

An overview of conservation and restoration work carried out in the Textile Restoration and Preparation Workshops in 2017

- The text presents the conservation and restoration work on several objects from the storage facilities of the Museum carried out throughout 2017¹. The specific restoration work performed has been presented through poster presentations at the 9th Meeting of the Restoration and Preparation Section of the Croatian Museum Association, which was held in May 2017 at the Maritime and History Museum of the Croatian Littoral in Rijeka.
The work performed at the Workshop was primarily focused on preventive conservation work on the items from the Collection of Objects Linked with Customs and Beliefs, the Collection of Jewellery, the Collection of Household Linen, the Collection of Croatian National Costumes from the Mountainous Region and the Adriatic Hinterland, the Collection of World Culture Objects, etc.² In addition to the conservation work of the museum holdings, the Workshop also participates in the technical implementation of the exhibitions held at the Museum, as well as during travelling exhibitions in other institutions.

1 In 2017 conservation and restoration work was performed on 12 objects.

2 2017 saw the preventive conservation of 3388 objects.

CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION WORK PERFORMED ON THE ITEM VA 932

Procedure performed by

Ljiljana Vilus Japec, senior conservator

Object data

Collection:	Collection of Objects Linked with Customs and Beliefs
Object type:	christmas tree
Period:	1940
Locality:	Zagreb
Dimensions:	33 cm x 18 cm
Material:	goose feathers, wire, plastics, plaster, glass, paper, cotton thread, cotton wool, lamellae

Description of object condition before restoration

The Christmas tree had been made from a wooden tiny pole wrapped in thin brown paper that imitated the tree trunk onto which branches had been attached. Upon examination of the twigs under the *Dino-Lite* microscope, it was concluded that they had been made from feathers. Following further research conducted by the Collection Manager and Senior Curator, Danijela Križanec-Beganović, it was determined that goose feathers had been used to make it. The branches had been made from wire, densely wrapped in green coloured, separated goose feathers, whose endings had been trimmed. The loose endings of the wire had been inserted into the slots between the paper that was used for the wrapping of the tiny pole. The form of the Christmas tree comprised of two sets of five branches and two sets of four branches, as well as one more branch that was actually intended as the top of the Christmas tree. The branches gradually became shorter towards the top of the Christmas tree. They were decorated with thirteen ornaments made from plastics, plaster and small glass baubles hanging on cotton threads, as well as with cotton wool and several lamellae. The tree trunk had been planted into an old gold coloured terracotta pot. The height of the tree along with the pot was 33 cm and its diameter was 18 cm.

The object had probably been inadequately stored, since it was covered in dirt throughout its surface. Two wires intended as branches had been broken and the feathers had been unwrapped on two wires - branches. Most branches had lost their form. Sixteen ornaments were missing and there were only cotton threads left wrapped around the branches.

Conservation and restoration work

Mechanical cleaning was performed after the photographing of the entire object. The ornaments were removed from the branches, photographed and cleaned with a vacuum cleaner and then wiped with cotton wool soaked in distilled water. The cotton threads that had been wrapped around the branches were also removed. Wet cleaning was performed after the mechanical cleaning of the branches with a vacuum cleaner. The branches were placed on a blotting-paper line one by one and coated with a paintbrush dipped into a 50:50 mixture of distilled water and 95% ethyl alcohol. Then they were placed on a clean blotting-paper strip one by one and cleaned with a paintbrush dipped into a mixture of distilled water and a neutral detergent *Restore Detergent* in the ratio of 100 ml of water and two or three drops of detergent. After that, they were placed on a clean blotting-paper, one by one yet again, and rinsed with distilled water by strokes of a paintbrush as long as there were remains of dirt on the blotting-paper. Finally, they were dried, one by one, with a dryer using the cold air option. The broken wire was replaced with new copper wire around which the existing feathers were wrapped again and it was put back into the corresponding slots. The previous form of the braches was restored and then ornaments were hung onto them again.

The Christmas tree was placed into an acid-free cardboard box and then it was returned into the storage facilities of the Collection.

CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION WORK PERFORMED ON THE ITEM № ET 391

Procedure performed by

Marijana Najjar, senior conservator

Object data

Collection:	Objects Linked with Customs and Beliefs
Type of object:	alms pouch
Period:	19 th century
Locality:	Karlovac
Dimensions:	22 cm x 10 cm
Material:	silk brocade, sheet metal

Description of object condition before restoration

An alms pouch for collecting alms from the Church of St. Barbara in Karlovac. The frame was intended to hold a tiny sheet metal box, which on one side had an opening for the insertion of coins, whilst on the other side a sac made of brocade was attached. The box was normally opened when it was full of coins.

The wooden pole, which used to be 142 cm long, was missing. The brocade was in poor condition. Flax-fabric lining had been placed under the brocade and it was also in poor condition. There was visible damage on the brocade and on the lining, in the form of larger and smaller holes that had been made mechanically. Stains of unknown origin were visible on the alms pouch and on the lining.

Conservation and restoration work

After the separation of the main fabric and the lining, they both underwent wet cleaning in the solution of a neutral detergent *Orvus paste* in distilled water, following which the main fabric and the lining were straightened using glass weights.

The main fabric was disassembled into parts and each part received a lining in silk coloured in greenish-grey colour. The damaged parts were closed with silk filament using restoration stitch. The lining got yet another lining of homemade flax-fabric in natural colour, whilst the damaged parts were also closed with silk filament using restoration stitch.

Following the restoration procedures on all the parts of the main fabric and the lining, their previous condition was restored. The frame with a sheet metal box was coated in *Renaissance wax* at the Restoration and Preparation Workshop for Wood, Ceramics and Metal.

A cushion of polyester and wool cushioning and *Avos* foil was inserted into the alms pouch. The entire object was wrapped into *Avos* foil, put into acid-free box and placed into the storage facilities of the Collection of objects linked with customs and beliefs.

CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION WORK PERFORMED ON THE FRAGMENTS OF MURSA TEXTILE № GR-309

Procedure performed by

Mihaela Grčević, restorer

Object data

Collection:	Archaeology Department of the Museum of Slavonia
Type of object:	archaeological textile
Period:	3 rd century
Locality:	Osijek
Dimensions:	11.5 cm x 4.5 cm
Material:	flax or hemp fabric

Description of object condition before restoration

Fragments of textile from the Grave 309, which was located on the corner of Frankopanska and Huttlerova Streets in Osijek, on the southeast side upon the excavation for Silos. They were found attached to plated bronze coins, separated at the Croatian Conservation Institute and placed between two pieces of glass. There were visible remains of patina on the fabric, as well as the typical brown colour, characteristic for archaeological textile.

Conservation work

Pressure mounting is the method with which primarily smaller archaeological objects and other flat objects are prepared for exhibiting or storage. The materials used in this method are *Hexlite* board, a honeycomb aluminium panel used as a background for exhibiting objects, flax tape, *Dommett* fabric and cotton fabric.

During the preparation of the frames for exhibition or storage, using the method of *pressure mounting*, Hexlite board was taped with flax tape and then two frames several centimetres wide were marked on the back. The marked frame was thickly covered with *Mowilith DM C2* glue using a paintbrush. The board was upholstered with a lightweight *Dommett* cotton fabric. The fabric was glued on the back of the board using an iron within the marked frame. The corners needed to be glued as neatly as possible.

The contours of the object were drawn on *Melinex* foil and 0.5 cm was added. The obtained form was transferred to a thicker *Dommett* cotton fabric and cut out. The fabric with the

engraved form was placed on the basis and attached with thread. The elevation of the fabric needed to correspond to the elevation of the fragment.

The layer placed on top was the final one, which means that its fineness and colour needed to correspond to the exhibited object. A dynamic cotton fabric was used, which was attached on the back using the iron within the second frame that had previously been marked.

The final layer was attached to the base using a needle and thread by the edge of the engraved form in order to get a clearly defined form into which the object was placed. The same final layer of the fabric was attached also on the back and it was strengthened along the edge by cross-stitching.

CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION WORK PERFORMED ON THE ITEM № 16720A

Procedure performed by

Adrijana Gašparić, textile restorer trainee

Object data:

Collection:	Collection of Croatian National Costumes from the Croatian Littoral
Type of object:	Headscarf
Dialect term:	<i>Pokrivaca za glavu</i> (headscarf)
Date:	end of the 19 th century
Locality:	Pag
Dimensions:	140 cm x 40 cm
Material:	cotton fabric, cotton thread

Description of object condition before restoration

The object is exhibited in the permanent exhibition of the Ethnographic Museum. It was made of fine cotton fabric with a weaving pattern.

The object was in a very poor condition and the damage was visible in the form of smaller and larger holes. The previous interventions that had been performed at the Museum were visible on the scarf and they had been closed by applying a non-woven fabric on the damaged parts.

Conservation and restoration work

Prior to the commencement of restoration work, the object was photographed and a structural analysis of the fabric was performed as well as fibre analysis.

The headscarf was wet cleaned in the solution of the neutral detergent *Orvus pasta* and distilled water. The previously made interventions were mechanically removed prior to the commencement of conservation and restoration work. After wet cleaning the scarf was air-dried allowing it to relax, which enabled the object to absorb some moisture, striving to straighten the threads of the warp and the weft and hence to prepare the object for the continuation of the work. During the relaxation, the object was placed onto a clean flat surface, covered with *Sympatex* film and wet blotting-paper and enclosed in *Melinex* film. The object absorbed a small amount of moisture through perforations on *Sympatex* and it was prepared for the straightening. After the straightening of the threads, the object was left to dry under glass loads.

Throughout its surface the object was lined with *crepeline* silk and the damage was closed by restoration stitches with filament silk. Following the restoration work, the object was placed in the storage facilities of the Collection of National Costumes of the Croatian Littoral.