

FOREWORD

Historiography of Art has been concerning itself with the study of image according to new methodological perspectives, viewing it as a polysemic and multicultural expression, aiming to integrate it in its own anthropological context, from the manifestations of image in the Prehistoric Age to those conceptualised during the Contemporary Age. The incorporation of these images in their physical, landscape, or other contexts, indicates certain performative practices of identity and of a communicative nature. On the other hand, the study of its circulation, of the artists and models, allows us to understand the widening spectrum of the potential of artistic production as a vehicle for ideas and expressions between restricted and broad sociocultural universes.

Following Carlos Alberto Ferreira de Almeida's reasoning, an author who viewed image «como instrument de comunicação de ideias, como uma parte privilegiada (...) de um sistema de símbolos e significações de uma cultura» («as an instrument to relay ideas, as a privileged part (...) of a system of symbols and meanings and of a culture» [*O presépio na Arte Medieval*, 1983]), we aimed to ponder, in this Section, on the forms of artistic-cultural integration of image in its physical and action-related context. At the same time, we attempted to share experiences concerning practices, rituals, uses and modes of fruition, starting from case studies that mirror diachronic and/or synchronic viewpoints on images.

Whilst it was not possible to include the text corresponding to the opening presentation by António Martinho Baptista, titled *A arte do Côa e o espírito do lugar – tradição e modernidade* in the present Section, we nevertheless must highlight that the author references over two hundred and fifty centuries of image history contained in the Côa Valley, a perfect instance of a space that functions as a synthesis of constructions of identity based on image. The reflections described in the Section “Imagem e Contexto” (“Image and Context”) over the course of the three days of the Congress found their bases in this very principle.

Of the 38 communications accepted to be included in the Congress program, only 21 are included in this publication, due to several reasons. Since we were aware

of the complexity inherent to the study of image, we opted to organise the texts according to their themes' own chronological order, despite the difficulties faced when attempting to frame some of them within a chronology, given their theoretical and/or transversal character(s) to the diachrony. In this sense, we decided to begin with a broad and reflexive reading on image with Vítor Oliveira Jorge's *Voltando de relance à problemática da Imagem*, continuing with the theme of parietal art with Maria de Jesus Sanches' *arte rupestre de tradição esquemática do Norte de Portugal*, a paper that effectively paves the way to the chosen chronological order. We also must emphasise the contributions of researchers from different nationalities, as well as the broad spectrum in terms scopes, fields and supports regarding the study of image, from urban space to religious and civil architecture, sculpture, painting, goldsmithing, tilework, waxwork, patinated plaster and terracotta and imaginary landscape of apparel.

Ana Cristina Sousa
Leonor Soares
Maria de Jesus Sanches