

ARTis ON 12, Special Issue: Heritage Conservation

Deadline: Jun 15, 2021

ARTIS-Institute of Art History of the School of Arts and Humanities of the University of Lisbon

ARTis ON 12 (2021) – Special issue:

HERITAGE CONSERVATION IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD (1919-1939)

Editorial board: Maria João Neto, Clara Moura Soares

The present year marks the 90th anniversary of the Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments (1931). The Patrimonium research group at ARTIS – Instituto de História da Arte da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa intends to celebrate the date by publishing a special issue of the ARTis ON journal.

The Athens Charter—adopted at the First International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments (Athens, 21-30 October 1931) and published within the context of the League of Nations is the first international document addressing issues of conservation and restoration. It features topics which remain important and pertinent to this day, such as the international status of monuments, which encourages international cooperation towards more effective conservation and restoration processes; the reuse/repurposing of monuments as a conservation measure; the presence of heritage in urban settings and its role in the development of cities; the importance of information and education for a better knowledge of heritage and its conservation.

The Athens Charter is, however, far more than a document. It meets the action plan of the League of Nations—founded on 28 January 1919, following the end of World War I, specifically its goal of ensuring the protection, conservation, restoration, study, and divulgation of historic and artistic heritage, both movable and immovable. The International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (Paris, 1922) was established sharing the same purpose, as were the International Museums Office (1926) and the International Commission on Historical Monuments (1933), both under the Committee's supervision. These were responsible for organising international cooperation in the realm of historic, artistic, and archaeological heritage by promoting scientific conferences, periodical publications such as *Museion – Bulletin de l'Office International des Musées* (created in 1927), and documents establishing technical and managerial guidelines.

The International Conference for the Study of Scientific Methods in the Examination and Conservation of Artworks (Rome, 1930), the aforementioned International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments (Athens, 1931), and the International Conference on Archaeological Excavations (Cairo, 1937), in which the most pressing and relevant topics at the time were discussed, were decisive for the development of the debate regarding conservation and restoration,

and of the best practices within that context. The results of these conferences were published on practical conservation manuals, such as *La Conservation des Monuments d'Art et d'Histoire* (1933), *Museographie: Architecture et Aménagement des Musées d'Art* (1935), *Manuel de la Conservation et de la Restauration des Peintures* (1938), or *Manuel de la Technique des Fouilles Archéologiques* (1939). These are the first international publications discussing the reach of intellectual cooperation within the realm of science and heritage.

This international cooperation also allowed for the drafting of crucial diplomatic documents such as the *Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict*. All this supports the proposition that the interwar period was indeed the time when the modification of the conservation, restoration and heritage management protocols took place, with the definition of scientific analysis methods and the establishment of norms for the protection of cultural property.

Undisputed as it is that the Second World War called for the debate, with new arguments, on the practice of safeguarding and intervening on heritage, it is also true that, after 1945, previous initiatives implemented under the League of Nations were resumed and adapted, such as the creation of new international organisms meant to promote the debate on the most crucial topics regarding conservation and restoration (ICOMOS, ICOM, ICCROM), and the publication of other advisory documents such as the *Venice Charter* (1964).

On the present issue of the ARTis ON journal we intend to analyse, on an international scale, the context in which the *Athens Charter* was formulated, in the wider context of the role of the League of Nations in defending and valuing historic, artistic and archaeological heritage, both movable and immovable.

Considering the two-decade interwar period in particular, we invite authors to submit the results of their research on topics such as:

- the consequences of World War I on heritage;
- personalities involved in the various committees and organisations active in that era;
- evidences of international cooperation (scientific conferences, publications, etc.);
- the *Museion – Bulletin de l'Office International des Musées* (content and contributors);
- the effects of the *Athens Charter* on conservation and restoration policies;
- legislation for the preservation of historic sites;
- training and action of conservation and restoration technicians;
- construction materials and techniques used in heritage conservation and restoration;
- monument restoration and/or reuse/repurposing projects;
- initiatives for the valuing and promotion of heritage;
- inventory projects;
- museum architecture and planning;
- creation of photographic archives of monuments and artworks;
- establishment of laboratories for the study of artworks;
- organisational initiatives and structures established after the Second World War which were retrieved from the interwar period.

Other topics suggested by authors may be considered by the ARTis ON Scientific Committee, pro-

vided that they fit the theme of the present issue of the journal.

Articles under this theme can be submitted until 15 June 2021. They should follow the style guide of the journal, which can be consulted on:

<http://www.artis.letras.ulisboa.pt/en/multimedia/ficheiros/publicacoes/ARTis%20ON%20-%20EDITORIAL%20GUIDELINES.pdf>

All articles must be sent to the following email addresses: revistaartison@letras.ulisboa.pt and claramourasoaes@letras.ulisboa.pt

If the file is 1MB or larger, it should be sent through a file transfer service (Wetransfer, Dropbox, Meo cloud, One Drive, etc.).

Reference:

CFP: ARTis ON 12, Special Issue: Heritage Conservation. In: Arthist.net, Jan 25, 2021 (accessed Aug 3, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/33274>>.