

Department of Applied Social Sciences

Roads for flow, roads for development: Portuguese Highway Engineering in the post-II World War (1945-1974)

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Objectives

Analyse the discourses and practices of the **Portuguese civil engineers** specialized in **road engineering** ("roads for development (*fomento*)") in the **metropolis** and the **colonies** during the dictatorship *Estado Novo*;

Study the **circulation and appropriation of U.S. traffic engineering** by European civil engineers (in this case, Portuguese) and how this influence changed conceptions about mobility in Europe ("roads for flow");

Emphasise the **role of technology** in the occupation and exploitation of **colonial territories**, and, more specifically, in the production of discourses and practices of civil engineers relative to roads in the colonies;

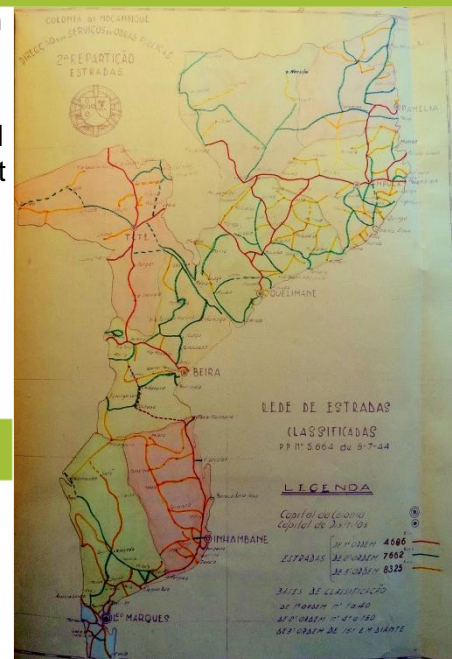
Study the debate about the **"Americanization" of Europe** and how the circulation of technology was part of a hegemonic U.S. agenda, co-produced with European actors.

Methodology

Framed in the **History of Technology's methodologies**, particularly an **actor/network approach**, this work will follow the actors such as the highway engineers and the roads planned and built.

The use of the **"lens of technology"** to understand the discourses, ambitions, and achievements of highway engineers will reveal technopolitical and technoeconomical dynamics hitherto little explored.

It will also be studied the **centre and periphery relations** and the processes of **appropriation, and circulation of knowledge**.



Expected Results

To present the **profile of Portuguese highway engineers** during the third quarter of the twentieth century, their intervention in the **design of metropolitan and colonial territories**, and their participation, both at **cognitive, and professional levels**, in the European and international debates, and in the establishment of standards.

To identify the consolidation of a **rhetoric on development ("fomento")** crossed by **traffic engineering concepts**, used to justify the public investment in roads with improved technical characteristics (Junta Autónoma de Estradas, 1956).

To identify how this discourse influenced the construction of roads in the **metropolis**, such as those included in the **"Main International Traffic Arteries"** (the "E-roads"), and in the **colonies**, such as the **"economic roads."**

