Dear Manon Mollard,

after reading and re-reading the response from the reader in question, we have to naturally start by saying that we stand fully by what we wrote. We have a profound disagreement with the way the reader framed his comments and recollections and it is our impression that his political affiliation won’t allow him for an appropriate understanding of our text (or the world in general).

It also seems relevant to refer that, although representing a practice, two individuals co-signed the text, one portuguese and another russian.

- Our text frames in a very short 7 lines paragraph an illustration of a full century of portuguese history. Resulting from a shorter version of an initial longer introduction, as you remember, naturally short and concise, it consciously left a lot out. Nevertheless, after re-reading the final version a few times again, the image we propose seems extremely precise in its intentions and successful for this article.

From that point onwards, and after framing a set of landmarks at the turn of the century, the text moves towards its raison d’être: the last decade, the touristic explosion in Portugal, and our positioning as a practice within it. The core of the text is fuelled by our experience, our projects, our clients, our views. We can only assume the reader has a different experience in this context, and no knowledge of ours.

The pompous and completely biased (and ironically nationalistic) lens used by the reader, both in his historical recollection, in the ultraconservative view over the last decade in Portugal, and over our practice, leads us to a simple disagreement. The adjective “soft” was discussed, very precisely chosen, and there is a clear difference between what happened in countries like Portugal or what happened in countries like Germany, Uganda, Russia, China or North Korea.

Portugal was, and is, a stable safe heaven of traditional values. That was the message we decided to pass and we stand by it.

Being apolitical, as a practice or as individuals, is our prerogative.

Best regards,
Filipe Magalhães
Lera Samovich

Porto, June 3rd 2020