in instruments of social, economic and political repression and efforts in outside control of private and public spaces.

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#### Image Sources::

Eliseu Gonçalves, over Google Maps background: Figures 1a and 3a

Phot. Joaquim Madureira: Figure 1b

Câmara Municipal do Porto: Figures 2 and 3b

New York Museum of Modern Art (MoMA): Figure 4a,b

Centro Português de Fotografia: Figure 5a,b and Figure 6

Phot. Paulo Sousa. In Jorge Figueira, 2005, “Cenas da Vida Conjugal”. *Público* 05-21-2005: 22-23: Figure 7a

Google Maps: Figure 7b

Phot. Rui Jorge Garcia Ramos: Figure 8a,b

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