

6.5.2017 / 3.9.2017

RACISM

AND

CITIZENSHIP

PADRÃO  
DOS  
DESCOBRIMENTOS

RACISM AND CITIZENSHIP  
6 MAY TO 3 SEPTEMBER 2017  
MONUMENT TO THE DISCOVERIES

A PROGRAMME BY  
Past and Present – Lisbon, Ibero-American Capital  
of Culture 2017

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Museu Nacional de História Natural e da Ciência  
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PAST AND PRESENT - LISBON,  
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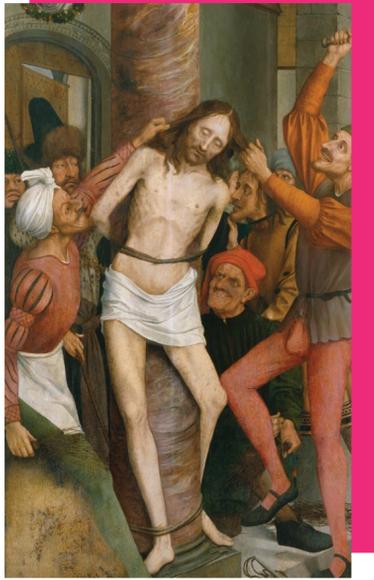
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## TENSION BETWEEN EXCLUSION AND INTEGRATION

The first part of the proposed itinerary focuses on the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries, on stereotypical images of Moors and Jews, replicated once they had converted to Christianity. It then moves on to display images of enslaved populations of African origin and natives from America and Asia. This part concludes with the theory of races, that is, a hierarchical vision of the world's peoples assuming European supremacy.

The colonial world opens the second part, exhibiting images of slavery and forced work, and the dehumanisation and inferiorisation of Africans. The difficulty in the representations becomes clear, especially when confronted with the recognition of non-Christian religions. Finally, contemporary art appropriates the colonial memory and reflects on a more inclusive vision of citizenship.



Quentin Metsys (1466-1530)  
Flagellation of Christ (1514-1517)  
Oil on wood, 191 x 92 cm  
Museum of the Machado de Castro  
Inv. no. 2518  
© José Pessoa (DGPC/ADF)

AND MUSLIMS

The forced conversion of Jews in 1497 in Portugal and its overseas territories triggered tensions relating to economic competition in the context of a successful integration. The converted Jews, known as *New Christians*, were excluded from Crown and Church institutions by the blood purity statutes, which were abolished only in 1773. The New Christians would also be the main victims of the Inquisition. The Christian conquest of the Iberian Peninsula (from the

8<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> century) viewed Muslims as the main enemy, a perception transported to Africa and Asia with the Portuguese expansion (15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries). The Muslims were expelled in 1496, but forced conversions took place to emphasise the infamy of their origins, with the converted labelled *Mouriscos*. Like the Jews, they were subject to the blood purity statutes. In Portugal, legally, until the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Jews and Muslims were only admitted for diplomatic reasons, while they were accepted in the colonies under certain restrictions.

SLAVES FROM AFRICA

The representation of Africans is initially linked to slavery and cannibalism. Images of slaves at work in the Brazilian plantations are displayed alongside images of black people in the midst of nature or of slaves as accessories of the Court. While the devil is represented by a black African in sculptures of saints, there are also examples of African saints. In a context of widespread discrimination and individual promotion of religious conversion, there is great ambiguity. Objects such as manillas, used for the acquisition of slaves like any other merchandise, and painful, imprisoning shackles document subjected and marginalised human lives. Indeed, the punishment of slaves was only beginning to be documented by artists, who were not Portuguese but who were involved in and favourable to the movement to abolish slavery.



Iron shackle  
Museu Nacional de Arqueologia  
No. ETNQ 2017.11  
© Luis Pavão



Unknown artist  
St Bartholomew (17<sup>th</sup> century)  
Painted and gilded wood, 102 x 35 cm  
Main Church of Idanha-a-Nova

NATIVES OF AMERICA AND ASIA,

EUROPE IN THE CENTRE AND OTHER RACISMS



Vasco Fernandes (1475-1542) and Francisco Henriques (?-1518)  
Adoration of the Magi (1501-1506)  
Oil on wood, 132 x 91 x 2,5 cm  
Museu Nacional Grão Vasco  
No. inv. 2145  
© José Pessoa (DGPC/ADF)

Simultaneously innocent and demonic, Native Americans were seen as open to conversion but permanent wrongdoers. In Portuguese art, contradictory representations of Brazilian Indians are evident. At times, they could be portrayed as one of the Three Wise Men, and at others, as the Devil. Yet it was the relationship with cannibalism which most significantly shaped and characterised Native Americans in Europe until the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

To describe India, large European repertoires of world customs show images of human sacrifices and pagan worship of strange foreign gods.

On the basis of these negative depictions, a theory of race began to be sketched out in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, which would influence hundreds of texts, illustrations and paintings. Until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, attempts were made to claim a hierarchy of races, with Europeans at the top.

Tobacco pouch in the shape of a black woman's head (18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century)  
Faience from Viana do Castelo, 21,3 x 13 x 18 cm  
Museu Nacional de Machado de Castro  
Inv. no. 9435, C-892



THE WORK REGIME IN THE

PORTUGUESE COLONIAL WORLD



Shoemaker shop (c. 1910), Mozambique  
Collection João Loureiro

In the colonies, slavery continued throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the series of abolitionist legislation from 1853 to 1875 proved to be difficult to apply. At that time, the label «slavery» was replaced with that of forced work. Yet the true nature of this change of label was unclear as it was lenient. There was a great deal of international debate on the mechanisms by which forced work was imposed. For this reason, there continued to be Africans shackled or imprisoned from the wars to occupy Africa, demonstrating the prolongation of this attitude. This is why African workers recruited for forced work continued to be documented or photographed, even in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

CONTRADICTIONARY REALITIES IN

PORTUGAL AND ITS AFRICAN COLONIES



Raul de Caldeira  
Advertising poster for Aregos soap (c. 1910-1916)  
100 x 75 cm  
Museu Nacional de Portugal  
CT12926 PL

The colonial exhibitions held in the 1930s and 40s in Porto and Lisbon followed international models of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the setting up of human zoos populated by communities brought from the colonies and exhibited in a «natural habitat» recreated for this purpose, highlighting relationships of supremacy and dependency. Along the same lines, the eroticisation of native African women became possible in a country with supposedly strict morals, and was justified by prejudices of primitivism and inferiority. Even though images of Africans assimilated into European customs and apparel acted to counter this view, racism expressed in illustrated publications, advertisements and art works was present and continued into the 1950s. The very limited access of the native population of the colonies to citizenship status improved somewhat during the colonial war of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s.

A NEW VISION

OF AFRICA

The constitutional monarchy (1834-1910) led the way for religious freedom with the authorisation of the return of Jewish communities and the construction of the first synagogue in Lisbon in 1904. It was not until 1985 that the first mosque was built in the city since the Middle Ages was constructed.

The revolution of 25 April 1974 and the independence of the colonies in 1975 created the conditions for universal access to citizenship. Despite this, issues of access and discrimination continue to exist, although racism has ceased to be supported or ignored by the state. Today, racism is punishable by law.



Musica da Escola das artes e officios Moçambique, A. O. P.

Arts and Crafts School Band Officinas (c. 1915), Mozambique  
Collection João Loureiro

The post-colonial period has seen significant activity by African artists, who explore their identity in a process of interrogation of institutionalised and Eurocentric images, contrasting them with the memory of different peoples. Meanwhile, Portuguese artists originating from the former colonies or who have absorbed the cultures of African populations have used these experiences to reflect on a new world, exempt from racism and with citizenship.



Gonçalo Mabunda  
Memories (2013)  
Metal and wood, 80 x 68 x 14 cm  
© T COM ART

