

Memory of the online presence of a Faculty: an exhibition

memoriafcsh.wordpress.com

A collaboration between Arquivo.pt and the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences of Universidade Nova de Lisboa (FCSH-UNL)

This collaboration resulted on the creation of an online exhibition that illustrates a real use case for the historical information preserved by Arquivo.pt (the Portuguese Web-archive). This exhibition highlights extracts of institutional online memories.

This work was developed within the [Investiga XXI](#) work group, where Arquivo.pt web archivists and researchers from the Social and Human Sciences collaborated.

[FCSH-UNL](#) supported the initiative through its Library. The online exhibition will contribute to write the history of the Faculty and its research centers.

FCSH: 40 years of lifetime, 20 years online

FCSH was founded in 1977 and it is part of Universidade Nova de Lisboa. Since 1997, that FCSH websites have been used as communication interfaces with its community of teachers, researchers and students.

Arquivo.pt preserves web content published since 1996. Therefore, the time span of the web content preserved by Arquivo.pt covers 20 years of the institutional online memory of FCSH, that is half of the Faculty's lifetime.



Fig. 1: The first version of the FCSH website preserved by Arquivo.pt (<http://arquivo.pt/wayback/19970417065158/http://www.fcsch.unl.pt/>)

In the early years of the Web, some printed information began being also available on the FCSH website. Over the years, the website scope was extended to also include news, lists of researchers, research programs, access points to various services, becoming a comprehensive portal to academic life at the Faculty.

Research centers are also important entities of the Faculty's ecosystem. They were born as small research cores of professors, more than 30 in 1997, but along the years they merged with each other, becoming larger and in smaller number. So, in 2016 there were only 16 centers.

Research centers are autonomous, managing their own projects and organizing specific events. This fact resulted in the creation of additional related websites for various purposes, such as institutional communication, project descriptions and event promotions. More than 100 websites were identified.

The online exhibition aimed to recover the memory of these institutional entities and present them to the academic community, through a chronological narrative built from the web pages preserved from the past by Arquivo.pt.

Synthesizing 20 years of memories into a single page

The project began by inventorying the current websites produced within the scope of the Faculty and R&D centers activities. Analyzing just a short list of URLs was enough to begin the research.

Progressively, we decided to focus on websites of institutional communication, and left for future work the additional websites about projects and events. Those that weren't yet preserved, were targeted for future crawls by Arquivo.pt.

The data collection was performed humanely through the Arquivo.pt search interfaces. We mainly used the hostname as search expression and jumped from version to version, within the web archive.

We took note of the main changes on the websites across time, potentially interesting content and references to external websites of events and projects. The data were collected, selected and registered into a page per organizational unity.

Elements	Description	
Name	Name of the entity to be presented in the exhibition	
Institucional context	What entity is the website owner. Projects and events websites may belong to multiple entities of the Faculty.	
Hostname	<i>hostname(s)</i> of the website along time and period of time	
Preserved version on Arquivo.pt	<i>Links</i> for preserved versions on the Arquivo.pt for each <i>hostname</i>	
Selected image	<i>Printscreen</i> of an image in a preserved version	
Web site history	Changes on tecnology, design and contents, URL, etc	
Selection of moments to remember	Selection of “interesting” moments in the website history with the link to Arquivo.pt	
Notes	Notes about others aspects related to the website preservation (important for the direct interaction with entities)	

Fig. 2: Table with elements for collecting information about the preserved websites of a given organizational entity.

Sometimes a R&D center used multiple hostnames along time. On the other hand, the identity may have also changed due to organizational merging, name changes or different institutional frameworks. For example, CHAM “Centro de Humanidades” in 2017 had two previous names: [“Centro d’Além Mar” in 2002](#) and then changed to [“Centro d’Aquém e d’Além Mar” in 2013-2014](#), when merged with “Centro de História da Cultura - CHC”, “Centro de Estudos Históricos - CEH” and “Instituto Oriental - IO”. Although, the hostname of the Website remained always is the same along time: cham.fcsh.unl.pt.

Sometimes, it was not straightforward to conclude if we were facing the same organizational entity after a merging, even when the website remained with the same title, same hostname and URL. It's hard to imagine that the entity changed if everything remained the same. Therefore, our conclusions were validated through interviews with current and previous staff of the Faculty and Research centers. Hence, the importance of institutional support and direct interaction with the entities, from which we tried to build a comprehensive memory.

Designing a time travel to the past

Memória da FCSH na Web

Presença online da Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas (1996-2016)

[Início da exposição](#) [Perguntas frequentes](#) [Sobre](#) [Contactos](#)

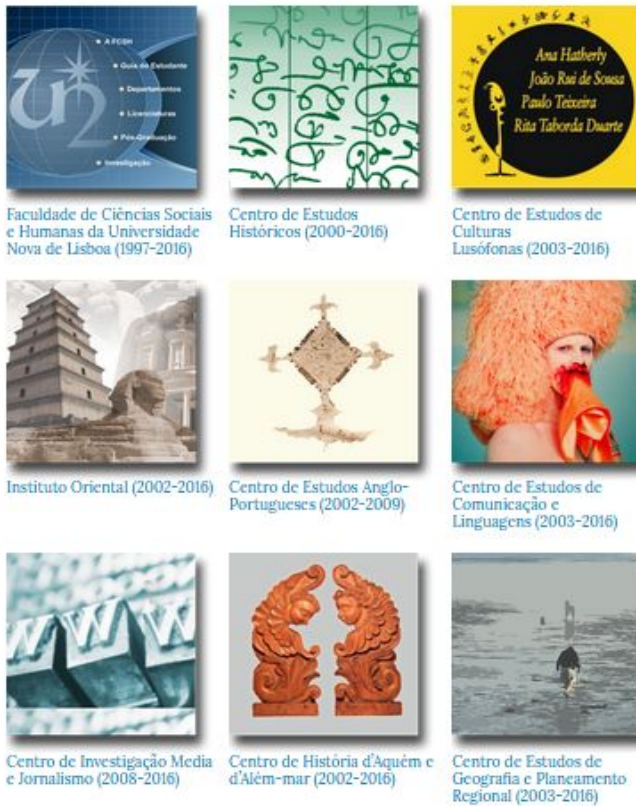


Fig. 3: Homepage of the online exhibition with images taken from the websites (memoriafcsch.wordpress.com)

The challenge was to create a website with a clean look and easy to browse. We anchored its navigation on suggestive images extracted from preserved web pages. The objective was to reinforce the idea that it is an exhibition about online *memory*, rather than about current information available on the live-Web.

Thus, the homepage of the online exhibition presents a collection of preserved web images from old websites of organizational units that belonged to FCSH.

The chosen publishing platform was the free version of Wordpress.com, so that anyone can perform similar works, despite a potential lack of financial resources.

By clicking on each image, the user is taken to a page that describes the online memory of each entity of the Faculty. It presents the following elements: featured image, brief synopsis, list of addresses along time and selection of moments to remember.

The text dedicated to each entity has a maximum length of 150 words and includes links to versions preserved on Arquivo.pt. In this movement between the online exhibition and the web archive, it is intended to provide the user experience of browsing an institutional memory.

Memória da FCSH na Web

Presença online da Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas (1996-2016)

[Início da exposição](#) [Perguntas frequentes](#) [Sobre](#) [Contactos](#)

Centro de Estudos Históricos (2000-2016)



Parâmetro da página de entrada (fcsf.unl.pt/ceh, 2009)

Memória do sítio Web

A primeira versão preservada com o endereço fcsf.unl.pt/ceh é de 2000 e não tem alterações até 2006. Entre 2007 e 2008 as versões recolhidas estão num novo endereço, ceh.unl.tripod.com. A partir de 2009, o domínio volta a ser o primitivo e o sítio Web surge com um novo design até 2015. A divulgação das publicações do centro é uma das funções do site.

Endereços

- fcsf.unl.pt/ceh, 2000-2006
- ceh.unl.tripod.com, 2007-2008
- fcsf.unl.pt/ceh, 2009-2016

Momentos para recordar

- [Programa de investigação do CEH, 2000](#)
- [Edições do centro, 2001](#)

Fig 4: Description page of an entity of the Faculty

(<https://memoriafcsf.wordpress.com/2017/08/01/centro-de-estudos-historicos-2000-2015/>)

To complement the exhibition there is a page of frequently asked questions and other support resources such as tutorials related to digital preservation.

Future work, because a website is never finished

The next step is promoting this exhibition through the institutional communication channels of the Faculty (institutional website, mailing lists, and so on). It will be necessary some review of

contents, and adding new entities to the exhibition. It currently describes the online memory of 24 entities, but during this project we identified 100 additional websites for projects and events related to the Faculty.

When we achieve a significant number of entities and related websites on the exhibition, we will organize them through a collections page with aggregations by topic and scientific area.

We believe that the direct interaction with Research centers must be continued and ministering training courses on web preservation and research would raise awareness to the importance of web archiving.

The main challenges to promote digital preservation awareness within the Faculty are to:

- Create habits and awareness for preservation of published Web content. How do we ensure that current Web publications are made in a condition to be preserved?
- Promote the visibility of preserved content through various strategies such as other online exhibitions or, even simple links to older versions of the websites. For example, we asked to R&D centers to put somewhere in their current websites a link “Preserved versions”, that sends the user to Arquivo.pt. Why not?
- Curate the preserved web content, involving the library and R&D centers. It depends not only on curators (librarians) but also on the research community. It is up to them to test the usefulness of born digital sources in the web archive for the various scientific areas.

Conclusions

The project was developed in 3 months, between May and July 2017, which led to a quick succession of steps in its development. On the other hand, it won in simplicity because the deadline forced me to focus on the most important issues to set strict priorities.

The short term of the project ended being an advantage. We would still be lost now choosing plug-ins if we had more time and however, would the extra plug-ins had actually being needed to accomplish the objectives? The users don't seem to miss them on the exhibition.

We wanted to demonstrate that anyone could create a similar project to preserve the memory of an organization, without requiring significant financial resources or technical skills. We hope that this project will encourage librarians and archivists to create ways of accessing online memory of their institutions.

If we did it, you can also do it.

To know more:

arquivo.pt/fcshontheweb

Report: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-NxNDiUP24WlJ6NFBQYm9id0E/view>

Online exhibition: <http://memoriafcsh.wordpress.com>

Videos -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PVIxPFE3VY&list=PLKfzD5UuSdERDa4Wj8TG9yULr3S8vZHNW&index=6>

Presentation - open class at the FCSH-UNL (vídeo) (May, 2017) -

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-cWHfij_2E&feature=youtu.be

Working progress (video) (June, 2017) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6OyQaj9pdI>

Slideshare: <https://www.slideshare.net/investiga-xxi/ricardobasilio-fccn-utad>

Personal blog on digital preservation: <https://www.facebook.com/gpsiglas>

Personal Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ricardobasilio>

About the author:

Ricardo Basílio, has a Master in Documentation and Information Sciences, was a librarian at the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences of Universidade Nova de Lisboa, and at the Art Library of Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, on the digital collections about portuguese tiles, the "DigiTile" project. His areas of interest are digital preservation, digital libraries and technologies that support information. Created and manages a website in Portuguese about Digital Preservation ([Digital Preservation Guide](#)).