

LacCA (Lacquered Copper Alloys)

Ancient varnishes on copper alloys of the 19th Century

Study and development of non invasive identification and characterisation techniques

A significant amount of copper-based artifacts in the museum's collections dating from the 19th Century were initially covered by a transparent (colored) varnish. This type of surface finish is of historical value and is an integral part of the object. Due to the lack of a non-invasive identification methodology for conservators, their preservation is compromised.

OBJECTIVES

The aim of the project is to develop simple and portable low cost identification techniques and to validate a systematical approach for the identification and characterisation of ancient varnishes on copper alloys.

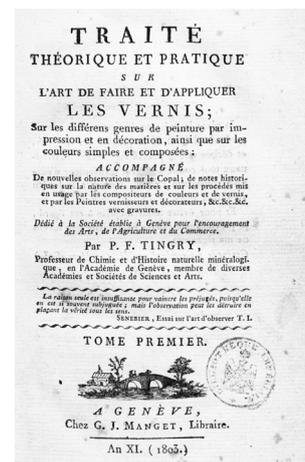
PROGRAM

The first step is to conduct an historical and technological research on Swiss and French objects dating from the 19th Century, which might have been varnished. Recipes and other historical written sources from that time will be studied to identify the ingredients, which were used for the production of varnishes. This step will allow us to gather information and form a data base prior to material analysis on varnished objects.

In a second step, examination and analysis campaigns will be carried out on historical objects on site with simple portable techniques (microscopy, ultraviolet fluorescence imaging, colorimetry electrical resistance, gloss and thickness measurements). The data will be completed and confronted to results obtained with more sophisticated instrumentation in order to get an overview concerning varnishing practice on copper alloys during the 19th Century.

RESULTS

The results will allow us to reveal simple identification and diagnosis criteria. A protocol combining different methods will be developed and validated by using mock-up coupons and a selection of real case studies.



FUNDING

HES-SO, Réseau de Compétences Design et Arts visuels

PROJECT LEADER

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PARTNERS

Haute Ecole Arc Ingénierie; Laboratoire INP, Paris; Laboratoire Monaris (Sorbonne Université), Paris; Musée International d'Horlogerie, La Chaux-de-Fonds; Musée historique, Lausanne; Musée des Arts Décoratifs et Musée des Arts et Métiers, Paris.

DURATION

18 months
1.3.2018 - 31.8.2019