



LABORATÓRIO NACIONAL
DE ENGENHARIA CIVIL

International Seminar Conservation of glazed ceramic tiles

research and practice



Exhibition

Space for promotional exhibits is available in the conference hall, or in the nearby exterior area. For cost and other conditions, please contact Teresa Fonseca:

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A table will be available for participants to make available promotional leaflets of other events, services or products or to call for research partnerships within the scope of Conservation.

Venue

Congress Centre
Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil
Av. Brasil 101 – LISBON
Underground: Alvalade
Seminar web site
<http://azulejos.lnec.pt>

Other information

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Deadlines

Extended abstracts: March 15, 2009

Communications: April 05, 2009



Introduction

Glazed ceramic tiles decorated with intricate geometric patterns and Arabic writing was for centuries, and still is, in widespread use in the Islamic countries and for westerners remain one of the most recognizable and constant marks of the beauty of mosques. From its origin in the Middle East and flourishing in the Islamic world, glazed tiles spread to Spain and Portugal and subsequently to Italy, the Low Countries and most of Europe.

Glazed ceramic tiles are used as decorative panels or as finishes of whole walls and façades in many countries, such as Portugal, where they make up a very relevant part of the national cultural heritage. Introduced to the country from the Moorish and Andalusia factories of Granada, Seville and Manises, they started being produced locally in the 16th century and developed as a preferred means of finishing architectural surfaces a century later, when they became ubiquitous in palaces, churches, gardens and bourgeois houses. The prevailing cobalt blue painting over a white tin glaze, that is so readily associated with the baroque architecture of Portugal and Brazil, developed when these colours became fashionable under the influence of Ming porcelain brought to the country by the Portuguese ships that made the China trade route. Production in Holland, where the same influences gave origin to glazed tiles finished in the famed Delft blue, was particularly remarkable and when demand in Portugal grew so much that it could not be met locally, tiles were actually imported from Holland. After a century of decline, the Art Nouveau movement brought about a renaissance of glazed tiles. Now over a century old, Art Nouveau tiles are themselves a worthy and readily recognizable heritage asset of both Europe and the Americas.

Concept and themes

Azulejos (as glazed ceramic tiles are called in Portuguese) are a durable architectural finishing, as proven by centuries-old panels that are still virtually undamaged. However they also suffer from the inherent weakness of being a layered material in which the outer glazed layer can readily detach from the ceramic substratum when water is able to penetrate within. Other frequent decay causes are the cracking of the glazed surface and the loss of adherence of individual tiles to the supporting walls. These and other weaknesses are often exacerbated by interventions making use of materials that are not fully adequate. Cases are found nowadays where well over a third of the glazed surface has been lost in a decay process that is in progression and will inevitably lead to the loss of whole panels of heritage value.

The aim of this seminar is discussing glazed ceramic tiles of historic interest, their decay and their conservation, as well as the pathologies of their insertion as architectural finishes. Examples of decay and their causes will be reviewed. Research results will be presented and research needs in the field put forward. Conservation and restoration methods and materials will be discussed based on the experience of practicing conservators and on results of past interventions.

The event will include lectures by specialists from several countries with relevant activity in the field, as well as communications by researchers and practitioners. For details, please see the program at the seminar site.

Language

English will be used both for written contributions and for oral presentations.

Participation

The seminar is open to everyone. The theme is of particular interest to researchers and practitioners in the field of conservation of glazed ceramic tiles and tile panels. A certificate of participation will be granted.

Organisation

The seminar is organised by Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil as a networking activity of the Project Eu-ARTECH, Access, Research and Technology for the Conservation of the European Cultural Heritage.

Steering Committee

João Manuel Mimoso (Chair)
José Delgado Rodrigues
Augusta Moniz Lima
Teresa Diaz Gonçalves
Dória Rodrigues Costa
Teresa Fonseca
Maria João Revez

Scientific Committee

José Delgado Rodrigues (Chair)
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Jaume Coll
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M.^a Antónia Pinto de Matos
M.^a Letizia Amadori
M.^a Rosário Veiga
Mário Mendonça
Max Schvoerer
Nathalie Huet
Rasool Vatandoust

Call for papers

Papers are welcome within the wide scope of the event including the historical context of manufacturing technologies and materials and research therein, particularly when bearing on conservation issues. Some will be selected for oral presentation and the remaining may be presented as posters. Regardless of how they are presented all accepted papers will be included in the seminar proceedings.

Extended abstracts of typically four to ten A4 pages shall be submitted by March 15, 2009 by e-mail to azulejos@lnec.pt. These will be peer judged and reviewed within 10 days of receipt. The final corrected text in standardized format must arrive by April 05 and will be published in a CD. A post-seminar volume will be published later with selected contributions.

Registration

The registration fee will be €40,00 and includes admission to the seminar conferences and presentations, a CD with the extended abstracts as received by April 05, a certificate of attendance, and afternoon coffee breaks. Lunch at the premises and participation in an event dinner are possible at extra cost.

