

P23. Textiles: a Cultural Heritage to Preserve

Ana Claro (CHAM - Universidade NOVA de Lisboa) and Maria João Pacheco Ferreira
(Museu de São Roque; CHAM - Universidade NOVA de Lisboa)

Weaving is an ancient activity, with more than thousands of years. Made of natural fibers, such as linen, cotton, and silk, textiles have always shown an impressive capacity to adapt to different functions in civil (domestic and public), religious, and military contexts. In the form of clothes, furnishings like bedspreads or door hangings, tents, liturgical ornaments, and many other typologies, textiles are incredibly versatile but also fragile, making their adequate preservation and study over time very difficult. Recently, this reality has been accentuated by the emergence and use of new materials, making the preservation of these textiles an even more challenging task.

Museums and other institutions responsible for their maintenance have been increasingly in contact with historians, art historians, and conservation scientists to better understand, preserve, and exhibit the vast and rich historical textile heritage. These collaborations have actively encouraged interdisciplinary stylistic, technological, and material studies and the development of conservation techniques. However, they also face serious problems with space management practices, budgets, and sustainability policies that are not always easy to reconcile. The proposal of this panel intends to share dilemmas, new approaches, and solutions to preserve the textile cultural heritage.

Keywords: Textiles; Conservation; Museums; Materials.

Thematic lines: Heritage Practices; Heritage Management; Conservation, Restoration and Sustainability.

Short bio: Ana Claro obtained her Ph.D. in Conservation and Restoration in 2009 from the Universidade NOVA de Lisboa. She worked as a researcher at the Getty Conservation Institute (Los Angeles, USA) as a visiting postdoctoral researcher on the Asian Organic Colorants project. She then got a grant to study the organic colorants on Portuguese textiles: IMPERIAL COLOURS: The impact of the Portuguese Expansion on Chinese silk production (16th to 17th centuries, at CHAM (Portugal). In 2012 she won a Marie Curie grant with the NANOART: Nano Art Research Tool project, at Universidad de Zaragoza (Spain). In 2016 she returned to Portugal, CHAM, where she keeps doing her research on Portuguese textiles, with the research group Textiles Trade & Taste, founded in 2011, and Project IRONIC, which studies the iron gall ink degradation and its possible treatment by nanotechnology. Her primary research focus is the study of colored materials applied to Cultural Heritage.

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