

***Azulejos* and prints – looking for matching**

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Abstract

Azulejos are one of the arts that most feature the Portuguese cultural heritage. Throughout the five centuries long history of Portuguese tiles the alternate use, as well as the cohabitation, of patterned and figurative tiles has been constant. The latter is usually the focus of greater attention, given the narrative potentials it entails.

To compose the tiles, particularly, the figurative ones that cover walls and vaults in churches or in palaces, the painters looked for inspiration in engravings. This connects the Portuguese tiles to a visual matrix present beyond European borders and it turns out to be very important to know the prints that inspired the tile compositions.

In fact, to know the print which was used as the model for a tile panel is a precious help for the reading and interpretation of the tile composition. It also gives a lot of information about the type of models and images better accepted at the time, as well as about the visual culture which is underlined in a particular period of the History of Art. Finally, it contributes to the knowledge about the painter or of the cultural elites which dominated then the art market.

Our communication will focus on these different aspects, showing many examples of the use of prints by the Portuguese tile painters.