

Reviews

Conservation Publications – IIC member's reviews of international periodicals: Portugal

The third in the series of non-English language conservation journals and periodicals reviews submitted by IIC members is from Portugal and was kindly submitted by António João Cruz.

Historical context

Professional conservation and restoration activities in Portugal started to emerge in the mid of the nineteenth century promoted mainly by the Academy of Fine Arts, in Lisbon. Later these activities were transferred to the supervision of the National Museum of Ancient Art (MNAA).

Until the 1930s, conservation and restoration practitioners were mainly painters who, in general, were only marginally interested in restoration and did not possess any formal training. The exceptions were rare and occurred mainly in the MNAA, where some painters like Luciano Freire established their restoration practices. In the 1930s, by initiative of some museum curators, collaborations with scientists were established (above all João Couto) and works of art began to be studied using laboratory resources, especially radiography. This encouraged some established publications to start dealing with conservation issues.

Before the 1990s, conservation and restoration articles in Portuguese were included in national museology or history journals and, later, in exhibition catalogues, and were not authored by conservators-restorers, but only by scientists or art historians. In the 1980s, the training of conservators-restorers, previously based on a master/apprentice system, began to be imparted through a formal system of education. The first available form of training developed within an institution (José de Figueiredo Institute, IJF) specifically from the restoration workshop of MNAA and was outside the regular national education system. Later, several other institutions established their conservation training courses that were included within the national higher education network. Some of these schools were: the Higher School of Conservation and Restoration, which was shut in 1999, the Tomar Polytechnic Institute, the New University of Lisbon and the Catholic University in Oporto. Only then the conservator-restorers did begin to publish their work. At first they published exclusively in Portugal and only when they started postgraduate studies they began also to publish in international journals (mainly in areas such as physics, chemistry or material science), usually having conservation scientists as co-authors.

While until the 1940s conservation publications focused primarily on paintings, the establishment of the MNAA's workshops encouraged the focus to shift to different types of works.

More recently, some studies have been published addressing general issues rather than case studies. However, even to this day, conservator-restorers seem to show some inertia and in most cases their publications are only related to academic activities.

Studies and publications in the area of architectural heritage have, however, followed a different path. The first publications on the subject, with a political and philosophical perspective, appeared in the first half of the nineteenth century and were signed by intellectuals concerned with the identity of the nation. Restoration interventions, developed with institutional support, started to be carried out from the end of the century by initiative of the national government through a department where engineers prevailed — a situation that essentially continues today with the difference that, the engineers have been replaced by architects.



Until the 1930s, however, publications that dealt with practical cases were still rare. They began to gain significance only in 1935 thanks to a journal with monographic issues, published until 1966 by one of the national services (the General Directorate of National Buildings and Monuments, or DGEMN). The tradition of presenting major interventions publicly through national publications persists to this day in other national journals. Furthermore, the presentation of studies related to materials and intervention techniques developed in academic contexts or other national institutions are presented mainly in national and international congresses.

Journals in Portugal

Today, the main Portuguese journal devoted solely to conservation is *Conservar Património* (<http://revista.arp.org.pt/>), published by the Professional Association of Conservators-Restorers of Portugal, which is indexed in several international databases including AATA (<http://aata.getty.edu/Home>). This journal has a broad scope and publishes peer-reviewed papers in Portuguese and other languages. Many papers are on Portuguese subjects, but a significant number of authors are from different countries. Among the Portuguese authors, conservation scientists seem to be in the majority. Some issues are dedicated to papers presented at specific scientific meetings.

Another journal focusing exclusively on conservation is *ECR – Estudos de Conservação e Restauro* (<http://citar.ucp.pt/ecr/>). This journal is published by a research centre based in a faculty with conservation-restoration courses at the Universidade Católica Portuguesa; many papers, mainly case studies, are related to studies developed within this institution. The papers are reviewed by members of the scientific committee.

Cadernos de Conservação e Restauro is another journal in the field of conservation, published very irregularly by the National Institute of Conservation. The majority of papers relate to the institute's activity and do not appear to be peer-reviewed. The authors are mainly conservators. The latest issues were monographic and dedicated to some important paintings housed in Portugal, although of Flemish origin. The last issue dates from 2010 and it is unclear whether the journal is still in publication – a doubt that also arises about other Portuguese journals with irregular periodicity and reduced frequency.

The digital journal *e-conservation* <http://www.e-conservationline.com/> is based in Portugal, although it does not specialize in Portuguese subjects. Moreover, it publishes only in English and the number of full papers written by Portuguese authors is very limited.

Besides these journals, two magazines both under the name of *Boletim*, were published very irregularly in the past. These magazines were created by a public conservation centre and an association for the development of conservation. In general, the issues had a very small number of pages, which were largely devoted to news. In the specific area of architectural heritage, three periodicals must be mentioned because of their interest for conservators, although none of them is devoted exclusively to conservation. All of them are dedicated exclusively to Portuguese case studies.

The *journal Monumento* <http://www.monumentos.pt> is presently owned by a national agency active in the area of urban rehabilitation and, in part, it represents a continuation of the journal of DGEMN, published between 1935 and 1966. Each issue is dedicated to one monument or one urban area and the papers are commissioned, with the authors being predominantly architects or historians. Conservation issues, in a restricted sense, appear occasionally.

Património – Estudos <http://www.igespar.pt/pt/publications/category/35/assets/> is a journal published by the national institute responsible for the architectural heritage (IGESPAR). The issues are thematic and the papers are also commissioned. The authors' backgrounds are quite diverse.

The magazine *Pedra & Cal* http://www.gecorpa.pt/revista_edicao.aspx?idr=56 is property of an association of companies specialising in urban and heritage rehabilitation (Gecopra). It mainly publishes news and short notes related to interventions done by the associates.

Recently a new journal has started publication, the *Anuário do Património* <http://www.anuariodopatrimonio.com/>, which, along with a directory of companies and professionals working in the field of urban and heritage rehabilitation, intends to present news and small notes about some restoration interventions.

Some Portuguese journals or magazines active in different fields have also shown interest in conservation issues or have published studies written by conservators. Among the academic or technical journals, the more relevant are: *Azulejo* (about tiles), *Artis and Revista de História da Arte* (both focused on art history), *Revista da Faculdade de*

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Letras - Ciências e Técnicas do Património (dedicated to cultural heritage) and **Museologia.pt** (concerned with museology).

Among the specialized magazines, **Invenire**, devoted to the cultural patrimony of the Catholic Church is also of interest to conservators and conservation. Besides national publication, there are a number of local journals, magazines and newsletters that deal with conservation and related topics, published by local institutions, such as museums and other associations.

<https://www.iiconservation.org/node/3707>



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