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The Ocean's Cultural Heritage  
Portugal



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[ 5 ]

# OCEANICA

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## MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY

Interspecific relationships, perceptions and practices over time

In the current international historiography, to conduct a history of the oceans we need to bring the sea – including its animals and natural ecosystems – into the writing of such history integrating them as key actors. Both people and non-human animals are lively agents in establishing ecological, economic and cultural relationships that go far back in time and well into our contemporaneity, when the sustainable management of marine resources is vital for humankind.

Studying the past occurrences of marine mega fauna, extractive activities (e.g. fishing, whaling, hunting) and related economic activities, as well as the scientific and cultural production associated to them, is one of the objectives of several projects included in “The Sea” research line, at CHAM – Centre for the Humanities. As a plural and diversified research group in terms of our methodological and chronological approaches, we are currently addressing how the Iberian empires have impacted on and influenced the exploitation of natural resources in their colonial territories, the appropriation of nature, local knowledge and practices, and how they were integrated centrally and locally. We are equally interested in understanding local and indigenous perspectives and ways of connection between people and their surroundings and environments, in Europe as well as in Africa and in the Americas.

With a focus on the Atlantic Ocean in the early modern period, this interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approach allows us to study long term relationships between people and animals and to understand significant ecological changes. We believe that it will contribute to the development of a worldwide oceanic history where all actors are included, and it may also help bringing different people together for a common or shared strategy towards environmental conservation.

Cristina Brito

## A RESEARCHER AND HER WORK

Carla Alferes Pinto

Carla Alferes Pinto is a researcher of the Early Modern Period (16th and 17th centuries) at CHAM – Centre for the Humanities. As someone who deals with interpreting the past, she realized that time never repeats itself, but has a graceful way of presenting itself in what we sometimes understand as cycles. Because the beach remains her favorite spot for vacations, swimming was the sport she practiced for several years and diving was one of the techniques she learned to explore the findings of the past, it is with spontaneity and enthusiasm that Carla finds herself again surrounded by water, sea, and oceans. The UNESCO Chair “The Ocean’s Cultural Heritage” is therefore a privileged island for the development of the research areas and social outputs related to the “Heritage and Memory” working group and the “Permanent Seminar on Women’s History Studies” that she coordinates.



## THE BEACHES OF PORTUGAL

Figueira da Foz

In 1876, the writer Ramalho Ortigão appraised the conditions of this beach saying it had everything to make pleasant the bathers stay. He highlighted the localization of the bay between the fortress of Saint Catherine and the village of Buarcos, the new neighborhood near the Mondego River estuary, the hotels, the theatre, the bull arena and the two clubs, where people could dance.

The place of Figueira developed first in the estuary of the Mondego River, benefiting from a strategical localization between the river hinterland and the access to the sea. Due to its intense port activities, Figueira became a village in 1771. Only a century later, Figueira started being sought by the elites as sea bathing place. With the arrival of new people and the need to lodge them, a new neighborhood was built, in 1860, close to the ocean. In 1882, Figueira became a city, because of its fast urban development. The proximity of the city to the sea increased along the years until all the maritime front was urbanized in the twentieth century. In the 1940s, this seaside resort was considered the “Queen of Portugal’s beaches”, representing the progress and cosmopolitanism of the Portuguese society during the summer. Meanwhile, port activities lost a part of their relevance, but were never abandoned. In the 1960s, the construction of the port jetties would transform profoundly all this seashore. To the north of the main jetty, the silting become so intense that Figueira’s beach increased several meters altering the close relation of the population with the sea.



▲ Figueira da Foz Beach, early 20th century. Postcard from the Arriaga Archive.



▲ Figueira da Foz Beach, 2013. Photo: Joana Gaspar de Freitas.

## MARITIME ARCHEOLOGY

Exhibition: The underwater heritage of Cascais

In the last years, the Municipality of Cascais has been developing a programme of management and enhancement of its underwater cultural heritage. This itinerant exhibition presents, through panels with high quality photos and short texts, some of the works being done. The exhibition highlights the local archaeological sites associated to shipwrecks and navigation areas, the preservation of the archaeological materials and the marine life forms that use these sites as a habitat. This project, built around the identity and memory of the littoral of Cascais, is being used to reach and raise the awareness of the population. Recently, it was also recognized as an example of good practices concerning the development of protection, dissemination and fruition of the underwater cultural heritage, according to the UNESCO convention of 2001.



▲ Exhibition: The underwater heritage of Cascais. Photo: Joana Gaspar de Freitas.

## HERITAGE COMMUNICATION

The Nazare wave: a stimulus for learning

Can a wave be considered a heritage? The Nazaré wave has become one since McNamara surfed it and everybody heard about it. Now, this amazing phenomenon can be understood by everyone. An innovative project, developed by the Faculty of Sciences of Lisbon, the researcher Mafalda Carapuço and the students of the Secondary School Gama de Barros, at Cacém, explains in a simple way the natural process that creates this special wave. In a 5 minutes video, using scientific animations, the students show what they have learned about it. This film, described by the students as “incredible”, was supported by the EEA Grants. The film, in English, can be seen here: <http://nazarewave.fc.ul.pt/themovie.html>

## NEWS AND EVENTS

### UNESCO REPORT

It was recently published a report about the contribution of the UNESCO Chairs on education for sustainable development. The report can be read here: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0025/002523/252319e.pdf>

### INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL HUMANITIES

The Franklin Institute, at the Alcalá University (Spain), is organizing, between July 3 to 6, 2018, the *International Conference on Environmental Humanities. Stories, Myths and Arts for Change*. The environmental humanities offer a multidisciplinary approach that challenges the traditional division between human, social and natural sciences. Considering that holistic perspectives are fundamental for finding solutions to the present global changes, this conference aims to contribute to the development of the environmental humanities in Spain. The call for papers is open until January 14. More information at: [www.institutofranklin.net/en/events/international-conference-on-environmental-humanities/](http://www.institutofranklin.net/en/events/international-conference-on-environmental-humanities/)

### SOCIETY AND THE SEA CONFERENCE

The University of Greenwich (London, UK) in partnership with the National Maritime is preparing a conference on the values of the ocean and coasts for sustainable development, in September 6 and 7, 2018, at University of Greenwich. The call for papers will open soon. More information at: [www.gre.ac.uk/society-and-the-sea](http://www.gre.ac.uk/society-and-the-sea)

### THE NORFISH PROJECT

Poul Holm, from the Trinity College of Dublin, is developing an interesting project on the North Atlantic Fisheries, with the support of the European Research Council (NORFISH). The main purpose is to do an environmental history of this maritime region between 1400 and 1700, analyzing the impacts of fishing increase and the consequences of The Little Ice Age on the marine ecosystems. Through this example, it is sought to understand how people manage global phenomena and climate change, a key issue facing the challenges of today. More information at: [www.tcd.ie/history/research/centres/ceh/norfish/](http://www.tcd.ie/history/research/centres/ceh/norfish/)

### ARTICLE ABOUT MANATEES

In the last number of the *International Journal of Maritime History* there is an article of two researchers of the UNESCO Chair “The Ocean’s Cultural Heritage”. Nina Vieira and Cristina Brito wrote “Brazilian manatees (re) discovered: Early modern accounts reflecting the overexploitation of aquatic resources and the emergence of conservation concerns”. The article can be read here: <http://journals.sagepub.com/eprint/YAchQgasIMUysikSkGc2/full>