



## National Museums in Portugal

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### Summary

Portugal began to develop a group of national museums in the second half of the nineteenth century. Its first collections were formed by the monarchy, and very much conditioned by the often difficult and complex relationship between the state and the Catholic Church. The first public museum in Portuguese territory was founded in Porto in 1833 to house artworks from monasteries, shut down as a result of the liberal's victory in the civil war (1828-1834). Its creation was strongly related to the separation of Church and State with the suppression of the ecclesiastical orders in 1834 in a process that was completed in 1910 with the declaration of a secular republic. An extensive series of museums owe their existence to this transfer of church property to the state.

The evolution of Portuguese museums was heavily marked by the Military dictatorship (1926-1933) and by the *Estado Novo* (1933-1974) under the rule of Antonio de Oliveira Salazar (1933-1968). Though museums were managed by a council related to the Ministry of Education, during this period, the SPN, National Secretary of Propaganda, renamed the National Secretariat for Information, Popular Culture, and Tourism in 1945 (SNI), directed an authoritarian state policy that was mainly concerned with establishing a strong image of what should be considered as traditional or authentic Portuguese culture – a policy which also influenced the development of specific museums such as the Museum of Popular Art (*Museu de Arte Popular*) and a collection that would later become the National Tile Museum (*Museu Nacional do Azulejo*).

Portuguese museums experienced a rapid and intense period of modernisation in the 1980s and 1990s during which time they attempted to make up for a long period of social and economic lag in relation to the rest of Europe, developing an active cultural policy. The Ministry for Culture, created in the 1990s, is today directly responsible for 29 national museums, but other important institutions such as the well-known Maritime museum in Lisbon are run by the Ministry for Defence. Private financing and patronage is relatively marginal; the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Porto is the only example of a joint private and public administration. However, one should remember that Portugal's most famous museum in the art world, the *Museu Calouste Gulbenkian*, is part of a private foundation (the museum itself is only one of the foundation's activities).

Geographically speaking, there is a clear concentration of national museums in Lisbon, but there is a second important centre in Porto, including Portugal's oldest national museum, the *Museu Nacional de Soares dos Reis*, and its youngest avatar, the Serralves Foundation, with its museum of contemporary art (the Serralves is a part public, part private foundation). The *Museu Nacional de Machado de Castro* is the main museum of central Portugal, and the *Museu de Évora* is the principal state museum in the south of the country. Recent policy aims to develop a more balanced network from a geographical perspective, and some major municipal museums have been integrated into the network created by the *Instituto Português de Museus* (IMC) in order to give

them greater national visibility. The Ministry for Culture also finances the *Fundação Berardo*, a foundation for modern and contemporary international art based on the a private collection of Joe Berardo and the foundation of the *Museu do Douro*, a network of regional museums dedicated to cultural and economic themes related to the Douro River Valley.

Portuguese national museums tend to be oriented in terms of national material culture. There are few important collections of European or extra-European art, and ethnographical museums tend to be more focused on domestic collections rather than on foreign ones, despite Portugal's status as a former colonial empire. The decorative arts and folk arts play an important role, as illustrated by the already mentioned Museum of Popular Art and the National Tile Museum, the later dedicated entirely to the very nationally typical tradition of painted ceramics. Interestingly, the most popular of national Portuguese museums in terms of visitor numbers is the National Coach museum (*Museu Nacional dos Coches*).

The selection of case studies for this report has sought to reflect the different origins and initiatives behind some of the most important of Portugal's national museums but also to illustrate a range of distinctive national narratives and their popularity today. It includes two of the three museums that officially held the title of 'national' from 1911 onwards: the *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga* and the *Museu Nacional dos Coches* (the third was the *Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporânea*). In terms of visitor numbers, renown and popularity, there can be no doubt as to the essential position occupied by the *Museu de Marinha*, The Maritime museum (one of the most famous in Europe, and the most visited); the National Museum of Archaeology (*Museu Nacional de Arqueologia*) is housed in the same emblematic building, the Jerónimos Monastery. Originally created by personal initiatives, their history contrasts with the case of the National Museum of Ancient Art (*Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga*) in Lisbon. This last museum will be considered alongside the *Museu Nacional de Soares dos Reis* (Porto) as the earliest national museums created in Portugal and as an example of the relationship between museum building, the monarchy and nationalisation of Church assets.

## Summary table, Portugal

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
The National Museum of Ancient Art <i>Museu nacional de Arte Antiga</i>	1884 ( <i>Museu Real de Belas Arte e Arqueologia</i> )	1884	Monarchy	Ministry for culture, Institute of Portuguese museums (IMC)	Art History	Portuguese and European painting, metal work, ceramics, furniture and jewellery	1200-1850	Classical townhouse, new extension (1940s), Lisbon.
The National Museum of Archaeology <i>Museu nacional de Arqueologia</i>	1903	1893	Personal initiative of Dr. José Leite de Vasconcelos	IMC	Archaeology, Ethnography, Art History, Epigraphy	Portugal (origins) Egyptian Antiquity	Paleolithic period to 1200	Share buildings with Museu de Marinha - monastery of Jeronimo, Lisbon.
The National Coach Museum <i>Museu Nacional dos Coches</i>	1905	1889	Monarchy, Queen Amélie d'Orléans (1889)	IMC	History of Transport, Decorative Arts	Coaches used in royal processions from the 17 <sup>th</sup> to the 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	1700-1900	Former royal riding stables, Lisbon.
National Maritime Museum <i>Museu de Marinha</i>	1962	1863	Royal collection originally (King Louis I)	Ministry of Defence	History of Maritime Life, Exploration and Warfare	From 15 <sup>th</sup> c. onwards, historical paintings, archaeological objects and model ships	1500-2000	Jerónimos Monastery, late Gothic and Portuguese style built by Henry the Navigator. (1450s), with neo-gothic addition (19 <sup>th</sup> c.), Lisbon.

## Introduction

The Portuguese nation generally claims two historical dates as representative of its political origin: 1139 and 1297. In 1139, Afonso Henriques, the ‘conqueror’ chased the Muslims from Lisbon, declaring himself the first king of Portugal. This is the foundational moment of the Portuguese monarchy, which remained in power until the beginning of the twentieth century, with small intervals during which Portugal came under the rule of the Spanish Crown (1580-1640). Indeed, the relationship with its Iberian neighbour has shaped Portuguese history and self-perception; most general histories of Portugal underline that the frontiers of independent kingdom of Portugal were defined in close accord with its current borders as early as 1297, a fact which has led Portuguese historians to lay claim to the title of being the oldest European nation-state. The country developed its identity as a nation through its strong maritime culture, due to its 848 km of coastline and, in a sense, also to its geographic position on the edge of the continent. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it evolved to the status of a world power, that it shared with Spain through the Treaty of Tordesilhas, 1494, signed by Kings Fernando and Isabel of Spain and King John II of Portugal. Major maritime exploration missions, such as Vasco de Gama’s expedition to the Indies– which set out from the Jerónimos Monastery (today home to the Maritime museum), brought great wealth to the country. The Portuguese developed commercial relations towards Asia and Oriental Africa in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At the turn of the eighteenth century, its main colony was Brazil, providing great quantities of gold, diamonds and rare woods.

However, Portugal experienced a period of economic difficulty in the eighteenth century due, in part, to the massive destruction of Lisbon in the 1755 earthquake. The most dramatic loss from a cultural point of view was the destruction of the Ribeira Palace (*Paço da Ribeira*) situated on the banks of the Tagus River, it was particularly affected by the tsunami that followed the earthquake. The rich collections of the royal library and archive, containing records from the Era of the Discoveries, as well as artworks by Titian, Rubens, and Correggio, that were housed in the palatial complex were all lost. King John I gave great impetus to the reconstruction of Lisbon in neo-Classical style. With the help of his Minister of State, the Marquis of Pombal, they also set out to reconstruct the royal library and collections in the Palace of Ajuda, in the outskirts of Lisbon. It was there too that the King created a Royal Botanical Garden, where specimens from the whole empire were cultivated, and a museum of natural history was established in 1777. A fire destroyed the original construction of the Palace but work on the new palace was already underway by 1795 (Almaça 1996).

The occupation of the Napoleonic Wars (1808-1814) had decisive consequences both in terms of political history and cultural development. In 1808, the Royal Family moved with the Court to Rio de Janeiro, taking with them the royal library and artworks from the Royal Palace of Ajuda. For this reason, Rio was home to the first royal Portuguese museums and scientific institutions, such as the Royal Library (*Biblioteca Real*, 1810), Botanical Garden (*Jardim Botânico*, 1811) and the Royal Museum (*Museu Real*, 1818). The move of the court to the Americas also shifted the balance of power between metropolis and colonies; in 1815, when the Peninsular War and the Napoleonic occupation was already over, King John VI decided to stay in Brazil and to proclaim the *Reino Unido de Portugal, Brasil e Algarves*. Meanwhile, mainland Portugal was devastated by the

war and controlled by a military junta that was presided over by a British general, a situation that provoked a movement of rejection amongst Portuguese patriots.

A liberal revolution began in Porto in spring 1820 requesting the return of the court to Europe, and as a consequence, John VI moved the court back to Lisbon in 1821. Nevertheless, the Portuguese liberals tried to restrict the political representation and the privileges granted to Brazil by the monarchy; they sought particularly to restrict free trade and to restore the monopoly of the metropolis. This provoked the indignation of the Brazilian liberal elites, who were supported by the King's son, Prince Peter (Dom Pedro), who had stayed in Rio. On 7 September 1822, the independence of Brazil was proclaimed and Dom Pedro was declared 'Emperor of Brazil'. This weakened the country economically and politically and was the source of future instability related to rights of dynastic succession.

These circumstances, the destruction caused by the 1755 earthquake and the transfer of the royal collections to Brazil in 1808, explain why, in relation to other European countries, the creation of public royal/national museums in Portugal began quite late in the nineteenth century. Indeed, the first royal museum in mainland Portugal was established in Porto in 1833 and its creation is related to the rise of liberal politics in the context of a dynastic dispute among the members of the Portuguese royal family.

In 1826, King John VI died in Lisbon, and his son, the Emperor Peter I of Brazil, laid formal claim to the title of Peter IV, king of Portugal with the support of a branch of the liberals. Since the Brazilian Constitution of 1824 did not allow the reunion of both kingdoms, he abdicated in favour of his daughter, Maria da Glória. As the Princess travelled from Río, the absolutist sectors organised themselves in support of Dom Pedro's brother, Dom Miguel, provoking a civil war. Although the war began in 1828, it was in 1831, when Dom Pedro abdicated and travelled to Portugal to support his daughter's right to the throne, that the conflict became a clear dispute between two political models: liberal constitutionalists –*pedristas*– and absolutists –*miguelistas*. Finally, international politics brought about the end of the war; in 1833 King Ferdinand VII of Spain, the main supporter of Dom Miguel, died, and in April 1834 the liberal regimes of UK, France and Spain decided to provide military support to the *pedristas*. Following a military intervention, Dom Pedro ratified the Liberal Constitution and his daughter was crowned as Maria II (1834-1854).

It is symbolical that the first national museum in Portugal was created in Porto, the city that had become the stronghold of the liberals as early as the 1820s. The city had fallen under the control of the *miguelistas* at the beginning of the war, who had carried out massive repression. After a long siege, the *pedristas* entered Porto in 1833 and one of Dom Pedro's first acts was to confiscate the property of those who had collaborated with Dom Miguel, and of the most important monasteries that had also supported the absolutist cause. With those artworks (mainly paintings but also prints), the King established the *Museu Portuense*, initially housed in the convent of Saint-Anthony in the centre of Porto; it was a symbolical monument to the victory of the liberals in the war. Though it may claim to be one of Portugal's oldest museums, this institution, today known as the *Museu Soares dos Reis*, is not among the largest of Portugal's national museums.

The liberal victory marked a decisive turn for the economic and intellectual development in the country. In 1834, the suppression of religious orders was decreed as well as the

nationalisation of all properties owned by the Catholic Church, which were subsequently auctioned. This process was to last nearly seventy years, as the monasteries were emptied immediately whilst the convents were seized only after the death of the last nuns, meaning that these were often transferred to the state only at the end of the nineteenth century. These transfers brought large amounts of cultural assets, including historic buildings, artworks and bibliographical and archival records under state control. In addition to the creation of the *Museu Portuense*, many of these artistic objects were collected in the *Academia de Belas Artes*, Lisbon (Academy of Fine Arts), which housed the *Galeria Nacional de Pintura* (National Gallery of Painting), these collections became part of the *Museu Real de Belas Artes e Arqueologia*, (future *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga*) founded in Lisbon in 1884. Nevertheless, this did not result in the development of any kind of “consistent cultural policy, perhaps because there seemed to be no real or urgent need to emphasise the importance of preserving the vast and diversified heritage legacy, both from an economical and a cultural point of view” (Martins, 2008: 288).

However, the first museum created with the aim of protecting historical heritage was the *Museu Arqueológico do Carmo* founded in 1864 by the *Associação dos Arqueólogos Portugueses*. Its promoter and first president was the royal architect, Joaquim Possidónio da Silva (1806-1896). The Museum gathered *spolia* from Medieval and Renaissance religious buildings that had been affected by the disentailment process, but also promoted archaeological activities in earlier periods. The museum was housed in the ruins of the Carmo Convent, in the centre of Lisbon, destroyed by the 1755 earthquake, and left as a reminder of the destruction of the city (Martins 2003 & 2008).

The combination of private initiative and royal support did however, directly lead to the creation of two other national museums before the 1910 revolution deposed the monarchy: the National Museum of Ancient Art (1884) and the National Coach Museum (1905), both located in Lisbon.

The 1910 revolution overthrew the monarchy, established Portugal’s first Republic and abolished the privileges of the Catholic Church. Properties of the Crown were nationalised, including the museum referred to above (*Museu Nacional dos Coches*), and the royal palaces. The buildings, abbeys and convents of 31 suppressed religious orders and 164 institutions were confiscated with all the artworks that they contained, providing the basis for new provincial museums. As a result, most major municipal museums in Portugal were founded during the next following two decades in former ecclesiastical buildings, often in Episcopal palaces. The most important of these have recently been integrated into the national network of museums directly related to the Ministry for Culture through the IMC (Portuguese Institute of Museums) in an effort to redistribute central government support to museums across its territory.

A military *coup d’état* in May 1926, led to the instauration of a military dictatorship, that lasted until 1933, when the regime evolved into the *Estado Novo*, as defined by António de Oliveira Salazar (1889-1970). The *Estado Novo*, a dictatorial regime that developed its legitimacy with the support of the country’s economic elite, the Church and the military, developing a very traditionalist approach to museum creation and development. For Sapega, “it was not in the regime’s interest to proclaim a radical break with commonly held notions regarding the Portuguese national character, and for this reason many of the SPN’s (National Secretariat for

Information) original ideological presuppositions were borrowed from cultural practices and discourses that had their roots in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.” (2008: 12).

As secretary of the SPN, it was the role of António Ferro (1895-1956) to construct a new image of Portugal and its unified state for the Portuguese and, more especially, for the international community. He was himself close to artists and major figures of the modern art movement, especially in Italy. He believed Salazar to be creating a nation that was to be innovative and modern. Yet, under the direction of Ferro, the SPN also applied its *política do espírito* (politics of the spirit) to a definition of popular folk art, rural culture and aesthetics as a major axe of national identity and it was in this context that *Museu de Arte Popular* was founded in Lisbon in 1948. The museum began with a collection compiled in 1935 for the exhibition ‘Portuguese Folk Art’; first shown in Geneva, the collection was exhibited again in 1940, in Lisbon, during the exhibition of the *Mundo Português*, (1940). The exhibition commemorated the centenaries of two essential events in the history of Portugal, the foundation of the monarchy (1139), and the renewal of independence from Spain (1640). It was planned as a glorious narrative of the History of Portugal, illustrating the nationalist ideology of the *Estado Novo*. In terms of the architecture and the displays of contemporary art, it clearly celebrated modernism. But with the presentation of the popular art collection, the director of the SPN had sought to provide an “image of the nation as essentially humble and agricultural but at the same time historically destined for imperial greatness” (Sapega, 2008: 14). A permanent exhibit of these collections opened in 1948, they have since grown considerably and are “composed of ceramics, popular gold and silver objects, musical instruments, basketwork, textiles, costumes and embroidery, miniature boats and horse-drawn vehicles, agricultural tools and reproductions of rural dwellings. The displays were organised according to provinces, reflecting the territorial administration of the country in 1936” (IMC, 2004: 17). The Salazar regime whose power very much depended on “ultraconservative ruralist ideology” promoted a regional or rural identity as the ‘imagined community’ that could serve as a “metaphor for the nation as a whole” (Sapega, 2008: 4).

The museum could be considered as the expression of a state ideology that claimed to promote material progress on the one hand, but that based the moral and spiritual force of the nation on the restoration of past values. In recent years, the polemical decision was made to close the museum in order to create a museum of the Portuguese language. Many deplored the loss of the museum as the loss of an important document of the discourse of the *Estado Novo*’s regime, and its vision of the idea of the Portuguese *povo* (people). The definite closure was recently revoked, however the old museography was dismantled and the museum is currently closed for renovation.

Ironically, whilst popular and rural culture was used in the construction of nationalist ideology, there does not appear to have been a policy of making culture more accessible to those populations most isolated from urban centres of power (Sapega, 2008: 16). Instead, attentions and initiatives concentrated on reinforcing the role of the major national museums.

More generally speaking, despite being a colonial power and former Empire, anthropology and ethnology in Portuguese museums has been more related to strategies of ‘nation-building’ rather than ‘empire building’ - to employ the categories developed by Georges W. Stocking in 1982 - (Viatte, 2000: 21). Although Portugal’s role as a colonial power was fully expressed in the

exhibits developed for the 1934 Porto Colonial Exhibition and the 1940 'Portuguese World' Exhibition in Lisbon, this ideology did not find an immediate echo in a permanent Colonial museum. Collections of Brazilian, African and Pacific ethnology did exist at the University of Coimbra and at the Portuguese Society of Geography in Lisbon. The *Museu Etnológico Dr. Leite de Vasconcelos* e *Museu Nacional de Etnologia* also held some collections. However no political project was developed to display the overseas empire of Portugal until the 1950s when the first plans were made for a *Museu do Ultramar* to be developed in Lisbon. So, generally speaking, the development of anthropology was relatively unrelated to colonial politics. It should be added that the National Museum of Ethnology opened the doors of its current building in 1975, the same year that the new government declared the independence of its colonies – making it, in a sense, a late to post-colonial national ethnographic museum. Whilst a large part of the collections indeed came from the former Portuguese colonies in Africa, Asia and America, it also dedicated a great deal of its attentions to the establishment of a very extensive Portuguese ethnographic collection.

As remarked by Dias (2001, 103) an in-depth study of the history of the museum would provide a useful basis for understanding Portuguese colonial policy, but as she states, Portuguese anthropologists have been reluctant to consider the history of their discipline, including that of the provenance of its ethnological collections. She notes that the commemoration in 2000 of the discovery of Brazil, did not give rise, as might have been expected, to a more critical reading of Portugal's relationship to its former colony, asking "When will it be possible to mount an exhibition on a specific geographical area or an historical event which takes several points of view into account: the colonised, the colonisers and the academics?" (Dias, 2001: 103). Although local and Portuguese ethnology was well founded and developed during the first two decades of the Salazar dictatorship, it also benefitted from a second period of heightened interest, just after the 1974 coup, with the establishment of many new local ethnographic collections but also collections related to national culture and the arts (the Ethnographic and Archaeological museum of Dr. Joaquim Manso, the National Costume Museum, the National Museum of Theatre in Lisbon). So it remains today that "ethnography in Portugal is often equated with popular and peasant culture" (Dias, 2001: 102).

In 1974, a left-wing military coup ended the dictatorship and introduced broad democratic reforms. The following year Portugal granted independence to all of its African colonies, as already indicated above, this did not provoke a critical presentation of Portugal's colonial past in its national museums. Rapid social changes and the democratisation of access to education with the growth of the middle classes followed, and in consequence, the importance of cultural services and activities has drastically increased since the 1980s. The country has also very much benefited in this sector from financing provided by the European Union – of which it has only been a member since 1986 - and which has helped develop or create many museums, both national and local (Anico and Peralta, 2007: 190).

National museums do not appear to deal directly with Portugal's difficult recent political past. 2004 was marked by the opening of a quintessentially national museum: the museum of the President of the Republic in Lisbon, initiated by socialist president Jorge Sampaio and opened near the official residence of the president in Belém. The role of the Portuguese president, elected every five years, is essentially representative. The museum mainly valorises the architectural heritage of the palace itself, and provides visitors with an historical overview of the

presidential institution since 1910. The museum's holdings were initially founded on the presidential gifts donated by General Ramalho Eanes, who served as president between 1976 and 1986. The displays focus on national symbols and the explanation of key elements of the biographies of past presidents, illustrated using personal and important objects owned by the heads of state.

However, the museum's very existence highlights the relative silence in regard to the relationship between the presidency and the recent period of dictatorships, proving the difficulty inherent to establishing a critical history of an institution by the institution itself. Even if, when it opened, the President underlined that 'A democracy does not have an official historiography and the history is made in plurality by historians' (Jorge Sampaio, quoted by Público.pt, 2004). The museum defines its mission in the most neutral terms possible as 'depicting the presidential institution to establish an interactive relationship between the citizen and visitor, promoting the participation of visitors through social, cultural and artistic means.'

(<http://www.museu.presidencia.pt/>, consulted on 25 February, 2011). The chronology of presidential figures creates *de facto* a kind of continuity smoothing over the difficult divides and revolts that have so deeply marked Portuguese political history since 1910.

## National museums and cultural policy in Portugal

Though several museums were created by the monarchy, the actual nominal title of national was given to three museums for the first time, in 1911, after the creation of the Republic: *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga*, *Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporânea* and *Museu Nacional dos Coches*. In 1965, three more museums were titled as national, two outside of Lisbon: *Museu Nacional de Arqueologia e Etnologia* (Museu Etnológico Dr. Leite de Vasconcelos), Lisbon; *Museu Nacional de Soares dos Reis*, Oporto; *Museu Nacional de Machado de Castro*, Coimbra.

From 1910 to 1933, museums owned by the state were managed by the *Conselhos de Arte e Arqueologia* (Councils of Art and Archaeology) of the *Direcção Geral de Instrução, Secundária e Especial* (Direction of Secondary, Superior and Special Instruction) of the Ministry of Public Instruction, renamed the *Conselho Superior de Belas Artes* (Superior Council of Fine Arts) of the *Direcção Geral do Ensino Superior e das Belas Artes* (General Direction of the Superior Education and Fine Arts) as part of the Ministry of National Education, until 1974.

Salazar's anti-liberal and nationalist regime had kept very tight control over the content and form of cultural affairs, by influencing how Portuguese history and culture were to be represented, notably in museums. It was a very centralised system that delegated little authority to regional or municipal instances. With the end of the regime and the emergence of a new ideology of democratic society, a policy was established that accorded a great deal of importance to a freer and more critical appreciation of the country's cultural heritage and cultural regional delegations were created with the 'aim of reducing social and regional imbalances in access to culture' (João Lima, M. and Gomes, R., 2010). This approach was to mark a stark contrast to the absence of effort to widen access to culture beyond major urban centres already observed as characteristic of the Salazar period.

Portuguese cultural institutions were progressively reorganised administratively after the coup of 1974. Museums were managed by the *Secretaria de Estado da Cultura* (Secretary of State of Culture) and in 1980, the *Instituto Português do Património Cultural* (Portuguese Institute for Cultural

Heritage) was created with a *Departamento dos Museus, Palácios e Fundações* (Department of Museums, Palaces and Foundations). The Portuguese Institute of Museums (IMC) was created in 1991 and with the advent of Portugal's first socialist government in 1995, cultural affairs became an ever more central aspect of state policy and for the first time they were placed under the direct tutelage of a dedicated Ministry of Culture. In 2004, the *Lei Quadro dos Museus Portugueses*, (legal frame for Portuguese museums) established the *Rede Portuguesa de Museus* (Portuguese Network for Museums). The RPM functions as part of the Portuguese Institute for Museums and Conservation, and provides a label for Portuguese museums whether private, public, regional or local as long as they meet the standards set by the Institute. It, of course, includes all national museums. It was a significant law for the history of Portuguese museums, designed to 'regulate the creation, activity and management of museums'. As with the creation of the IMC itself, the Law can be considered a response to the context of a museum boom in Portugal since the 1980s, providing a frame that could help new institutions find their place and gain steady financial support. The official texts state that the aim of the new Law was "to create an accreditation of museums to promote the access to culture and the valuation of cultural heritage through the introduction of standards of quality to be followed by Portuguese museums".

It defines the concept of museum; establishes the procedures for the creation of new museums; identifies their museological functions (study and research, inventory and documentation, conservation, security, interpretation, exhibition and education); regulates the duties of a museum; determines the existence of qualified staff as well as financial resources (NEMO, 2010: 1). It established museums (including all national ones) for the first time as a nationwide network, to be administered according to a coherent policy in technical terms.

Indeed, the 2004 Law also introduced a new classification as 'national treasures' for objects of particular importance and created a central digitised archive mission to deal with all the documents related to these objects. It also provides for a centralised editorial service that has since been made responsible for the integral edition of the collections of the museums run by the Ministry for Culture and a series of guidebooks (NEMO, 2010: 3). In addition, it has been important in developing a national tariff grid for museums, with reductions for students and the introduction of free entrance on Sunday mornings.

The 2004 guide issued by the IMC lists 116 out of the 530 institutions that claim the title of museum in Portugal today (Raposo, 2010: 4). They are of varying size and mission and are run by different governing bodies, they all profit from the visibility and support provided by the Portuguese Museum Network label helping to promote and market the museums of Portugal in a tourist driven economy. 'Whilst the quality of the work produced in Portuguese museums is unquestionable, their lack of public visibility is equally evident' (IMC, 2004: 3). The IMC as a label also includes some of the most dynamic and prestigious local government museums, besides some major museums run by private entities and state companies. However, as a department of the Ministry of Culture, the IMC directly administers only 29 museums, giving them all a kind of national status. There are also a series of other important museums run directly by other ministries and the governments of the Autonomous Regions of the Azores and Madeira (all have been included in the annex table).

A diversification of possibilities and attitudes to the financing of cultural affairs is illustrated by the creation of the Serralves foundation in Porto, which though initially a state initiative, has

become an original, and still relatively rare, example of partnership in this area between the state and civil society (Coelho and Santos, 2008: 8). Today it is Portugal's most important museum of contemporary art. Its focus is on Portuguese and international art since 1968, a date which appears as more significant politically than artistically (its chronological scope differentiates it from the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Lisbon, created in 1911 and focusing uniquely on Portuguese art since 1850). Situated in a prestigious building constructed by architect Álvaro Siza Vieira, it was the city's undeniable showpiece during its year as European capital of culture (2001). According to its website, it attracts over 400,000 visitors a year making it one of the most frequented museums in the country, ahead even of the National Coach museum.

The financing of Portugal's national museums by the state is based on the running costs and "the ability to generate their own revenues plays no role in the funding allocated to museums every year" (Coelho, J. and Santos, C. 2008). This incremental budgeting system has come under some scrutiny and the recent museum plan introduces the idea of a more careful evaluation of the efficiency of different institutions and their budget handling.

In terms of the education of curators and the place of museology in Portuguese academic tradition, Dias (2001: 98) remarks on the fact that "museology is considered a minor topic" marginal in relation to the teaching of anthropology and its presentation in museums (but also in relation to other disciplines of material culture). She points to an absence of scientific publications in Portuguese dealing with museological issues and the "non-existence of Colloquia and round-tables on museums in general"; this is certainly something that we have also observed in our research for this report. The situation is currently changing with specific courses being dedicated to museology in many universities. The 2004 law also provided for an editorial project to produce a series of books relating to professional issues faced by the staff of Portuguese museums (NEMO, 2010: 3).

In 2007, a new decree merged the Portuguese Institute of Maintenance and Restoration with the Portuguese Institute of Museums to form the Institute for Museums, and Conservation, assembling "in the same institute, competencies in the areas of the museums and conservation and restoration of the mobile and immaterial cultural heritage" (HEREIN, 2010). The desire to streamline the administration of Portuguese museums and to increase the efficiency of its members as a network led to the development of an overall pedagogical approach: *Strategic Plan for State Museums* issued in 2010 (João Lima, M. and Gomes, R., 2010). The plan hopes to further harmonise state policy, especially in terms of the professional qualifications required to work in state museums and to promote academic and scientific training for the museum sector. In terms of general education, a national competition was founded as part of a more general policy to promote art education in schools: "my school adopts a museum" to encourage closer ties between schools and museums of the national network (João Lima, M. and Gomes, R., 2010: 32).

## **Case studies in chronological order**

### **Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga (MNAA)**

The National Museum of Ancient Art, *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga*, (MNAA) was created in 1884 as the *Museu Real de Belas Artes e Arqueologia*, integrating the already existing collections of the *Academia de Belas Artes* in Lisbon. Its opening fulfilled a longstanding need, arising after the

abolition of religious orders in 1834, to provide a worthy setting for the multitude of works of art that had come into the possession of the state. The idea for the creation of the ancient art museum was set off by the success of a large retrospective exhibition of ornamental Portuguese and Spanish art in Lisbon in 1882 and by the possibility of a place for a permanent presentation provided by the state's acquisition of the Palácio Alvor (palace of a seventeenth century aristocrat). In 1911, the collection was separated into two parts forming the *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga* (Arts from 1200-1850) and the *Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporânea* (art since 1850). During the *Estado Novo* period, particular attention was given to emblematic elements of Lisbon's architectural heritage, buildings classified as historic were massively restored as emblems of the Portuguese nation. These included some museum buildings such as the MNAA. It also gained a new wing that opened in 1940, with the exhibition of the *Primitivos Portugueses* (the Portuguese school of Painting, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries) which form the central canon of Portuguese art history.

The collections of painted Portuguese tiles was part of the MNAA until 1965, but played a very insignificant role in the permanent exhibit although they were showcased in the 1940 display of objects from the MNAA during the Portuguese World Exhibition. In 1965, the collection was used to found the independent *Museu do Azulejo* that was given the title of 'national' in 1980. The *Museu nacional do Azulejo* is housed in a convent dating back to the sixteenth century and is itself a national monument of great artistic value. Decorative tile work has since come to be recognised as a very strong and representative expression of Portuguese culture.

The MNAA's importance is also due to the normative role that it played in providing other smaller Portuguese museums with a museographical model. Until 1974, it was considered as a place where museum professionals could come to learn their trade in terms of communication, education and conservation services.

Although it is home to some irrefutable masterpieces of European painting, from an international perspective the museum is less well known than the famous museum of art in Lisbon the *Calouste Gulbenkian Museum* (1967) whose 'excellent financing and bright museography casts somewhat of a shadow over the national museum of ancient art' (Manaster, 1986: 73). Although clearly a private foundation with a Board of Trustees, we might mention however that its founder Calouste Gulbenkian (1869-1955) was a British national of Armenian origins, yet he specified in his testament that, whilst he intended to dispose of his property and heritage under the terms of British law, his foundation was to be run under the terms of Portuguese law. Before establishing his own museum as a foundation based on his personal collection, Gulbenkian donated important collections of paintings of foreign schools to the national museum, leading to the established of two rooms especially dedicated to his donations in the *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga*, respectively opened in 1948 and 1953 (*Museu nacional de Arte Antiga*, 1962: 8). Portugal's National Museum of Ancient Art and its National School of Painting do not seem profit from quite the same privileged status in terms of image and visitors relatively to other European countries such as Belgium or the Netherlands where the major artists of those countries play a very clear role in the creation of national identity.

## Museu Nacional de Arqueologia

Dr. José Leite de Vasconcelos (1858-1941) founded The National Museum of Archaeology, *Museu Nacional de Arqueologia* in 1893, some ten years after the National Museum of Ancient Art discussed above. Its first denomination was the Portuguese Ethnology Museum. It was founded thanks to donations to the collections transferred from the already existing Royal archaeological collections in 1910. The ideology behind the museum was to explore the origins of the 'Portuguese man', a very fashionable notion among a certain Portuguese intellectual elite during the second half of the nineteenth century. It sought, by adopting both an anthropological and an archaeological perspective, to uncover the genuine origins of Portuguese popular culture. A very different approach than the paternalist and folkloristic ideologies later behind the establishment of the *Museu de Arte Popular*, that was to give a charming image of the simple life of Portuguese people.

Its mission was to provide a national account of the history of human settlement in the geographic territories of Portugal from its earliest origins to medieval times with an approach that sought to combine the disciplines of physical anthropology, ethnology and archaeology (Raposo, 2010: 1). It also sought to illustrate what its creator, José Leite de Vasconcelos, considered as the strong ties between past cultures and current cultural practices and productions. It was explicitly conceived of as an instrument for the promotion of national identity, as both a popular and scientific undertaking. Vasconcelos to instruct the public, instilling in it the knowledge and love of its homeland. From the 1930s onwards, the museum took a more clearly archaeological direction in terms of collections and publications, but it is only since 1990 that its title excludes the term ethnology.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, it has been located in the Jerónimos Monastery, one of the most emblematic monuments of Portugal (since 1962 it shares the building with the National Maritime Museum). Throughout the century, it also expanded its collecting mission to a more international perspective with finds, through donations, from the entire Mediterranean basin. During the entire period of the Salazar regime, the museum was the unique centre for the practice of professional archaeology in Portugal and played a centralising role in relation to the creation of some local museums – today some hundred Portuguese museums claim to hold archaeological collections (Raposo, 2010: 4). In contrast with the centralising policy of the Salazar regime, the current director of the museum, Luis Raposo, seeks to develop the national museum as a network in direct collaboration and exchange with other museums across the country. This, as he states, is necessary due to the rapid multiplication of archaeology museums since the 1990s in particular. His objective is to make the national character of the museum a reality for the entire territory and not uniquely for its capital and to thus encourage a dialogue between national and regional initiatives.

Between 1989 and 1993, the museum was organised as a permanent exhibit entitled: *Portugal, from its origins to beginning of the Nation*. Since 1995, the museum has been mainly organised as a series of temporary exhibitions developing different themes of national interest: *The Bronze Age: discourses of power; From Ulysses to Viriato; Roman Portugal: using Natural Resources; Islamic Portugal; The Religions of Lusitania*. Their organisation relies on collaboration and materials from museums all over Portugal and equally calls on specialists from all over the country and from abroad in an effort to provide a plurality of historical points of view.

It would appear, on the other hand, that the permanent exhibits are relatively unimportant in the present life of the museum: there is however, a presentation of ‘Treasures of Portuguese Archaeology’ and also a presentation of Egyptian archaeology. For Raposo however, the above-mentioned temporary exhibits have allowed the museum to develop the intellectual material necessary, in the form of catalogues, to consider a new, more up-to-date and conceptually interesting permanent gallery. The museum is one of the most visited national museums in Portugal just behind the National Museum of Carriages.

### **Museu Nacional dos Coches**

Perhaps surprisingly, the National Museum of Carriages, *Museu Nacional dos Coches*, is the most visited of the IMC national museum network, with 225,000 visitors a year (Observatório das Actividades Culturais, 2010: 29). It is, today, the world’s largest collection of ceremonial coaches from the seventeenth and eighteenth century both in terms of quantity and quality.

Created in 1905, the conception of a collection of royal coaches as an independent museum is quite original, and its success, unprecedented (the most obvious evidence is that it is one of the few Portuguese museums for which it is possible to find easily available documentation in several languages) – by stark contrast, the museum of royal coaches at Versailles in France, is nearly completely unknown (dwarfed by the rest of the site) and is not considered of any particular importance.

The idea for the establishment of the collection goes back to the Universal Exhibition of 1851 in London that led to the first presentations of Portuguese decorative arts (Bessone, 1993: 4). The success of these events, especially the presentation in 1881 at the South Kensington museum in London prompted King Luis I himself to decree the establishment of a collection of Portuguese art in Lisbon. It was here that, for the first time, the royal carriages were exhibited to the public as objects of aesthetic value. However, the establishment of a permanent museum was undertaken twenty years later at the direct initiative of the new queen, Amélia de Orléans e Bragança (1889) who took great pains to convince the king to transform the magnificent riding ring and stables of Lisbon into a place for this permanent exhibition, originally known as the *Royal museum of carriages*. It received, from the beginning, quite exceptional support and was already then thought of as a major new tourist attraction that might “make up for the relative modesty of other national museums” (Bessone, 1993: 13). Indeed one of the principal reasons for its success has been the magnificent architectural and decorative baroque frame that splendidly showcases the carriages, making it an exceptionally complete visual experience. This explains that its existence was maintained despite the fall of the monarchy only five years later, the collections were even considerably expanded and an important section was added for costumes (later to become a basis for the National Costume Museum that opened in 1976). In recent times, there has been heated debate over a new project supported by the Ministry of Economy for a modern building with large open spaces to relocate the collection.

### **Museu de Marinha**

The National Maritime Museum, *Museu de Marinha*, is another of Lisbon’s most popular destinations; it is indeed well known as one of the largest maritime museums in Europe. It is one of two Portuguese museums to be run by the Ministry for Defence, (which is the reason for the absence of the ‘national’ epithet in its title, as this can only be attributed by the Ministry for

Culture). It appears however, as far more significant than the second museum managed by the Defence ministry, which is the Military Museum also situated at the centre of the city of Lisbon.

The museum is directly placed under the patronage of Vasco de Gama, whose statue thrones in the entry and whose body is buried in the adjoining Santa Maria church. The Jerónimos monastery is considered to be one of the most important and beautiful monuments in Lisbon. It was built by the so-called Henry the Navigator in the 1450s and it is was there that Vasco de Gama's men spent the night before embarking on their famous voyage to India around the southern tip of Africa in 1497. The voyage of discovery led by de Gama became part of national mythology due to the epic poem, *Os Lusíadas* by Luis de Camões (1525-1580).

The inception of a public museum as a collection related to the maritime history of Portugal dates back to 1863 and the reign of Louis I (1838-1889). It moved several times, first installed in the Naval Academy and then in the Palace of the Count de Farrobo. The collections expanded most radically during the Salazar era and it was the donation of its most important benefactor, Enrique Maufroy de Seixas, in 1948 that inspired this ambitious project and the search for a more suitable setting. It should also be remarked that the Ministry of Defence was powerful enough to be able to promote the museum's installation in such a prestigious setting, in addition, the president at this time was Almirante Américo Thomaz, formerly active in the Navy.

The choice of the monastery however, also corresponded with regime's reading of Portuguese history. The Salazar dictatorship had clearly developed the idea of a Golden age of Portuguese history during the period of maritime expansion, followed by a period of decline that culminated in the 1910 Revolution. The 'Portuguese World' Exhibition of 1940 was organised in the Belem quarter related to the Jeronimos Monastery and to the place of departure of all great maritime exploration missions.

To this end, the Exhibition represented both a celebration of Salazar's efforts to liberate Portugal from its decadence and a platform to present the regime's version of the country's history. Accordingly, the organisers structured the exhibits around the high-points of Portuguese history-the Foundation, the Occupation and Conquest, Independence and the Maritime Empire, which was lauded as one of the great achievements of mankind. (Corkill, Almeida, 2009: 384)

The Exhibition's centrepiece was the *Padrão dos Descobrimentos* (monument to the discoveries) opposite the Jeronimos Monastery. "In national memory, the location represented a golden age when it was the locus of the country's position as a maritime and transcontinental power. What took place represented a systematic "ideologization of history" in which diverse memories are transformed into a single official memory to become part of the national identity" (Corkill, Almeida, 2009: 388). This national discourse found permanent expression with the installation of the Maritime museum in the western wing of the Jerónimos Monastery in 1962.

The museum tells the naval history of Portugal in a series of chronologically organised galleries and boasts everything from modest common fishing boats to the estate cabin of the royal yacht. Its *pièce de resistance* a massive hall with life-size gilded royal barges and a number of early aircraft attached to the navy. According to Manaster (1986: 72) the national maritime museum is "outstanding visually and technically". It is the only national museum that provides a narrative of the Portuguese Golden age in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as a world power,

as an Empire based on its ambitious programme of maritime expeditions, status that it lost to English, French and Dutch initiatives over the next two centuries, its colonial reach losing its main stronghold with the independence of Brazil in 1822.

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## Annex table, Portugal

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Style Location
<u>National museums run by the Portugese Institute of Museums (Institute of Museums and conservation)</u>				<u>IMC: Portugese Museum institute founded in 2001.</u>			
Museu Nacional de Soares dos Reis		1833	Museum was set up by the King Pedro IV who desired to see a Museum of Painting and Prints in Porto	Run by the IMC	Art History, Decorative Arts	Portuguese painting and sculpture from the 19th through to the mid-20th century. A main attraction is the collection of work by the sculptor Antonio Soares dos Reis. Ceramics, silverware and jewellery are also important parts of the collection.	Porto
Museu nacional de Arte Antiga. The National Museum of Ancient Art	1884	1884	Monarchy	Run by the IMC	Art History	Portugese and European painting, metal work, cermaics, furniture, fabrics and jewellery.	Lisbon
Museu nacional de Arqueologia. The National Museum of Archaeology	1903	1893	Personal initiative of Dr. José Leite de Vasconcelos	Run by the IMC	Archaeology, Ethnography, Art History, Epigraphy	Portugal (origins) Egyptian Antiquity.	Lisbon

Museu Nacional dos Coches. The National Coach Museum	1905	1889	Monarchy, Queen Amélie d'Orléans (1889)	Run by the IMC	History of Transport, Decorative Arts	Collection given by the monarchy of the royal coaches used in processions from the 17 <sup>th</sup> to the 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	Lisbon
Museu do Chiado. Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporânea. The National Museum of Contemporary Art		1911	Museum created as separate entity, collections from The National Museum of Ancient Art	Run by the IMC	Art History	Portuguese art from 1850 to the present day.	Lisbon
Museu de Arte Popular	1948	1935	Antonio Ferro, secretary of the SPN, National Secretariat, Estado Novo	Run by the IMC	Portuguese Folk Art, Ethnology	Portuguese ceramics, popular gold and silver objects, musical instruments, basketwork, textiles, costumes and embroidery, miniature boats and horse-drawn vehicles, agricultural tools and reproductions of rural dwellings.	Lisbon
Museu Nacional de Machado de Castro	1960	1913		Run by the IMC	Art History	Religious art, especially sculpture, large collection of the royal sculptor Machado de Castro of the 18 <sup>th</sup> c.	Coimbra (formerly a regional museum) in the former episcopal palace.

Museu Nacional do Azulejo. The National Tile Museum	1980	1960	Museum created as separate entity, collections from The National Museum of Ancient Art	Run by the IMC	Decorative Arts	Portuguese tile collection	Lisbon
Museu nacional de Etnologia: The National Museum of Ethnology	1975	1965		Run by the IMC	Ethnology, Anthropology	Collections of African cultures, Mozambique, but also South American Indians, Indonesia and Macau.	Lisbon
Casa-Museu Dr. Anastacio Gonçalves	1980	1969	Collection and house donated to the state by the Dr Gonçalves	Run by the IMC	Art History, Literature	Decorative arts of Portugal and China. Painting, mainly portugese.	Lisbon
Museu Nacional do Traje. The National Costume Museum.		1975	Part of the collections transferred from the National Coach museum	Run by the IMC	History of Fashion and Costume	Portugese clothing (part of the collection comes directly from the royal house) from the 18th century onwards.	Lisbon
Museu Nacional do Teatro, National museum of Theatre	1982	1979	Collections nearly entirely based on private donations	Run by the IMC	History of Theatre	Costumes, props, modes, figures, designs, posters, photographies documenting the performing arts.	Lisbon
Museu da Musica, The musci museum	1994	1911		Run by the IMC			Lisbon

<u>Regional museums run by the IMC – and as such administratively national</u>							
Museu do Abade de Baçal		1915	Regional authorities	Run by the IMC	Regional History	History of the north-east region of Tras-os-Montes and to the former Episcopal Palace.	Episcopal palace etc.
Museu de Alberto Sampaio		1928		Run by the IMC			Former collegiate church.
Museu dos Biscainhos	1978	1963		Run by the IMC	History, Art	Palace museum: decorative arts: 17 <sup>th</sup> c.	Braga
Museu de Lamego	1922	1901		Run by the IMC	Sacred Art, Religious History	Pieces originally belonging to the Episcopal palace	<u>Location and building</u>
Museum regional de Arqueologia D. Diogo de Sousa		1980	Diogo de Sousa	Run by the IMC		Museum on the site of the best preserved archaeological remains of the Roman town of Bracara Augusta.	
Museu da Terra de Miranda	1982			Run by the IMC	Regional Archaeology and Ethnology	Local productions of all kinds. founded by Father Antonio Maria Mouinho in a 17 <sup>th</sup> c. municipal building...	Porto
Museu de Aveiro		1911		Run by the IMC	Art History	Collection of sacred art.	Lisbon
Museu Grao Vasco	1921	1916		Run by the IMC	Art History	Collection of sacred art.	Lisbon
Museu da Guarda	1985	1940		Run by the IMC	Art History, Archaeology		Lisbon

Museu Monografico de Conimbriga	1962	1930		Run by the IMC	Archaeology, Conservation	Museum at the site of the ruins of the Roman city of Conimbriga.	Lisbon
Museum de Ceramica		1983		Run by the IMC	Decorative Arts	Ceramics	Lisbon
Museum Ethnografico e Arqueologico Dr. Joaquim Manso		1976		Run by the IMC	Regional Culture, Ethnography	Located in the former home of the journalist and writer, founder of the Diario de Lisboa (daily newspaper). History of the region and cultural identity of Nazaré... section on maritime ethnography.	Coimbra (formerly a regional museum) in the former episcopal palace.
Museu de José Malhoa	1940	1933		Run by the IMC	Art History	Museum dedicated to the work of José Malhoa.	Lisbon
Museu de Evora	1915	1804	Inaugurated to the public in 1804 as the collection and library of Archbishop Manuel do Cenaculo	Run by the IMC	Art History	Based on the collections of an 18th century curiosity cabinet. Paintings collection, mainly religious art.	Lisbon
<u>Other institutions: universities or ministries...</u>							Lisbon
Museu Militar, National military museum	1926	1851	Artillery museum founded by the General José Baptista da Silva	Ministry of Defence	Military History	Exhibits include an extensive display of guns, pistols and swords (featuring iconic pieces such as Vasco da Gama's sword.	Lisbon

Museu Geologico, the Geological Musuem.	1918	1856		Ministry of Economy, Institute of Geology and Mineralogy			Lisbon
Museu de Marinha, National Maritime Museum.	1962	1863	Former royal collection began by King Louis I (1838-1889). Expanded during the <i>Estado Novo</i> .	Ministry of Defence	History of Maritime Life, Exploration and Warfare	Collections go back to the 15 <sup>th</sup> c. with historical paintings, archaeological objects and model ships.	Lisbon. The museum is fittingly housed in the monastery or hermitage of Jeronimos, built in late gothic Portuguese style in the 1450s by prince Henry the Navigator.
Museu de Ciência da Lisboa, The University of Lisbon Science Museum	1987	1967		University of Lisbon	History of Science	Basic scientific theory and instruments.	

Serralves foundation and the National Museum of Contemporary Art	1999	1989		State funded but also companies and privated individuals, is administered as a private foundation with a board whose directors are named by the state.	Contemporary Art	Seeks to place contemporary Portugese art at an internation level.	Episcopal palace etc.
Museu Nacional da Imprensa		1997		Non profit association: Association of the Museum of printing.	History of Printing Technology, Publication, Graphic Design, art History	International (Germany, France, America) collection for the technology of printing. Cartoon, graphic arts etc.	Former collegiate church.
Museu do Douro	2009	1998	Created by parliamentary decision	Run by a foundation controlled by the Ministry for Culture	Regional History	A network of museums dedicated to regional economic and cultural themes: tabacco, wine production, silk, bread etc.	Braga
Museu da Presidência da República (Museum of the Presidency of the Republic)	2004			The portugese presidential offices.	National History	History of Portuguese presidents since 1910.	