

Learning from SAAL's Brief Life: Housing production and popular organization

Ana Tostoes

The SAAL developments (1974-1976) were created in Portugal at the initiative of the central power following the democratic revolution that took place some months before, on 25 April 1974. SAAL's major lines of development can be traced generically following the loudest demands of the revolutionary process for housing that drove the development of 176 residential neighbourhoods conducted under the scope of popular participation by the technical brigades who had completed on-site projects and given support to the population.

In typological terms, the neighbourhoods were of great uniformity, using almost exclusively the single-family terrace house, in accordance with the Central-European models from the 1920s. Constructive methods used different processes from self-construction to pre-fabrication or craftsmanship knowledge. The aim of this paper is to analyze this uncommon housing production using two case studies, Bairro da Bouça (Siza) and Casal das Figueiras (Byrne) in order to reveal an alternative way of thinking and construction in the scope of extreme circumstances linked to social movements.

Biography:

Ana Tostões Ph.D. (ana.tostoes@tecnico.ulisboa.pt) is chair of DOCOMOMO International, DOCOMOMO Journal Editor and associate professor of architecture at Técnico.University of Lisbon, where she specializes in twentieth century architectural and urban history with an emphasis on Re-Use practices. She has published widely, curated exhibitions, and taken part in juries and scientific committees.