

graphic supplementary information

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QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY
Lorinda WONG

Condition Recording in the Field of Wall Painting Conservation, 1997

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Lorinda Wong, "Condition Recording in the Field of Wall Painting Conservation," unpublished post-graduate diploma dissertation, Courtauld Institute of Arts, Wall Painting Department, London, 1997.

Drawbacks of the questionnaire included that it was heavily focused on England (35%) and within Europe (66%). In addition, only 18% of the respondents were working privately in comparison to 82% evenly distributed between governmental and institutional roles.

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Questionnaire Summary

The existing questionnaire, carried out in 1997, focused specifically on the methods and means of condition recording in the field of wall painting conservation.¹ Out of the 122 questionnaires sent, there were 46 respondents from 18 countries with a distribution of responses from those working privately, and in governmental and institutional roles.²

Questionnaire Results:

- Percentage of Respondents by Country
- Respondents by Working Situation

Country	Percentage
England	35%
Italy	4%
Germany	4%
USA	2%
Denmark	2%
Czech Republic	2%
Belgium	2%
Switzerland	2%
France	2%
Mexico	2%
Austria	2%
China	2%

Working Situation	Percentage
Governmental	41%
Institutional	41%
Private	18%

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Questionnaire Summary

• **Condition Recording.** the collecting and setting down for preservation information on the particular state of being or situation of an object with respect to its circumstances at a given time

The questionnaire focused on condition recording which is only one component of conservation documentation as a whole. However, the recording of condition encompasses not only the physical observation of a painting and its surroundings but must also take into account any **relevant information** which enhances ones observation of condition phenomena as well as aids in the subsequent interpretation (ability to recognise, identify and define) of this information. Therefore, the recording of condition could also include aspects regarding structural support, techniques of execution, historical alterations, previous interventions, etc.

For condition recording in particular the physical recording of such information includes not only **written** and **image-based** formats but also primarily **graphic documentation**.

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Questionnaire Summary

• **Graphic documentation:** a record of phenomena or other topographical data created by superimposing symbols, patterns and/or colours over a base map

Therefore, as graphic documentation plays such a prominent role in the recording of condition, a large portion of the results from this questionnaire have been found relevant to the GraDoc seminar. However, it is important to keep in mind that the questionnaire results do not focus exclusively on graphic documentation but also takes into account other methods and formats of recording condition. Likewise, it should be noted that graphic documentation has applications other than just for condition recording.

For the questionnaire, three levels of condition records were specified including the
A. Preliminary Condition Assessment,
B. General Condition Survey and
C. Detailed Condition Report.

The graphs following each question posed show results of all three levels of condition recording. However, the majority of information extracted for the GraDoc seminar has been taken from data provided for the **B. General Condition Survey**, which appeared to be the most representative of the results. The number in parenthesis following the results of each question represent the total number of responses.

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Questionnaire Summary

I. GENERAL QUESTIONS ON CONDITION RECORDING:

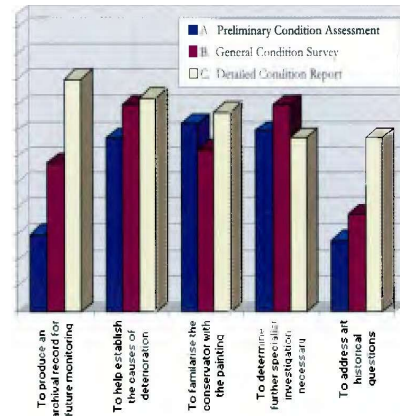
Question 1:

The recording of condition can be investigation-related. What are the objectives?

Results:

- To determine whether further investigation is necessary (32)
- To help establish the causes of deterioration (31)
- To familiarise the conservator with the painting (25)
- To produce an archival record for future monitoring (24)
- To address art historical questions (17)

Questionnaire Results: Investigation-Related Objectives of Condition Recording



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Questionnaire Summary

I. GENERAL QUESTIONS ON CONDITION RECORDING:

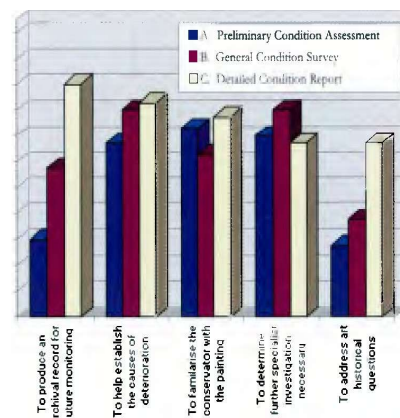
Question 1:

The recording of condition can be investigation-related. What are the objectives?

Comments:

The results are not specific with regard to graphic documentation which is only one of the *methods* used for recording condition. For example, *To determine whether further investigation is necessary* and *To establish the causes of deterioration*, listed as the two most important objectives, can be achieved by a variety of recording methods of which graphic recording though playing a key function is only one example. However, most of the factors mentioned are typical objectives for carrying out graphic documentation in general. For example, graphic documentation is definitely used by conservators as well as other related professionals as a way *to familiarise themselves with the painting*.

Questionnaire Results: Investigation-Related Objectives of Condition Recording



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Questionnaire Summary

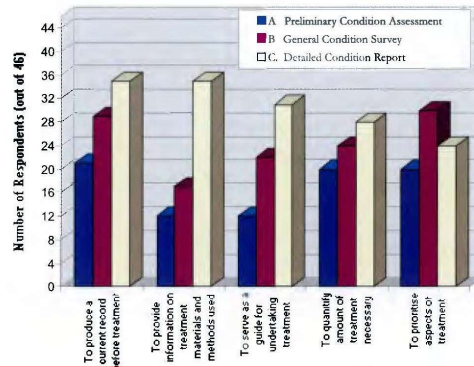
Question 2:

The recording of condition can be treatment-related. What are the objectives?

Results:

- To prioritise aspects of treatment (30)
- To produce a current record before treatment (29)
- To quantify amount of treatment necessary (22)
- To serve as a guide for undertaking treatment (21)
- To provide information on treatment materials and methods used and location (18)

Questionnaire Results: Treatment-related Objectives of Condition Recording



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Questionnaire Summary

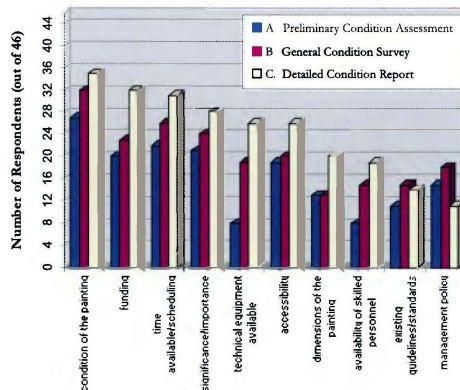
Question 3:

Which of the following factors may influence the level of recording

Questionnaire Results: Factors Influencing Condition Recording

Results:

- Condition of the painting (31)
- Time available/scheduling (26)
- Funding (25)
- Significance/importance of the painting (23)
- Technical equipment available (17)
- Management policy (17)
- Dimensions of the painting (17)
- Accessibility to the painting (16)
- Existing guidelines / standards (14)
- Availability of skilled personnel (13)



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Questionnaire Summary

Question 4:

The condition of paintings may be recorded with different levels of detail and scope.

Results

- the level of recording is standardised (11)
- the level of recording is determined for each painting (29)

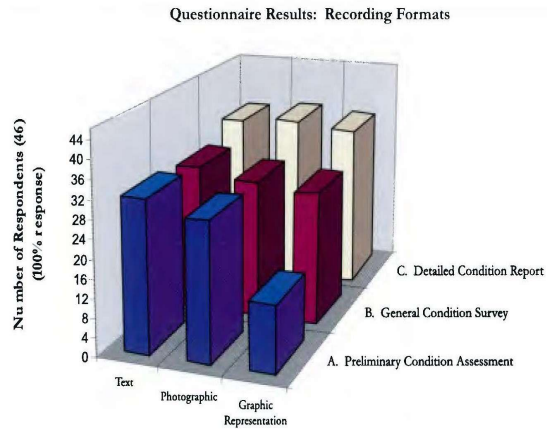
Question 5:

Which of the following do you normally use to characterise condition?

Results:

- Text (37)
- Photographs (36)
- Graphic representation (31)
- Other

Comments: The use of text photographic and graphic representation as recording formats for condition recording seem to be fairly equally weighted with text (80%), and photographs (71%) being slightly more used than graphic representation (67%).



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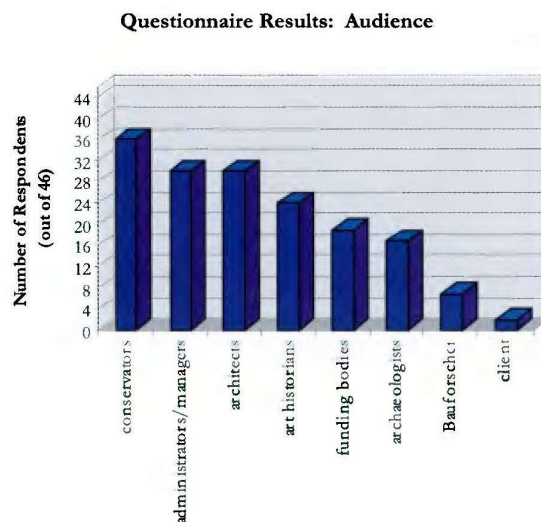
Questionnaire Summary

Question 6:

Who uses this documentation?

Results:

- Conservators (35)
- Administrators/ managers (29)
- Architects (29)
- Art historians (23)
- Funding bodies (20)
- Archaeologists (15)
- Bauforscher (15)
- Client (6)¹
- Scientists (1)²



¹ The small percentage of respondents working privately as opposed to those working within governmental and institutional roles may explain the low results for "clients". However, it may also indicate that graphic documentation is of less interest to those not working directly within the field

² "Scientists" was not initially listed in the questionnaire but was later added by a respondent. This may explain the low number of responses.

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Questionnaire Summary

Question 7:

Who participates in recording wall painting condition on site?

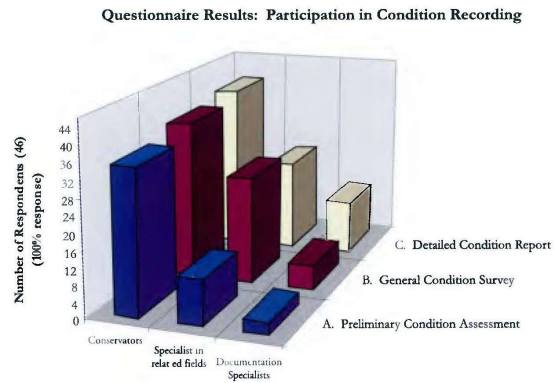
Results:

- Wall painting conserva/or (38)
- Documentation specialist (5)

Specialists in related fields:

- Architects (13)
- Scientists (6)
- Archaeologists (5)
- Photographers (5)
- Art Historian (2)
- Draughtsperson (2)
- Specialist Conserva/or (2)
- Structural Engineer (2)
- Technician (2)

Comments: The actual number of people participating in the recording process appears dependent on the size of the project and allocation of funding for documentation. Questionnaire comments specify the benefit of fewer participants as it is, 'difficult to have uniform results', 'interpretation of phenomena is very subjective' and 'too much variation likely to be introduced if more than one person participates'. However, a few respondents also mentioned the benefit of more people participating to allow for discussion and consultation. While others suggested that the entire team participates in the observation but only one person carries out the actual recording.



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Questionnaire Summary

Question 8:

How do you ensure clarity and consistency in the data recorded?

Results:

- use standard terminology with definitions of decay phenomena (23)
- include explanatory notes (20)
- include a type of 'visual glossary' with photographs or illustrations of decay phenomena (18)
- include a narrative description of each phenomenon recorded (14)

Question 9:

Who is responsible for producing the finalised documentation?

Results:

- Conservator (37) Documentation specialist (5) •Other

Question 10:

Do you use a verification system to check the accuracy of condition recording?

Results :

- no (22) •yes (8)

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Questionnaire Summary

Question 8:

Question 9:

Question 10:

Comments

Results indicate that conservators are mainly taking part in the whole process of graphic documentation with related specialists and documentation specialists (though still quite low in number) slowly growing in number due to the increasing amount and advanced technical level of graphic documentation currently being undertaken.

Comments suggest that the number of people participating in the production of finalized documentation varies, but can include a wide range of people such as site managers, technicians, documentation specialists, data entry persons, team leaders and project coordinators. It was suggested by some that there is a need for a coordinator to oversee the whole process.

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Questionnaire Summary

Question 11:

What happens to completed documentation?

Results:

a. Physical records:

- *additional copies are produced (33)*

Results:

b. Electronic records:

- *hard copies are produced (17)*
- *electronic copies are produced (on disk, optical disc, etc.) (16)*

Question 12:

How are these records accessed?

Results:

- *all records are organised and stored in an archive (30)*
- *copies made as required (24)*
- *information is stored on a database (10)*

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Questionnaire Summary

Question 13:

What methods are used to ensure the preservation of documentation

Results:

a. Physical records?

- Conversion to electronic media (15)
- Archival storage conditions (14)
- Records produced on acidfree paper (12)
- Black and white versions of alphotographs are produced (11)
- Colour strips are included to monitor the changes in colour photographs (10)
- Other

Results:

b. Electronic records?

- continui upgrading of electronicdata to match current software and hardware systems (11)
- maintenance of software to run old/ obsolete programs. (10)

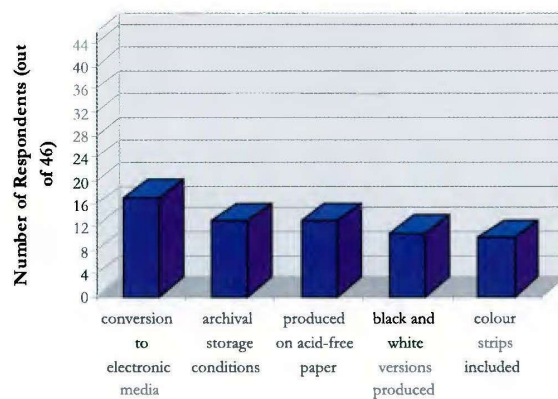
Comments: No actual specifications were given for what was considered to be "archival storage conditions". However, results still indicated that only a small number of respondents are taking measures to ensure the preservation of documentation. Perhaps most interesting, the low number of respondents producing black and white versions of photographs.

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Questionnaire Summary

Question 13:

Questionnaire Results: Methods taken to ensure the preservation of documentation



Comments: No actual specifications were given for what was considered to be "archival storage conditions". However, results still indicated that only a small number of respondents are taking measures to ensure the preservation of documentation. Perhaps most interesting, the low number of respondents producing black and white versions of photographs.

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Questionnaire Summary

II. QUESTIONS SPECIFIC TO GRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION

Question 1:

Which of the following graphic mapping methods do you use?

Results:

- overlqys on photographs (27)
- direct on photographs (25)
- direct on fine drawings (24)
- overlqy on fine drawings (19)
- direct on photogrammetric drawings (12)
- overlays on photogrammetric drawings (11)
- direct on digitai images (9)
- overlqys on digitai images (6)
- directly into computer on fine drawings (4)
- directly into computer on photographs (3)
- directly into computer on digitai images (1)
- directly into computer on photogrammetric drawings (0)

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Questionnaire Summary

Question 2:

Which of the following methods do you use when you are recording condition graphically?

Results:

- colours and symbols (21)
- black and white only (19)
- colour only (13)
- symbols only (12)

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Questionnaire Summary

Question 3:

Do you design your documentation so that it can be converted to black and white for reproduction?

Results :

- yes (23) •no (17)

Question 4:

How do you determine the condition categories (phenomena) to be recorded?

Results:

- At just condition categories to suit each individual painting (27)
- Use a standard list of condition categories specific for wall/painting (10)
- Use a standard list of condition categories also applied to other heritage items (8)

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Questionnaire Summary

Question 5:

What are you recording?

Results :

- the manifestations of decay (e.g. flaking paint) (35)
- the general state of conservation (e.g. stable) (34)
- causes of decay (e.g. rising damp) (30)
- added materials (e.g. repairs) (27)
- aspects of original technique and materials (e.g. giornate) (25)

Comments: This would also normally include non-condition recording layers such as sampling and treatment.

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Questionnaire Summary

Question 6:

What related research is conducted?

Results :

- *conservation history* (36)
- *assessment of the building condition relevant to the painting* (30)
- *investigation of the principle causes of decay* (29)
- *generai history* (27)
- *art historical* (27)
- *analysis of the painting* (19)

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Questionnaire Summary

Question 7:

How do you represent the varying levels of intensity within each deterioration phenomenon (e.g. slight to serious paint flaking)?

Results:

- *text description* (34)
- *photographs* (32)
- *graphically using different symbols* (19)
- *graphically using gradations of colors (or different colours)* (14)

Comments: Use of "varying density of symbols" was not listed as an option but was perhaps considered by some respondents under "graphically using different symbols".

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Questionnaire Summary

Question 8:

How do you record superimposed (overlapping) phenomena?

Results:

- *Text description* (29)
- *Graphically on a computer using transparent layers graphically* (25)
- *Utilising a (traditional) system of overlays* (24)

Comments: Use of "varying density of symbols" was not listed as an option but was perhaps considered by some respondents under "graphically using different symbols".

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Questionnaire Summary

Question 9:

How do you record the condition of curved surfaces (e.g. vaults)?

Results:

- *Photographs* (34)
- *Graphically flatten (distorting the image)* (22)
- *Rectified Photographs* (12)
- *Three-dimensionally on computer* (6)

Comments: Use of "varying density of symbols" was not listed as an option but was perhaps considered by some respondents under "graphically using different symbols".

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Lori Wong
Senior Program Officer



 Getty Foundation
14 novembre alle ore 17:36 · 🌐

We're excited to welcome Lori Wong as our new **Senior Program Officer!**

With over two decades of experience in cultural heritage conservation, Lori brings a wealth of knowledge from her roles at [Courtauld Institute of Art](#) and [Getty Conservation Institute](#). She holds degrees in art history and studio art from Wellesley College, a Postgraduate Diploma in Wall Paintings Conservation from the Courtauld, and an MBA from Wharton.

Lori's extensive fieldwork and leadership has extended to global conservation efforts with significant projects worldwide, including Tutankhamen's tomb and the Mogao Grottoes. Her work integrates practical and theoretical aspects of conservation, and she's been dedicated to enhancing professional skills in the Global South through collaboration, training, research, and dissemination. We look forward to the valuable insights she will bring to our conservation initiatives.