

FOR AN ARCHITECTURAL MEMORY: João Simões + Amadeu Gaudêncio Construction Company

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Architectural Memory.

Partner Institutions

Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (BNP)

Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (AHU/DGLAB)

Expected Future Partner Institutions

Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian (FCG)

Sistema de Informação para o Património Arquitetónico (SIPA)

OBJECTIVES

This Project is organized by short- and long-term objectives.

In the short term, the main objectives of this research are: (1) Preservation of memory - the conservation, archiving and cataloguing of the received collections JS+AG, contributing to complete the historiographic picture of Portuguese architectural production in the 20th century; (2) Study and support to the scientific study of the collection - research and promotion of the investigation of 20th century Architecture, through the production of articles, and the direction of Master's and PhD thesis, focusing on the architect under analysis.

In the long term it is intended to develop a digital database (following Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation guidelines) to introduce the processed data and make it available to the general public and promote cooperation with institutions with similar objectives in order to disseminate, enhance and study Portuguese Architecture.

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ABSTRACT + IMAGES

In 2015 Faculdade de Arquitetura da Universidade de Lisboa (FAUL) founded the project "Por uma Memória Arquitectónica" (PORARQ) with the aim of identifying, studying, and disseminating the estate of Portuguese architects, centered in Lisbon, which have been deposited in this institution. More than ever, it is important today to understand the safeguard of what is the Architecture of the last century and that comprises "the last generations of paper", that is, the work of architects who have all their projects in physical support. The rescue of these elements represents ensuring the future of the past. Within this framework, in 2019 FAUL received in deposit the estates from João Simões (1908-1995) and Amadeu Gaudêncio construction company (1935-1995). This documentation comprises about 1000 projects, made between the 1930s and the 1980s.

In the panorama of Portuguese Architecture of the early twentieth century, João Simões (JS) occupies a secure place, being a figure that in many ways we can define as central. He was present at a number of key moments in Portuguese Architectural Culture, such as the founding of the ICAT and 1948's Congress. On the other hand, Amadeu Gaudêncio was, between the 40's and the 70's, the largest national construction company.

João Simões entered Escola de Belas Artes in 1924, as part of the last group of students of José Luís Monteiro, one of the main figures of the Lisbon School and a master in teaching the Beaux Arts principles. In 1932, he finished his degree in Architecture and was awarded with the José Luís Monteiro Prize. After a brief period in Raul Martins' atelier and, after, in Veloso Reis Camelo's, where he worked alongside Faria da Costa; JS began a collaboration with the Amadeu Gaudêncio construction company, eventually becoming its chief architect, a position he held for the rest of his life. At the same time, he maintained his liberal activity - for which he was twice awarded the Valmor Prize - having signed several projects, among them: the Frigorific and Codfish Commerce Regulating Commission Warehouses, the Press House, several stadiums, the Caixa Geral dos Depósitos in Figueira da Foz, the Cartaxo Municipal Market, the Nazaré Hotel, and the Popular Life Pavilion, of the Portuguese World Exhibition, (co-authored with Veloso Reis Camelo), among many others.

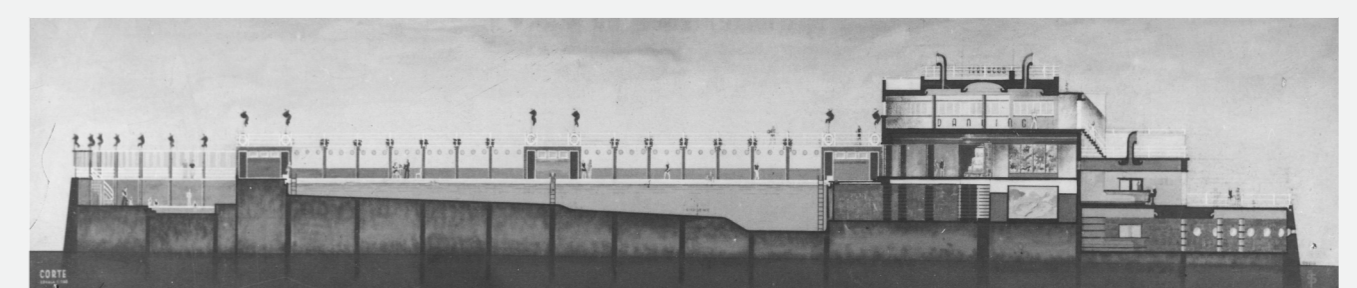
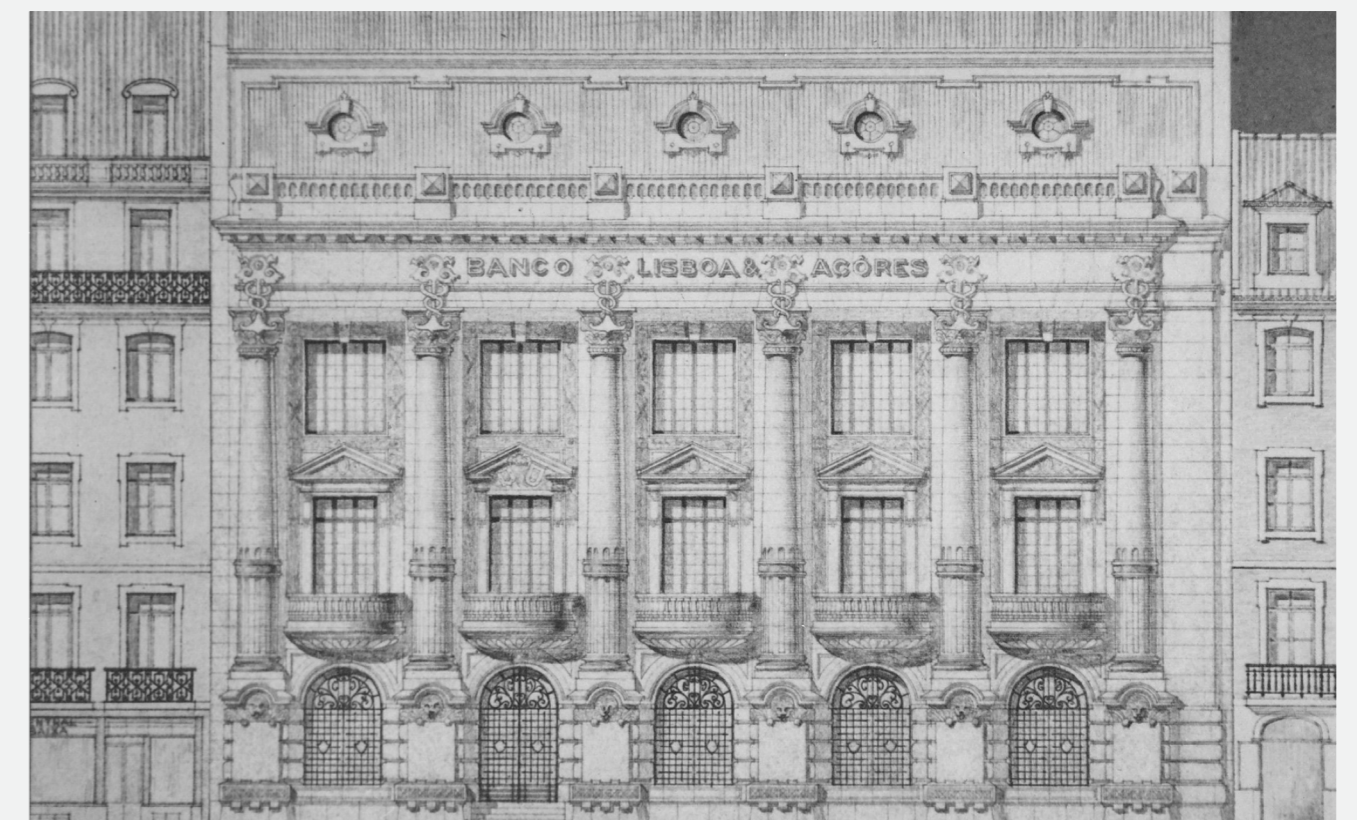
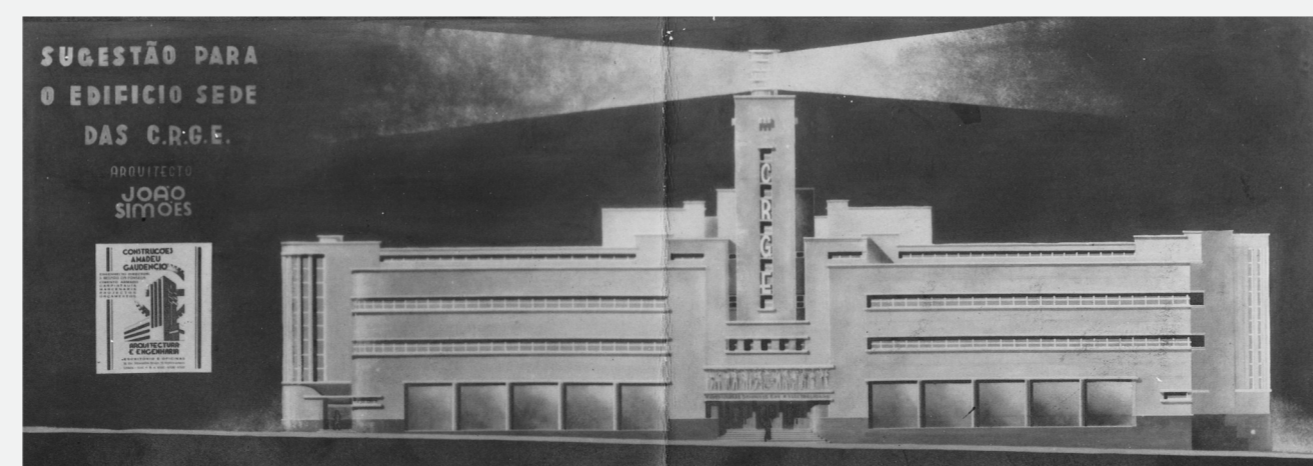
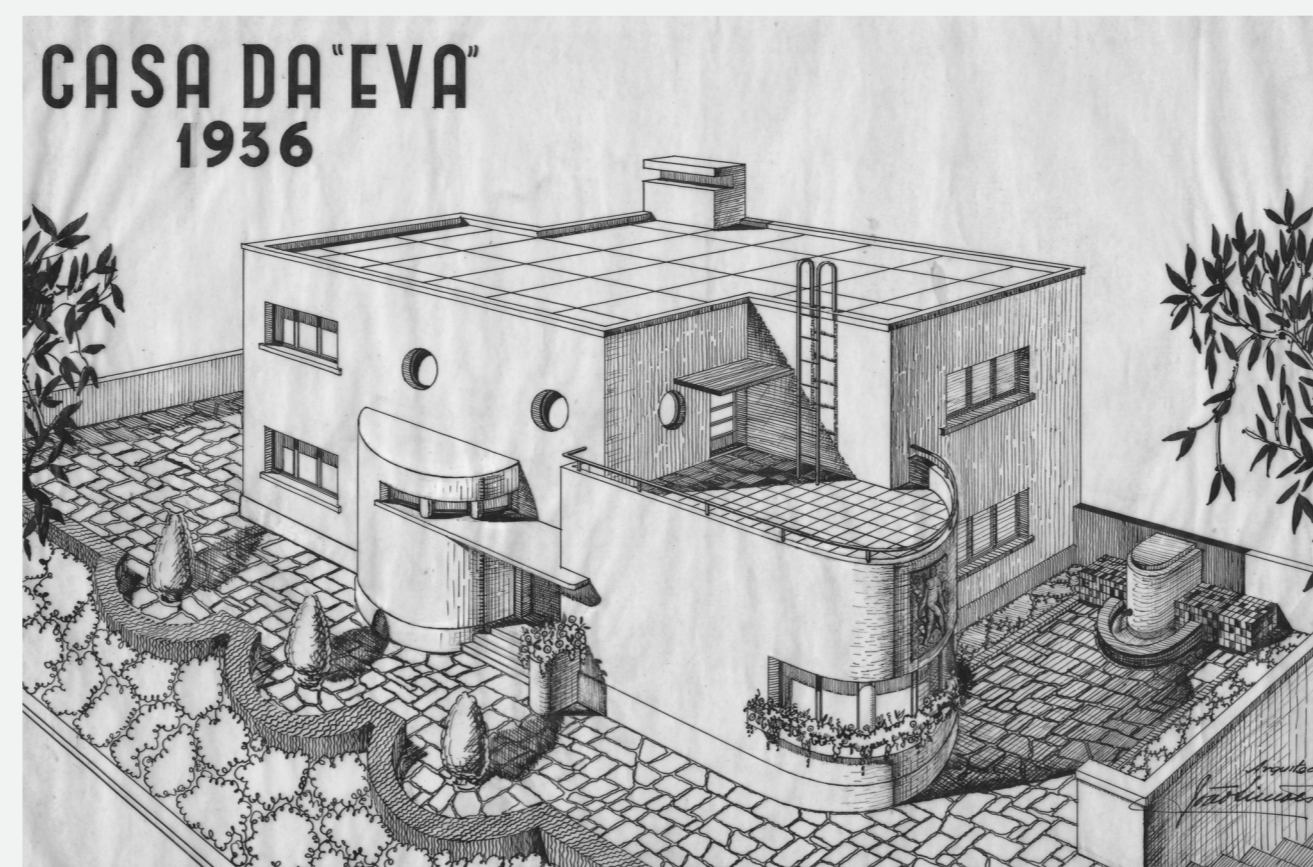
As chief architect of Amadeu Gaudêncio construction company JS coordinated most of the construction work, such as: Santa Maria Hospital, Casa da Moeda, Cinema and Theater Joaquim de Almeida, N. Sra. De Fátima Church, S. João Hospital, Head Offices of Banco Nacional Ultra, French Lycée Charles Lepierre and the Diário de Notícias Building.

His work, both individually and within AG, is vast in quantity and unpublished, never having been object of a comprehensive and detailed study that would allow it to be valued and distinguished from that of his peers.

This Project is characterized by a theoretical and practical approach, based on 4 essential aspects: the organization and archival treatment; the transfer of support/digitization; the preservation and conservation of the material (in partnership with Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal), and dissemination through scientific and technical research in Architecture and associated disciplinary fields. So, the present application thus aims to gather conditions to guarantee the continuity of a mission of the greatest importance, justified by the need, on the one hand, to ensure the architectural memory, and on the other, to adapt the already existing resources to the available technological conditions, in order to maximize their dissemination.

This is an urgent opportunity, since these documents require careful and timely preservation which, if not accomplished, will lead to their loss, with the consequent obliteration of cultural heritage and knowledge, which should be accessible to all. Architects and their collections, as protagonists of 20th century Portuguese Architecture, a period when the professionalization of Architecture took root and architectural practice gradually intensified, both in Portugal and in the territories that were then colonies (namely the second half of the century, coinciding with the period after World War II, a time of economic expansion that also reached the territories under Portuguese administration until the first half of the 1970s); are fundamental to understand the social and cultural evolution of a country that changed significantly throughout this century. Not to contemplate the architectural production of this century is to forget stages, scenarios, and spaces that hosted historical events and their protagonists.

Finally, this project aims to contribute significantly to the preservation of the Memory, Knowledge and Dissemination of 20th century Portuguese Architecture, both among the scientific community and architects, as well as the interested public, nationally and internationally.



SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE FOR THE DISCIPLINE

The study of these collections will be a privileged source for obtaining new and relevant information for ongoing research on CIAUD different fields: Architecture, Design and Urbanism. Also relevant is the beginning of a study on the architects who graduated from the Lisbon School as a way of recognizing and contributing to the establishing of the identity of the Lisbon School of Architecture.

As a complement to the information and sources already explored by historiography, these collections will allow us to identify dates, authors and descriptions, both for projects and works already known, and for many others, whether they were built or not. This data and its interpretation will allow us to complement and support a panoramic view of the production of a particular studio, integrating it in the framework of architecture and design in Portugal in the 20th century.

At a higher level, the assets will also allow us to highlight the importance of sub-disciplines associated with Architecture (interiors, furniture, graphic design, etc.) that are often relatively less valued, but ultimately have been a key terrain for the development of everyday life and the collective imaginaries of citizens.

EXPECTED ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT

As in previous work experiences in this field, we know that the results of this project will (re)value a part of the imagined and built heritage that in general is despised by the historiography of Architecture, by heritage policies, by the economic fabric that, with few exceptions, systematically invest in the rapid obsolescence of the built solutions and in the uncritical renovation, without paying attention to the cultural value of the pre-existences or to the importance of preserving collective memories.

The recognition of the value of these works, namely in the city of Lisbon, can and should contribute to their rehabilitation, instead of continuing to destroy in order to build again, which is not only a loss of memory and identity, but also an economic waste of scarce resources.

This project will be another contribution for us to consider the recognition, appreciation, defence, conservation and restoration, as well as dissemination, in a more informed, detailed and conscious way of the values in presence.

RESEARCH PLAN AND TASKS

Today there is a consensus that Architectural heritage, as a relevant component of the cultural heritage of a region or community, is a powerful factor of social distinction and identification. Buildings and cities survive beyond the temporal limits of each generation and its inhabitants. They become to a large extent, the most persistent material expression of a community's culture. For these reasons, architectural archives play a pivotal role, given not only the depth of information they contain, but also the authenticity of these records and, consequently, their incomparable evidential and testimonial power.

In recent years, it has been noted that several architects or heirs, seeking to leave the testimony of their professional careers in an institution that offers them the guarantee that their estate will be well received, treated and studied, have turned to the Faculty of Architecture. In the case of the JS and AG estates, unfortunately PORARQ have not yet had the availability in human resources and means to make the systematic work that we now propose to do.

The activity of JS and AG have been little considered, if not ignored, by Historiography, Architecture and Design, keeping them in the shadow of some of their colleagues who have been rightly considered reference figures of Portuguese Architecture. However, what we know of JS + AG activity makes their contribution clear to the shaping of daily life in Portugal, especially in Lisbon.

While it is true that a substantial part of JS work has always been based on the design of income-generating buildings commissioned by the civil construction companies that were then promoting the expansion of the capital, the diversity of scales and programs that he approached throughout his career is remarkable. During his professional career JS developed projects on the most different scales, from housing to tourism, sports facilities, sanitary and hospital posts in the Portuguese colonies (at the service of the Colonial Urbanization Office) and, even, developing Urbanization Plans.

The official distinctions that validated his revivalist options and the large public commissions that punctuated his professional career did not prevent JS from getting closer to the modern movement. Embracing a clear sympathy for the oppositionist cause, he joined the group that gravitated around Keil do Amaral. João Simões participated in the organization of the Exposições Gerais de Artes Plásticas (EGAP) which, between 1946 and 1956, were one of the main showcases of the neo-realist movement in Portugal. He played a key role in the formation, in 1946, of the Cultural Initiatives of Art and Technique (ICAT), the group that would acquire the former magazine *Arquitectura* (which JS would come to coordinate) to give it a modern orientation, more informed and attentive to the international architectural production. In 1948, Simões was elected member of the board of the National Union of Architects, on the list headed by Keil do Amaral, and was a prominent participant in the National Congress of Architecture organized that year.

The team that makes up the research group of the project was strategically chosen for its completeness and, between them, for being able to carry out a project of this magnitude in the shortest time possible. Also, this team has been working systematically on the preservation and knowledge associated with the estates of architectural studios within PORARQ. PI Joana Malheiro has finished a full research about João António de Aguiar (JS friend and co-worker at Gabinete de Urbanização Colonial) and has published a 20th century Portuguese Architecture Chronology (being now able to cross references and events that involved frequently João Simões) which will be also central to the identification and understanding of confluences, architects and projects from AG. Hugo Farias's research focuses on architectural analysis of modern buildings will allow an analytical stage of the project and Toussaint's knowledge on theory and practice of 20th century Portuguese Architecture will constitute a basis for this project.

The documents and archives of Architecture have, in potential, a substantial relevance as a support to administrative, technical and scientific actions related to the architectural activity, but also as an objective of cultural fruition and basis for processes of production of individual and community identities. PORARQ-JS+AG will be developed within CIAUD's Research Group Lab.i.Arq. This group is formed by multidisciplinary researchers whose previous work, experience and ongoing research will contribute significantly to the expected results of this embryo-project. Moreover, the development of this project will contribute to other ongoing and proposed projects since the recognition, reading and analysis of the entire breadth, diversity, and depth of documentation in the JS+AG collections will allow us to establish connections and new lines of study for the Research Group.

This project is structured in 5 phases, each one integrating a task.

TASK 1 – This task focuses on the organization of JS+AG estates. The practical work will begin with the recognition and exploratory listing of all the projects, as well as, gathering a set of relevant basic information (project designation, dates, location, commissioner, etc).

TASK 2 – The main objective of this task is to prepare the estates so they can be handled and digitized.

TASK 3 – The main objective of this task is to catalogue the architectural collections.

TASK 4 – This task focuses on the digitalization of the architectural estate. The task of digitalizing is of key importance for the preservations of the original documents and also for the sharing of information by PORARQ. The methodological approach to this task will include the following steps: digitalization of the drawings collected on the selected projects; definition of types of drawing, scales of drawings and graphic expression.

TASK 5 - The main objective of this task is to develop descriptions for each project and design. This task will provide a new in-depth understanding of the projects composing each collection, in their different architectural scales: urban scale, building scale, design integration and the technical and tectonic features of each project.

According to the information revealed throughout this research process, it is accepted that some of the following research phases may also be considered within the scope of this embryo project: identification of information gaps; research of complementary documentation (licensing files, photographic files, company archives); attraction of institutional partners and preparation of applications for funding research projects at national and European level.

EXPECTED SCIENTIFIC RESULTS

The expected results are as follows: Treatment and digitalization of the JS+AG collections; Organization of the estate, promoting the future dissemination of the knowledge achieved to a wider audience.

The scientific activities expected to be produced by PORARQ: JS + AG research scope are:

1. The preparation of a monographic book about the JS + AG work, covering the different scales and aspects of their Architecture.
2. Integration of the results (biography, architectural work and images of the most significant projects) in PORARQ Website, providing public and open access to the principal outputs of the research project at an international level. The implementation process of this platform will also enable the opening of these collections to be studied by Master's and PhD students.
3. Participation in lectures, constituting an opportunity to present the results of the research and to discuss the JS architectural production.
4. Productions of Papers to be published in indexed publications.

BUDGET: € 7.497,08

Human Resources - The funding granted will enable the hiring of a research scholarship holder (for 6 months), which represents a value of 1104,64 (grant) + 7,5 (insurance) + 129,89 (social insurance). All in all, per month, this represents a total cost of 1242.03 euros, which amounts to 7452,18 euros for the 6 months of grant requested.

Equipment - An amount of 44,90 euros is also requested for the acquisition of one HDD USB 3.0 1TB 2,5 WDigital Elements external disk.

These two expenses make a final/total cost of 7497,08 euros.

No other costs are expected, since there are FA technical spaces and equipment allocated to activities of this nature that, for the moment, are not fully used due to lack of human resources.

The work of the contracted researcher, duly accompanied by PORARQ: JS+AG researchers, will allow the collection of information that will be incorporated into personal and/or collective investigations underway and to be developed.