

Azulejo Art (Paris, 9 Nov 12)

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Azulejo Art, the History of an Ornamental Practice

A product of the ceramic art form, the azulejo reveals a capacity to adapt to and incorporate styles and artistic movements which cut across the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. Initially used as a substitute for the lack of altarpieces and paintings in churches, the azulejo gradually became a costly object, prized by the aristocracy for the decoration of its palaces. Some compositions reveal a practice in which the ornamental is adjusted to affirm and legitimize the aesthetic value of an art form.

The Grand Panorama of Lisbon is symptomatic of this phenomenon. Discovered recently in the palace of the Counts of Tentúgal, this 17th century creation (c.1699) attributed to Gabriel del Barco, reveals the taste of the time, especially in its use of a characteristic duotone. It represents a complete panorama of the city before the famous earthquake of 1755. Its topographic dimension gives us, in effect, a chance to identify both existing and destroyed monuments. Convents, churches, palaces, a great number of buildings represented here, have one thing in common: the pervasive presence of azulejos. This panorama thus allows an analysis of ornament through the typological study of conservation sites. Even so, from church to palace, the usage of the azulejo varies. Function, use and the pleasure of possessing such works are among the parameters which one must take into account when considering an art form which addresses themes to do with the very notion of ornament.

This conference will present case studies from the Iberian Peninsula and will allow one to discover results of recent research projects on azulejos and ceramics in Portugal.

For the detailed programme please see:

<http://www.inha.fr/IMG/pdf/Programme-22.pdf>

Reference:

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