



LEATHER AND RELATED MATERIALS WORKING GROUP



NEWSLETTER MARCH 2010

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Edited by: Céline Bonnot-Diconne

FROM THE COORDINATOR

Dear colleagues,

this number is published with the aim to inform you about forthcoming meetings in the field of leather conservation, which represent a significant opportunity for discussion and update in a subject which has received over the recent years increasing signs of interest from professionals working in cultural heritage preservation and conservation.

1. The Interim Meeting of the Leather and Related Material Working Group which will be held in a few days in Rome, organised together with four other WGs on the theme *Multidisciplinary conservation: a holistic view for*

historic interiors. Detailed information are reported farther on, and the latest updates are available on the site <http://iscr.beniculturali.it>. The abstracts of the accepted papers and posters for the Leather WG are enclosed, and the proceedings will be published online on the ICOM-CC website immediately after the meeting. They will be accessible to all ICOM-CC and Leather WG members.

2. The Triennial Conference which will be held in Lisbon on 19-23 September 2011. The deadline of the call for papers/posters is extremely close (April 16) and I invite you all to consider your participation submitting abstracts. It is very important that the Leather WG shows on occasion of the Triennial Conference the same wide attendance of the Interim Meetings;

3. The conference organised by the Department of Paper and Leather Conservation of Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń (Poland) on the theme Parchment and Leather research, conservation-restoration, craft, with an interesting programme concerning the wide and complex variety of artefacts made of animal skin and their conservation problems.

On the next issue of the Newsletter I would like, with your support, to dedicate some space to the structure and the history of our Working Group, to the use and implementation of the LRM webpage in the ICOM-CC site as an update and work instrument, and to the discussion of the triennial programme, in order to update its progress in view of the Triennial Conference in Lisbon.

With my assistant coordinators Céline and Jutta I send you my best wishes,

Sincerely yours,
Mariabianca

ICOM-CC INTERIM MEETING

MULTIDISCIPLINARY CONSERVATION A HOLISTIC VIEW FOR HISTORIC INTERIORS

Joint interim meeting of five ICOM-CC working groups

Leather and Related Materials
Murals, Stone, and Rock Art
Sculpture, Polychromy, and Architectural Decoration
Textiles
Wood, Furniture, and Lacquer

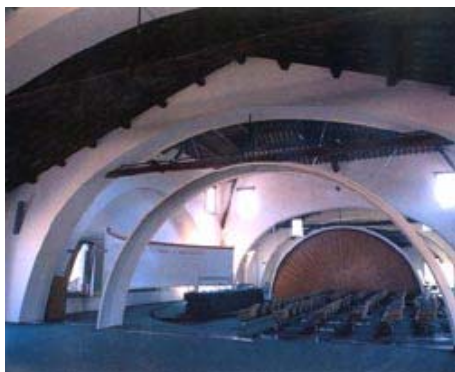
Rome, 23-26 March 2010

Complesso Monumentale di San Michele a Ripa

Sala dello Stenditoio

Via di San Michele 22, 00153 Rome

GENERAL INFORMATION



Multidisciplinary approach to the conservation of historic interiors is the subject of the ICOM-CC Joint Interim Meeting to be held in Rome on March 23-26, 2010, at the Complesso Monumentale di San Michele, seat of the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities. The Stenditoio Hall will host five ICOM-CC Working Groups gathered to discuss historic, environmental, and technical aspects on the conservation-restoration of objects that differ in techniques and materials, but as a whole they make up a unique context to be preserved.

Programme

The meeting will consist in three days of presentations. Sessions will be dedicated to the main theme of the event that highlights specific projects focussing on interdisciplinary approaches, historical and methodological aspects, environmental issues, conservation techniques, and guidelines for preventive conservation and

maintenance. Each working group will also have the opportunity to present and discuss contributions and ongoing research programmes related to its specific area of interest. The last day will be reserved for technical visits to conservation laboratories and historical houses.

The official language of the conference will be English.

Registration fees

Status	Early registration until <u>7th March 2010</u>	Late registration from <u>8th March 2010</u>
members & friends ICOM-CC	140 euros	170 euros
non-members	160 euros	190 euros
students	80 euros	100 euros

Registration fee for the three days of meetings will cover:

- abstracts publication and congress materials;
- coffee/ tea breaks;
- buffet lunches.

Free visits to conservation laboratories and historical houses will be organised on Friday 26th March, for selected groups.

The Stenditoio Hall has maximum sitting capacity of 340 persons, therefore, registrations will be closed once that number is reached.

Farewell party (Wednesday 24 March)

The event will take place in the prestigious [Doria Pamphilj Palace](#), located in the historic centre of Rome, and will include an opportunity to visit the painting Gallery.

Due to the capacity of the rooms and for collection safety, a maximum of 150 persons are allowed.

The cost of the farewell party is Euros 60 and is to be paid separately. Accompanying persons may attend the event at the same price.

Visits (Friday 26 March)

Technical visits are arranged for Friday 26th March. Delegates are requested to indicate their first and second choice among the following options consisting in a combined visit to an historical house and to a conservation laboratory.

Accompanying persons can participate if there are available places remaining.

Visit options	Historical houses	Conservation laboratories	Max. persons allowed
1 - Rome	Villa Farnesina	ISCR	30
2 - Rome	Palazzo Sacchetti	ISCR	30
3 - Rome	Villa Torlonia	Vatican Museums	40
4 - Rome	Il palazzo del Quirinale - Le Collezioni - Carrozze		20
5 - Florence	Stibbert Museum	Opificio delle Pietre Dure	18

Visits are free, but delegates are expected to pay for transportation and lunch.

The visits to OPD in Florence will be organized for a minimum of 5 participants. The city of Florence can be reached by high speed trains in about 1 hour and 40 minutes. The round trip cost from Rome is about 88 Euros in second class and an advanced reservation is highly recommended.

* The visits programme could undergo changes due to organizational reasons.

Payments

Registration fee and additional costs should be paid by bank transfer to the following account:

Account name: **Istituto Superiore per la Conservazione ed il Restauro**

Bank: **BNL Gruppo BNP PARIBAS**

IBAN number: **IT03D010050338200000211078**

Swift code: **BNL ITRR**

Reference: **ICOM-CC Rome 2010, followed by your name and surname**

Please send the receipt of your payment to:

Daniela Sauer

e-mail: is-cr.convegnorestauro@beniculturali.it

fax: 0039 06 589 4250

Refund policy /Cancellation of registration

Cancellation of a registration must be made in writing to the Meeting Organising Committee (fax 0039 06 589 4250, or email to:

is-cr.convegnorestauro@beniculturali.it

Cancellation prior 1st February 2010 will receive a full refund less 20% administrative fee. No refund will be

granted for any cancellation request after 1st February. However delegate substitution is possible, giving notice within March 12, 2010.

Recommended travel agency

raptim s.r.l.

Via dei Penitenzieri, 17 a/b

00193 Roma

Tel. +39 06 687 091

Fax +39 06 686 54 49

www.raptim.it

Please email your general inquiries to:

Daniela Sauer

e-mail: is-cr.convegnorestauro@beniculturali.it

fax: 0039 06 589 4250

All papers and posters that will be presented at the ICOM-CC Rome 2010 Conference will be published on the ICOM-CC website.

PAPERS

TO BE PRESENTED FOR LEATHER GROUP

Kirsten Achengreen Piacenti, Stibbert Museum Director, Florence, I

The conservation campagne at Villa Stibbert. Case studies

Today it is generally accepted that the aim in conserving a Historic House is bring it back to a pristine condition. The problem is to decide which is the most appropriate moment.

In the case of the conservation of the Royal Apartments of Palazzo Pitti which we were faced with a couple of decades ago, we chose the 1911 inventory, the last to be drawn up while the building was still used to its original purpose, that is as a royal residence.

In the case of the Stibbert Museum which we started tackling ten years ago, it seemed obvious to go back to the notary inventory of 1906, drawn up at the death of the owner and collector.

Frederick Stibbert left a unique legacy in his house and museum on the hill of Montughi in the northern outskirts of Florence. A legacy of arts and crafts, past and present, which we felt it to be our moral obligation to restore to its former glory. In the century that followed his death, the unity of his vision had been forgotten, and arms and armour invaded even the former living rooms.

Our task was twofold: 1) to recapture the original aspect of the interiors and 2) to recuperate - and where necessary restore - the original furnishings and works of art.

Both problems had in a way been codified in the work we had done with the re-furbishing of the Royal Apartments where, however, the documentary material at our disposal was infinitely greater due to its court status. At the Stibbert

we had only the one inventory. There were no inventories drawn up during Stibbert's lifetime and few contemporary photographs of the rooms. The notary would be a man without specialized art historical knowledge but on the other hand by his very profession absolutely reliable.

After a careful study of the inventory, the next task was to identify the objects and paintings mentioned. They had often been moved to other rooms or relegated to the deposit, or even wantonly dismantled. The work progressed by stages. Not only had the objects to be cleaned but the very rooms had to be restored and in so doing we touched upon just about every type of conservation.

During the symposium, experts will be dealing with the individual methods employed. In my talk I intend to describe a series of case-studies, follow room by room the problems that faced us and the solutions we chose – the ball-room, the dining room, the Sala Rossa, the study with the Sieneese banners and the tooled leather hangings, the Quadreria Antica.

As will be seen we were not able to follow a fixed policy but had to consider each case separately and at times only a compromise was possible. We also had to make adjustments as we went along but we were fortunate in having the loyal support of our patron, the Florentine bank Ente Cassa di Risparmio, and a loyal group of research workers and conservators. Without their collaboration the work could not have been undertaken. It is still in progress.



Céline Bonnot-Diconne, Leather Conservator, 2CRC – Activillage – Centr'alp, Moirans, F; **Jean Pierre Fournet**, Art historian, Paris, F; **Benoit-Henry Papounaud**, Curator, Head of Musée Anne-de-Beaujeu, Moulins, F

Historical and methodological aspects of the 18th century French gilt leather tapestry restoration in a historical house: the Maison Mantin project (Moulins, France).

Louis Mantin was a collector from the upper middle-class in Moulins (France), who lived during the second half of the 19th century. He was a very wealthy man and he built his house between 1893 and 1897. In this beautiful home, built in a mixture of two styles, the Néo-Gothic and the Louis XIII revival, Louis Mantin laid out his encyclopaedic collection of approximately fifteen hundred objects (furniture, enamels, tapestries, paintings, and ceramics). In accordance with his will, it was planned to make this residence a "house-museum", but its opening to the public was made possible only hundred years after its death.

In 2005, the Conseil Général de l'Allier decided to launch the major simultaneous restoration of the building and its interiors. The organisation of such huge project was a challenge; it required employing in each field a specialised craftsmen. The complexity of the project had also an impact on establishing exceptional building site that was initiated in 2007.

Among the treasures of this house is the room of Louis Mantin. The walls are entirely covered with a gilt leather tapestry made up of polychrome panels manufactured in the Boissier workshop, in Avignon, in the first quarter of the 18th century. The gilt tapestry was largely modified

and supplemented at the time of its installation in the house at the end of the 19th century. In current project this exceptional decoration was entirely demounted and restored in line with the wishes expressed by Louis Mantin in his will that have conditioned most of the conservation options.



Ann Hallström, Conservator, Department of conservation and photo, Livrustkammaren, Skoklosters slott, Hallwylska museet, Tumba-Stockholm, S; **Erika Hedhammar**, Conservator, National Heritage Board, Department of Conservation, Visby, S; **Lisen Tamm**, Conservator, Department of conservation and photo, Livrustkammaren, Skoklosters slott, Hallwylska museet, Tumba-Stockholm, S

Cleaning, condition, surveying and maintenance: house keeping Swedish style

Skokloster Castle and the Hallwyl museum in Sweden are two historical houses and open-display museums with diverse climate control problems.

Both interiors and collections have been cared for through the ages in a traditional manner.

Conservators and curators started to document this work only in the 1990ies and after about twenty years it is now time to draw conclusions from the accumulated experience of this work and of its documentation.

Skokloster Castle was built in the late baroque era and is situated in a rural setting outside Stockholm. The collections consist of objects brought there by all its owners from the late 17th century to the early 20th century. The interiors comprise tapestry, gilt leather, furniture and paintings of which many have been kept in the castle for more than 400 years! The collections also contain books, weapons, applied art, scientific instruments and house hold textiles.

At Skokloster Castle, which is not heated, the RH reaches levels of as much as 80 % indoors during damp autumn days. Apart from occasional corrosion problems, this often results in reoccurring mould growth on all kinds of organic material.

The Hallwyl museum was originally the Hallwyl Palace, built in 1897 in central Stockholm and was one of the earliest buildings to be fitted with central heating in the country. The palace was built to house Countess von Hallwyls' collections, as well as serve as a home and office for the von Hallwyl couple.

In the Hallwyl House we hardly see any corrosion on metal surfaces at all, simply due to the fact that the indoor climate is extremely dry. The house is centrally heated and even with the thermostat at its lowest, the RH still hovers around 30%. Here the organical material suffers from drying damages.

In both houses conservators and curators co-operate in a project to clean, condition survey and maintain the collections, working with one or two rooms per year. To start, the room is emptied of all movable objects. The ceilings, walls, windows and floors are vacuum cleaned. All objects are carefully dusted off, thoroughly examined and condition surveyed and documented. We look for corroding metal and organic parts are examined for insect attack, signs of fading, cracking and so on.

A form is filled in for each object or a group of objects if the condition is similar. Each object is graded according to need of conservation treatment. Object in need of urgent care are treated more or less immediately. Mountings may be adjusted or other improvements are made, before re-opening the room.

As visitors in both museums often can see the work during progress, it is not unusual for tour guides to take the opportunity to talk briefly about the maintenance and conservation work. Conservators on their side are happy to answer direct questions posed by visitors.



Susanna Conti, Textile Conservation Director, Opificio delle Pietre Dure e Laboratori di Restauro, Florence, I; **Licia Triolo**, Textile Conservator, Opificio delle Pietre Dure (SAF), Florence; **Maria Rizzi**, Biologist, Opificio delle Pietre Dure, Florence, I; **Francesco Civita**, Curator of the Japanese department, Stibbert Museum, Florence, I; **Naomi Katō**, Costume and Textile Historian, Florence - Nagasaki, J

From historic interiors to the conservation studio: a route to knowledge of a Japanese multi-material textile, from the Stibbert Museum in Florence.

This paper aims at explaining many challenges in the interpretation of the object and the evaluation of the conservation treatment options of a textile artefact, bearing in mind its main characteristics:

- 1) The provenance from a museum collection, which has - among its primary aims that include an appropriate conservation of the works of art - the respect for the requirements of the collector, who had strongly sought the museum and supervised it to the last detail
- 2) The use of different materials (animal fibres; vegetal fibres, natural dyes, horn, leather, metal, lacquer)
- 3) The provenance from a complex and distant artistic production such as Japan ("*Manchira*", part of a Samurai's Armour, Edo period)

The diagnostic project, art-historical study, and interaction among multiple professional competences such as scientists, historians and conservators are fundamental elements to let the object speak about itself in its own special language, telling us its own story and inevitably guiding us towards future conservation treatment and preservation.

Among the techniques studied and "rediscovered", particular attention has been paid to the dyeing of leather called "*shobū-gawa*" in Japanese. Thanks to the above-mentioned professional synergy, it has been possible to investigate the constituent materials and reconstruct the original technique of this particular type of decoration on leather.

Another important subject to study was the iconography of the dyed leather, rich in meanings tied to important Japanese historical events.

Among the choices leading to our conservation treatment, particular importance and significance has also been given to the textile's structural consolidation. The specific typology of degradation concerning the object enabled us to make conservation choices using differentiated methods.

The conservation and exhibition projects have been then enriched with all the data collected during the study carried out while the object was in the lab. Finally they have been necessarily compared to the provenance of the object from a collection and museum as particular as the Stibbert one. This museum was strongly desired by Frederick Stibbert at the end of XIX century. He arranged it in every detail (display cases and mannequins included) establishing how he wanted it to be handed down to posterity.

Therefore many are the challenges to make operative conservation choices which may enable us to maintain unchanged the collector's will, and at the same time respect the delicate balance of these works of art made of different materials.



Katerina Malea, Lecturer, TEI of Athens, Department of Conservation of Antiquities & Works of Art, Egaleo, Athens, GR; **Stamatis C. Boyatzis**, Assistant Professor, TEI of Athens, Department of Conservation of Antiquities & Works of Art, Egaleo, Athens, GR; **Marina Kehagia**, Postgraduate student in Museum Studies, TEI of Athens, Department of Conservation of Antiquities & Works of Art, Egaleo, Athens, GR

Cleaning of tanned leather: testing with infrared spectroscopy and SEM-EDAX

Leather is one of the most sensitive materials used in everyday applications and art objects, that is subject to hard use, harsh environmental conditions, etc. Leather cleaning techniques involve the use of various solvents, soaps and detergents, surface dry-cleaners, etc. The major concern of most research work carried out on the use of these cleaning products and techniques has aimed basically at the effectiveness of cleaning procedures. However, physical/chemical interaction of the various cleaning products or techniques with the proteinaceous material, as well as with possible added compounds (due to tanning processes, etc.) is an issue that merits investigation. In the present work, the results of spectroscopic (FTIR, FTIR-microscopy and SEM-EDAX) evaluation of the possible effects of various cleaning procedures on leather samples are presented.

Leather samples were cleaned in one area, leaving almost half of the surface in a non-cleaned state for comparative purposes. Cleaning products and techniques used: organic solvents (white spirit, trichloroethane, acetone, ethanol-water mixture), acidic and alkaline media (hydrochloric acid, aqueous ammonia solution), water-based detergents (Texapon®, Synperonic N®), a hydrocarbon-based detergent (Vulpex® in white spirit) and a natural rubber-based surface dry-cleaner (Groomstick®). FTIR spectra (KBr samples and microscopy on surface and cross sections) were examined comparatively between cleaned and non-cleaned adjacent areas on each of the tested leather samples. In the cleaned areas, the most notable changes were observed in the case of acetone, ammonia solution and ethanol-water (reduction of esters and protein-related components), trichloroethane (reduction of protein-related components), and Vulpex® in white spirit (reduction of hydrocarbon chains and ketones). Analysis of cleaned leather surface, with SEM-EDAX showed significant increase of chlorine (Cl) for

hydrochloric acid - cleaned surface, Sodium (Na) for Texapon® and Potassium (K) for Vulpex®. Finally, small increase of Sulphur (S), Potassium (K), Calcium (Ca) and Silicon (Si) and appearance (low levels) of Sodium (Na), Silicon (Si) and Chlorine (Cl) was detected in the case of Groomstick®. Residual quantities of cleaning agents have also been found through SEM analysis in the case of acetone, Vulpex® in white spirit and Groomstick®.

FTIR spectroscopy and SEM-EDAX were employed to investigate the alterations on the surface of tanned goat-skin induced by a number of cleaning products and techniques. FTIR spectroscopy and SEM-EDAX were employed to investigate the state of tanned leather after treatment with a number of cleaning agents. Detergent in non-polar solvent (Vulpex® in white spirit) and Groomstick selectively remove hydrocarbon-related components (wax or oily impurities) and possibly oxidation products. In many cases, like treatment with acetone, hydrochloric acid, ammonia, trichloroethane) bulk material has been removed, while the organic additives (such as wax) have been affected to a lesser extent.



Ira Rabin, Scientist, Federal Institute for Materials Research and Testing (BAM), Berlin, Germany; **R. Schütz**, **E. Kindzorra**, **U. Schade**, **O. Hahn**, **G. Weinberg**, **P. Lasch**

Analysis and preservation of an ancient alum tawed parchment

The Temple Scroll is one of the most beautiful items belonging to the famous Dead Sea Scrolls collection. It is written on a light coloured parchment that measures 8.148 metres long and hardly exceeds 0.1 millimetres in thickness.

Palaeographic studies revealed that the Scroll consisted of two parts dating from different eras: the larger part of the Scroll dates to the middle of the 1st century BCE, whereas the smaller part, which was probably applied as a antique repair sheet, is supposed to have been adhered and copied in the middle of the 1st century CE.

Allegedly, Bedouins discovered the Temple Scroll in 1956 wrapped in a cloth and deposited in a clay jar in Qumran cave 11. When scholars finally accessed the Scroll in 1967 it was severely damaged by humidity.

The results of the analytical study of the surface of both parts of the scroll conducted recently by means of SEM/EDX, μ -XRF, FTIR and Raman spectroscopy show that the larger part of the scroll has been tawed with alum. Whereas no sulphate salts could be detected in the repair sheet, it was found that chalk has been applied to its surface.

The Temple Scroll is the only alum tawed parchment in the whole collection. Questions relating to its preservation will be discussed in this presentation.

POSTERS

TO BE PRESENTED FOR LEATHER GROUP

Monica Bercè, Art historian, Textile and Leather Conservator, Florence, I

Gilt leather wall hangings in the Stibbert Museum of Florence

This paper will present a study of the gilt leather panelling in the Stibbert Museum. The study is part of a general plan for the re-organizing of display in the Florentine house-museum. It consists of a historical investigation on the origin of the works, and is a necessary preliminary study which will influence future conservation operations.

The study consists of an accurate research of the ornamental patterns on the panels and their execution technique, as well as a comparison with other specimens and with textile samples; it also compares specific literature and historical research, starting from a careful analysis of the purchase documents stored in the Stibbert archives. Of no lesser importance, in view of future conservation operations, is the study of the many historical documents describing the assembling and up-keep of the works. These documents allow conservators an insight into the materials and techniques used conserving the objects in the past.

The collection of this Museum is remarkable for the number and quality of leather works: not only gilt leather, such as frontals and hangings, but also upholstery and leather fittings worked and decorated in different techniques. Such variety makes this collection an important source of knowledge for several artistic techniques linked to the use of leather and related materials.

In this account attention will be focused on painted gilt leather that decorates some of the rooms: in particular the red-gold hanging in the Library; the silver flowered spiral pattern on display in four rooms; and some "vogeltapete" (bird patterned panelling) in the Dining Room. The furnishing of the Louis XV Parlour will be briefly mentioned, as it was panelled in an unusual way (like other rooms) by fixing frontals and spalliere on the walls.

Hypotheses on the origin and dating of the Library and Dining Room hangings are based on the analysis of manufacturing technical processes and the observation of pattern style. In the red-gold leather panelling, the alternate oval shaped pattern is typical of sixteenth century materials, while the decoration grandeur, added to a rather large pattern, suggests a later manufacture date, possibly seventeenth century.

The "vogeltapete" hangings, on the contrary, belong to the noticeable corpus of symmetric patterned panels with natural elements whose original design is to be connected with one of the "Patrons d'Etouffes et le Velours" by Daniel Marot issued in 1703, and can be dated back to the production of Carolus Iacobus, active in Mechelen between 1693 and 1728. From this time onwards the ornamental patterns of these panels was constantly repeated, and such reiteration makes it difficult today to tell the first specimens from their copies. Although a good quality product, such panelling shows rather low relief and only two prevailing shades, which could prove the hypothesis of a nineteenth century leather replicas.

The silver flowered panelling has a different origin: through the finding of a series of significant documents and the comparison with another corpus of similar works, kept in palaces Chigi Zondadari in Siena and S. Quirico d'Orcia, these panels have been connected with Cardinale Flavio Chigi, a prominent member of the Roman family well

known as connoisseurs of this form of art. Following the trail of the purchase documents and expense accounts of the Cardinal's Venetian agent, it can be suggested that these panels came from Venice and date them between 1684 and 1687, the period when this type of wall decoration was widely spread in Italy.



Peter Hallebeek, chemist, Amsterdam, NL

The condition of the gilt leather wall hangings in the Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia, Italy

Research has been performed on the gilt leather wall hangings in the Palazzo Chigi in Ariccia as part of a European project entitled Chisius, set up for the conservation of the outside of the palazzo, the garden and the interior (1997- 1999). The palazzo contains nine rooms with gilt leather wall hangings, unique examples of the Italian baroque period. The rooms, the decoration and the wall hangings are closely connected to each other and in order to return the palace in its original state it is necessary to comprise the treatment of the leather in the total plan for the conservation.

The wall hangings were removed from the walls 55 year ago and replaced five years later. In the interim period some of some pieces of leather panelling belonging specific rooms with a specific pattern were put into another room. During the latest conservation and restoration of the gilt leather these mistakes were corrected and the rooms could be brought back into the original state. In most of the rooms the condition of the leather is relatively good, however a consistent balance does not exist. This situation can be corrected by the application of specific conservation treatments. No overpaint was detected on any of the wall hangings.

In each of the rooms the gilt leather is directly nailed to the wall with iron nails. Degradation from the cotton thread in the seams has caused extensive separation of the panels. From the results of the measurements on 40 samples for pH, differential number, sulphate content and shrinkage temperature one may conclude that the general chemical state the leather is fair to good expect for a few parts attacked by red rot. This means that conservation could be limited to the application of a dressing and a buffer.

Also flock leather is present, in less good condition, which has no print on the front side, but a metal foil and gold varnish with darker strip of paint. This type of gilt leather is in relatively weak condition and the connection between surface layers and leather is very weak or broken.

The physical damage to the leather is more extensive and comprises: deformation, discoloration of the metal foil, discoloration of organic pigments, change of colour of copper containing mineral pigments, damage caused by copper and iron nails, missing parts and gaps, local detachment of the paint layer, tears and holes, water damage on parts around the windows due to leakage caused by bad condition of the walls and the windows.

Recommended conservation treatments are: - cleaning of the surface; - superficial consolidation of paint layers; - removal of the nails; - partial flattening of the leather; - partial relining; - application of new leather on the edges; - sewing the panels together, using the original holes; -

filling gaps and tears; - attachment of the panels to a wooden framework.



Anne Lama, KTP-Associated, The Leather Conservation Centre, Northampton, UK; **Paula Antunes**, Senior Lecturer, British School of Leather Technology, The University of Northampton, Northampton, UK; **Yvette Fletcher**, Acting Head of Conservation, The Leather Conservation Centre, Northampton, UK; **Jeffrey Guthrie-Strachan**, Senior Lecturer, British School of Leather Technology, The University of Northampton, Northampton, UK; **Karen Vidler**, Senior Book Conservator, The Leather Conservation Centre, Northampton, UK

Analysis of Acid Deterioration of Leather

Acid deterioration can be defined as red rot in leather and particularly occurs in vegetable tanned leather manufactured from the mid 19th Century onwards. Acid deterioration is observed in a variety of leathers including bookbinding leather, gilt leather, screens, wall hangings, upholstery and luggage. The deteriorated leather shows a lower pH, sometimes below 3.0, and lower hydrothermal stability, indicating the loss of collagen structures. The visible changes in the deteriorated leather usually include fine cracking, a powdery surface (often reddish/brownish, hence the common term for acid deterioration as red rot) and complete or partial loss of the grain layer.

Current research has shown that environmental pollutants (e.g., sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide) and the leather manufacturing processes are thought to be responsible for the acid deterioration. However, further investigation is required not only to refine the possible causes of the acid deterioration but also to determine the chemical and physical changes that occur as a result of this type of deterioration in leather.

Current conservation treatments include the application of a cellulose-based compound such as hydroxypropylcellulose in isopropanol. Based on the STEP leather project, it was shown that aluminium alkoxide, particularly aluminium diisopropoxide acetoacetate ester chelate, provides some protection against acid deterioration. The recommendation of the report was to treat severely deteriorated leather, (where the shrinkage temperature or hydrothermal stability is below approximately 30°C and the pH is below 3), with the aluminium alkoxide. Further research is therefore required to determine the penetration of aluminium alkoxide, and the physical and chemical changes in the treated leather. A further review of the past and current products used to treat acid deterioration is required in order to determine the effectiveness of the applied products based on the changes in the physical and chemical properties of the treated leather. Due to limitations in the current products there is also a need to develop or design a new product to prevent acid deterioration. The aims of the study are therefore as follows:

1. To review and study the causes of acid deterioration,
2. To study the physical and chemical changes that may have occurred due to acid deterioration,
3. To review and study the past and current products used for the treatments of acid deterioration and associated problems,

4. If suitable, modify available products to ensure they are acceptable within the conservation field,
5. Potentially to design and develop a new product to treat acid deterioration.



Maria Nimmo, Conservator and Art Historian, Rome, I;
Francesco Petrucci, Architect, Curator of Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia (Rome), I

Ariccia: in the baroque country dwelling of the Chigi family, gilt leather and archival documentation

The fiefdom of Ariccia was acquired by the Chigi family (princes Mario, Agostino and cardinal Flavio, all nephews of Pope Alexander VII) in 1661 and the palace, already widely restructured by the Savelli in the end of the 1500s, was partly transformed and enlarged between 1666 and 1672. This reconstruction was executed by Carlo Fontana using plans designed by Bernini for a typical scheme for a country residence, Contemporary work with a consistent theme was undertaken in beautiful park. Further enlargements and extensive decorations took place during the 1700s.

The palace, a rare example of baroque residence unaltered in its own environment, was sold by the Chigi family to the town hall of Ariccia in 1988. The past twenty years have seen the conservation of the architectural structures, maintenance and/or conservation and restoration of relevant paintings (Gauli, Mario de' Fiori, Salvator Rosa, Cades, etc.), sculptures and rich furnishings. Among the latter, for instance, are the leather wall hangings, present in numerous rooms. The palace is nowadays the setting for important exhibitions and houses a main collection of paintings and drawings of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries, donated by illustrious scholars in the last decay.

The inventories from 1672 and 1673, taken to coincide with the two spectacular musical events created and designed by Carlo Fontana allow an overview of the decorations and furnishings within the palace. These include descriptions of the leatherworks, such as portieres, table covers, cushion covers as well as wall hangings in gilt and painted leather, in some cases embossed or flocked.

All the leatherwork has been registered in an extensive computerized Report begun in 1990. This field survey, executed by Istituto Superiore per la Conservazione e il Restauro (ISCR, formerly ICR), gathered not only descriptive data on the artefacts, including archival documentation, but also information on the techniques employed and the objects' condition. The section of the Report on techniques describes the various procedures for working and decorating leather: incised, moulded, embossed, gilt, painted, flocked, etc., principal types of punch marks, the joining of skins, original inscriptions and stamps, etc.

The examination of inventories and accounts has allowed the dating of most of the leatherwork, and the identification of the artisans involved in the execution and installation: from the carver of the wooden moulds, to the leather artisan, to the painter in charge of painting the family arms, medallions, etc. Information on the original setting of the

leathers, provenance and displacements, etc. has been provided as well.

The research has also enabled the collection of data regarding the historical technical terminology related to the artefacts, procedures and materials.

The archival research allows on one hand the idea of the decorative richness and original numerical importance of the leatherworks to form and helps to identify the correct location of the objects preserved. On the other hand it enriches the knowledge of historical terms relative to these types of artefacts, contributing to define a global history of materials and techniques in the field.



Marina L. Regni, Freelance Paper, Parchment and Leather Conservator, Rome, I; **Rossella Marcucci**, Botanist, Padua, I; **Emilia Regni**, Natural Scientist, Padua, I

Identification and Symbology of Plant Species in Gilt and Painted Leather

The Alps are a most impressive range of the mountains separating central from Mediterranean Europe. Since Roman times and especially the Middle Ages, many passages (e.g. via Francigena) have provided access to important commercial trade between the French, Swiss, Austrian, and Slovenian side, and Italy (from west to east: Liguria, Valle d' Aosta, Piemonte, Lombardia, Trentino Alto Adige, Veneto, and Friuli Venezia-Giulia).

Local fashion, ritual practice and climate have presumably allowed a certain number of gilt, painted and hand-stamped artistic works on leather to survive. The original areas were selected to be described in two pending publications.

Over ten years ago, systematic research started in Italy to identify the pieces in order to better understand techniques and materials, to recognize centres of manufacture and to identify preservation and conservation systems for the future care of these artistic works. In this contribution, the author, coordinator of the project, gives the outline of the results concerning the identification of 40 plants that can still be found locally in nature, and that were painted on leather dating mostly back to the XVII century.

The research was carried out in collaboration with the curator of an important botanical garden and a natural sciences researcher in the North East of Italy.



Theo Sturge, Leather Conservator, Sturge Conservation Studio, Northampton, UK

Conservation of Chinoiserie Gilt Leather Wall Hangings in the UK.

The eleven panels of Chinoiserie gilt leather wall hangings are in a private house in central England. They date from around 1725 – 1775, and were probably made in London. They are the only known Chinoiserie hangings in the UK. The leather is mounted on wooden boards set into wooden panelling.

In the 1970's they were in poor condition with many splits, and were faced with Japanese paper and an unknown PVA adhesive. When the present work started in 2009 the

paper had split, and the leather had distorted, but the paper still supported the edges, preventing loss.

Following documentation, the facing was removed with a non-polar solvent, Leksol, n-Propyl Bromide, a substitute for 1,1,1 trichloroethane. The more obvious solvents for the PVA were mainly polar and dissolved the varnish and paint of the gilt leather. The leather surface was cleaned with slightly damp micro-fibre cloths.

The leather was removed from the boards, and the splits were repaired with patches of Scandinavian archival calf from J Hewit and Sons. Once the leather had been skived to a suitable thickness, the edges of the patches were pared down to give a smooth join with the original. It was coloured with water based dyes from J Hewit. The adhesive was a mixture of Lascaux acrylic dispersions. Three parts of the harder 498HV to one part of the softer 360HV added to give greater flexibility. Prior to the application of the patches the leather was humidified using Sympatex, a textile with a semi-permeable membrane on one side. This allowed the leather to be relaxed so that the edges could be brought together as accurately as possible. To hold the leather in alignment, very small patches of Reemay, a non-woven polyester textile, were applied along the joins using Beva Film as an adhesive. This was incorporated into the final repairs with the leather patches.

The tacking edges of the leather were quite fragile and were reinforced with a narrow strip lining of thin archival calf with the Lascaux mix as an adhesive.

Except for one panel which had a painting on it which was kept separate, the leather was replaced on the original wooden boards using stainless steel staples.

There were some very small areas of loss and these were filled with solid Beva 371. The Beva 371 is warmed to make it liquid, a very small amount of earth pigment is added to colour it, and then it is dried on silicone paper. The resulting solid material makes a flexible filler that can be applied with a heated spatula. The fills were painted with artists' quality acrylic paints, and any in-painting needed on the original leather was carried out with Winsor and Newton artists' quality water colours. No varnish was applied to the leather as this can cause serious problems for future conservators.



ICOM-CC TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE

ICOM-CC 16th Triennial Conference
Lisbon, Portugal
September 19-23, 2011

Cultural Heritage / Cultural Identity.
The Role of Conservation

CALL FOR PAPERS AND POSTERS

ICOM-CC is inviting paper and poster contributions for its 16th Triennial Conference. This two-step process consists of a call for abstracts of prospective papers and posters,

followed by an invitation to submit full papers and poster abstracts for publication. Please refer to the various Preprints documents on ICOM-CC's dedicated conference website <http://www.icom-cc2011.org> for the schedule and instructions.

I. Call for paper and poster abstracts

The Triennial Conference presents an overview of the current state of conservation research and practice. Work submitted must be original and must not have been published elsewhere or be under consideration by another publication. Papers and posters may address the Working Group aims and program and/or the conference theme.

The conference theme aims to capture the recognition by communities or nations of the importance of affirming their cultural heritage in this era of globalisation, as they evolve through contact and exchange with other cultures. Considering this trend, the conference will explore and compare different approaches regarding conservation policies and methods, as well as scientific methods for studying materials and technologies, in order to improve our understanding of the role of conservation in valuing heritage and its relationship to other areas such as sociology, economy, and politics, which are vital in ensuring the sustainability of communities.

The ICOM-CC Triennial Conference in Lisbon will be an opportunity to share methods, studies and strategies to value individual cultural identities through heritage conservation by addressing topics such as:

- The relationships between cultural heritage and cultural identity
- National and international conservation policies
- The importance of interdisciplinarity in the preservation of cultural heritage
- The development of research and education in heritage conservation
- Standards, practices, and methodologies for heritage conservation.

Authors must use the **abstract template (see at the end of this newsletter or on the dedicated conference website)**.

Abstracts can be submitted beginning March 15, 2010. Deadline for receipt of abstracts is April 16, 2010.

A list of Working Groups and contact information can be found on ICOM-CC's regular website. Please note that abstracts must be submitted via the dedicated conference website and not directly to Working Group Coordinators. Initial abstracts as well as final papers and poster abstracts may be submitted in English, French or Spanish. Coordinators and peer reviewers will evaluate and rank the abstracts, using the following criteria:

- Originality and innovation of the work presented
- Application to conservation practice in its broadest sense, in keeping with ICOM-CC's overall mission
- Relevance to the conference theme and/or Working Group aims/triennial program
- Logical structure, good argumentation, and clear writing style
- Demonstration of collaboration between disciplines (e.g., conservation, science, art history, humanities)

II. Final papers and poster abstracts

Authors whose abstracts have been provisionally accepted will be invited by the Working Group Coordinator to submit a full paper or an updated, print-ready poster abstract. Invited authors should consult the Instructions for Papers or Instructions for Posters on the conference website.

Deadline for receipt of full papers and final poster abstracts: November 12, 2010

Invitation to submit a full paper or final poster abstract does not guarantee its acceptance. Authors will be informed of the results of the Editorial Committee's final selection of contributions in March 2011.

Please consult the **Preprints Schedule** on the dedicated conference website for a complete list of key dates. Non-compliance with these deadlines may result in the rejection of contributions.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

CALL FOR PAPERS

Parchment and Leather. Research, conservation-restoration, craft **21 – 23 October 2010**

organised by:

Nicolaus Copernicus University Toruń (POLAND)
Department of Paper and Leather Conservation

Deadline for abstracts (500 words): 15 April 2010

Contact:

dr Halina Rosa zkipis@umk.pl
dr Tomasz Kozielec tk@umk.pl

Conference Language: Polish and English

Fee: 100 €

More information please visit website: www.zkipis.umk.pl

THE CONFERENCE SUBJECT

The conference will be divided into five sessions devoted to broad views of research problems and questions regarding conservation of historic parchment and leather artefacts.

SESSION I

- Research of historic parchment and leather items.
- Study of their present and former environments as well as the affect of both the environment and object structure on condition and level of damage of the examined objects.
- Discussion of preservation and storage issues in libraries, museums, and inside sacred buildings.

SESSION II

- Conservation/restoration of historical parchment including archival, library, and museum objects such as manuscripts, prints, drawings, and parchment painting in Polish and European collections, parchment elements inside organ pipes and in other places.
- Problems of their preservation, preventive conservation and full restoration. Examples of treatments and their results.
- Copying an archival document.

SESSION III

- Conservation of archeological leather. Polish and European collections of archeological leather: the size of the collections and type of objects. Problems of their safety, storage, and display.
- Methods of prevention during archeological exploration and the ensuing conservation actions, methods used, and the medium.
- Restoration of archeological leather.

SESSION IV

- Conservation/restoration of historic book bindings, archival documents, historic elements of saddles and harnesses, carriages, furniture covers, and gilt and embossed wall hangings.
- Types of artifacts and the ornamentation and meaning of these historic art objects in Polish and European collections.
- Problems of prevention, preservation, and full restoration of objects, examples of conservation treatment and final results.

SESSION V

- Historic and contemporary leather craftsmanship.
- Traditions of the Polish and European tanning and parchment trades.
- Book binding workshop: equipment, materials, and methods.
- Contemporary gilt leather craft: technology and materials.
- Reenactment groups: reconstructions of medieval leather shoes and clothes, experimental archeology.
- Contemporary products for renovation of leather surfaces.

NEWSLETTER NOTES

Submissions welcome

The various sections of the newsletter are open to the collaboration of everybody. We are counting on your active participation reporting news, information and contributions concerning technologies and conservation of leather artefacts and the professional aspects on this field.

Please send your submissions, not exceeding 1300 words, to:

Mariabianca Paris

E-mail: mariabianca.paris@tin.it

Céline Bonnot-Diconne

E-mail: cbonnotdiconne@aol.com

Jutta Goepfrich

E-mail: j.goepfrich@ledermuseum.de

Newsletter on line

This newsletter is available on the ICOM-CC website:

<http://icom-cc.icom.museum/WG/LeatherRelatedMaterials/>

<p style="text-align: center;">THIS ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER WAS FINALLY REVIEWED ON 12TH MARCH 2010</p>



ABSTRACT TEMPLATE FOR

PAPERS AND POSTERS

ICOM-CC 16th Triennial Conference
Lisbon, Portugal
September 19-23, 2011

Abstracts for papers and posters should be submitted via the conference website www.icom-cc2011.org beginning March 15, 2010. Instructions for creating an author account will be posted there.

The deadline for receipt of abstracts for papers and posters is April 16, 2010.

Abstracts must not exceed 1000 words in total.

I wish to contribute a Paper Poster (delete as appropriate)

Language of final paper/poster: English French Spanish (delete as appropriate)

Name of Working Group:

Please indicate membership category of main author ("*author for correspondence"):

ICOM Member ICOM-CC Voting Member
ICOM-CC Friend ICOM-CC Student Friend (delete as appropriate)
Non-member

Membership number:

If the main author is not a member or a Friend/Student Friend, please indicate if a co-author is and provide the name, membership category and membership number:

Abstracts without this information cannot be accepted.

For more information on membership issues, please contact the ICOM-CC Secretariat secretariat@icom-cc.org

The distribution of words among the three sections below may be altered somewhat as long as the total count does not exceed 1000 words. Please use complete words and sentences.

1. Introduction

Title

Author/s (*indicate author for correspondence)

Institution/s

City, country

E-mail address/es

Introduce what you will discuss in your paper or poster (100 words)

2. Main body of text (750 words)

Divide the main body of text according to section headings, for example Sampling, Methods of Study, Experimental Results, etc. that will be used in the paper or poster.

Poster abstracts should include a description of illustrations to be used.

(Experimental results of work in progress may be indicated as 'forthcoming information'.)

3. Conclusion (150 words)

SCHEDULE FOR PREPRINTS PRODUCTION

ICOM-CC 16th Triennial Conference

Lisbon, Portugal January 2010	Call for abstracts of papers and posters
March 15	Conference website editorial system available for abstract submissions
April 16	Deadline for authors to post abstracts on editorial system
April 16 – May 21	Coordinators (COs) evaluate, rank and comment on the abstracts Abstracts are exchanged among Working Groups as appropriate.
May 21	COs post rankings and comments on editorial system.
May 21 – June 16	Peer Reviewers (PRs) review abstracts and CO rankings and comments. Major ranking disagreements are raised with COs via the Managing Editor (ME).
June 16	PRs post their comments and rankings on editorial system.
June 21 – 23	Editorial Committee (EC) and ME make provisional selection of papers and abstracts.
June 25 – 30	ME informs COs of provisional selection of contributions COs notify authors.
Nov 12	Deadline for authors to post full papers and final poster abstracts on editorial system
Nov 12 – Jan 14, 2011	COs edit and rank full papers and poster abstracts, working with authors on content, language, and abstracts in three languages.
Jan 14	COs post rankings and comments on the editorial system.
Jan 19 – March 4	PRs review and rank full papers and poster abstracts.
March 4	PRs post their rankings and comments on the editorial system.
March 9 – 16	EC and ME review overall rankings and make final selection of papers and poster abstracts.
March 17 – 22	ME notifies COs of results. COs inform authors of EC decision, including any requested revisions.
March 17 – April 11	Authors revise papers as needed in consultation with COs.
March 17 – April 21	ME releases final papers and poster abstracts to the publisher in batches.
March 17 – June 30	Publisher copyedits papers and poster abstracts and verifies print quality of images.
April 21	Final batch of papers and poster abstracts is sent to the publisher. Table of contents is posted on conference website.
May 6	COs submit triennial overviews for publication.
July (TBD)	Authors and COs review first proofs in PDF. Papers are available to registered participants on conference website.
August (TBD)	Production of preprint volumes and CD
September (TBD)	Preprints are shipped to conference venue
Sept 18	Distribution of preprints at Triennial Meeting