

CONSERVATION SUB-COMMITTEE

Report of the second Conservation Sub-committee meeting
held on 13 and 14 April 2007 in Istanbul.

Members present: Mandana Barkeshli (Head), Nil Baydar, Ana Beny, Betul Çakırca, Hesna Haral, Paul Hepworth (part of the meeting), Zorina Kanapatskaya, Irina Katkova, Cheryl Porter (Secretary).

- The meeting began with the participants presenting themselves and their interests and connections with TIMA.
- Dr. Barkeshli presented a brief report on the activities of the sub-committee during the past year.
- The committee discussed in some detail the issues which TIMA had outlined and came up with the following suggestions:

1. Membership:

- The committee recognized that the work of the conservation sub-committee would be of interest to: i) those who could give advice and expertise, and ii) those who feel they would benefit from advice.
- Those who would be available to give advice would best be contacted personally from the individual committee members' contacts.
- Those who seek advice will be mainly attracted by understanding what it is that TIMA can offer to them.
- The initial contact would come either through the individual members, or from information found on the website.
- It was suggested that TIMA should design a membership form that is more attractive and informative than the current form, and that the form for enrollment in TIMA should include a tick-box asking for information about the applicant's special interest(s); for example scientist, conservator, art historian, librarian, etc .
- The committee also decided that in order to advertise TIMA, national and international institutions, conservation e-lists, conservation magazines and other relevant bodies should be contacted (*See Appendix I*)

2. Website:

- The committee agreed that our website is necessary in order to advertise our presence and to list what it is that we can offer to our members.
- Subjects which can be included on the website are disaster planning, preservation, etc. These should be translated into Arabic, Persian and Turkish.

3. Creating a directory and list of specialists, research and training courses:

- The committee will provide web-links to specialist institutions that provide this information. In the future, the conservation sub-committee could initiate and oversee their translation into Arabic, Persian and Turkish. (*See Appendix II*)

4. Compiling lists of standards, including guidelines and examples of best practice

- Unlike other sub committees, whose work is involved with the creation of tools for access to and reproduction of the manuscripts, the work of the conservator deals directly with the object. Any conservation treatment could (at the very least) alter the nature of the object. For this reason, the committee feels inclined to refrain from prescriptive information on conservation topics.
- The conservation sub committee can however, and will provide links to websites and specialist institutions, whose code of ethics and standards for preservation of manuscripts are internationally recognized as “best practice”. In the future, TIMA could initiate and oversee translation of some of the most relevant into Arabic, Persian and Turkish. (*See Appendix III*)

The committee recommends that the members of the sub-committee should agree and adhere to the following statement of ethics:

TIMA conservation sub-committee acknowledges the sensitivity of the community to/about the object. We recommend that conservators be conscious of appropriate materials, handling and attitudes and avoid treatments that can compromise the “sacredness”, spiritual or symbolic value of the object”.

For conservation, the issues of best practice are not served by information on the website but by conferences, workshops and other educational events.

The sub-committee will identify and prioritize important information on these web links and endeavor to have these pages translated into Arabic, Turkish and Persian from English. (*Please see websites: <http://aic.stanford.edu/pubs/ethics.html> and <http://www.ecco.info/>*).

Required Research and identifying gaps in knowledge:

- The sub-committee members have come up with a number of possible research topics worthy of further investigation:
- Work has begun and continues on the terminology of the Islamic Manuscripts and its preservation and conservation and the bibliography of Islamic manuscripts. These should be ongoing projects supported by TIMA. (*Handouts on Bibliography on Islamic Papers, Book Structures, Pigments and their Conservation were distributed out during the TIMA Sub-committee Meeting by Mr. Hepworth*).
- A number of other research projects have been suggested and was proposed in the 2nd Conservation Sub-committee report. However, it is advised that the committee should concentrate on more manageable task such as translation of the website and collation of the material for the website.
- Financial support for the translations of the content which will be provided in the websites is essential

Call for papers:

From the members there are already offers of papers:

Nil Baydar & Paul Hepworth
Helen Loveday
Ana Beny and Cheryl Porter
Irina Katkova
Hamid Ali
Zorina Kanapatskaya

From non-members

Neeraja Gopi

Jury for selection of papers:

Mandana Barkeshli
Ana Beny
Cheryl Porter
Nil Baydar
(Paul Hepworth)

Mandana Barkeshli and Cheryl Porter
14 April 2007