



Art Conservation Training Programs and the Acquisition of Professional Competences: Archeological Materials as Studio Case

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The section devoted to Conservation and Restoration of Archaeology materials covers an extremely varied range of objects such as pottery, bones, fossils, glass, wall paintings, stone, mosaics, metals, etc.- all of them presenting specific pathologies. The acquisition of professional competencies is reached through activities focused on both developing a theoretical foundation and the development of practical skills. The content of the lessons is therefore extensive and sometimes very complex since the students trained in this area must control all the aspects related to the conservation and restoration of any material coming from an excavation, as well as the ability to judge systematically the ethical and aesthetic questions concerning its treatment and future preservation.

Particularly, one of the materials involving major complexity due to its nature and continuous degradation are archaeological metals. Given these materials are relatively rare and they are usually found in a precarious condition, the content of the theory lessons is usually complex, and student's acquisition of practical skills require the development of specific active learning methodologies. On the other hand, the use of mock-ups simulating real studio cases in order for the students to develop hands-on experience and therefore practical skills do not represent the reality of these materials in any way. How can we therefore guarantee the successful student's learning process in this area where actual cultural heritage is so different and rare? And how to do it in a short period of time given the time constraints of current study plans? These are some of the issues teachers usually have to deal with in this specific field

The objective of this paper is to present the teaching methodology used in a complex, specific and heterogeneous field such as the conservation and restoration of archaeological metals, where practical skills are essentially acquired by students through real conservation studio cases based on actual archaeological artifacts.