

Lino, V. L. (2019). *Recovering voices of the refugiadas: remembering female world war II refugees in Lisbon*. Abstract from MLA International Symposium.

During World War II Portugal came to play an essential role as country of transit and temporary asylum for thousands of refugees seeking to escape Nazi persecution and war. After the armistice of 22 June 1940, thousands made their way through France and Spain to reach Portugal from where they eventually would leave for their final destinations overseas. Since Lisbon was indeed the great embarkation point for connections to the Americas, the city and the nearby coastline filled with foreigners fleeing war-driven Europe. This paper addresses the role of female refugees within public and cultural memory in Portugal. Indeed, the figure of the “refugiada” [female refugee] has become a recurrent mnemonic reference that has shaped dominant memory images of war-driven Lisbon in Portugal: Until today it is emphasized how in contrast to the Portuguese women at the time these female refugees smoked in public, visited coffee houses alone, used makeup as well as shorter hair and shorter dresses. However, in contrast to their visibility as an object of admiration and/or disapproval, their particular situation and their own voices are almost absent from the public sphere. The purpose of this paper is twofold: First, it retraces the dominant image of the refugiada in cultural memory in Portugal, foregrounding precisely the contrast between the visibility of female refugees with their “foreign” costumes and the almost absence of their voices and perspectives. Second, it analyzes literary and artistic negotiations of these (in part fictional) voices and perspectives in order to discuss the particular place of the “refugiadas” within the memory of war-time Lisbon.