PREVENTIVE CONSERVATION AS A TOOL: EXPERIENCES IN THE COOPERATIVE INTERINSTITUTIONAL PROJECT FOR INSTITUTIONS OF RÍO DE JANEIRO

Milagros M. Vaillant Caliol
National Union of Writers and Cuban Artists

INTRODUCTION
Libraries and archives face a massive problem of deterioration and loss of their collections. The problems are of such magnitude that cannot be solved with the traditional restoration procedures. For this reason, the best alternative is preventive conservation.

An Inter Institutional Cooperative Project for Brazilian Institutions was developed in 2009–2011 to promote preventive conservation in historical patrimony institutions of Rio de Janeiro.

OBJECTIVES
To develop a preventive conservation training program for cultural heritage institutions in Rio de Janeiro.

To do a conservation survey of these institutions.

To develop a preventive conservation action plan with specific recommendations for each participant institution.

To publish the results as articles, at meetings and as a book that could be used as a reference material by other Latin American institutions.

PARTICIPANT INSTITUTIONS
National Archive (AN): Lucia Regina Saramago Perella.
Oswaldo Cruz Archive of Fluminense (AOC): Maria Alice Franco de Souza.
Coordination of Documentation and Archive of the Museum of Astronomy and Related Science (MAST): Ozana Hannesch.
Center of Memory and Information of the Founding Casa de Rui Barbosa (CMFCRB): Edmar Moree Gonçalves.

APPLIED METHODOLOGY

Course of Preventive Conservation
Preventive conservation courses, seminars and practical classes were offered to conservators, restorers, and representing from all institutions involved in the project.

These activities offered the conceptual, technical, and methodological tools necessary for to carry out the experimental work.

Surveys

INSTITUTIONS WITH CLIMATE CONTROLLED STORAGES

N° V\% Climate Controlled \% Climate Controlled

RH AND T FLUCTUATIONS IN RJ, 2005-2009

RH, RAIN AND WIN SPEED ANNUAL AVERAGES IN RJ, 2005-2009

VARIATION OF THE MONTHLY AVERAGES OF RAIN OF RJ, 2005-2009

RESULTS REPORT

OBTAINED RESULTS

COMPARISON OF PREVENTIVE WORK CARRIED OUT BY EACH INSTITUTION

BUILDING CONDITIONS OF THE INSTITUTIONS

NEED TO BE IMPROVED (38%) GOOD (72%)

STORAGE CONDITIONS OF THE INSTITUTIONS

NEED TO BE IMPROVED (41%) GOOD (57%)

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

An interinstitutional preventive conservation working group was organized and consolidated in Rio de Janeiro, to foster cooperation among several cultural heritage institutions with important documentary collections.

The methodology used, evaluated high-priority aspects of preventive conservation, applicable to institutions in different geographical location.

The educational activities increased the level of training and understanding, introducing concepts in the daily practices of these institutions, producing a change in mentality and style of work for the preservation of historical heritage in Rio de Janeiro.

Rio de Janeiro climate conditions increase deterioration processes in archival collections of these institutions. High levels of RH, the interactions with T, the low wind speed, and high levels of rain, especially in spring and autumn, were the most damaging factors. The last one has caused severe disasters. That is why, it is important for each institution to develop a disaster preparedness program.

There were similar damages in most collections, so the actions to be taken could be similar too.

The results were published as articles, in meetings and a book in Spanish and Portuguese which could serve as a reference material for conservators and restorers from institutions of America Latina. In:

http://www.mast.br/pdf/livro_milagros_espanol.pdf